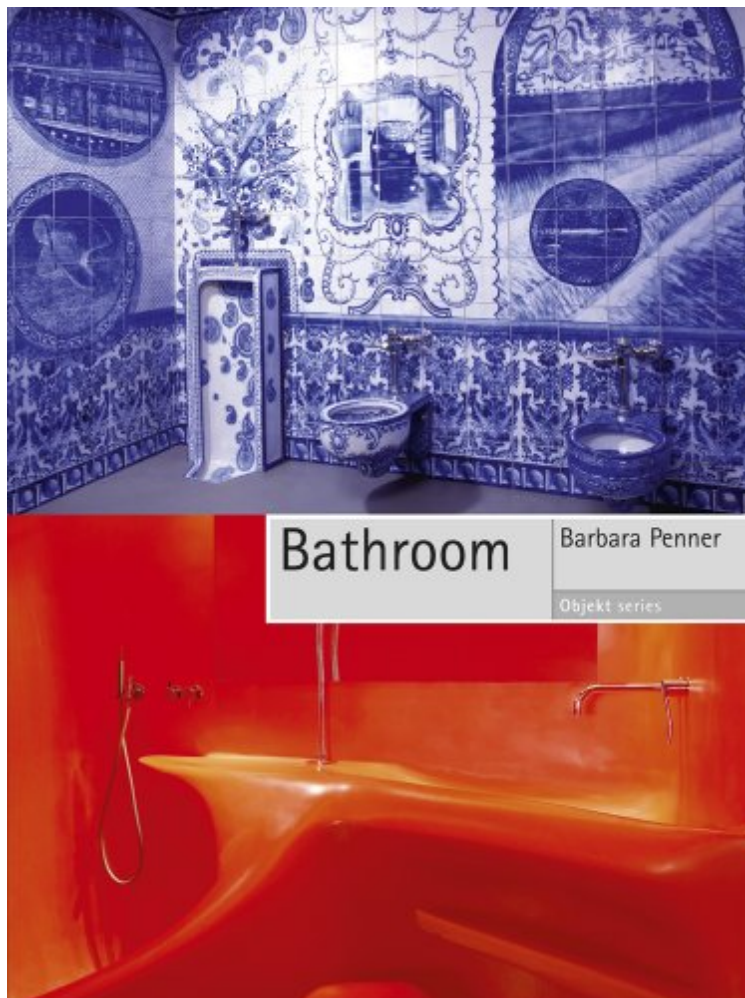


## Bathroom (Objekt)

Barbara Penner

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**Barbara Penner : Bathroom (Objekt)** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Bathroom (Objekt):

The story of the modern bathroom is both one of grand feats of engineering and mass production, and of the unremarkable, mundane and repressed. The most private place in the home, the bathroom is where we perform the most intimate of our daily routines; it is also a space where we take refuge from the outside world. Yet the moment we turn on a tap or flush the toilet, the smallest room is hooked up to the largest of all infrastructural systems: a vast and complex network of pipes, pumps and treatment plants. Bathroom charts the evolution of the bathroom and the habits and lifestyles to which it gave rise. The book considers how and why the bathroom emerged and how it became an international symbol of key modern values — of cleanliness, order and progress. It explores how the modern

bathroom, its technologies and its customs have been exported globally through colonialism, the media, fashion, world expositions and tourism, and the tensions this process has caused. It also discusses more user-friendly and low-tech alternatives, which are set to become ever more relevant in our environmentally conscious age. Abundantly illustrated, Bathroom examines examples from history and from across the globe. From squats to hi-tech bidet toilets, and from cast-iron bathtubs to monsoon showers, Bathroom is an original and eye-opening study of this significant but often overlooked space.

“For an investigation of how we evacuate and what we do with the results, this is a remarkably clean book. . . . Where the body and technology meet, this immensely useful little volume points out, is exactly where we have to confront our most basic self-image, but we always do so through an elaborate system that plugs that sense of our body into a network of implements and biases that are socially constructed.”