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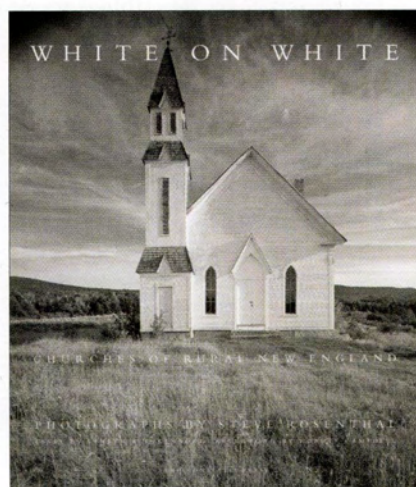
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WHITE ON WHITE: CHURCHES OF RURAL NEW ENGLAND

Photographs by Steve Rosenthal
 Essay by Verlyn Klinkenborg
 Afterword by Robert Campbell FAIA
 The Monacelli Press, 2009

A distinguished architectural photographer, Steve Rosenthal is known to many for his crisp images of New England's important new buildings, including Kallmann and McKinnell's Boston City Hall, Cobb's Hancock Tower, and Kahn's Exeter Library. Less known is his longtime, quiet obsession: making black-and-white photographs of New England churches.

These striking images have been bound together in large-format plates in a beautiful book. A foreword by Verlyn Klinkenborg, who is on the editorial board at *The New York Times*, and an afterword by *Boston Globe* architecture critic Robert Campbell FAIA provide thoughtful context to view these photographs as art.

Any art form has its limitations, of course. The sonnet form restricts a poem with specific meter and a fixed number of feet and lines. When beauty emerges from a sonnet, it seems all the more astonishing because of the apparent restrictions of the form. However, the tension between the meaning and the form are inextricably connected.

Photography, and particularly black-and-white photography, has many

limitations analogous to the limitations of the sonnet form. The photographer's view of the world is already limited by a monocular lens, but the black-and-white photographer is further limited by the absence of color. Surely color would give a greater scope for conveying meaning?

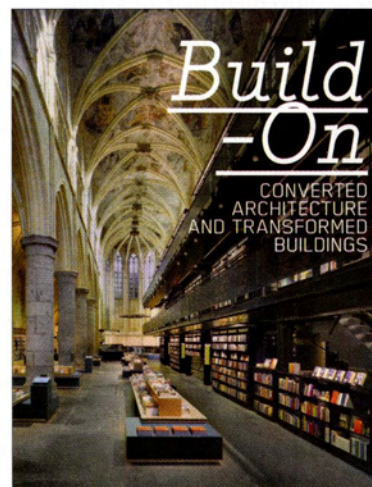
But in the hands of an artist such as Steve Rosenthal, the black-and-white format intensifies the meaning. The images in this book are astonishing. Their subjects are the iconic white, 18th- and 19th-century structures that were once the center of community life in the region and still define the New England landscape today. Rosenthal gives them an epic stature. Through the sensitivity of his eye and the clarity of his compositions, these frail wooden barns — indeed they were built mostly for farmers — become heroic, timeless architecture.

In these photographs, the reader will find a full education in architecture. Here are essays on siting, context, and urbanism. Here are essays on the efficiency of form as it relates to function, on the use of daylight and sun, and on the role of structure. These photographs are essays in style, and how style carries meaning.

And further, these photographs are essays in the human spirit. Through Rosenthal's lens, we feel — and this is no exaggeration — the human will to immortality and the reach for meaning across time. The builders of these New England treasures were housewrights and carpenters, whose knowledge of history and the larger world seems hopelessly limited when compared to our age of plane travel and the Internet.

But with the availability of pattern books, the builders of these essential New England buildings were able to reuse the forms of ancient temples and medieval cathedrals. Timeless forms were made new. Steve Rosenthal's haunting, dreamlike, beautiful photographs will forever change our sense of these country churches.

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BUILD-ON: CONVERTED ARCHITECTURE AND TRANSFORMED BUILDINGS

Edited by Robert Klanten and Lukas Feireiss
 Gestalten, 2009

The possibility of transformation is one of the great promises of working with existing buildings. This is an elusive goal; to begin with something old, introduce a new ingredient, and end with the unexpected — which is somehow both familiar and new — requires both deference and assertion. Several examples of this alchemy appear in the projects illustrated in *Build-On*. Unfortunately, the book's enthusiasm is diluted somewhat by the sheer number of examples cited.

With lush color photographs and short descriptive essays, the book features over 85 projects from around the world (mostly Western Europe), including many that may not be widely recognized in the US. Although no table of contents is provided (the projects are indexed by architect at the end of the book), the book is divided into three themed chapters. In the first, "Add-on," new spaces are added or superimposed onto existing structures. In "Inside-Out," exteriors remain largely intact, while interiors are fundamentally altered. "Change Clothes," the most interesting, looks at works that attempt to change the face of the existing structure. Although this last implies a focus on appearance, it features the repurposing of