



# Out of the Ordinary: Popular Art, Architecture and Design

*Derham Groves*

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Out of the Ordinary is one part unembellished documentation and one part verbi-visual equivalent of a Pro Hart work made with nineteenth-century, paint-loaded canons. It is a cultural history, resource for contemporary designers, imaginarium and luminous almanac of an explorer of the stranger species of creativity - from brick art to letterboxes, junk mail, mail art, television, fashion, food, model trains, Disney's imagineering, amusement parks, feng-shui, Postmodern architecture, human-scale craftsman - ship, forgotten Australian architects in China, famous architects (that, perhaps, should be forgotten save for their bow ties), collectors of Sherlock Holmes memorabilia, outsider artists and clients - and none of these things exactly. Everywhere Derham Groves attends to and finds significance in the minutiae of everyday life, inter-association, and those things that affect us so profoundly but remain just outside the purview of the normal. And in these things - objects, art, architecture, environment(s) - he finds stories and teaches his reader how to do the same. Out of the Ordinary is also a motivational text. It begins with bricks, perhaps the most standardized and repeatable units of construction, and reveals how they can be used as vehicles for unfettered creativity and not merely for the creation of containers. Groves shows how art and architecture can emerge and receive nourishment from the garbage of the everyday and creative collisions. Groves also calls, albeit subtly, for a turn away from homogeneity, the standardized, and unimaginative or lazy design informed by principles of economy, efficiency, utility and function conceived in abstraction. Rather, Groves celebrates the reanimation and/or rejuvenation of place by the makers of anything out of the ordinary (who don't necessarily pray to the demiurge of good taste) who have created spaces and things through which the creative imagination shines. (Dr. Andrew Chrystall, School of Communication, Journalism and Marketing, Massey University).

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