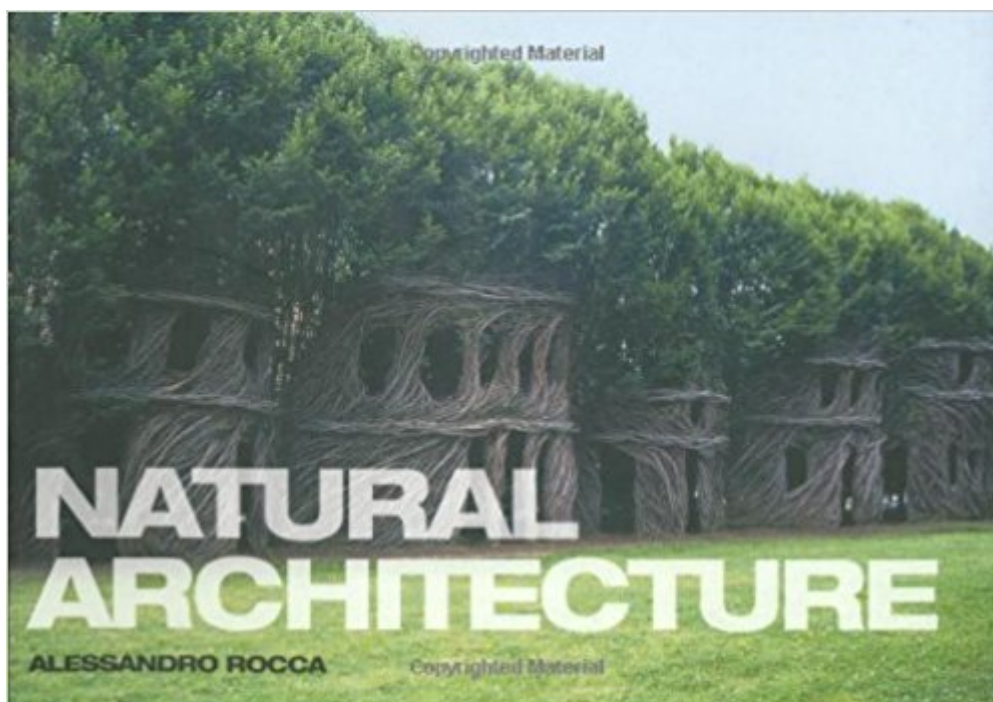


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# Natural Architecture



## Synopsis

Never has the relationship between art and nature been more complicated and more fragile, but also richer and more fascinating. The artists and architects in *Natural Architecture* have transformed the act of building into an art form capable of sparking new relationships with nature, landscape, and the environment. Though far from basic or primitive, these creations are built from humble elements: branches, twigs, pebbles, straw, stone found at their site. Fulfilling a wide variety of intentions—sometimes structural, sometimes sculptural, sometimes sacred—the works presented here inspire a sense of awe and reverence for the forces of nature. From a bridge in Tibet connecting an orphanage and a nearby village, to a hut fit for mythical creatures, to a pavilion in Iceland with a roof made of water perpetually frozen in an exuberant shape, each project resonates with a sense of purpose and innate beauty. *Natural Architecture* presents sixty-six site-specific installations that use raw materials, manual labor, and natural stimuli to create truly green architecture that is as organic as the materials with which it is created. Projects by Olafur Eliasson, Patrick Dougherty, Nils-Udo, Ex. Studio, Edward Ng, nArchitects, and many others are shown together for the first time. Selected for their commitment to the use of raw materials, manual labor, and natural inspiration, these works are vividly displayed in photographs, drawings, and models. These fantastical creations allow the changing landscape to naturally overtake each structure until it finally decomposes. Each project is accompanied by a series of photographs, drawings, and models. The rugged and surreal beauty of the projects in *Natural Architecture* question the wisdom of our ever-accelerating construction processes and point a way forward, toward a new organic simplicity of structure and form.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Each of the 66 featured site-specific installations, built from found on-site materials, is carefully cataloged with photographs, drawings, and models. Ultimately, these fantastical creations allow the changing landscape to naturally overtake each structure until it finally decomposes. -- American Style, June 2008

Like many surveys of particular themes of art, this book is one of the more useful compilations, with enough breadth of images to appeal to a wide range of artists and architects. -- Landscape Architecture, September 2007

With photos, notes, postcards and maps these albums evoke not only a long-gone world of steamer ships, train travel and the grand tour, but also the boundless wonder of travel at a time when the world seemed unimaginably vast. As beautiful as it is fascinating. -- Marin, December 2007

an inspiring collection by a really diverse selection of architects and designers -- WorldChanging, September 19, 2007

"In this remarkable book, Alessandro Rocca, architect and critic at Milan Polytechnic, has assembled a world of almost surreal beauty. " --Architect, October, 2007

"In a world driven by high-tech gadgetry, creations of organic architecture--by hand, with raw materials that are truly green--are worthy competitors to the latest skyscraper in any competition for psychic reward. In this remarkable book, Alessandro Rocca, architect and critic at Milan Polytechnic, has assembled a world of almost surreal beauty."

--Architect, October, 2007

"Ecologically sensitive projects make up Natural Architecture. Some, such as a water station and a chicken house, are practical; many are dazzling in their inventiveness and beauty; and all were made from materials on-site." --House & Garden, October, 2007

"each project resonates with a sense of purpose and innate beauty." --Brunswick Street Bookstore

Alessandro Rocca is an architect, architecture critic, and professor at the Milan Polytechnic. He is the author of numerous books and articles on architecture.

Keen and concise

Even in paperback, this book is lovely on your coffee table, but also informative about the natural architecture movement. Purchased as a gift and was well-received!

How we engage with nature can be defined as breathtaking by virtue of our human capacity for ideas made real by building. This book shows us how to open our spaces, so we can open our

minds and our hearts to a more Artful experience with nature and our environment.

I got this book based on the example pictures which you can see on , and for those it's nice. But many of the really inspiring pictures in the book are available here or other places online. The book covers a wide range of projects, from a practical bridge construction in Tibet to an agricultural education program for kids (which has almost nothing to do with architecture as far as I can tell) to extremely personal works of art. If you read the professional reviews above, you may think the projects in this book share characteristics like decaying over time. The selection is really more a scattershot of whatever Alessandro Rocca happened to like. There are parks and houses included, for example, which are carefully maintained and are not expected to decay at all for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately most of the especially beautiful works are marred by the luridly purple prose attached to describe them. It's the typical modern art nonsense where artists plant an arbor of trees but have to artspeak what they've done into, "a device for alteration of the gaze in paths of access and leaving the place. Its evolution is very closely connected to its reception, which necessarily passes through the sensations received." If you can wade through that kind of self-aggrandizing vocabulary list, more power to you. I for one had to tear out the pictures I liked and toss the book so the text wouldn't ruin the experience of the art.

This beautiful volume has a wide-range of outdoor structures constructed, for the most part, from natural materials. As a member of a community that has built straw-bale structures, I found the range of materials and style of structures quite inspiring. I recommend this book for anyone interested in the relationship between the natural world and man-made structures.

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