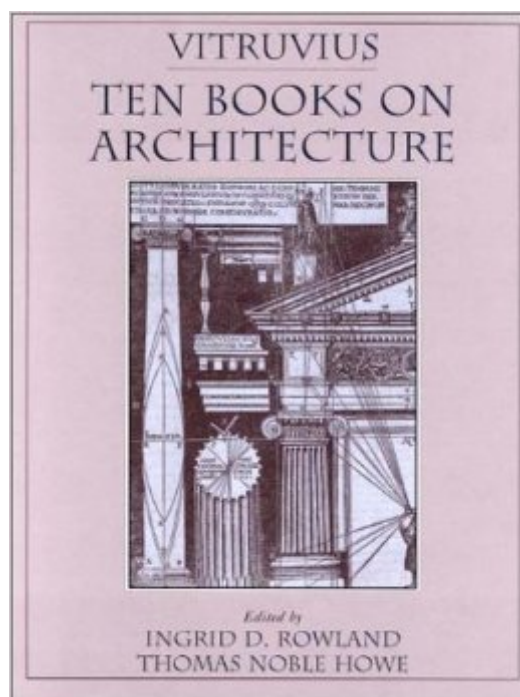


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Vitruvius: 'Ten Books On Architecture'



Synopsis

For the first time in more than half a century, Vitruvius' Ten Books on Architecture is being published in English. The only full treatise on architecture and its related arts to survive from classical antiquity, the *Architecture libri decem* (Ten Books on Architecture) is the single most important work of architectural history in the Western world, having shaped architecture and the image of the architect from the Renaissance to the present. Demonstrating the range of Vitruvius' style, this new edition includes examples from archaeological sites discovered since World War II and not previously published in English language translations. Rowland's new translation and Howe's critical commentary and illustrations provide a new image of Vitruvius, who emerges as an inventive and creative thinker, rather than the normative summarizer, as he was characterized in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Ingrid D. Rowland is an associate professor of Art History at the University of Chicago. Thomas Noble Howe is a professor in the Department of Art at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas.

Book Information

Paperback: 352 pages

Publisher: Cambridge University Press (January 15, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0521002923

ISBN-13: 978-0521002929

Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 1 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (9 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

First off, I should note that I find this version of Vitruvius far more useful than many others, especially in the clearly noted diagrams, explanations of measurement units, and so forth. The editor and translators have done a good job of this aspect of Vitruvius Pollio's work. However, the translators appear to have taken a few liberties with the text. First, since Vitruvius is a historical work as well as a canon of Classicism, an honest modern-day translation must relate not only to its period, but also to subsequent periods in order to be understood in terms of the nearer to present

and Vitruvius' own time. The translators' choice of ridding the text of the translation "the Orders" for Vitruvius' original choice of "genus" is bad enough, but when you observe that this translation has been rendered as "type" instead, it has the potential of blending in with unintended references in the text to type as well as being confused with common modern/Modernist discursions into what type is. The translators should have indicated their theories about what they thought would be a correct interpretation of the Roman word "genus" at the beginning of their notes, not by making a deliberate decision to diverge from the customary content of the text. Second, this translation appears to fail to take into account some aspects of military culture which have influenced the text.

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