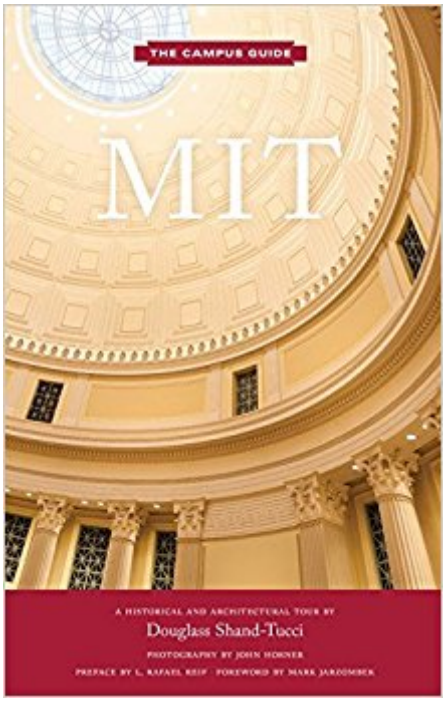
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MIT: An Architectural Tour (The Campus Guide)



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Synopsis

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was founded in 1861 as the cornerstone of Copley Square in Boston’s Back Bay, then the center of a progressive, proto-globalist Brahmin culture committed to intellectual modernism and educational innovation. MIT founder William Barton Rogers’s radical vision to teach by "mind and hand" was immediately successful.In 1916 MIT, growing by leaps and bounds, moved its campus to the nearby Charles River Basin in Cambridge, where it now stretches along the shore overlooking the Back Bay. MIT: The Campus Guide presents the history of the Institute’s founding and its two campuses. Today, the campus is studded with buildings designed by noted architects such as William Welles Bosworth, Alvar Aalto, Eero Saarinen, I. M. Pei, Steven Holl, Charles Correa, J. Meejin Yoon, Frank Gehry, and Fumihiko Maki, among others. Alongside the architecture is a distinguished array of public art including works by Picasso, Henry Moore, Alexander Calder, Louise Nevelson, Frank Stella, Sol LeWitt, and Jaume Plensa.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The reader who expects short descriptions and scripted walks in this architectural guide is in for a surprise: What Douglass Shand-Tucci has done is frame the history and architecture of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as an apotheosis...?of the Boston Brahmin culture that undergirds its beginnings and persists in subtle ways to this day..[A]n informative and entertaining read." - Architecture Boston Magazine

Historian and author Douglass Shand-Tucci, the Harvard-educated independent scholar, is founder of Back Bay Historical, dedicated to Boston-Centric Global Studies &pipe; Art and Architecture; Literary, Cultural and Intellectual History. He is the author of many books, including Boston Bohemia, Built in Boston, The Art of Scandal, the Harvard University Campus Guide, and The Crimson Letter.Douglass Shand-Tucci lives in Boston’s Back Bay, where the learned flow is sometimes interrupted by provocative reviews and comment. He has taught at Harvard, where he was Senior Affiliate in the History of Architecture in Eliot House, and at MIT and is now on the faculty of the Boston Architectural College.Mark Jarzombek is Professor of the History and Theory of Architecture at MIT. He is the author of Designing MIT:The Architecture of William Welles Bosworth.

This series began out of the realization that the campuses of America’s colleges and universities (and some of its prep schools) are environments unique in the world, and thus deserve guides which visitors can carry in their hands as they walk around-- and which will give insights into just about everything they might see on those walks.Shand-Tucci has, instead, produced a hybrid. The first half of his volume makes the case that MIT was founded out of the impulses of Boston’s "Brahmins" at the middle of the nineteenth century. He makes a compelling case, but perhaps it might have been published in a separate book that one need not be forced to carry on a tour of the MIT campus. The second half-- the actual "Campus Guide"-- seems to be less a comprehensive catalog of MIT’s buildings (date, architect, minimal description) than a set of musings on topics that interest the author.Other volumes in this series have been true Campus Guides. This is not one of them.

I do not think that Mr. Tucci was able to engage anyone to realize that this ’campus guide" is no more than one in a series of guides to various colleges.Indeed even this one is mediocre at best. The first part of this "tome" (no other word could possibly suffice) makes the case that "Tech" as MIT was then known as was founded by Boston’s "Brahmins" at the mid 19th century---- No others? At all?. He seemingly d-r-o-n-e-s o-n and o-n, and the actual "Campus Guide" is no more than his off-handed, flippant and particularly odd musings on the campus, its architecture and anything else that possibly stroke his fancy.Why was this published if it was not going to be a succinct campus guide?

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