

# Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan

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Since its original publication in 1978, *Delirious New York* has attained mythic status. Back in print in a newly designed edition, this influential cultural, architectural, and social history of New York is even more popular, selling out its first printing on publication. Rem Koolhaas's celebration and analysis of New York depicts the city as a metaphor for the incredible variety of human behavior. At the end of the nineteenth century, population, information, and technology explosions made Manhattan a laboratory for the invention and testing of a metropolitan lifestyle -- "the culture of congestion" -- and its architecture.

"Manhattan," he writes, "is the 20th century's Rosetta Stone . . . occupied by architectural mutations (Central Park, the Skyscraper), utopian fragments (Rockefeller Center, the U.N. Building), and irrational phenomena (Radio City Music Hall)." Koolhaas interprets and reinterprets the dynamic relationship between architecture and culture in a number of telling episodes of New York's history, including the imposition of the Manhattan grid, the creation of Coney Island, and the development of the skyscraper. *Delirious New York* is also packed with intriguing and fun facts and illustrated with witty watercolors and quirky archival drawings, photographs, postcards, and maps. The spirit of this visionary investigation of Manhattan equals the energy of the city itself.

In this fanciful volume, Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas, founder of the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (O.M.A.), both analyzes and celebrates New York City. By suggesting the city as the site for an infinite variety of human activities and events--both real and imagined--the essence of the metropolitan lifestyle, its "culture of congestion" and its architecture are revealed in a brilliant new light. "Manhattan," Koolhaas writes, "is the 20th century's Rosetta stone . . . occupied by architectural mutations (Central Park, the Skyscraper), utopian fragments (Rockefeller Center, the U.N. Building), and irrational phenomena (Radio City Music Hall)." Filled with fascinating facts, as well as photographs, postcards, maps, watercolors, and drawings, the vibrancy of Koolhaas's poignant exploration of Gotham equals the heady, frenetic energy of the city itself. Anyone who loves New York will want to own this book. Rem Koolhaas is the internationally known architect, a founder of the Office for Metropolitan Architecture (O.M.A.) in Rotterdam, and author of the critically acclaimed *S,M,L,XL*.

#### Other Books

*Paradigm Islands: Manhattan and Venice*, Concerning architecture and the city, built, imagined and narrated, this book focuses on Manhattan and Venice, but considers architecture as an intellectual and spatial process rather than a product. A critical look at the making of Manhattan and Venice provides a background to addressing the dynamic redefinition and making of space today. The gradual processes of adjustment, the making of a constantly changing dense space, the emphasis on forming rather than on figure, the incorporation of new forms and languages through their adaptation and transformation, make both Manhattan and Venice, in different ways, the ideal places to contextualize and address the issue of an architecture of the dynamic.

Ⓜ Ⓜ Ⓜ Ⓜ Ⓜ . *Modern architecture and historical change*, Cambridge: MIT Press , 1986, pp.31-41. *Compact Oxford English Dictionary of Current English*, 3rd edn revised , Oxford : Oxford University Press , 2008. Online: <http://www.askoxford.com> (accessed ..."