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Robert venturi duck architecture

The Big Duck Building in Flanders, New York. Image via Wikimedia Commons. Complexity and contradiction in architecture, the groundbreaking 1966 book by Robert Venturi, who died at the age of 93, has always stayed out of my bookshelf. Like its author, it is an unpleasant thing to bow to conventions about what a book should look like. A recently published facsimile edition of *Learning from Las Vegas*, the radical manifesto he wrote in 1972 with his wife Denise Scott Brown and his colleague Steven Izenour, does the same. It rises from the stacks of books gathered around my desk, a monumental tome that cannot be ignored. Like the Vegas billboards it celebrates, it cries out for attention. Venturi, who broke more than just bookshelves around the world, was one of the most influential figures in 20th-century architecture, taking a learned sledgehammer to the dogmas of modernity and arguing for a world that embraced history, diversity, and humor. He was a Catholic large tent that rejected the either/or attitude of purity and order and pleaded for the plural richness of both/and. It was a pop sensibility that valued the burger stand as much as the cathedral, an inclusive approach to architecture that found joy in everyday life. Less is more, was the po-faced maxim of the modernist maestro Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, to which Venturi gleefully replied: Less is a boredom. At the age of 18, I first met Venturi and Scott Brown when I was an intern at the National Building Museum in Washington DC. They came to give a lecture at the Vincent Scully Prize ceremony in 2002 and performed a rapid-fire slideshow of things they loved, under the banner *A Disorderly Ode to Architecture That Engages*. It was a fun ride, from Michelangelos and bungalows to ketchup bottles and cartoons, but presented with poker facial gravity of this to suit the retired couple. They took their fun seriously. As Scott Brown later wrote: Be dead, don't set up your subject, and (as Bob Brooks Brothers wears suits), present outrageous content in a conventional format. I was eagerly queuing to have my book signed (even Venturi's signature was bigger than life, with the facade of the house he had designed for his mother in a lively scribble), and when I learned that I was from Yorkshire, his eyes lit up. Vanbrugh! Castle Howard! It is one of our favorite buildings! I expected it to be lyrical about pop culture, but instead he began to charm himself for the wonders of English Baroque. In an instant, he transformed the, in my head had always been a tedious mansion, from a childhood, involuntarily to be dragged around such places, into a magical world of architectural games and theatrical tricks, a large house conceived as a series of stage sets. I had this Stone pods were so full of mischief and wit. Both complex and simple ... Venturi's mother house in Philadelphia. Photograph: Buyenlarge/Getty ImagesUnexpectedly, Venturi's influence persisted. A year later, the first essay I had when I arrived at the university was his mother's house, which he built in Philadelphia in 1964. It was the first time I learned how to read a plan and a section, what to look for in a facade, how architecture could be figurative: that meanings can be translated into physical space. It is both complex and simple, open and closed, large and small, Venturi wrote. Some of its elements are good on one level and bad on another. I remember staring at the plan for hours trying to figure out why the stairs bent awkwardly around the back of a chimney breast, as if each element was competing to occupy the middle of the room. In a typically perverse way, Venturi wrote that the staircase, which is considered to be in its own right, hidden in a rest room, is bad. But seen as part of the complex and contradictory whole, it's good. It performs a curious dance with the chimney, and splays at the bottom to provide a place to sit. The facade, meanwhile, looks like a Vegas sign, a thin screen that calls the house, through which the interior complexities of the building occasionally protrude and unbalance the symmetrical shape. It had a fatness, like layered stage landscape, which would continue to be an issue in Venturi and Scott Brown's work. Baroque architecture needed a depth of a courtyard to do their decoration, they wrote. Renaissance architecture might be a foot, Rococo an inch, and Art Deco could suggest seven or eight superimposed surfaces in a bas-relief, an inch deep. We loved the richness within the deco-low relief, but when we came to think about what this meant to us today, we realized that our decorative surfaces should be two-dimensional – for many reasons, including cost. Robert Venturi's duck and decorated shed illustration. It was a kind of architecture that they classified as decorated sheds, a functional box of ornaments applied regardless of what was going on inside, which they put in opposition to the duck, where the architecture itself is a sculptural, symbolic object – named after a duck-shaped egg stand on Long Island. It is a useful classification that remains relevant, with the distorted ducks attracting media attention as the decorated sheds spread across the landscape. They told me that wherever they went, The game I bet I can like something worse than you like. It was an urge that Scott Brown called a hate-love-eater, an attraction to the strange, ugly, or banal that forced them to think about this attraction and to unglue the signs and symbols behind the world around them. Venturi Venturi often referred to as the father of postmodernism, but he was so much more than that. As the historian Robert Miller wrote, it is an accusation comparable to calling Thomas Edison the father of disco. Like Edison, Venturi shone a bright light into the often gloomy world of architectural discourse, illuminated a colorful spectrum of possibilities, embraced the chaotic vitality of the ugly ordinary, and expanded the idea of what architecture could be. 9 Strange and wonderful architectural ducks collage based on a photograph by Robert Venturi. Original photo © Denise Scott BrownThey exist for a reason. Coined by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown in *Learning from Las Vegas*, Ducks are buildings that literally project their meaning [1]. No architectural metaphors here - they are exactly what they look like. Many emerged along interstate highways, a lonely doughnut or dinosaur that made the road trip through America. Places like Las Vegas and Macau have built their identity in the kitschy and literal language of architecture – a powerful contribution with the duck. Although they are degraded to one of the strange harbingers of the postmodern era, ducks still appear today (like the Chicago Apple Store's latest Macbook roof). Are they funny, cheesy or just ugly? Love them or hate them, ducks have a carefree presence in our architectural history. Below are 9 strange and wonderful examples of buildings that make no excuse for being exactly what they are: + 101. Big Duck / Long Island New York, USAImage via Wikimedia (public domain)The one who started it all, Robert Venturi coined the architectural term duck from this precedent in his 1972 book *Learning from Las Vegas*. Built in 1931 by duck farmer Martin Mauer, the building was designed to sell ducks and eggs (you guessed it) ducks and eggs, with its unusual shape and prime location that attracts many customers. Originally built along a busy street in Riverhead NY, the duck enjoyed a nomadic life that moved several times before settling 6km down to the small town of Flanders, modelled on a Pekin duck, the roly-poly-proportioned building was built almost entirely of wire mesh and concrete to make room for a gift shop. In addition to being immortalized by Venturi's writing, the Big Duck wrote architectural history by landing a place on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in 2008.2. Mr. Toilet House / Suwon, South KoreaImage via wef.orgThe two-story, 420-square-foot home was originally built in 2007 for Sim Jae-Duck (aptly named), former congressman and mayor of the South Korean province Built. Sim, who was nicknamed Mr. Toilet for his career-defining job, was dedicated to improving the condition of the restrooms in the country. The toilet is also a central place of residence that has culture, he said at a meeting. The house is a literal monument Sim's eccentric quest to beautify the toilet - with stairs after the movement of pipes and a painted steel exterior alludes to the white ceramics in toilets. After Sim's death in 2009, the private home was transformed into a toilet museum, with exhibitions, collections and activities to fund public baths in developing countries. Looking for the toilet? The building has four – one even with room-to-ceiling glass, which becomes opaque at the touch of a button.3. Haines Shoe House / Hallam Pennsylvania, USAImage via visitpadutchcountry.comShoe seller Mahlon Haines is said to have approached the architect of the building with a boot and said: Build me such a house. The shoe store was born; built as a form of advertising for Haines' business in 1948. The 25-foot-tall building is 5 storeys high, with upper floors previously rented to couples and now house guided tours of buildings. The house is planned with its living room on the toes, the kitchen at the heel and living rooms that run up the ankle of the boot. An ice cream parlour is also located in the Shoe Instep.4. Dog Bark Park Inn / Idaho, USA© Wikimedia user Graystock licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0The two-bedroom B&B was designed and built by artists Dennis Sullivan & Frances Conklin and opened in 2003 as the largest beagle-shaped building in the world. With a canine-themed interior, the building is a quirky addition to America's roadside architecture – popular in the early days of car vacations that formed a deep-rooted part of American culture (many of which overlap with the postmodern ducks that Venturi mentions). The Beagle building becomes more whimsical, and also houses a museum for chainsaw artists (think painted wooden sculptures of various dogs).5. The Museum of Tea Culture / Meitan, ChinaImage via skyriscities.comOfficially built in 2010 as the largest teapot in the world, the museum rises to a height of 78 meters with a diameter of up to 24 meters. The more than 5,000-square-foot museum is a building dedicated exclusively to teapots that literally takes you to the next level. Meitan has a rich history around tea - known as the hometown of Chinese green tea. As China decides to distract from weird buildings, we are glad that this quirky addition will make it in time. 6. Chiat/Day Building by Frank Gehry / Venice, California, USA© Flickr user ikkoskinen licensed under CC BY 2.0Not deconstructivist, but still curvy – this is definitely one of the stranger works of the architect. Frank Gehry designed these binoculars in 2001 as the entrance to his Gehry-like business house Chiat/Day (back). The postmodern building is known for unusual mix of different architectural styles and materials. Ten years later Announced that the building would be leased as part of the expansion of Los Angeles – binoculars now serve as an entry point into their offices in Venice.7 Kindergarten Wolfartsweier / Karlsruhe, GermanyImage via karlsruhe.deDesigned and built in 2011 by the artist Tomi Ungerer and the architect Ayla Suzan Yöndel, this adorable kindergarten goes beyond the metaphor. Clad in concrete and metal, the two-storey building lets natural light flow through its round window eyes inwards. Although the idea of stepping through the mouth of a giant cat and having class in its belly sounds creepy - an adorable facade, a green fur roof and a tail-shaped slide ensure that the building stays true to its playful spirit.8. Cabazon Dinosaurs / California, USAImage via Wikimedia by Wikimedia user Jllm06 (public domain)Launched in the 1960s, the giant dinosaurs were thought to be street attractions of sculptor Claude K. Bell (see 4) to lure customers to his Wheel Inn restaurant (now closed). The first - called Dinny was built over a period of 11 years until 1975, with Mr-Rex later added in 1981. Bell created Dinny from salvaged material from the neighboring highway, with a steel scaffold and an extended metal grille that formed its shape before it was covered with layers of shotcrete spray concrete. A woolly mammoth was also to be built, but was never realized. After Bell's death in 1988, the property was sold and now houses a creationist museum and a souvenir shop. Longaberger Building Headquarters / Newark, USA© Wikimedia user Barry Haynes under CC BY-SA 3.0 In addition to the Big Duck, the Longaberger Basket Building is a firm fixture in novelty architecture. Opened in 1997, the 180,000-square-foot building was built as a literal embodiment of the company's best-selling product. The company's founder, Dave Longaberger, had originally wanted all companies to follow a basket-like shape, but only the headquarters was completed before his death. Today, longaberger has tragically remained vacant, and Longaberger stopped paying the property tax in 2014. Unfortunately, the famous basket has been left empty and languishes in the real estate market, with no potential buyers. A long and complicated foreclosure process is underway, but so far the building remains a relic for those who still want to visit. [1] Frederick, Matthew 101 Things I Learned in Architecture School Through their groundbreaking theory and provocative construction, The couple Robert Venturi (born June 25, 1925) and Denise Scott Brown (born October 3, 1931) were at the forefront of the postmodern movement and led the lead in one of the most significant changes in the of the 20th century, by writing groundbreaking books such as *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (written only by Robert Venturi) and *Learning from Las Vegas*. Published. (co-written by Venturi, Scott Brown and Steven Izenour). About this author Cite: Sabrina Syed. 9 Weird and Wonderful Architectural Ducks 08 Jul 2017. Accessed. &t;https://www.archdaily.com/875022/9-weird-and-wonderful-architectural-ducks-&t; ISSN 0719-8884 0719-8884 &t;https:&t;