



**AS FOUND
HOUSES**



As Found Houses

Experiments from self-builders in rural China

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- Tells the stories of innovative transformations of vernacular houses in rural China by self-builders
- Appeals to readers interested in architecture: from design practitioners to students, researchers and library collections, and those interested in Chinese architecture and rural development, both within China and elsewhere
- With the support of framing essays by guest writers, the book enters into a discussion with contemporary architectural discourse that will make it an important part of any university collection

In rural China, an informal wave of building catalysed by economic and social developments has rendered some villages unrecognisable. This building boom, taking place in a context of limited regulations, has created densities more often found in urban areas. At the same time, the rapid transformation of rural villages has generated some remarkable hybrid experiments where rural builders use generic construction methods to adapt, modify, graft, cleave and wrap traditional vernacular typologies. These typologies have existed for hundreds of years and represent an accretion of localised building knowledge and cultural identity. Where often these typologies are preserved and maintained as tourist destinations, this book looks at those instances where families transform them to account for new ways of living.

By looking closely at these transformations, **As Found Houses** identifies innovative, informal design responses that negotiate between traditional housing forms and the changing conditions of the rural village. The book presents the intelligent and surprising solutions applied to house typologies conceived by builders in 4 regions of rural China. Using photographs, axonometric drawings and interviews with the villagers who live in these hybrid experiments, the book situates design solutions within the context of their larger human narratives, thereby challenging ossified understandings of vernacular architecture that treat historical and cultural tradition as static.

The book argues that the manifold evolution of the vernacular is part of the every-day practice of the villagers' lives, and that architecture for them is very much still a home. **As Found Houses** is a guide to the surprising design decisions found in the domestic architecture of rural China and a resource for thinking about contemporary design.

John Lin is an architect and an Associate Professor in the department of architecture at The University of Hong Kong. With Joshua Bolchover he is the director of Rural Urban Framework (RUF), a non-profit research and design collaboration. Their projects integrate local and traditional construction practices with contemporary sustainable technologies.

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