

# Delirious New York, Rem Koolhaas' Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan: A Journey Through the Labyrinthine Dreamscape of an Architectural Icon

Delirious New York, published in 1978 by Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas, is a seminal work that has profoundly influenced the discourse of architecture and urbanism. The book is a provocative and insightful exploration of the history, culture, and architecture of Manhattan, seen through the lens of Koolhaas's unique and often controversial perspective.

Koolhaas's writing in Delirious New York is characterized by its dense and poetic language, which weaves together historical facts, personal observations, and theoretical speculations to create a labyrinthine dreamscape. The book is divided into eight chapters, each of which explores a different aspect of Manhattan's urban fabric, from its skyscrapers to its parks to its infrastructure.

One of the central themes of Delirious New York is the Manhattan grid. Koolhaas sees the grid as a symbol of both the order and chaos of the city. It is a rational and efficient system for organizing space, but it also creates a sense of anonymity and alienation. The grid, Koolhaas argues, is both a blessing and a curse, and it is a defining characteristic of the Manhattan experience.

## Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan by Rem Koolhaas

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English



File size	: 182733 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 553 pages



Another major focus of *Delirious New York* is skyscrapers. Koolhaas sees skyscrapers as the ultimate expression of Manhattan's ambition and hubris. They are symbols of power and wealth, but they also represent a desire to escape the limitations of the earthbound city. Koolhaas argues that skyscrapers are not simply buildings, but "condominiums of the sky," where people live and work in a vertical community.

In contrast to the dense and chaotic urban environment of Manhattan, Koolhaas also explores the city's parks. He sees parks as oases of tranquility and beauty, where people can escape the hustle and bustle of the city. However, Koolhaas also argues that parks are not simply places of relaxation, but also sites of political and social contestation.

Finally, Koolhaas turns his attention to the infrastructure of Manhattan. He explores the city's bridges, tunnels, and utilities, which are often hidden from view but are essential for the functioning of the city. Koolhaas argues that infrastructure is not simply a technical matter, but also a political and aesthetic one. He shows how the design of infrastructure can shape the way that people experience the city.

Koolhaas's book is not simply a description of Manhattan, but also a "retroactive manifesto" for the city. He argues that Manhattan is not a finished product, but a work in progress that is constantly being shaped by the people who live and work there. Koolhaas calls for a new kind of architecture that is responsive to the needs of the city's inhabitants and that celebrates the city's unique character.

Delirious New York is a complex and challenging book, but it is also a deeply rewarding one. It is a book that will change the way that you see Manhattan, and it will challenge you to think about the nature of architecture and urbanism in new ways. If you are interested in architecture, urbanism, or the history and culture of New York City, then I highly recommend reading Delirious New York.

- [Rem Koolhaas's Delirious New York: A Retroactive Manifesto for Manhattan](#)
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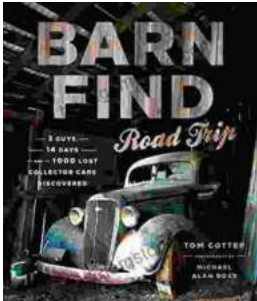
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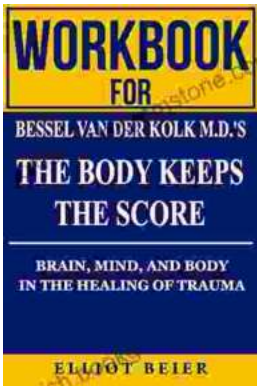
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