

OSCAR NIEMEYER

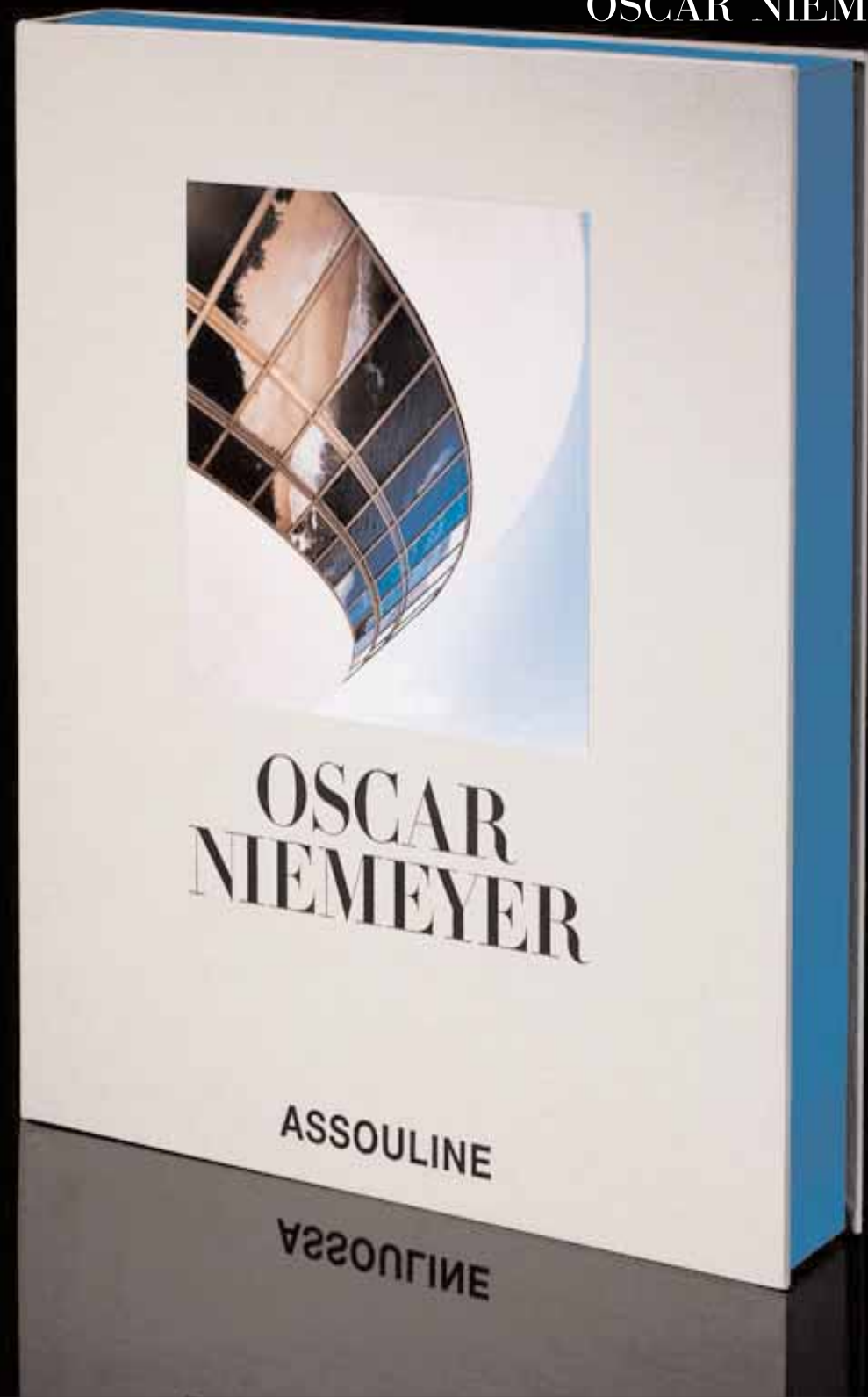
Un book by Matthieu Salvaing, a lectern designed by Rinck



ASSOULINE

“The ultimate task
of the architect
is to dream.”

OSCAR NIEMEYER



Oscar Niemeyer

Photographs by Matthieu Salvaing

Introduction by Michael Kimmelman

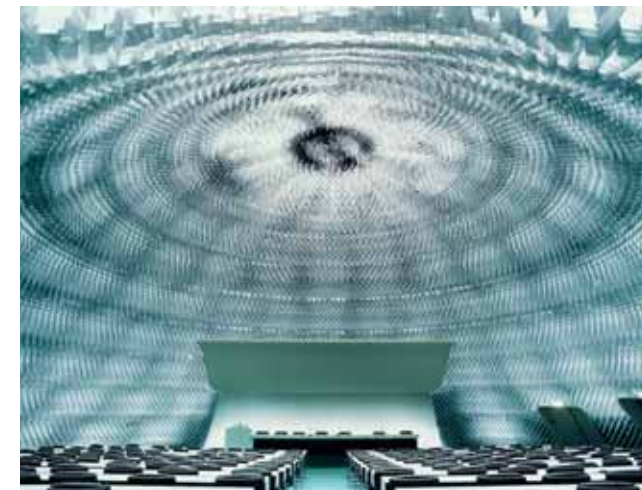
Oscar Niemeyer, the last surviving father of Modernist architecture, rose to prominence at Le Corbusier's side but ultimately swerved from the hard, straight lines of orthodox Modernism. Instead he forged a parallel track that mimics the crescendos and denouements of human feeling through swooping curves, graceful arches, and sensuous lines. Using reinforced concrete, he has elevated the everyday to the sublime.

Assouline is proud to present the limited edition Oscar Niemeyer, the most complete and lavish exploration of his 101-year life and career. Sketches and original photography, alongside contributions from Tadao Ando, Santiago Calatrava, Frank Gehry, and Zaha Hadid, affirm Niemeyer's considerable and continuing influence on twentieth and twenty-first-century architecture.

Photographer Matthieu Salvaing has traveled the world for the past ten years, drawing inspiration from design, fashion, and architecture. Salvaing's exploration of Brazil and his friendship with Oscar Niemeyer have been catalyst for his work.

Michael Kimmelman is chief art critic at *The New York Times* and author *The Accidental Masterpiece: On the Art of Life and Vice Versa* (Penguin, 2005) and *Portraits: Talking with Artists at the Met, the Modern, the Louvre, and Elsewhere* (Random House, 1998).

14 x 17" • 168 pages • 118 illustrations • hardcover with linen presentation box
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My encounter with Oscar Niemeyer

Interview with photographer Matthieu Salvaing

How did you meet Oscar Niemeyer?

I had been spending winters in Brazil for a while and became friends with his grandson Guto, who one day brought me to the architect's office in Rio on Avenida Atlantica, some fifteen years ago. At the time, he used to explain and talk about his architecture a lot in a very human and pedagogical way for the novice that I was—with a marker and paper.

How was your first encounter?

At first I was awed to come face to face with such a monument of modern architecture. Then, once this first emotion faded I was impressed by the man's intelligence and generosity. He immediately welcomed me as member of the family and suggested I could stop by and say hello any time I came to Brazil, just as one does in the south of France, very spontaneously. So I started visiting him every time I arrived in Rio, and then I started taking some photos of him and of some of the houses he'd built, all very naturally.

So that's when it all started?

Indeed. I had taken a few portraits of him that I had shown to *AD* magazine in France and was promptly commissioned to produce a big reportage on Oscar. Then many other magazines started asking for more. Soon after that Assouline published my first small work on Oscar Niemeyer; it was seven years ago. It was truly my encounters with Oscar that made me switch from the world of fashion and portrait photography to become of photographer of architecture. So I owe him a little of my vocation, and I would have surely not gone deeper in architectural photography hadn't it been because of him.

So you still today have a true professional relationship with Oscar Niemeyer?

It goes beyond merely professional. I often meet him at 11 a.m. and then we have lunch at his office. Sometimes he tells me to come by his apartment in Ipanema, which can create some funny situations. Last time I arrived and saw that the police had surrounded the building. I was worried and wondering what was happening when I saw that Oscar was having a chat with Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez! Sometimes I meet him in the afternoon and we watch a game of soccer on television. Oscar has always had the time to talk about Paris, which he loves deeply, or about Sartre or Aragon. He doesn't like to travel but he loves France, which is to him the land of human rights and culture. Oscar is a person who pulls you up. Throughout my relationship with him, he has always given me the impulse to make things, and also shown me the beauty in my life.

Oscar has also entrusted you with one of his creations, yes?

A few months ago, I came to his office and he drew for me, in a gesture of friendship, a lectern (in front of me, at scale, on a big sheet of tracing paper) for displaying the new book I published with Assouline. Oscar has drawn very few pieces of furniture during his life, and I was very honored to have won his confidence. To produce the lectern, I decided to call Rinck, the most prestigious French cabinetmaking company. Located just off the Faubourg Saint-Antoine for decades, Rinck has outfitted the most beautiful places in the world and collaborated with designers like Philippe Starck. They made a beautiful prototype in Brazilian rosewood, which I then presented to Oscar. His reaction was unambiguous: "Very good work!" A true compliment from the last giant of modern architecture.



Rinck Group

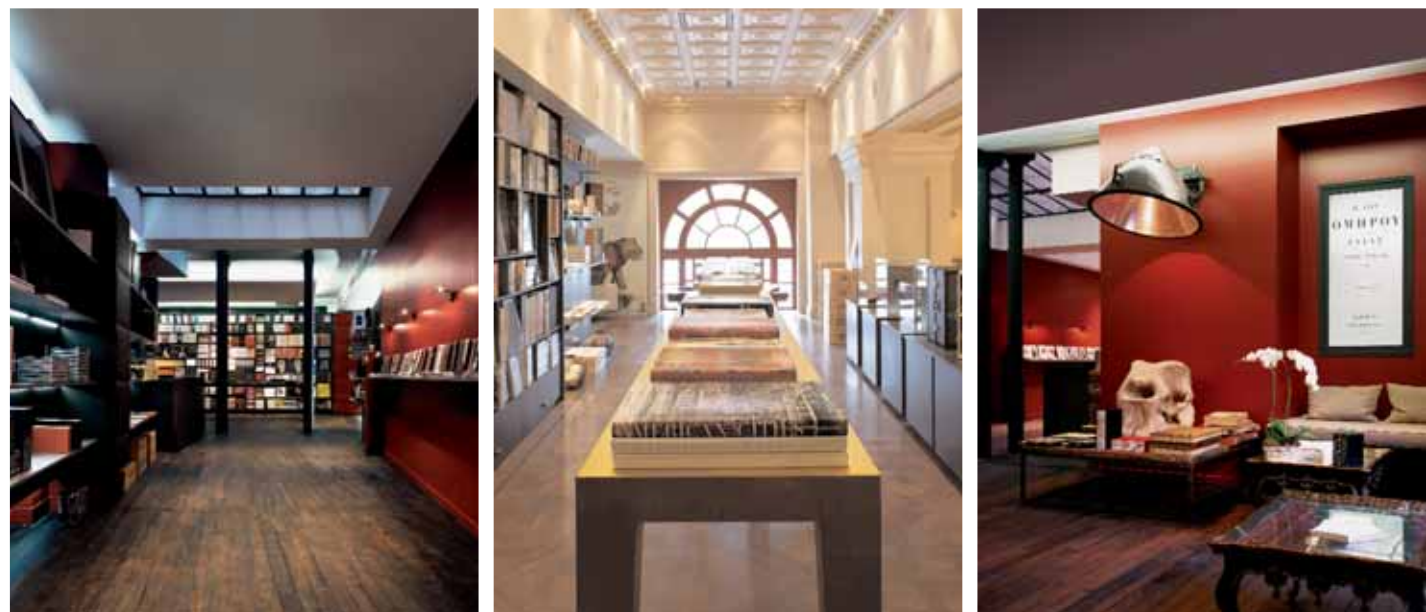
170 years in the service of prestige

Maison Rinck was the maker of choice for Ruhlman and Leleu amongst other great names in the 1930's. Pieces such as these are now greatly sought after by collectors as demonstrated in an auction organised by Sotheby's in May 2006. At this time a chest of drawers produced by Maurice Rinck was valued at between 100,000 to 150,000 euros. The exceptional quality of pieces produced in the workshop remain undisputed as a brand name today

The offer from Rinck is both unique and exceptional. All the skill and expertise essential for high net worth interior design and decoration have been accumulated and developed over the years: fine draftsmanship and technical drawing in the design studio, bronze casting, glass work, wood carving, gilding, sculpture, marquetry, mosaic; in shagreen, vellum, leather...

From initial site survey through to installation, from first design brief to the making of furniture ... the Rinck Group puts its stamp on the most prestigious projects whether they be hotels and restaurants (The Grand Hyatt Tokyo, Buddakan in New York, Pic Hotel in Valence, France), show-rooms (Baccarat and Guerlain), luxury yachts (Wedge II by Philippe Starck and the Superyachts Award winner of 2009 Al Mirquab by Andrew Winch) not forgetting private residences.

From Moscow to Bangkok, Hong Kong to Doha, New York to Oman, the Rinck Group works in partnership with the greatest international contemporary designers and decorators including Philippe Starck, Gilles & Boissier, Patrick Jouin, Albert Pinto, David Collins and Andrew Winch, to name but a few.



ASSOULINE

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Created in 1993 by Martine and Prosper Assouline, this publishing house has made a name for itself with a unique and contemporary visual sensibility and established an innovative approach to style and design.

Following a series of co-editions distributed internationally in up to eight languages, in 1999 the founders moved their operations to New York to begin producing books directly and developing Assouline into an international brand.

In 2004 Assouline opened a large concession in the gift section of the legendary New York department store Bergdorf Goodman and introduced itself to a new audience, which now identifies the name and image of Assouline as a luxury brand, first among equals in the cultural universe. Since then, the brand has expanded its concept developed alongside its books a series of special and limited editions, gift items, reading-related furniture, and a gallery of prints by the photographers and illustrators who make up the Assouline universe.

These books and gifts are sold online at www.assouline.com and in the proprietary Assouline boutiques in Paris (2005) and New York (2008), as well as at numerous “corners” in luxury retailers around the globe (Miami, Toronto, Mexico City, San Francisco, Dubai, Doha, Hong Kong...Ö) and at Sotheby’s in New York. Opening next: Los Angeles and Las Vegas. English-language Assouline books are distributed by fine booksellers worldwide.

The new publication *Oscar Niemeyer* takes its place among the house’s books that adhere to a policy of the exceptional, which recently gave birth to Assouline’s Ultimate Collection. Assembled using the traditional anglaise technique and color-tipped by hand on art-quality paper, these high-concept, high-quality works are published in limited editions of 1,000 and represent a new level of sophistication for true connoisseurs.

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