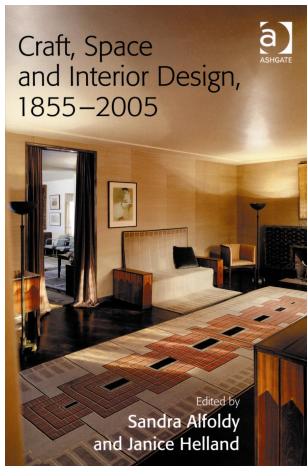


Craft, Space and Interior Design, 1855–2005 / Edited by Sandra Alföldy and Janice Helland—
 Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2008.—240 p.: ill.—ISBN: 978-0-7546-5706-4 (cl., alk.
 paper): \$99.95.



This collection of thirteen essays was compiled by editors Sandra Alföldy, Canadian craft historian, and Janice Helland, professor of women's studies and art history, to demonstrate that "craft controls, manipulates, organizes, and defines space." Contrary to prevailing thought, craft, decorative art, ornament, and interior design are not passive art forms at odds with High Modernism. Architecture is always interrelated with craft and design, even across the changing trends of the 20th century. Craft may be attendant upon architecture, but objects also shape space.

The working title for this book was *Craft in Space: Architecture Interiors and Decoration*, and I puzzle over why the term, "architecture" was dropped since most of the contributing authors address the ways in which architectural spaces are defined by craft.

In the book's introduction, Alföldy and Helland posit that "craft and space create ephemeral, ever changing snap shots of public and private moments" and they proffer that this collection of writings offers the first sustained exploration of the relationship between craft and space. Though the beautifully researched and written essays feel more like an album of engaging

snap shots than a single, convincing argument, many hit the mark. Bridget Elliott's article on the textiles at Saarinen House proves the existence of a once-denied link between the Arts and Craft Movement and Modernism. Helland skillfully defines the public, gendered space of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Glasgow tea rooms by examining the exquisite gesso panels of Margaret MacDonald. Jim Cheshire and Joseph McBrinn explore how craft can give meaning to ecclesiastical spaces. Other authors have admirably restored credit due women, who worked with and championed Crafts throughout the past century: Penny Sparke on Elsie de Wolfe, Cynthia Imogen Hammond on Catherine Baurer, and Alföldy on Anita Aarons. The inclusion of contemporary examples, such as Simon Starling's 2002 reworking of Josef Frank's 'Aralia' and Toronto's Gladstone Hotel project, expand the book's scope.

The book's forty-eight photographs and plans illuminate the text. Its scholarly apparatuses—index, reference, list of figures, and notes contributors—are impressive and substantial and, unfortunately, so is its price. Scholars interested in craft and design, architectural historians, and academic researchers following recent endeavors to expand the concept of space are its likely audience.

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