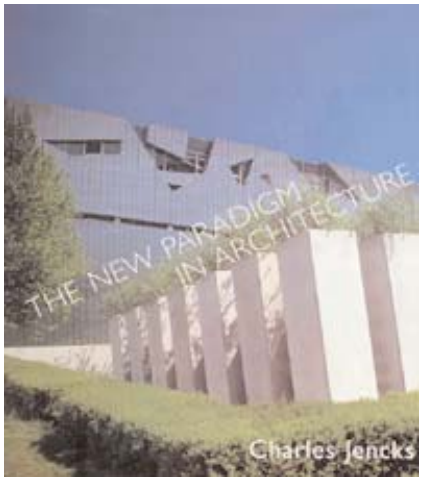
The New Paradigm in Architecture

The Language of Post-Modernism

Charles Jencks



Charles Jencks is a designer and the author of numerous books on the theory and history of architecture and was formerly visiting professor at UCLA.

The New Paradigm in Architecture tells the story of a movement that has changed the face of architecture over the last forty years. Starting with the counter culture of the 1960s and the call for a complex urbanism by Jane Jacobs and a complex architecture by Robert Venturi, it shows how such demands started to be realised by the 1990s in a new and complex architecture aided by computer design. Often curved, warped and fractal in shape, it is more convivial, sensuous and articulate than the Modern architecture it challenges. Carried forward by architects such as Frank Gehry, Daniel Libeskind and Peter Eisenman, it has also become a leading approach in many schools and offices around the world. The computer is now at its heart but its history, which Charles Jencks traces, is built on the desire for an architecture that communicates with its users, and one based on the heterogeneity of our cities and global culture. This pluralism results in the multiple-coding of architecture's radical eclecticism, and that new convention for public buildings, the enigmatic signifier.

This, the first book to define the broad issues of Post-Modernism, led to its growth in other fields such as philosophy and the arts. First written at the start of an architectural movement in the middle 1970s and translated into eleven languages, it has gone through six editions, each one giving a feeling of how the issues looked at a particular moment. Now completely rewritten and with three new chapters, the seventh edition brings the history up to date with the latest twists in the narrative, and the turn to a new complexity in architecture.

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