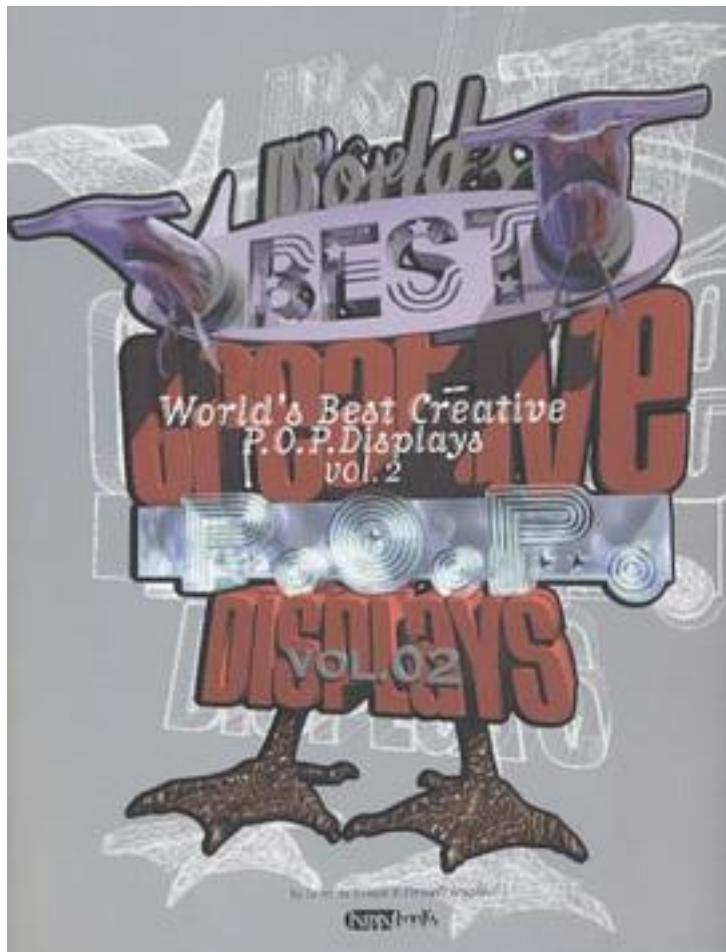


World's Best Creative P.O.P Displays



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"Architecture must facilitate man's homecoming"

ALDO VAN EYCK

houses and homes

This book is titled "25 Tropical Houses in Singapore and Malaysia", but it could just as well refer to "25 homes", because the residential buildings illustrated share a common spirit: they are not just buildings, but homes - with all that the word implies.

Witold Rybczynski points out that the home is the result of historical evolution. It is tied to the growth of urban living with its accompanying industrial and technological innovations, which have in turn resulted in profound changes as to what we understand a family to be. Intimacy and privacy, according to Rybczynski, are key features of the modern idea of home. He is careful to say that it "would be dangerous to claim that there was a single place where the modern idea of the family home first entered the human consciousness. There was, after all, no identifiable moment of discovery, no individual inventor who can be credited with the intuition, no theory or treatise on the subject." But in Europe, there was what he calls the "exemplary" development of the bourgeois interior in the Netherlands in the 17th century significant because it was here that the modern "social dictatorship of the merchant class" first emerged as part of an evolving capitalism, urbanism and democracy.

In other words, the modern idea of a home with its functional differentiation of spaces, the separation of utility and ceremony, the separation from the public domain, the provision of private spaces to members of the family and the creation intimacy is linked to social, economic and technological changes. Since the latter part of the 20th century, such changes have taken on a 'global' character. The world is now linked financially; commercially and technologically to an unprecedented degree, such that there is a rapidly advancing surface uniformity in urban life all over the world, apparently regardless of culture. But the extent of this uniformity is debatable, as culture continues to mediate the homogenizing effect of globalization. Even in Europe, the imposition of greater uniformity by the European Union has provoked a countervailing 'regionalism', as individual parts of Europe respond by accentuating their regional, cultural and linguistic character, instinctively alert to the threat of losing their identity.

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