

Subject: Re: book announcement by ACSF member

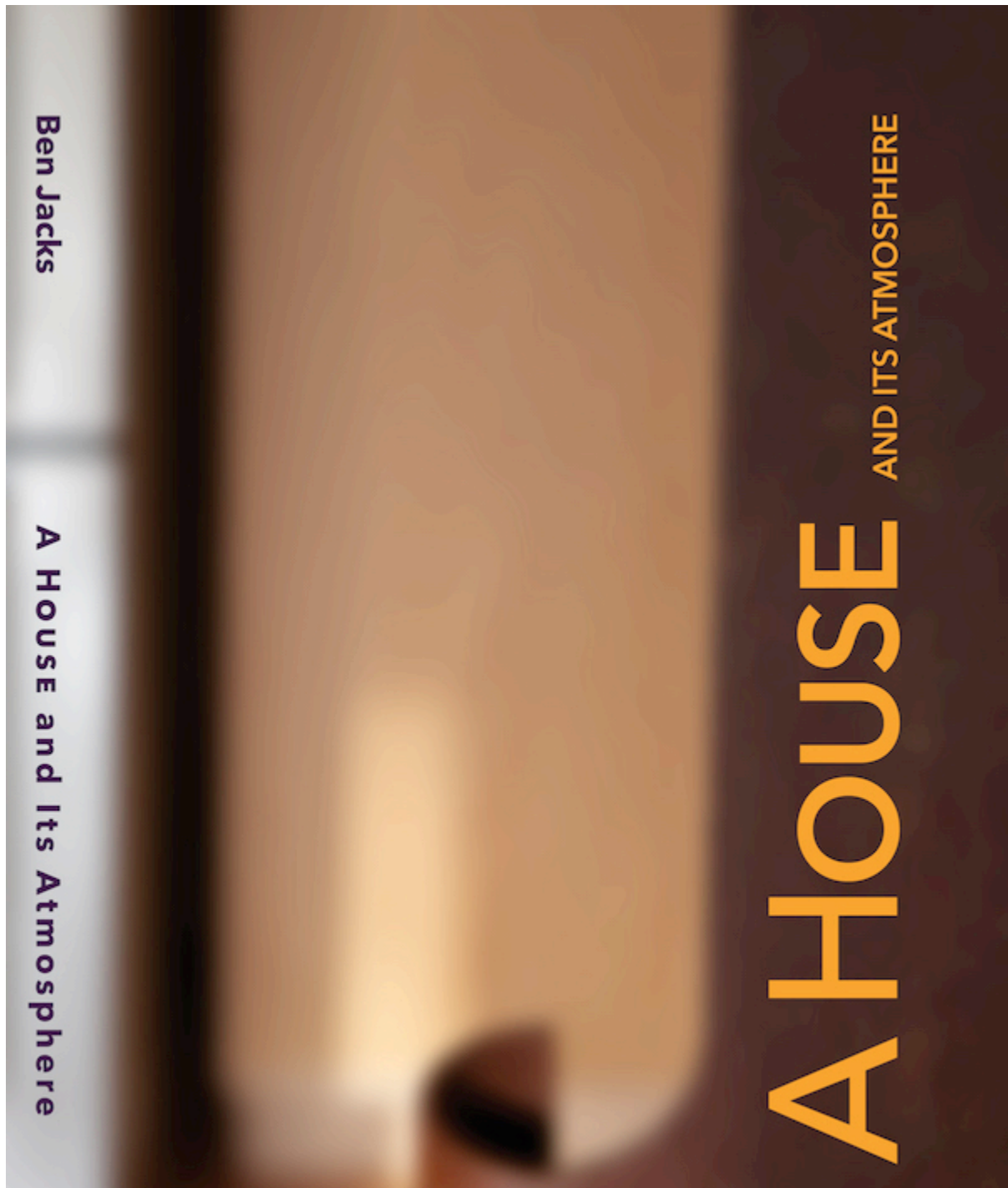
Date: Saturday, November 4, 2017 at 13:05:38 Eastern Daylight Time

From: Julio Bermudez

To: ACSF List-Server

Dear ACSF friends,

It's good to share with you the publication of one of our members' new book. It's Ben Jacks' "A house and Its Atmosphere". Below is the information.



Ben Jacks

About the Book

A House and its Atmosphere is a meditative essay about the experience of designing and building a house of one's own. Told in seventy black and white photographs and a series of narrative excursions, architect Ben Jacks reflects on a lifetime of influences as he reveals the personal nature of inhabiting a place at the edge of a tidal cove on an island in Maine. *A House and its Atmosphere* quietly advocates for the simple logic and modest ease of direct experience and an observational perspective in architecture.

In chapters about imagining, walking, and designing Ben Jacks reflects on the essence of architectural experience, describing what it is like to begin to make momentous decisions, arguing that aesthetic experience is the result of how one has learned to see. Memory, family, nature, relationships, and work inform design at every step.

A House and its Atmosphere is a grounded story about designing and building a small work of architecture. With students of architecture and amateur builders in mind, Ben Jacks makes a case for design informed by theories of place-identification, detail, and craft. The book is a primary source and a chronicle of experience of radical empiricism. As such it offers a kind of conceptual tool kit for those interested in thinking about the processes of architecture, designing, and placemaking.

A House and its Atmosphere is a fresh and valuable contribution to the *shelter memoir* genre, from a professional architect's perspective.

Praise for *A House and its Atmosphere*

From the time of the author's pacings across the future building's site to his savorings of the house's several atmospheres, the ideas and chapters of this marvelously written book were imagined, discussed, sketched, and constructed in ways that intertwine places and patterns of life. Both the text and the house reveal architecture's power to enrich existence by giving dimension and expression to a basic human desire: being at home. Atmosphere, a topic with unmatched currency today, is rendered nearly palpable on these pages and in these photographs, communicating not only emotions—the necessary but limited topic of most atmosphere discussions in architecture today—but also things to think about: the interdependence of culture and ecology, the conditions under which craft still has a place in architecture, the aesthetic dimension of everyday life, and so on. The book is unhesitatingly personal, but not for that reason private. Instead, its accessible prose and immediacy engage central topics in architectural education and practice: design, theory, and construction technology. Professors and professionals will find the book radical in a simple way: it penetrates to ground on which good lectures and projects are constructed—pre-professional life. Here is an eloquent, optimistic, and profoundly humane book.

David Leatherbarrow

Professor and Chair of the Graduate Group in Architecture, University of Pennsylvania

About the Author

Ben Jacks is an architect, writer, and teacher, holding degrees from the University of Chicago, the University of Pennsylvania, and the Stonecoast MFA Program in Creative Writing at the University of Southern Maine. He is an Associate Professor at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. In 1991 Ben walked the Appalachian Trail, 2000 miles from Georgia to his home state of Maine. The experience of walking and camping inspired and continues to inform his thinking and writing about architecture, aesthetics, landscape, and place, which has been published in leading journals and presented at numerous academic conferences in North America and Europe. He is the author of *The Architect's Tour: Notes for the Design Traveler* (Culicidae Architectural Press). He lives with his family in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Deer Isle, Maine.

<http://culicidaearchitecturalpress.com/blog/ben-jacks-a-house-and-its-atmosphere/>

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"leap and the net will appear"