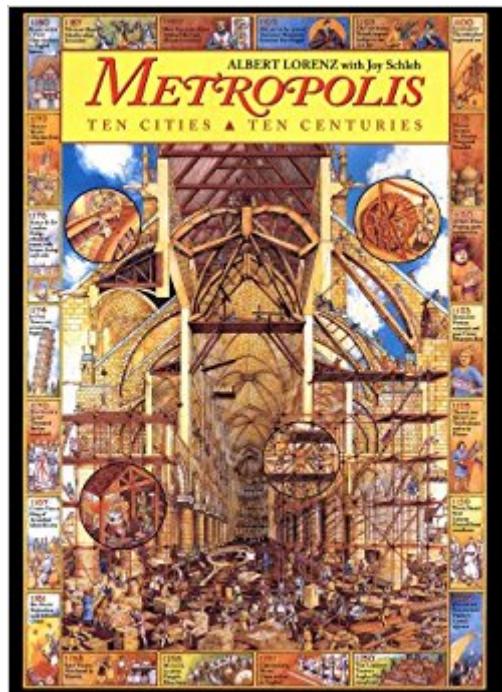


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Metropolis: Ten Cities, Ten Centuries



Synopsis

Architectural illustrator Albert Lorenz delights the imagination as he evokes defining moments of the past 10 centuries from 11th-century Jerusalem to 20th-century New York.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In tracing the evolution of the metropolis, architectural illustrator Albert Lorenz dazzles readers with his extraordinary visual depictions of some of the greatest defining moments in human history. Ranging from the pinnacles of human achievement in art, technology, and architecture to wars and plagues, we see how these forces have shaped our urban centers. Nineteenth-century London, for example, depicts the Industrial Revolution-age city, while 16th-century Florence is a center of refinement and enlightenment. We are led, ultimately, to the emergence of the modern mega-metropolis, 20th-century New York. Lorenz employs such illustrative techniques as aerial perspectives and cut-away views into buildings in order to capture as many details as possible. Each of the 10 mini-chapters is a visual realm unto itself; a completely illustrated timeline unites them. One of the most memorable illustrations is Lorenz's imagining of the countless artists and craftsmen building the glorious Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. The full-color illustrations throughout effectively educate both kids and adults about art, culture, and architecture.

Sprawling aerial vistas, painstakingly rendered interiors and revealing cross-sections are among the diversions in this pictorial exploration of 10 cities, each spotlighted during an era of significant change. Lorenz and Schleh tour readers through such far-flung historical moments as the building of

Notre Dame in 12th-century Paris, the sultan of Mozambique's dismissal of Vasco da Gama in the 15th century and the almost year-long siege of Osaka Castle in 17th-century Japan. Full-spread art details such focal points as an 18th-century Viennese concert house and the skyscape of 20th-century Manhattan; an illustrated chronology frames these pictures with references to contemporaneous achievements elsewhere. Art on single-page spreads, meanwhile, is faced with a key identifying illustrated objects and explaining their significance. The artists also touch on lighter subjects, among them the various styles of dress seen on the streets in Victorian London and the diverse culinary offerings in modern-day New York City. An eclectic look at past and present civilizations. Ages 10-up. BOMC, QPB, History Book Club and CBOMC selections. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This gorgeous book is nominally about cities, but through elaborate color illustrations, cross-sections and graphics, it depicts human endeavor and activity as well. This is a large (though lightweight) book, approximately 10" x 12", and each of the cities depicted are given six pages. The first two-page spread puts the city into a textual and graphic context. The second spread depicts a building or the city being described, and these illustrations are dense with activity revealed more acutely with cross-sections, blow-ups and detail. An illustrated timeline of the century also runs along the border of these two pages. The final spread explains the centerpiece illustration and offers more detail of some aspect of the time. For example, Paris in the 12th Century first describes the Middle Ages and the history of Paris, and explains why so many cathedrals were built in this era, accompanied by a map of Europe showing many of them; the centerpiece illustration shows the construction of Notre Dame, with details of smiths, roofers, masons and carvers at work, and a timeline along the border that shows 22 other significant events of the century, such as the death of Omar Khayyam, an appearance of Halley's Comet, the birth of Genghis Khan, the murder of Thomas a Becket, the ascension of Richard the Lion-Hearted to the English throne and the construction of the Leaning Tower of Pisa; finally, a description of the cathedral work is given along with detailed text and illustrations of Notre Dame's carvings and stained glass, including the Rose Window. The text is informative and detailed, though this is a supplement to history texts and not a substitute, with an emphasis on how people of the time lived and worked. The cities chosen are historically and culturally significant: Jerusalem of the 11th century with a discussion of religion and the Crusades; Paris of the 12th century, with a discussion of the cathedrals of Europe; a Mongol tent city of the 13th century; 14th century Koblenz, with a discussion of the Plague; Lisbon and Mozambique of the 15th century; 16th century Florence, with a discussion of Renaissance art and

learning; Osaka of the 17th century, with a discussion of Kabuki and No theatre; Vienna of the 18th century; 19th century London; and 20th century New York, emphasizing its immigrant populations. If you are a history buff, or have a child studying history, this lush book will add dimension to your/their understanding. Highest recommendation.

"Metropolis" features 10 cities in 10 centuries. Besides telling the history of a certain metropolis in a certain century this book features brilliant illustrations, which not only show the city but also its people with their of living. Most impressive about it is that even though it is a book and not a movie, the illustrations are drawn and arranged in a way that the book "comes to live". On the main illustrations, which show the actual metropolis, a type of "enlargement glass illustrations" draw the viewer's attention to important situations. Each metropolis' picture has a border of smaller illustrations listing historic events. Beyond the metropolis' illustrations there are also stories, well told historic information, facts, symbols, maps, and sketches. While a younger child might enjoy searching the pictures for interesting situations, a teenager can learn enough to impress a teacher. On a personal note: I was delighted to find out that my hometown Vienna made it into this book, which features selected highlights of cities and centuries. "Vienna, 18th century" is one of the ten chosen. A fabulous book/buy for any parent, who hopes that their children will get a good grasp on history and enjoy learning this knowledge. Gisela Hausmann, author & blogger

Metropolis is an amazing tour de force for readers of all ages. It seems to be a children's book at first glance, with full-paged color illustrations, but it satisfies the curiosities of any reader about life in different cities and different times. Where else could you learn about the construction of Notre Dame Cathedral in the 12th century AND Koblenz at the height of the plague in the 14th century? I plan to keep this book as a family treasure and pass it down to my children some day. Read it!!

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