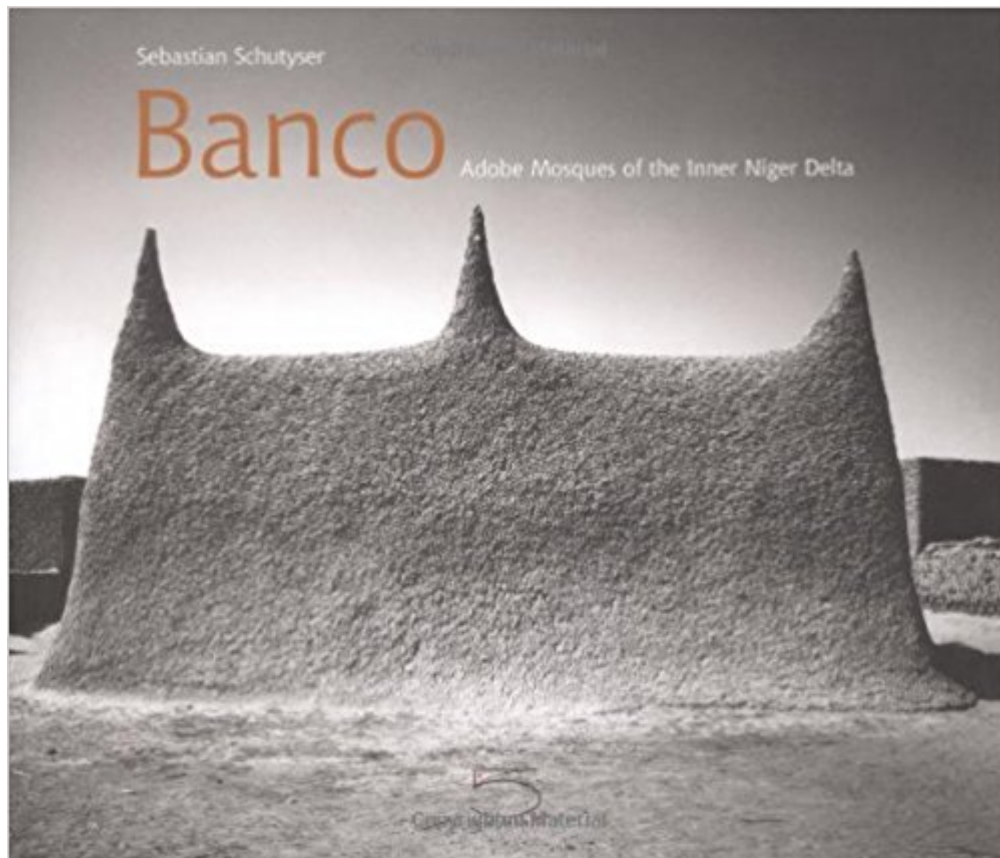




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Banco: Adobe Mosques Of The Inner Niger Delta (Imago Mundi Series)



Synopsis

As the Bechers - the famous German photographers - have made us discover the morphology and powerful beauty of 19th and 20th century industrial archeology, the photographs of Sebastian Schutyser reveal a neglected African architectural heritage: village adobe mosques in Mali. His black and white photographs (beautifully reproduced in duotone) emphasize a plastic language now extremely rare: an artistic fusion of architecture and sculpture. Is it architecture with sculptural qualities? Or is it rather architectonical sculpture? We no longer know; our mind and our senses are disconcerted by the cultural exception of this special creative mixture. Yet, at the origin of each of these creations we won't find a sculptor or an architect: only village craftsmen; master artisans who have updated an ancestral skill of molding raw earth. Indeed, it is not the expression of a bygone popular culture: the majority of these mosques have been built or altered in the 20th century; thus, they simultaneously belong to a living tradition and to modernity. These images exalt the strength and beauty of a language that eludes globalization. They emphasize the grain and substance of the clay--smoothed by hand or cracked by erosion. They exacerbate the reassuring solidity of the masonry, the sensuality of the textures and, at times, the eroticism of the shapes. The methodological approach of the photographer shows a regional architectural typology unitary yet very diverse. The book includes a photographic appendix which documents all the principal adobe mosques of the Inner Niger Delta (520 of them) with the name of the villages and geographical coordinates.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Sebastian Schutyser spent his childhood in Congo. He has a master degree in photography. His work has been exhibited in the Royal Africa Museum of Tervuren, the Noorderlicht Photography Festival (NL) and the Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris.

This superbly designed and produced book on adobe mosques in Mali is the freshest architecture title this season. Sebastian Schutyser's handsome photographs do these haunting monuments proud. The only architecture we have in this country that compares to these mosques are the beloved New Mexican adobes -- and they look conventional in comparison.

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