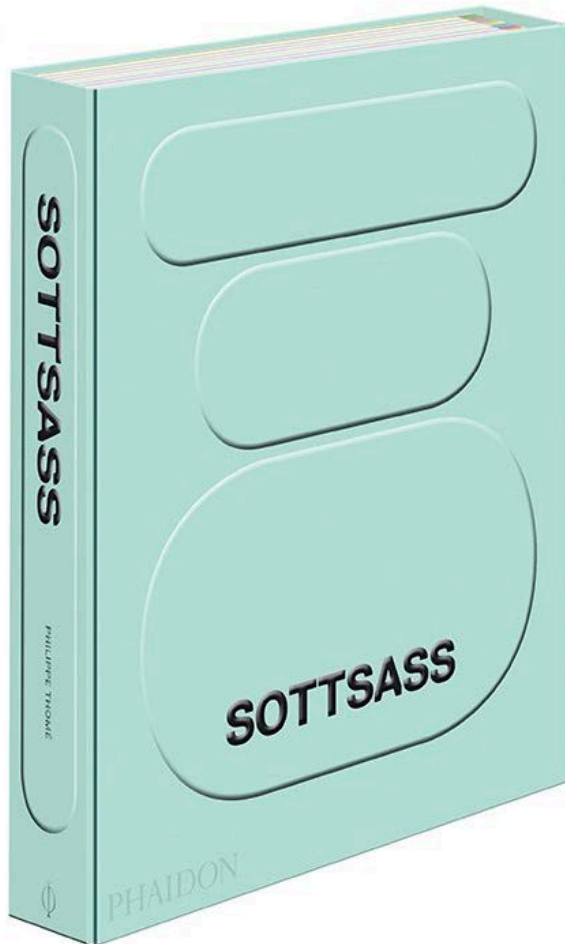


# ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

## A NEW MONOGRAPH HIGHLIGHTS THE PROLIFIC CAREER OF ARCHITECT AND DESIGNER ETTORE SOTTASS

Text by Kristen Flanagan | June 4, 2014

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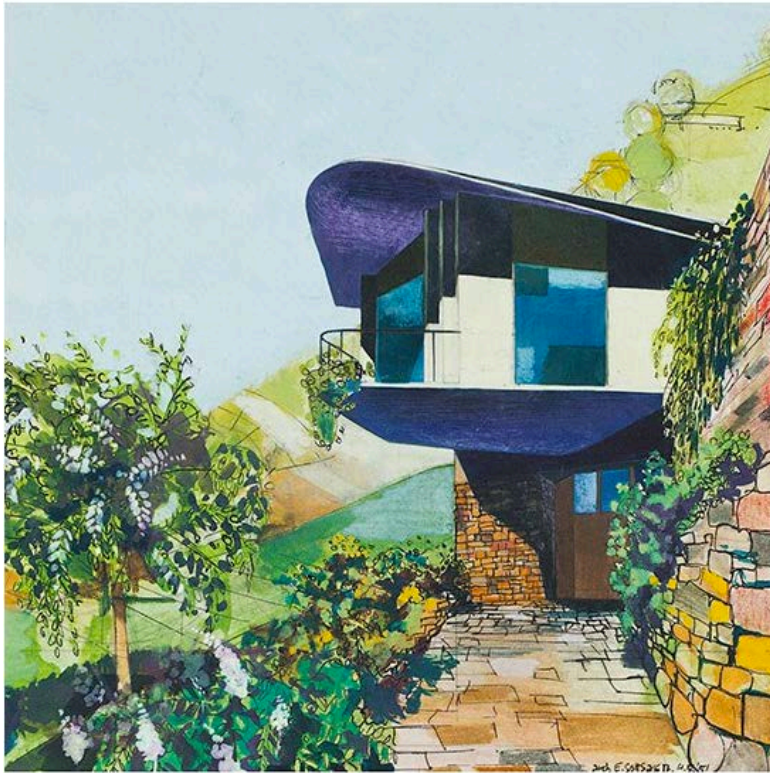


The new book *Ettore Sottsass* by Philippe Thomé. Photo courtesy of Phaidon

Ettore Sottsass (1917–2007) is probably best known for founding the Memphis Group, a Milan-based collective of young designers who produced brightly colored, asymmetrical furniture, lamps, and ceramics in the early 1980s. But those were just a few years in a prolific career that spanned decades and disciplines. Now a new book, *Ettore Sottsass* (Phaidon, \$150) by Philippe Thomé, puts a spotlight on the Italian architect and designer's entire oeuvre, from his iconic electronics for Olivetti, such as the Valentine typewriter, to his unique glass and ceramics.

Flanagan, Kristen. "A New Monograph Highlights the Prolific Career of Architect and Designer Ettore Sottsass." *Architectural Digest*, June 4, 2014

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A drawing of the Lora Totino villa, in Turin, Italy, circa 1951.  
Photo courtesy of Archivio Ettore Sottsass

Sottsass, who studied architecture in Turin, Italy, after immigrating from his native Austria, possessed a playfulness that was integral to his design. In reaction to the rationalist architecture of his father's generation, Sottsass once said, "When I was young, all we ever heard about was functionalism, functionalism, functionalism. It's not enough. Design should also be sensual and exciting." Throughout the volume, Thomé, a scholar of the history of architecture and design, draws parallels between life and art by juxtaposing Sottsass's biography with his boundary-crossing creations.

Alternating between personal history and critical analysis clearly links Sottsass's influences—studying architecture at Turin Polytechnic University, serving in WWII, being held as a prisoner of war, traveling to the far reaches of Asia—with his work. The tome also includes five short essays, written by design experts such as Francesca Picchi and Emily King, that explore Sottsass's work in architecture, graphic design, photography, industrial design, and collector's editions.



The Valentine typewriter conceived by Sottsass for Olivetti, in 1969.  
Photo courtesy of Alberto Fioravanti

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Sottsass worked on the Olabuenaga House, in Maui, Hawaii, between 1989 and 1997.  
Photo courtesy of Grey Crawford

*Ettore Sottsass* (\$150) is available now from [Phaidon](http://Phaidon.com).

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