Image Building: How Photography Transforms Architecture

by Therese Lichtenstein. Prestel, March 2018. 144 p. ill. ISBN 9783791357294 (pbk), $39.95.

Reviewed March 2019 Dana Statton Thompson, Research and Instruction Librarian, Waterfield Library, Murray State University, dthompson29@murraystate.edu
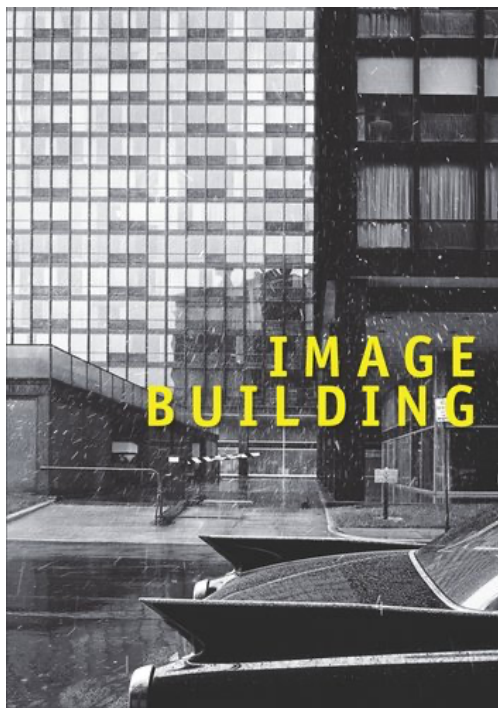
Image Building: How Photography Transforms Architecture was published in conjunction with the eponymous exhibition produced by the Parrish Art Museum in Watermill, New York. Both exhibition and catalog focus on photographs from the 1930s to the present and examine how spaces and structures are represented and interpreted through historic and contemporary photographic images.

The catalog is comprised of a foreword and acknowledgements section written by the director of the Parrish Art Museum, Terrie Sultun, a list of lenders to the exhibition, two essays (one by a contributing essayist and one by the curator of the exhibition), an exhibition checklist, and the curator's acknowledgements. The exhibition is represented by fifty-seven color plates, which are listed at the end of the book.

The first essay, "What Goes Up: Architectural Photography and Visual Culture," is written by contributing essayist Marvin Heiferman, a well-known independent curator and faculty member at the International Center for Photography and School of the Visual Arts in New York, New York. Heiferman examines photographs from Joseph Nicéphore Niépce's upper-story window in 1826/27 to the destruction of neighborhoods in Aleppo, Syria in 2016, providing a sound overview of the history of photography as it intersects with architecture. According to Heiferman, photographs are partially responsible for the perceived iconic and permanent nature of our built environment. Ironically, he points out, these same photographs often outlive the very structures they represent. The second essay, "Architecture after Photography," is written by Therese Lichtenstein, the curator of the exhibition and an art history teacher at The Ross School in East Hampton, New York. Lichtenstein focuses on the works of nineteen artists, both well-known

and emerging. She explores the social, psychological, and conceptual implications of viewers' subjective understanding of architecture through images, noting that our conception of our built environment is built though the perspectives of its photographers. Both essays include additional color and black and white reproductions of photographs (fifty-six total) that are not included in the exhibition, creating a balance between text and image.

The photographers represented in the exhibition and catalog are: Berenice Abbott, Robert Adams, Iwan Baan, Lewis Baltz, Hélène Binet, James Casebere, Thomas Demand, Luigi Ghirri, Samuel H. Gottscho, Andreas Gursky, Candida Höfer, Balthazar Korab, Thomas Ruff, Ed Ruscha, Stephen Shore, Julius Shulman, Eza Stoller, Thomas Struth, and Hiroshi Sugimoto.

Image Building has a narrow focus and would be best suited for researchers and curators. The catalog is highly recommended for art libraries, museums, and institutions that support architecture, art history, museum studies, and photography programs. Additionally, it would pair very well with New Topographics (edited by Britt Salvesen, published by Steidl, 2010), which considers the 1975 exhibition New Topographics: Photographs of a Man-Altered Landscape and covers some of the same ground as Image Building.