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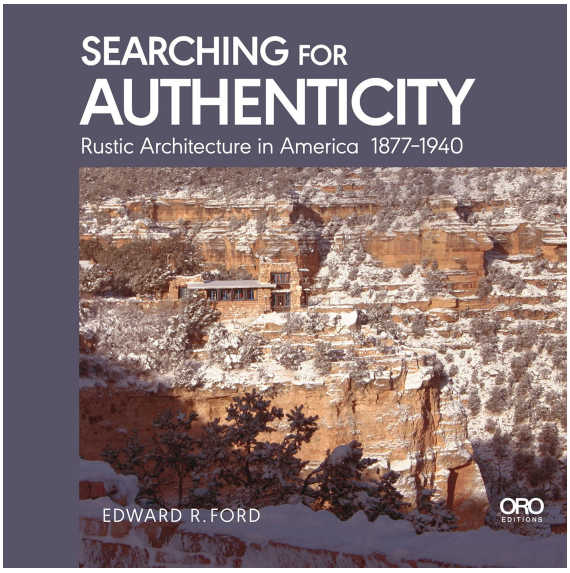

Searching for Authenticity

Rustic Architecture in America 1877-1940

Edward Ford

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- At a time when America was becoming increasingly technologically sophisticated and remote from the natural world, there was an architectural movement to reverse the process, if only for a short time

Rustic Architecture in America 1887-1940 is a history of a series of misunderstood masterpieces, the log-based architecture that emerged in the Adirondacks and the National Parks between 1890 and 1935. It is a history of how both form and technology of construction were determined by the tourist industry and the railroads who built the buildings and the social and environmental damage caused by the larger process of which they were a part. Many of these buildings were constructional shams driven by romantic pretenses, but there is also in the best of this architecture something truly original. It is also a history of how the rustic aesthetic transcended glib, mythic romanticism to produce a truly original architecture, how the unique conditions of the West merged craft with the industrial, of how its designers drew on the landscape of the West in combination with the European traditions of the rustic to create an original architecture and a unique way of building. Forty buildings are examined in detail. The text and the numerous original drawings unfold the story how the work was actually constructed in relation to its many enduring myths.

Edward Ford is the author of the two volumes of *The Details of Modern Architecture* (MIT), and *The Architectural Detail* (Princeton Architectural Press). His architectural work is the subject of *Five Houses, Ten Details* (Princeton Architectural Press) He has taught at Washington University-St. Louis, the University of Virginia, the University of Texas Austin, and other universities.







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