



Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream

By M. Jeffrey Hardwick

 Download

 Read Online

Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream By M. Jeffrey Hardwick

The shopping mall is both the most visible and the most contentious symbol of American prosperity. Despite their convenience, malls are routinely criticized for representing much that is wrong in America—sprawl, conspicuous consumption, the loss of regional character, and the decline of Mom and Pop stores. So ubiquitous are malls that most people would be surprised to learn that they are the brainchild of a single person, architect Victor Gruen.

An immigrant from Austria who fled the Nazis in 1938, Gruen based his idea for the mall on an idealized America: the dream of concentrated shops that would benefit the businessperson as well as the consumer and that would foster a sense of shared community. Modernist Philip Johnson applauded Gruen for creating a true civic art and architecture that enriched Americans' daily lives, and for decades he received praise from luminaries such as Lewis Mumford, Winthrop Rockefeller, and Lady Bird Johnson. Yet, in the end, Gruen returned to Europe, thoroughly disillusioned with his American dream.

In *Mall Maker*, the first biography of this visionary spirit, M. Jeffrey Hardwick relates Gruen's successes and failures—his work at the 1939 World's Fair, his makeover of New York's Fifth Avenue boutiques, his rejected plans for reworking entire communities, such as Fort Worth, Texas, and his crowning achievement, the enclosed shopping mall. Throughout Hardwick illuminates the dramatic shifts in American culture during the mid-twentieth century, notably the rise of suburbia and automobiles, the death of downtown, and the effect these changes had on American life. Gruen championed the redesign of suburbs and cities through giant shopping malls, earnestly believing that he was promoting an American ideal, the ability to build a community. Yet, as malls began covering the landscape and downtowns became more depressed, Gruen became painfully aware that his dream of overcoming social problems through architecture and commerce was slipping away. By the tumultuous year of 1968, it had disappeared.

Victor Gruen made America depend upon its shopping malls. While they did not provide an invigorated sense of community as he had hoped, they are enduring monuments to the lure of consumer culture.

 [Download Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an Americ ...pdf](#)

Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream

By M. Jeffrey Hardwick

Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream By M. Jeffrey Hardwick

The shopping mall is both the most visible and the most contentious symbol of American prosperity. Despite their convenience, malls are routinely criticized for representing much that is wrong in America—sprawl, conspicuous consumption, the loss of regional character, and the decline of Mom and Pop stores. So ubiquitous are malls that most people would be surprised to learn that they are the brainchild of a single person, architect Victor Gruen.

An immigrant from Austria who fled the Nazis in 1938, Gruen based his idea for the mall on an idealized America: the dream of concentrated shops that would benefit the businessperson as well as the consumer and that would foster a sense of shared community. Modernist Philip Johnson applauded Gruen for creating a true civic art and architecture that enriched Americans' daily lives, and for decades he received praise from luminaries such as Lewis Mumford, Winthrop Rockefeller, and Lady Bird Johnson. Yet, in the end, Gruen returned to Europe, thoroughly disillusioned with his American dream.

In *Mall Maker*, the first biography of this visionary spirit, M. Jeffrey Hardwick relates Gruen's successes and failures—his work at the 1939 World's Fair, his makeover of New York's Fifth Avenue boutiques, his rejected plans for reworking entire communities, such as Fort Worth, Texas, and his crowning achievement, the enclosed shopping mall. Throughout Hardwick illuminates the dramatic shifts in American culture during the mid-twentieth century, notably the rise of suburbia and automobiles, the death of downtown, and the effect these changes had on American life. Gruen championed the redesign of suburbs and cities through giant shopping malls, earnestly believing that he was promoting an American ideal, the ability to build a community. Yet, as malls began covering the landscape and downtowns became more depressed, Gruen became painfully aware that his dream of overcoming social problems through architecture and commerce was slipping away. By the tumultuous year of 1968, it had disappeared.

Victor Gruen made America depend upon its shopping malls. While they did not provide an invigorated sense of community as he had hoped, they are enduring monuments to the lure of consumer culture.

Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream By M. Jeffrey Hardwick Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #579970 in Books
- Brand: Brand: University of Pennsylvania Press
- Published on: 2010-03-09
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.02" h x .64" w x 5.98" l, .95 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 288 pages

 [Download Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an Americ ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream By M. Jeffrey Hardwick

Editorial Review

Review

"Hardwick's thesis is compelling . . . : instead of saving the city, Gruen inadvertently contributed to its demise."—*Washington Times*

"Victor Gruen may well have been the most influential architect of the twentieth century."—Malcom Gladwell, *New Yorker*

"A pioneering book on a seriously neglected subject, and everybody interested in the evolution of twentieth-century cities should read it."—Alex Garvin, *Archives of American Art Journal*

"Hardwick brings fresh insight into the specific role of shopping centers in spawning the twin evils of sprawl and urban decline."—*Enterprise & Society*

"An insightful account . . . in lucid prose."—*New York Times*

"*Mall Maker* is an important book. . . . The fact that Gruen's buildings are more lived in than the work of nearly any other modern architect makes him a designer worth reading about."—*Metropolis Magazine*

About the Author

M. Jeffrey Hardwick is Senior Program Officer at the National Endowment for the Humanities. He earned his Ph.D. degree in American studies from Yale University.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Leticia Simmons:

Often the book Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream has a lot associated with on it.

So when you make sure to read this book you can get a lot of gain. The book was written by the very famous author. Tom makes some research ahead of write this book. That book very easy to read you can get the point easily after reading this article book.

Eric Graves:

Are you kind of active person, only have 10 or even 15 minute in your day time to upgrading your mind talent or thinking skill even analytical thinking? Then you are experiencing problem with the book when compared with can satisfy your short period of time to read it because all this time you only find book that need more time to be study. Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream can be your answer mainly because it can be read by a person who have those short time problems.

Pamela Garcia:

Don't be worry when you are afraid that this book will filled the space in your house, you can have it in e-book method, more simple and reachable. This Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream can give you a lot of pals because by you looking at this one book you have point that they don't and make an individual more like an interesting person. This book can be one of one step for you to get success. This reserve offer you information that perhaps your friend doesn't learn, by knowing more than some other make you to be great people. So , why hesitate? We need to have Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream.

David Hoag:

As we know that book is very important thing to add our information for everything. By a reserve we can know everything we wish. A book is a range of written, printed, illustrated as well as blank sheet. Every year ended up being exactly added. This publication Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream was filled with regards to science. Spend your extra time to add your knowledge about your science competence. Some people has different feel when they reading the book. If you know how big advantage of a book, you can truly feel enjoy to read a guide. In the modern era like at this point, many ways to get book that you simply wanted.

Download and Read Online Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream By M. Jeffrey Hardwick #ZC4SD73URT6

Read Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream By M. Jeffrey Hardwick for online ebook

Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream By M. Jeffrey Hardwick Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream By M. Jeffrey Hardwick books to read online.

Online Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream By M. Jeffrey Hardwick ebook PDF download

Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream By M. Jeffrey Hardwick Doc

Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream By M. Jeffrey Hardwick Mobipocket

Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream By M. Jeffrey Hardwick EPub