



Tools of the Imagination: Drawing Tools and Technologies from the Eighteenth Century to the Present

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The construction of a building is fascinating to watch, as the symbiosis between man and machine turns what seem to be scattered piles of material into architecture. But before the tools of construction ever arrive on the site, the architect wields a different set of tools to design, develop, and document the building-to-be. The history of these drawing tools is one of invention and innovation. In a profession increasingly dominated by the computer, earlier tools from the compass to the helicograph, ellipsograph, and volutor; from perspective charts to slopes and batters; from Mylar to modeling clay are beautiful artifacts of a bygone day. Along with historical objects, the National Building Museum has collected wooden models by Frank Gehry and hand-drawn sketches by Tod Williams, showing that the tools of the imagination are still very much a part of architectural design.

Covering 250 years of design tools and technologies, *Tools of the Imagination: Drawing Tools and Technologies from the Eighteenth Century to the Present* takes a revealing look at how architects have produced the drawings, models, renderings, and, now, animations that show us the promise of what might be built. The book includes a wide array of these tools as well as drawings, renderings, and sketches from well-known architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and I. M. Pei.

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