

This should be read by all architects

Below_ Marc Quinn's giant bronze-cast baby at Chatsworth House, Derbyshire



BOOK / Liquid Thresholds By Neil Thomas and Aran Chadwick Atelier One, 2009, £34

With an enviable list of clients and collaborators that include Turner Prize-winning artists Antony Gormley, Anish Kapoor and Rachel Whiteread, for two decades, Atelier One's Neil Thomas and co-director Aran Chadwick have both consistently disproved the assumption that engineers simply realise the visions of others. When discussing Atelier One's input with Gormley and Whiteread on the Quantum Cloud sculpture and House structure, both have spoken without reservation of the engineer's input, detailing how it was instrumental and not procedural. As is implicit in moments of 'genius' – the word used by collaborator and founder of sibling firm Atelier Ten, Patrick Bellew – capturing and bringing methodology to their processes is often impossible, as intuition plays such a major role.

CHRISTOPHER FURLONG/GETTY IMAGES

This book is not instructive, but rather it serves to catalogue and inspire, with a photographic essay by Peter Marlow, tracing work from 1995 to 2008, followed by a series of artworks and building case studies, including DP Architects and Michael Wilford's Singapore Arts Centre and Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios' Earth Centre.

This is not a book for engineers alone; instead, it should be read by all architects who are assembling their next design team. Engineers must not simply be used to work things out. As Peter Cook puts it in his introduction, they should always be brought in 'at the thinking end of this complex professional sequence.' **ROB GREGORY**

- + *Inspiration for engineers and architects*
- *Not enough from the founders of Atelier One*

Soane wanted to view himself as a teacher as well as a practitioner

EXHIBITION / Order: Myth, Meaning and Beauty in Architecture
 Until 30 January 2010,
 Sir John Soane's Museum,
 London, UK
www.soane.org

The Soane Museum takes up its founder's challenge to be a place of teaching by staging an exhibition of drawings and models demonstrating the Orders of Architecture, which were originally prepared for John Soane's lectures at the Royal Academy in 1809. Of the 12 lectures he gave at the Academy over 20 years, three focused on a discussion of the orders. Nothing unusual about that of course, as most architectural writers devote much space to them, and their ancient forebear Marcus Vitruvius Pollio gave the first impulse to such an arrangement. Much of the first four of his *Ten Books* is concerned with them, and up to the beginning of the Information Age, some knowledge of them was required of the aspiring architect.

The Soane lecture watercolour figures would be held up by an assistant as the professor came to the relevant place in his lecture. There are about a thousand of these relatively rough figures with plain, stark black labelling. The fascination of the ones dealing with the orders is their recreation of the majestic structure, which is the quintessence of architecture, even though by the time Soane lectured, the Greeks and Romans



were no longer thought to provide the only models for modern building. In the previous 200 years, Chinese and Indian architecture had become quite familiar. Even the buildings of the New World, of Mexico in particular, were seen as equalling those of the Greeks and Romans, and yet the orders remained the architects' *vade mecum*.

Why that is so remains a curious yet relevant question. The orders consist of a post and beam. The post has a base and a shaft crowned by a capital which joins to the topping capital. This also is in three layers; the beams proper that span between the columns, the transverse rafters that rested on them, which correspond to the