



Pretty Vacant: The Los Angeles Dingbat Observed

Clive Piercy

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The only thing better than one boring building is hundreds of them. Far from the glamorous and avant-garde architectural features that make Los Angeles justifiably famous are the humble apartment buildings known as "dingbats." But *Pretty Vacant* dares to elevate the low-rise, the boxy, the not remarkably well-constructed to the architecturally sublime. In this inexpensive brick of a book, through scads of photographs of these underappreciated gems, their boundless surfacey charms are soon obvious. Combining funky textures, streamlined sconces, and future-retro ornamentation, these buildings practically define LA vernacular in their optimistic mix of mid-century modishness and darling details. Clive Piercy's photographs provide a streetside glimpse into the curious lives of these buildings, with charming names that range from the regal (Kings Studios) to the space-age (The Galaxie). Assembled in a compact but weighty package with more than 480 images, *Pretty Vacant* provides a snapshot tour and kitschy homage to this underdog architectural form.

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