



## *Seeing Through Drawing*

### *Ver a través del dibujo*

### *Ver através do desenho*

## Richard Economakis

In this richly illustrated book, architect and educator Michael Imber invites us to consider the artwork that has accompanied the representation of buildings since the Renaissance, when architecture emerged as a distinct craft. The book showcases Imber's own drawings and art, but it is less a catalog or monograph than a profound reflection on ways of seeing and understanding buildings and their context.

The first of the book's three sections deals with the art of seeing through drawing, with illustrations by such artist-architects as Cass Gilbert, H.H. Richardson, or Julian Abele, including work by some of Imber's own students at Yale University. In the opening chapter, Imber notes that "the process of representational design has been used for generations, [but] is now quickly giving way to computer simulation." Yet "in the traditional process of drawing, observation forms ideas and stimulates the imagination. Imagination creates a concept to be teased out on paper, manipulated, layered, minute

adjustments after minute adjustment. Sometimes accidental lines become part of the design, or a simple scribble carries the eye of a composition, form, or details. These nuances are further congealed into aesthetic solutions that become the architect's vision of a building or structure."

In a chapter titled "The Artist's Hand", Imber provides an account of the journey by which he came to realize the importance of drawing. He then traces the paths of a number of notable American architects such as Lionel Pries, John H. Kell, Robert Swain Peabody, and Samuel V. Chamberlain. In a chapter entitled "The Architect Abroad", Imber discusses the importance of travel in an architect's education.

In the second section, we follow Imber's journey through a series of his watercolors. He discusses the process leading to the realization of building designs, from the moment of conception to construction, with sketches of his visions and designs using a variety of techniques: pencil, charcoal, watercolor, gouache. In a chapter titled "Drawing in Practice", he asserts the importance of drawing in every stage of the realization of a building. In his last section, Imber takes us back to nature with watercolors painted in Maine. He argues that the ability to travel and to "recharge" by "observing and learning the concepts of beauty from nature" will condition an architect's creative growth.

**Michael G. Imber**

*The Art of the Architect*

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