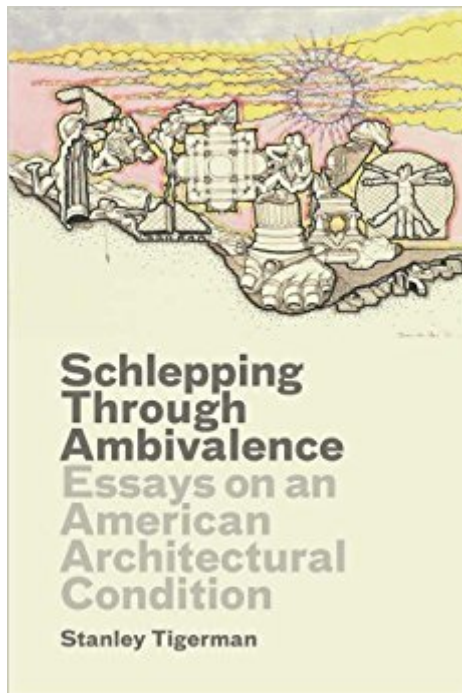




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Schlepping Through Ambivalence: Essays On An American Architectural Condition



Synopsis

Chicago architect and iconoclast Stanley Tigerman has been called a "design maven who can spit venom like a snake." Though he is at times sharply critical, his ability to cut to the core of architectural discourse has opened this insular world to a broader audience. His words and theories are appealing for their candor and are backed by his long-standing architectural practice. Since 1964 Tigerman has made an indelible mark on his hometown and on cities across the globe, with projects ranging from the Five Polytechnic Institutes in Bangladesh to the Holocaust Memorial Foundation Museum in Skokie, Illinois. This collection of essays, most previously unpublished, spans the course of Tigerman's career. Included are writings on the history of Chicago architecture, architectural theory, and commentary on contemporaries. Tigerman's engaging words, at times humorous and humble, at times biting and cantankerous, will captivate students and scholars as well as the general reader.

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Customer Reviews

Stanley Tigerman is an American architect, theorist, and designer and the former director of the School of Architecture at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He is the author of *Versus: An American Architect's Alternatives* and *The Architecture of Exile*. Emmanuel Petit is associate professor at the Yale School of Architecture.

Stanley Tigerman: Schlepping Through Ambivalence Stanley Tigerman is fascinating. He is a contemporary architect struggling to come to grips with difficult issues of contemporary culture,

tackling them head on. These searching, disparate, sometimes conflicted essays written over a professional lifetime are filled with wonderful insights. Equally wonderful are his many drawings, which he calls "architoons", that here complement these essays. He is often hard on others, but always harder on himself. He seeks meaning through juxtaposition so that these essays, like his own architectural work, become a sort of Hegelian dialectic of thesis / antithesis leading to a troubled synthesis from which he again departs: towers for the wealthy / housing for the homeless; suburban villas / work for the disabled; commercial / spiritual; engaged / alienated; silly / profound; life / death. Tigerman in these essays comes across as himself a fascinating juxtaposition, like some difficult cross between Howard Roark and Soren Kierkegaard. *Schlepping Through Ambivalence* is fascinating and fun to read, yet also an important document of a key period in architectural history. For decades Tigerman was at or near the center of everything significant. Tigerman knew many key figures in the last half century. He worked with the pioneering modernist Keck Brothers; and at SOM in its heyday with Bruce Graham, Walter Netsch, Fazlur Khan, and Myron Goldsmith; he studied at Yale with Paul Rudolph and Vincent Scully. He was design director for Harry Weese. He has maintained long, close friendships with Frank Gehry; Peter Eisenman; Michael Graves; Robert Stern; Tom Beeby; John Hejduk; and many others, whom he writes about in these essays. He writes letters posthumously to Mies. He recalls Louis Kahn and what is probably the last conversation an architect had with Louis Kahn before his death. Nobody has been more passionate about architecture's role in society than Tigerman. His background gives him a deep understanding of modern architecture few others possess. So his insistence on imbuing it with broader social, cultural, religious, environmental, and ethical concerns is all the more profound. One of Chicago's most widely influential architects, Tigerman has also been an important educator as well as architect. He also has long been Chicago's greatest impresario for architectural culture. His essays on Chicago architecture reposition Chicago modernism by juxtaposing it with its own past, as well as the much longer past of architectural history in general. He explores the romantic / classical veins Giedion and others ignored. Such essays are the flotsam of a whole cultural movement he helped inspire. Perhaps when cyber-engineers eventually codify the entire sequence of algorithms needed to create architecture, they will also encode these essays so that future creators will also know what it is to be human.

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