



Massive Change

Bruce Mau , Institute Without Boundaries , Jennifer Leonard

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Massive Change is a modern illustrated primer on the new inventions, technologies, and events that are affecting the human race worldwide. The book is a part of a broader research project by Bruce Mau Design intended to provoke debate and discussion about the future of design culture, broadly defined as the "familiar objects and techniques that are transforming our lives."

In essays, interviews, and provocative imagery aimed at a broad audience, Massive Change explores the changing force of design in the contemporary world, and in doing so expands the definition of design to include the built environment, transportation technologies, revolutionary materials, energy and information systems, and living organisms.

The book is divided into 11 heavily illustrated sections covering major areas of change in contemporary society — such as urbanism and architecture, the military, health and living, and wealth and politics. Each section intersperses intriguing documentary images with a general introductory essay, extended captions, and interviews with leading thinkers, including engineers, designers, philosophers, scientists, architects, artists, and writers. Concluding the book is a graphic timeline of significant inventions and world events from 10,000 B.C. to the present.

Massive Change Details

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Author : Bruce Mau , Institute Without Boundaries , Jennifer Leonard

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From Reader Review Massive Change for online ebook

Chris says

This book takes on a huge challenge and doesn't completely succeed. It doesn't completely fail either. The book is well-organized and beautiful to look at. There are interviews with people who are prominent in various areas of industrial design and related fields. The themes are important: Responsibility, sustainability, the application of technology to human problems. It made me want to learn more.

Ryan says

In the words of author and designer Bruce Mau, "*Massive Change* is not about the world of design; it's about the design of the world."

The design of the world is a daunting and broad subject for a book, but somehow the Mau largely delivers on his promise. *Massive Change* is structured as a series of vignettes focusing on different subjects — bioengineering, housing huge populations, information communication and visualization, eradicating disease, militarism and war, etc. Within each chapter, international thought leaders are profiled in often fascinating interviews about their contributions to science and society.

The book almost reminds me of a printed version of NPR in the sense that it treads somewhat lightly on complex subjects, but still provides enough interesting insight to inspire further reading. Plus, like NPR, most of the storytelling is in the hands of interviewed experts.

Although I really enjoyed the book, I thought it was made worse by only relying on liberal ideologies, which came through especially in the chapter about military technology. Although I'm glad the book has a strong point-of-view, some of the interviews on controversial subjects would have been more interesting as one-on-one debates from opposing viewpoints.

Gary says

This book tries to motivate society to think of the entirety of humanity when faced with an objective. *Massive Change* is structured in a pick up and glance format (which I didn't know going in, I assume the format was intentional?). Minimal depth, quick interviews, large photos with brief motivational statements. More of a coffee table book than anything, this book will only function in that setting. Sitting down to read this cover to cover is more frustrating than enjoyable because of its lack of depth and sporadic structure.

Pick it up. Skim it. Put it down. Skim more later.

Artur Coelho says

Este livro proclama ser não uma obra sobre o mundo do design mas sim sobre o design do mundo. É um objectivo elevado para um retrato de novas tecnologias e tendências culturais que contém a possibilidade de permitir ao homem redesenhar o planeta. Do urbanismo à engenharia genética, passando por meta-materiais, ciência avançada, organização económica e à inevitável influência militar, *Massive Change* mostra-nos possibilidades de redesenhar as sociedades, combater os maiores problemas com que a civilização humana se debate e novas soluções tecnológicas que prometem maravilhas já ao virar da esquina. Publicado em 2004, as tendências e desenvolvimentos tecnológicos ainda não se encontram amplamente aplicadas aos olhos de quem lê em 2012, mas a promessa e a necessidade de mudar o mundo, fugindo da espiral de pobreza, predação ambiental e decadência civilizacional não perdeu a incisiva importância.

Charles says

bruce mau yo. bruce mau.

Ian says

Full of interesting ideas, some are appealing and some are kind of worrisome. I the basic premise and optimism of the project are refreshing, but I sometimes wondered "were have i heard this before?"

Joshua says

Read this a while ago, basic overview of developments. However it read like techno-sensationalism. No challenges to social structures or bases of problems.

Michael says

So smart! People too often write design off as trivial because they think that it is just about "making things pretty."

Abraham says

An exciting book to get into - I love all those OMA-related big colorful books. The problem is that this is one of those visionary books that attempts to throw a big WOW over the nauseating forward motion of science and technology. That would be great if this weren't already fairly dated - nothing fades faster than the big wow of what technology will do to our way of being than a hint of being dated. And it'd not dated enough to be a nostalgic walk through the future of the past.

Still, some of it is pretty fascinating, and the argument, that the world in which we live and which we build is a design masterpiece to put the death star to shame, is a compelling one. It is the sense of wonder that comes through. Still, it is a bit hard to finish.

Damon says

Its more of a coffee table book. Simple spreads about a topic or a person of interest vision on what is out there to be done in this field. Ultimately Mau is trying to perform the binding of many fields together in one book under the title of design. The article on Curitiba, Brazil made me completely re-think urban rapid transit to encapsulate something that is a more open system (buses with movable docking terminals that can grow and change with a city instead of a closed system like a rails).

Pierre says

Our world is changing ever more rapidly and at ever larger scale. Contributing essayists give a glimpse of our future ranging from information and science to medicine and health to infrastructure and the environment.

I am a policy analyst dealing with clean energy and the environment and find this book to be very uplifting that we can indeed meet the challenges of this new century.

Dylan says

This is the kind of book you don't read from cover to cover, but rather pick up off the table and read bits and pieces of from time to time, or just look at the pictures. The urban planning and sustainability sections are a little hard for me to get through since they contain essentially very basic information of the type I deal with every day at work, but presented as if they're the most radical notions ever put in print. And my brother-in-law Caleb is mentioned in the acknowledgments/contributors section of book, but not next to the section they wholesale stole from him... doh!

Pierre says

This pretentious book is hopeful in the feeling that, YEAH WE CAN DO IT! but a big let down when you realize, WHY WE LREADY DOING IT ALL THE TIME AND THERE'S STILL SHITTINESS!

Lori says

There are some great photographs in this book and information on new technology related to sustainability.

Jack says

This is a hugely important book to me.

Everytime I need some direction, am depressed with the state of the world, and/or I don't know what the hell is going on with my life, I have to read this book.

It's hopeful and optimistic to a degree that I could never be; a perfect foil, if you would. This book could be my mentor in design.

It was, and still is an absolute must-read for me.
