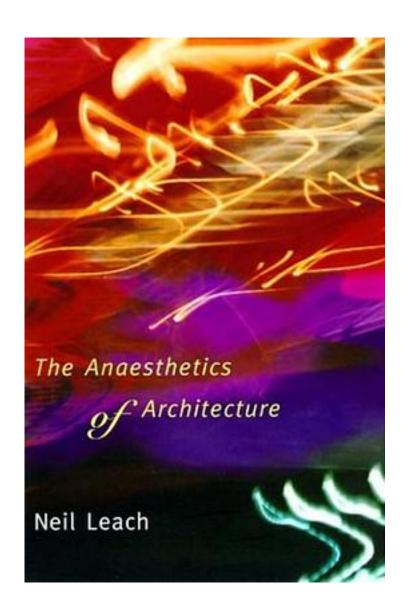
The Anaesthetics of Architecture



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In this short, intentionally polemical book, Neil Leach draws on the ideas of philosophers and cultural theorists such as Walter Benjamin and Jean Baudrillard to develop a novel and highly incisive critique of the consequences of the growing preoccupation with images and image-making in contemporary architectural culture.

The problem with this preoccupation, Leach argues, is that it can induce a sort of numbness, as the saturation of images floods the senses and obscures deeper concerns. This problem is particularly acute for a discipline such as architecture, which relies heavily on visual representation. As a result, architects can become anaesthetized from the social and political realities of everyday life. In the intoxicating world of the image, the aesthetics of architecture threaten to become the anaesthetics of architecture. In this culture of aesthetic consumption, this "culture of the cocktail," meaningful discourse gives way to strategies of seduction, and architectural design is reduced to the superficial play of empty, seductive forms

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