

1 The World's Best Architecture

PHAIDON EDITORS

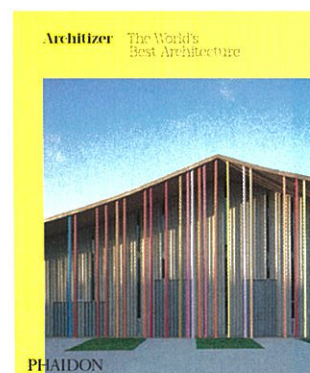
"We're not here to build for other architects, we're here to build for all of humankind." *The World's Best Architecture* opens with these words from renowned Danish designer Bjarke Ingels. It is an all-encompassing quote which defines the book: a compilation of buildings chosen by the people who use them. *Architizer's A+Awards* programme is judged by communities around the world, offering the public a rare platform to be at the centre of the discussion. The result is a diverse and wide-reaching compendium of over 150 projects – where established and emerging names are printed side-by-side.

Architecture-lovers may recognise some of these visually striking structures. Kengo Kuma & Associates' structure for V&A Dundee is a compelling new museum connecting the River Tay and the city. The institution, which is inspired by nearby cliffs, has social interaction

and connectivity at its heart. Nature is also the inspiration for Steyn Studio's Bosjes Chapel, which responds to its mountainous backdrop through undulating white forms. Paul Keskeys, *Architizer's* Content Director, names it a "new architectural icon for South Africa."

There has never been a more important time to consider our relationship with the environment. A sustainable approach to architecture is demonstrated by a selection of award-winners. For example, New York-based Terreform ONE's mission is to design against extinction, whilst the *No Footprint House* in Costa Rica by A-OI responds to its habitat by passive climate control.

"The projects tell us not just about the nature of great architecture today but also what it could look like tomorrow," Keskeys explains. This volume is marked by a creative spirit of continual innovation.



Words
Eleanor Sutherland

Phaidon
phaidon.com

2 Faceworld

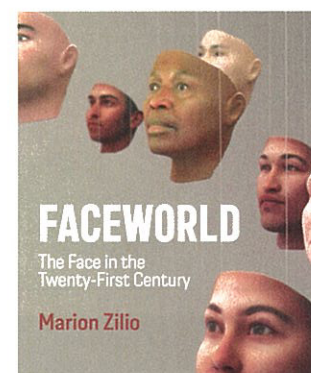
MARION ZILIO

Marion Zilio's latest title, *Faceworld: The Face in the Twenty-First Century*, charts the history of the technical, economic, political, legal and artistic fabrication of the face. In it, Zilio argues that the narcissism of the selfie may well be a chance for us to come to terms with the non-human part of ourselves – to understand the technical aspect of our face and digest our role as consumers, communicators and human beings in today's hyper-visual world.

The title is in-depth, well-considered and inherently reflective. It begins with the date the word "selfie" was added to the Oxford English Dictionary (2013) and builds upon its ties to the "Facebookisation" of the world (Facebook having launched in 2004.) What follows is a series of cohesive and imaginative readings into contemporary culture – how we are experiencing unease as camraphones diffuse the self-portrait into a cloud of pixels.

Of course, no reading into the selfie is without considering the anthropological journey we have taken – from gazing into mirrors and the Narcissus pools to paying for lavish painted portraits. We then move into the 20th and 21st century experimentation of masquerade through the works of Cindy Sherman, Gillian Wearing and Claude Cahun. Zilio doesn't disappoint; she covers all this and much, much more, including data-mapping, political economies and contemporary aesthetics.

Beyond the highly convincing arguments, the book is, above all, optimistic. After covering the ground of data dissemination, issues of security and the dark "oblivion" of images sent down the Snapchat wormhole, Zilio makes a wonderful case for the 90 million images uploaded to Instagram each day – that they may merely be part of a new stage "essential to our psychic development."



Words
Kate Simpson

Polity
politybooks.com

3 Video/Art: The First Fifty Years

BARBARA LONDON

When technology boomed in the 1960s, art changed forever. *Video/Art: The First Fifty Years* is abundant with facts on the technological revolution that led to video art and the ongoing mutation of media art. Written by Barbara London (b. 1946) – curator and spokesperson – the book delves into video as a fundamental art medium, alongside stories from London's professional life.

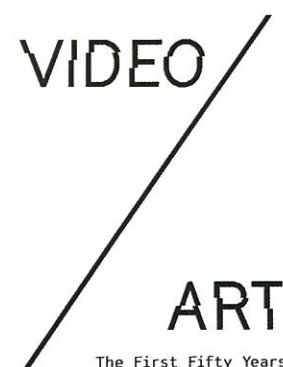
Beginning in Manhattan in 1968, readers plunge into a hub of buzzing counterculture via memories of pivotal experimentation and underground screenings frequented by influencers like Patti Smith, Andy Warhol, John Cage and Merce Cunningham. "I realised [upon watching Cunningham perform] that art could consist of everyday actions carried out live, rather than static images locked down in concrete forms," recounts London.

The chapter *Defining a Medium, Defining a Field* de-

tails the dawn of video, outlining bold experiments and pucky risks taken by trailblazers like Nam June Paik and Robert Rauschenberg. Moving to the importance of intersectionality, the chapter *Multimedia: Video, Performance and Music* catalogues groundbreaking artists such as Laurie Anderson and Joan Jonas.

Whilst performers skyrocketed video art from fringe form to a widely accepted medium, so did the increased accessibility of equipment – the text chronicles how gadgets have shrunk drastically from sedentary industry cameras to portable, handheld devices.

Looking to the future in a globalised world, London discusses how video art has advanced to media art, unavoidable with the rise of digital tools, graphics and the vast impact of the internet. How will artists continue to transcend traditional visual vocabularies?



Words
Robyn Sian Cusworth

Phaidon
phaidon.com