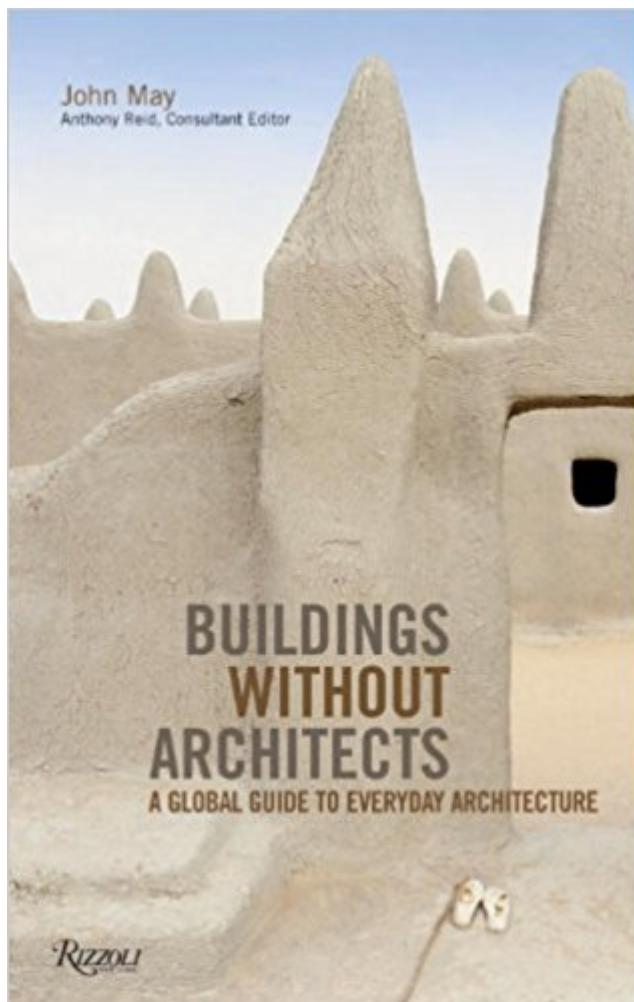


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# Buildings Without Architects: A Global Guide To Everyday Architecture



## Synopsis

A wonderfully informative reference on vernacular styles, from adobe pueblos and Pennsylvania barns to Mongolian yurts and Indonesian stilt houses. This small but comprehensive book documents the rich cultural past of vernacular building styles, from Irish sod houses to sub-Saharan wattle-and-daub huts and redwoods treehouses. It offers inspiration for home woodworking enthusiasts as well as architects, conservationists, and anyone interested in energy-efficient building and sustainability. The variety and ingenuity of the world's vernacular building traditions are richly illustrated, and the materials and techniques are explored. With examples from every continent, the book documents the diverse methods people have used to create shelter from locally available natural materials, and shows the impressively handmade finished products through diagrams, cross-sections, and photographs. Unlike modern buildings that rely on industrially produced materials and specialized tools and techniques, the everyday architecture featured here represents a rapidly disappearing genre of handcrafted and beautifully composed structures that are irretrievably "of their place." These structures are the work of unsung and often anonymous builders that combine artistic beauty, practical form, and necessity.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Diligent environmentalists John May and Anthony Reid have put together a book, *Buildings Without Architects: A Global Guide to Everyday Architecture*, that will change the way you view the art of dwelling design. Showcasing man's capacity for creation and ingenuity, the book reminds us that human beings the world over have built homes with nothing more than their own two hands and

Mother Nature's rich resources... Buildings Without Architects evokes a time before electricity and advanced technology, before modernization and beaming skyscrapers when design grew out of resourcefulness and was, in fact, truly green." ~Zink

John May is a writer and journalist based in London, England. He is the author of the official history of Greenpeace. Anthony Reid is a lecturer on vernacular environment based in London. His wide-ranging research on vernacular architecture has taken him around the world.

May's book is basically a slick repackaging of stock images of vernacular buildings worldwide complete with the standard architect's dreary renderings of each structure. The structure and the narrative of the book is not very interesting as it is organized along the lines of an identification handbook. Also, Earthship Reynold's is a licensed architect and his buildings are largely contrived and theory-laden, lacking the most basic premises of what a vernacular building or process is. Why Reynold's work is even in this book is beyond comprehension as his work should not be seen in the same light. Save your money for Rudofsky's classic Architecture without Architects or Oliver's Dwellings: The Vernacular House Worldwide.

Line drawings of vernacular and indigenous architecture around the world. If there was still a Whole Earth catalog, this would be number one in its category. This book realizes the highest aspiration of what a book should be, for its subject. Text left page, great line drawing right page, often with cutaways that are great. This is one fantastic book.

More user-friendly and generalist than "Architecture without Architects" but the smaller format is a slight qualitative disadvantage. A good, well-produced ready-reckoner for worldwide building practices

Colossal little book of global perspective. Great photographs, engineering diagrams and cross-sections. Bravo to the Authors and Editors. STEVE GALAT (Hallandale Beach, Florida)

The best feature of the book is its organization of the material; but it is short on comparative analysis which would have been helpful, given the diversity of the examples.

This is a beautiful book showing the magnificent art of traditional building. Pictures leave the

reader/viewer in awe of the craft, skill and aesthetic of 'native' constructions. It takes one back to the appreciation of simpler ways of life.

Great book, small format.

Seems like it's been a while since a grownup nonfiction book has crossed my path that I couldn't put down, had to keep turning the pages because it was just so daggone fascinating. I call these books Your Neighborhood Librarian's Fetish Books, because I go through them so obsessively. The one about the little girl beauty pageants; Hair Wars; the book of Powwow attire. Yum. So here's a new one, and what is it about? Vernacular architecture. The way people have built their houses and service structures all over the world and throughout history, when building is entirely driven by materials, function, and comfort. How did the ancient Scots cope with bitter winds and lack of lumber? What's the best way to stack hay in Eastern Europe? How exactly is a yurt put together? And oh, what a luxurious wealth of types of structures! Haida plank houses, Yanomamo compounds, indlus, igloos, tipis and toleks. Bottle buildings, log cabins, cob houses, cave dwellings. With plan drawings, elevations, cross sections, and some color pictures. Makes you want to go out in the woods, mix up some mud, cut some saplings, and make yourself a little indlu of your own.

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