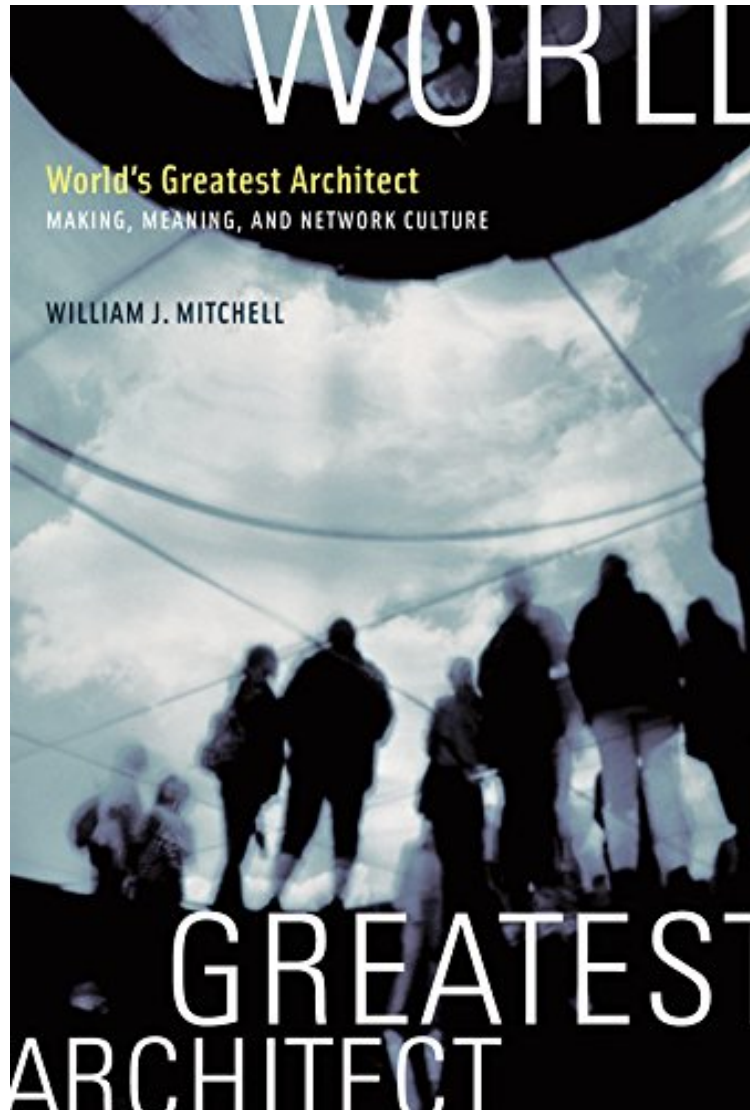


(Library ebook) World's Greatest Architect: Making, Meaning, and Network Culture (MIT Press)

## World's Greatest Architect: Making, Meaning, and Network Culture (MIT Press)

*William J. Mitchell*

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**William J. Mitchell : World's Greatest Architect: Making, Meaning, and Network Culture (MIT Press)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised World's Greatest Architect: Making, Meaning, and Network Culture (MIT Press):

Artifacts (including works of architecture) play dual roles; they simultaneously perform functions and carry meaning. Columns support roofs, but while the sturdy Tuscan and Doric types traditionally signify masculinity, the slim and

elegant Ionic and Corinthian kinds read as feminine. Words are often inscribed on objects. (On a door: "push" or "pull.") Today, information is digitally encoded (dematerialized) and displayed (rematerialized) to become part of many different objects, at one moment appearing on a laptop screen and at another, perhaps, on a building facade (as in Times Square). Well-designed artifacts succeed in being both useful and meaningful. In *World's Greatest Architect*, William Mitchell offers a series of snapshots -- short essays and analyses -- that examine the systems of function and meaning currently operating in our buildings, cities, and global networks. In his writing, Mitchell makes connections that aren't necessarily obvious but are always illuminating, moving in one essay from Bush-Cheney's abuse of language to Robert Venturi's argument against rigid ideology and in favor of graceful pragmatism. He traces the evolution of Las Vegas from Sin/Sign City to family-friendly resort and residential real estate boomtown. A purchase of chips leads not only to a complementary purchase of beer but to thoughts of Eames chairs (like Pringles) and Gehry (fun to imitate with tortilla chips in refried beans). As for who the world's greatest architect might be, here's a hint: he's also the oldest.

"Like the extraordinary 'Whole Earth Catalog' of our youth, these brilliant essays create a pattern of possibilities that allow the reader to see and design one's personal connections between each essay. The allusions to various cultural icons and their views on topics ranging from maps and communication to art and creativity make this book a must read for the constructively eclectic design mind. It is incisively written and along with William Mitchell's other contributions, firmly establishes his place in the pantheon of learning professionals."--Richard Saul Wurman (Richard Saul Wurman) About the Author William J. Mitchell was the Alexander W. Dreyfoos, Jr., Professor of Architecture and Media Arts and Sciences and directed the Smart Cities research group at MIT's Media Lab. He authored many books, including *The World's Greatest Architect* (2008) and *Placing Words: Symbols, Space, and the City* (2005), both published by the MIT Press.