

1: architectonics_of_humanism_essays_on_number_in_architecture

Lionel March Architectonics of Humanism Essays on Number in Architecture 'March has written a highly readable account of the relationship between architectural discourse and mathematics.

Essays on Number in Architecture New York: To order this book, [click here!](#) As Wittkower so effectively points out, those terms are not our terms. To understand them now requires a conscious act of the imagination. Among his most striking observations is this: Familiar as this idea may be now, having stood the test of the intervening fifty years, it is still not entirely clear what it means. Wittkower was careful to say that it does NOT mean that such designs were simply translations of music into architecture. Rather, both musical and architectural theory in this period seem to rest on a Pythagorean faith in the importance of number: As Palladio said, The proportions of the voices are harmonies for the ears; those of the measurements are harmonies for the eyes. Such harmonies usually please very much, without anyone knowing why, excepting the student of the causality of things. Now, nearly 50 years later, he returns to its problems, having never really forgotten them. A nagging question, first encountered as a Cambridge examination problem, described in the prologue, frames the book: This does not look like a musical interval! Anyone who rashly skips to the epilogue out of curiosity will find that a great deal has happened in the intervening pages. This question is examined, investigated, and turned every way in Architectonics of Humanism. The range of investigation is encyclopedic, and the references are impressively complete. March had ready access to the excellent Renaissance collection at UCLA, and the hundreds of figures reproduced here are a valuable resource in themselves. The wide margins, suggested perhaps by Renaissance printing conventions, contain delightful asides as well as bibliographic information. Most important, March shows an unbiased willingness to consider Renaissance number in all its variety. All this, I think, makes the book an invaluable resource and reference for everyone with an interest in Renaissance mathematics. It goes beyond architectonics, which only raised the questions, to the nature of number itself. What follows is some indication of how diverse the investigation is. We may take "musical proportion" as a well-established Renaissance concept, but what are we to make of "gendered number," "ethical number," "shapeful number," "theological number," "occult number," "playful number," and "right triangular number," to mention only a few chapter titles, and to say nothing of the many varieties of proportion? The reader will correctly guess what some of these categories are, but some will surely be new. Consider, for example, "occult number. That every name gives rise to numbers? The odd possibility that designs may encode words and names is kept fully in view. The Hebrew names of God give rise to numbers which can be arranged in intriguing patterns: March suggests that such numbers may have been used secretly in designs, their significance concealed from all but the most discerning. Here is a source of number meanings which is totally unknown to us, but which must have been quite immediate then, at least to skilled players. According to Vitruvius, a temple "must have an exact proportion worked out after the fashion of a finely-shaped human figure. Here you will find Renaissance measurements of the male body in great detail. A fascination with square roots and higher roots is characteristic of Renaissance arithmetic. Heron of Alexandria had given successive approximation methods for representing irrational roots by rationals. These methods were, in principle, known in the Renaissance. Thus we are alerted to the possibility that when we see 17, or an integer multiple of it, we are really looking at the square root of 2, and that there should be a 12 nearby. This association of certain peculiar integers with rational approximations to interesting square roots is just one of many innovations in Architectonics of Humanism. Indeed, there are so many innovations that when we return, in the latter part of the text, to make sense of plans and designs, knowing far more about number and proportion than we knew before, there is a superfluity of interpretations. Problems that had no solution, if we sought simple "musical" proportions, now seem to have many esoteric solutions, more than could simultaneously be right. March has enlarged our conception of Renaissance number until it is large enough and flexible enough to accommodate real data, in all their stubborn complexity. Perhaps none of these interpretations is right, we realize, but it is very unlikely, with these methods, that a correct interpretation would be missed. In this sense Architectonics of Humanism is definitive. It is also, as I stressed above, a

stimulus and reference for the study of Renaissance mathematics in general. The great mathematical problem of the Renaissance, as it seems in retrospect, but also, to some extent, as it was seen at the time, was to make sense of the irrationals. This is not a problem of architectonics, but I found *Architectonics of Humanism* nonetheless full of ideas and information on this question. The practical use of "rational convergents," for example, clearly has a bearing on the question of the irrationals. This is just one example of how *Architectonics of Humanism* more than fulfills what its title promises. To order this book from Amazon. March, *Architectonics of Humanism*, p. His research interests are topics in the physics of fluids, including most recently a topic that fascinated Leonardo, turbulent flow.

2: The Architectonics Of Meaning | Download eBook PDF/EPUB

Architectonics of Humanism has 1 rating and 0 reviews. This book presents a fresh viewpoint on the use of symmetry and proportion in Alberti and Palladio.

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3: Lionel March - Wikipedia

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7: ARCHITECTONICS - Definition and synonyms of architectonics in the English dictionary

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8: Architectonics of Humanism: Essays on Number in Architecture by Lionel March

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