





13 Architects Children Should Know

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PRESTEL

Munich · London · New York

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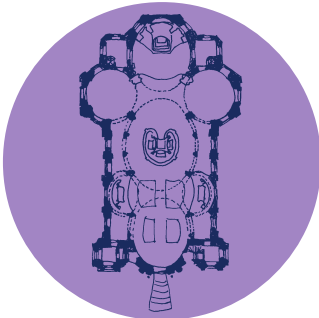
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Whether we go shopping, visit a church or museum, or simply take a walk in town, we are surrounded by architecture.

Architecture is an art form that everyone can see and that in some way influences all of us. Good architecture helps make us feel comfortable in a house or pleased by a city.

We may not be fully aware of it, but architects are the people responsible for how everything looks around us. With their ideas, they have changed not only architectural styles but also building technologies. The way we make architecture has changed a lot in the last 200 years. Many buildings created nowadays would have been barely thinkable in times gone by. To help you learn more about how these changes took place, we will introduce you to 13 of the world's most famous architects.

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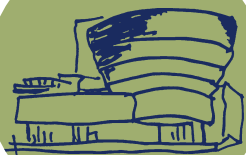
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1296 Construction started on the Basilica of Santa Maria del Fiore, Florence

1379 The pope moves from exile in Avignon, France back to the Vatican in Rome

1418–1428 San Lorenzo, Florence

1360

1365

1370

1375

1380

1385

1390

1395

1400

1405

1410

1415



Dome of the Basilica of Santa Maria del Fiore,
1420–1436, Florence

The fascinating thing about Brunelleschi's dome is that there are actually two of them: the one inside that supports all the weight and the outer one that protects the inner one. This amazing construction took 16 years to build.



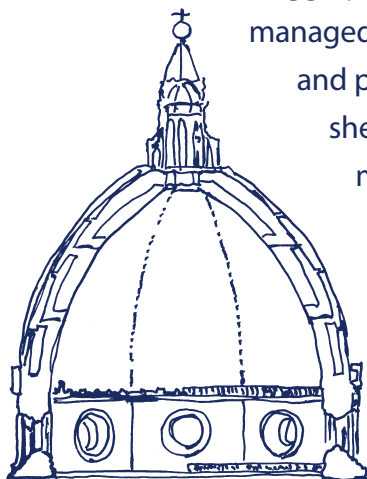
Filippo Brunelleschi

Brunelleschi was a goldsmith by trade, but he was much more interested in buildings—especially the buildings of antiquity*. Who would have thought that a broken egg would mark the beginning of his success story as an architect?

When building work started on the Basilica of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence in 1296, everyone knew it would be among the biggest cathedrals in Christendom. Yet when the church was nearly finished, the builders realized they didn't have a clue how to construct its huge dome. The only dome of this size was on the Pantheon in Rome, and it was over 1,000 years old. Brunelleschi had studied this building in detail, and he knew how to build something like it in Florence.

But the city leaders did not trust Filippo at first, so they organized a competition in 1418. Whoever came up with the best idea for how to build such an enormous dome would get the commission. Brunelleschi knew the solution, but he was only willing to reveal it to the person who could rest an egg upright on top of a marble slab. Nobody in Florence

managed to do this trick. Finally, Brunelleschi took the egg and pressed it down so hard against the slab that the shell flattened firmly and the egg stood still. The other master builders got very worked up, claiming they could have done the same thing. They probably could have, of course, but they simply didn't come up with the idea. As such, it was Filippo who went on to build the dome of the cathedral.



Born

1377 in Florence

Died

1446 in Florence, buried in the Cathedral of Florence

Education

Goldsmith

Professions

Sculptor, Architect, Inventor

Architectural Style

Renaissance*

Good to know

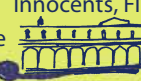
Brunelleschi helped make another discovery that is still being used in art schools and by architects to this day: central perspective*. This is a way of drawing people, streets, and houses so that they look three-dimensional—even though we can only see them on flat paper.

1418–1428 San Lorenzo, Florence



1420–1436
Cathedral
Dome, Florence

1421–1455
Hospital of the
Innocents, Florence



c. 1441–1460
Pazzi-Chapel,
Florence



1360

1370

1380

1390

1400

1410

1420

1430

1440

1450

1460

1470



La Rotonda,
1566–1591, Vicenza

The Villa sits gracefully on its small hill. It has four temple facades, one for each side. The first time you see this building, you might not discover where the entrance exists.

c. 1510 Copernicus determines that the Earth revolves around the Sun

1517 Martin Luther confronts the Catholic church with his Ninety-Five Theses

1566–1591 La Rotonda, Vicenza

1577–1592 Il Redentore, Venice

1480

1490

1500

1510

1520

1530

1540

1550

1560

1570

1580

1590

Andrea Palladio

Andrea di Piero della Gondola (Andrea Palladio) was the son of a stonemason—a highly trained construction worker. Palladio worked as a stonemason himself and as a sculptor before becoming an architect.

Palladio may have been a stonemason his entire life had not one of his sponsors discovered his extraordinary talent. Conte Trissino taught Palladio everything about antiquity*. The Conte even traveled with him to Rome so he could study the ancient buildings. He also introduced him to important people who soon wanted the young architect to design their houses. Palladio developed a special way of designing buildings: he used elements of architecture from antiquity*. A very important aspect of this style was his so-called temple fronts or facades, which consisted of columns and triangular tops called pediments. The name “temple front” originates from ancient Greek and Roman temples (or religious buildings) that had similar columns and pediments to signify their special importance.

Palladio did not build temples, however, because people in his day did not worship ancient Greek and Roman gods. Instead, Andrea built mostly villas, which were large country houses for rich people. The families who commissioned these buildings loved Palladio’s temple facades, because they gave their villas a much more elegant appearance. So what was once used in antiquity as a way of worshipping gods was now used by Palladio for making “normal” houses. This idea made Palladio’s style all the rage in northern Italy. His most famous villa is



Born

1508 in Padua as
Andrea di Piero della
Gondola

Died

1580 in Vicenza

Education

Stonemason,
Sculptor

Professions

Stonemason,
Sculptor, Architect

Architectural Style

Renaissance*

We do not know a great deal about Palladio's personal life. He is remembered mostly through his buildings, which still influence architects today. As it happens, Palladio never actually built a villa for himself. If you could design your very own villa, how would it look?



La Rotonda near Vicenza. It is so named because of its circular interior and the dome (or "Rotonda") above.



Palladio did not just build villas. He also designed a famous theatre in Vicenza and two big churches in Venice. Both of the churches have beautiful temple facades that can be seen from Venice's St. Mark's Square. Some of Palladio's greatest designs were never even built—including designs for Venice's famous Rialto Bridge and Doge's Palace.

Palladio's ideas became so popular, he wrote a book about them: "The Four Books of Architecture". Here he explained how to build not only these villas but also churches and even bridges. Architects all over the world would read his book and use its ideas. If you take a close look, you will recognize Palladio's style in all kinds of buildings. Even the home of the United States President, the White House, is a "Palladian" building.

Good to know
Andrea was given the name Palladio by Giangiorgio Trissino, who had sponsored him. The name is meant to remind us of Pallas Athena, the Greek goddess of wisdom and art.



Il Redentore
(Church of the Most
Holy Redeemer),
1577–1592, Venice

This church in Venice was built as way of saying thanks to God for liberating the city from the plague*. Even today, people in Venice process from the city center in St. Mark's Square to the church, which lies over a canal. This procession takes place over a temporary "bridge" made of boats, and it has occurred every third Sunday in July since 1577.