

Taschen  
JULIA WATSON. LO—TEK. DESIGN BY RADICAL INDIGENISM

Julia Watson, W—E studio

VA

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**The Power of Lo—TEK**

**A global exploration of indigenous architectural innovations**

Three hundred years ago, intellectuals of the European Enlightenment constructed a **mythology of technology**. Influenced by a confluence of humanism, colonialism, and racism, this mythology **ignored local wisdom and indigenous innovation**, deeming it primitive. Today, we have slowly come to realize that **the legacy of this mythology is haunting us**.

Designers understand the **urgency of reducing humanity's negative environmental impact**, yet perpetuate the same mythology of technology that relies on exploiting nature. Responding to climate change by building hard infrastructures and favoring high-tech homogenous design, we are **ignoring millennia old knowledge of how to live in symbiosis with nature**. Without implementing soft systems that use biodiversity as a building block, designs remains inherently unsustainable.

**Lo—TEK, derived from Traditional Ecological Knowledge, is a cumulative body of multigenerational knowledge, practices, and beliefs**, countering the idea that indigenous innovation is primitive and exists isolated from technology. It is sophisticated and designed to sustainably work with complex ecosystems.

In four chapters—Mountains, Forests, Deserts, and Wetlands—**this book explores thousands of years of human wisdom and ingenuity from places like Peru, the Philippines, Tanzania, Kenya, Iran, Iraq, India, and Indonesia**. We rediscover an ancient mythology in a contemporary context, radicalizing the spirit of human nature.

"Half a century ago, Rudofsky took us around the globe in *Architecture without Architects*. Today, Julia Watson invites us to reframe our future through the wisdom of indigenous design. Lo—TEK is landscape architecture without landscape architects."

— *Bjarke Ingels*

**The editor and author:**

Academic and author **Julia Watson** is the Principal and Founder of Julia Watson Studio, an experiential, landscape, and urban design studio, as well as a Director and Co-Founder of 'A Future Studio', a collective of conscious designers with an ethos towards global ecological change. She teaches Urban Design at Harvard and Columbia University. After graduating from Harvard with the highest award for her work on conservation and spiritual landscapes, she has been published in *Nakhara Journal*, *Water Urbanisms East*, *World Heritage Sites and Living Culture of Indonesia*, and co-authored the Spiritual Guide to Bali's UNESCO World Heritage with Dr. J. Stephen Lansing.

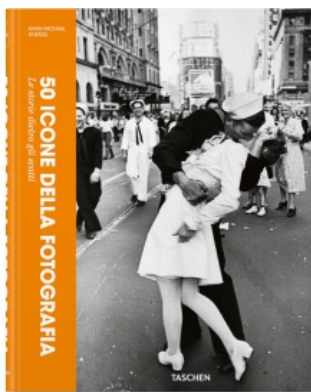
**The designer:**

**Piera Wolf and Claudine Eriksson** are W—E studio, a multidisciplinary creative studio based in Zürich and New York that strives to bridge time and space between these constantly evolving and contrasting cities. Piera and Claudine have individually been recognized by publications and organizations including *The New York Times*, *Dazed Digital*, *Rolling Stone*, *Slanted*, and many more. Talks, teaching, and workshop engagements include the New York School of Visual Arts, HTW Berlin, Google Creative Lab, and the Zürich University of the Arts.

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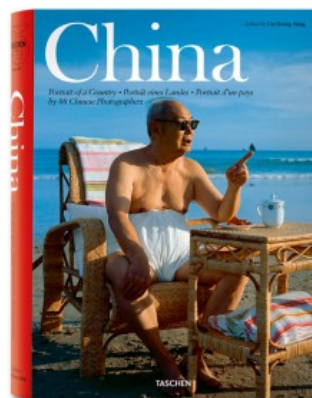


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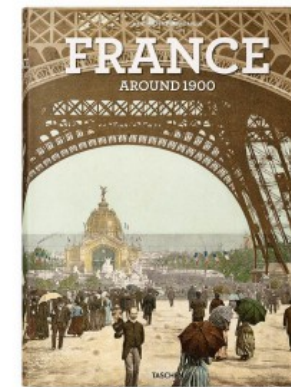
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