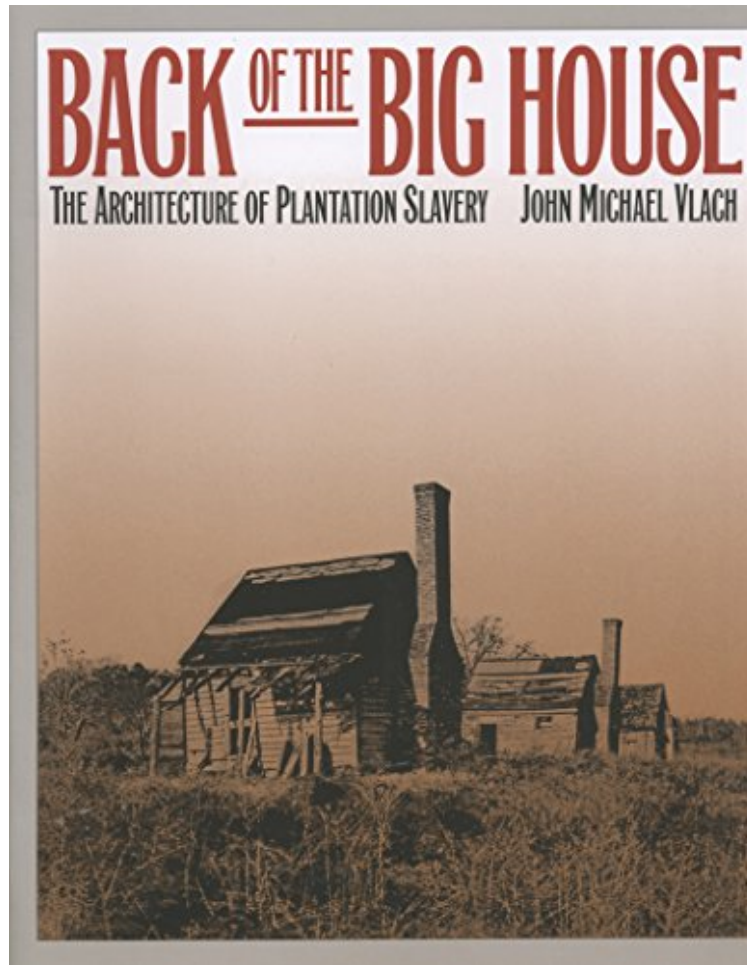


(Download pdf ebook) Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery (Fred W. Morrison Series in Southern Studies)

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John Michael Vlach

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John Michael Vlach : Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery (Fred W. Morrison Series in Southern Studies) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery (Fred W. Morrison Series in Southern Studies):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Pamela S. Porter Old South architecture 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Four Stars By MJP Bought this for a gift. 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By Music diva Great reading

Behind the "Big Houses" of the antebellum South existed a different world, socially and architecturally, where slaves lived and worked. John Michael Vlach explores the structures and spaces that formed the slaves' environment.

Through photographs and the words of former slaves, he portrays the plantation landscape from the slaves' own point of view. The plantation landscape was chiefly the creation of slaveholders, but Vlach argues convincingly that slaves imbued this landscape with their own meanings. Their subtle acts of appropriation constituted one of the more effective strategies of slave resistance and one that provided a locus for the formation of a distinctive African American culture in the South. Vlach has chosen more than 200 photographs and drawings from the Historic American Buildings Survey--an archive that has been mined many times for its images of the planters' residences but rarely for those of slave dwellings. In a dramatic photographic tour, Vlach leads readers through kitchens, smokehouses, dairies, barns and stables, and overseers' houses, finally reaching the slave quarters. To evoke a firsthand sense of what it was like to live and work in these spaces, he includes excerpts from the moving testimonies of former slaves drawn from the Federal Writers' Project collections.

From School Library Journal YA--In the past, much study was devoted to antebellum plantation houses and to the planters who erected them. The slaves upon whom these estates relied have only just begun to receive scholarly attention. Vlach uses interviews with former slaves, photographs, and architectural drawings from the 1930s and '40s to analyze how the black population fit into this environment. The author dispels the Gone with the Wind myth of sterile-white fiefdom and builds an accurate portrayal of plantations as dynamic places that were dominated by the master, yet still influenced by the slaves. This book should fascinate students of American history. Hugh McAloon, R. Christopher Goodwin Associates, Frederick, MD Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal This important and pioneering study explores the scene behind the plantation houses of the antebellum South where slaves lived and worked. Taking advantage of the extensive collection of drawings and photographs from the Historic American Buildings Survey, Vlach (American studies, George Washington Univ.) vividly depicts the architectural settings of plantation slavery: the yards, smokehouses, slave cabins, barns, stables, kitchens, and other outbuildings that defined the cultural landscape. Oral histories from former slaves recorded during the 1930s and 1940s, as well as period accounts, provide powerful depictions of how African Americans transformed those settings to serve their particular needs. Highly recommended for social and architectural historians alike. - H. Ward Jandl, National Park Svce., Washington, D.C. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. One of the most user-friendly studies of African-American material culture ever written. "American Historical Magazine" "A book that is at once album, introduction, and overview of the complexity and diversity of southern plantation architecture." "South Carolina Historical Magazine" "This is a solid piece of documentation which forcefully illuminates a neglected yet pivotal aspect of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century reality." "Maryland Historical Magazine" "Interweaves contemporary reports, oral histories of former slaves and archaeological evidence of surviving outbuildings in an unemotional but powerful manner." "New York Times Book Review" "A book that is at once album, introduction, and overview of the complexity and diversity of southern plantation architecture." "South Carolina Historical Magazine" "Interweaves contemporary reports, oral histories of former slaves and archaeological evidence of surviving outbuildings in an unemotional but powerful manner." "New York Times Book Review"