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Cosmic Culture

Soviet Space Aesthetics in Everyday Life

Dieter Seitz

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- Traces the impact of space travel on everyday life in the East
- July 2019 is the 50th anniversary of the moon landing
- Space exploration from the perspective of cultural history
- A visual story told with photos and historical documents

Since the dawn of time, people have been fascinated by the idea of travelling to the stars, which is vividly illustrated by utopian and dystopian works of architecture, the visual arts, and cinematography. In many ways, the designs and symbols associated with space travel also found their way into popular culture in the former Soviet Union and its satellite states. Often spurned as propaganda by the West, they informed the design of mass-produced consumer goods and public art works in the USSR. While in our part of the world space travel largely turned into a political race as a result of the Cold War, its appeal found an aesthetic expression in everyday life in the East.

This book presents the results of in-depth research and extensive travels through a total of seven countries. Its prime focus is the impact of space exploration on everyday life in its pioneering age between the late 1950s and the 1980s and the persistence of related concepts and utopian ideas in today's society. Told as a visual story, it combines artistic and documentary photography, portraits of contemporary witnesses, landscape snapshots, and historical documents. It is in part an historical investigation since many of the pioneers of the space age are no longer alive and many of the formerly ubiquitous items have disappeared.

Text in English and German.






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