



Chinese Lattice Designs (Dover Pictorial Archive)

Daniel Sheets Dye

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Chinese craft design excelled in the manipulation of geometric space and reached its highest point in the design of window lattices on Chinese houses. Long recognized as an important folk art, window lattices have been generally neglected as an art form and this book is the first work on the subject since the 17th century. Fortunately, it is also the definitive work on the subject, and though no book can present a complete coverage of Chinese lattice, this book is a great classic study and an incredibly rich source of design for Westerners.

More than 1200 designs are shown here, arranged in a clear system of classification that includes 22 areas of related design — borders, brackets, tail pieces, and so on. The lattices are classified according to one basic figure or concept, and the hundreds of beautiful design variations fall into only 26 categories: parallelogram, octagon or octagon square, hexagon, single focus frames, double focus frames, triple focus frames, quintuple focus frames, no focus frames, wedge-lock, presentation, out-lock, in-out bound, the Han line, parallel waves, opposed waves, recurving wave, loop-continued, like swastikas (a Buddhist symbol), unlike swastikas, central Ju I, allover Ju I, S-scroll, U-scroll, rustic ice-ray, symmetrical ice-ray, and square and round. Each category is introduced in sections at the front. In addition, there is usually a short description for each design and every design is designated by name, location, and approximate date of construction. Professor Dye spent over 21 years studying and copying lattices all over China, and because of the ravages of time and changing cultural values, this collection can probably never be duplicated. Balanced, intricate, sometimes asymmetrical, usually harmonious, these lattice designs present a wealth of material for the Western commercial artist, textile designer, pattern-maker, and craftsman. Reflecting their Chinese heritage, these designs are universal and can be used almost anywhere.

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