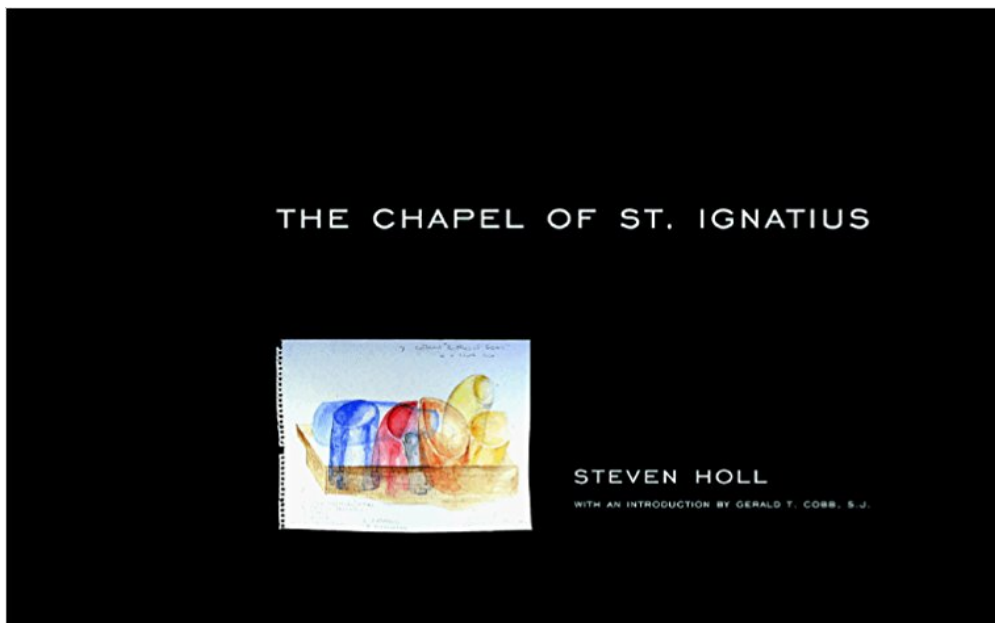


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The Chapel Of St. Ignatius



Synopsis

If the recently completed and highly praised Kiasma museum in Finland is architect Steven Holl's largest and most public work to date, his much smaller Chapel of St. Ignatius in Seattle is his most private and, in many ways, his most inspiring. In it, we see distilled the themes and concerns that have made Holl one of the most respected architects practicing today. This jewel-like chapel, while small, contains the essence of Holl's vision-his interest in the phenomenology of space, his passionate investigations of form and material, and his use of reflected light and color. This book functions as a journal in the life of this extraordinary building. From Holl's preparatory watercolor sketches, to design development and working drawing details, to construction shots showing the unique precast system, to a large photographic portfolio of the completed building, this book reveals Holl's working method as well as the finished building. Essays by Steven Holl and client Fr. Jerry Cobb introduce the book. The color photographs present the unique aspects of the design and its details.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Seattle is widely seen as a hip, cutting-edge city, yet--the Space Needle aside--its architecture has tended toward the conservative. That could be changing, with several promising projects currently under way, including a music museum designed by Frank Gehry and one completed building of considerable poetry. The latter, Steven Holl's St. Ignatius Chapel at Seattle University, is the subject of a monograph that emphasizes its mystical aspects, which Holl links to the life of Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuit Order. This complex little building is a glowing meditation on mysteries of light and color, and the book deepens those mysteries more than it clarifies them. The color photos are

gorgeous but usually abstract and unidentified, and Holl's text is short and metaphorical. The chapel bears strong influences of such early modern architects as R.M. Schindler, Alvar Aalto, and especially of Le Corbusier, in the form of his pilgrimage Chapel at Ronchamp. Yet it is also Holl's personal creation, marrying awkwardness and grace in a memorable manner. At some point, a third-party book will examine these influences and the complex history of how this building, which involved great collaboration and compromise that goes unmentioned here, came into being. Until then, this visually evocative package will give a taste of the subtle pleasures that can only be fully experienced by visiting the building. The softly reproduced photos are artful, but the text is arguably set too small to read comfortably, and the scarce captions are smaller still. --John Pastier

Lovely monograph of a beautiful little building.

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