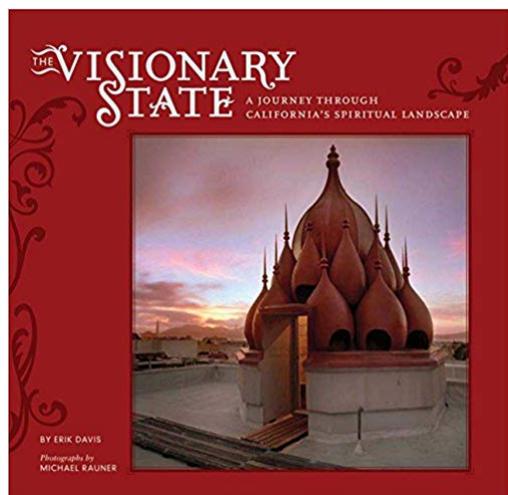


The Visionary State: A Journey Through California's Spiritual Landscape *by* Michael Rauner, Erik Davis



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With a rich cultural history and Hollywood stars publicly attesting to a wide range of faiths, it's no surprise that California's spiritual landscape is as diverse as its natural surroundings. *The Visionary State* weaves text and image into a compelling narrative of religion, architecture, and consciousness in California, from neopaganism to televangelism, UFO cults to austere Zen Buddhism. Acclaimed culture critic Erik Davis brings together the immigrant and homegrown religious influences that have been part of the region's character from its earliest days, drawing connections between seemingly unlike traditions and celebrating the diversity of California's spiritual composition. Michael Rauner's evocative photographs depict the sites and structures where these traditions have taken root and flourished. *The Visionary State* is a landmark look at what is likely the most varied locale for religious activity anywhere.



Reviews of the **The Visionary State: A Journey Through California's Spiritual Landscape** by Michael Rauner, Erik Davis

Kahavor

This is a fabulous book, like everything Erik Davis writes. The photography just takes it to a new level. This book will be a standard reference for us in future journeys on the North American west coast. We intend to visit all the sites, or as many as we can, documented in the book.

But it is much more than a travel book. Davis brings his masterful knowledge of American gnosticism and materializes it in his historical, rich narrative about the numerous temples, religions, and cults of California. I strongly recommend "Techgnosis" for a much deeper treatment of the same topic. Let's hope he keeps bringing his skill as a writer to craft more beautiful essays about the rich and fragmented American life, and the strange worlds emerging as the American imperial reign draws to a close.

Davis is probably the most talented of the current psychedelic authors, and has a talent at keeping an open and critical eye on both the dark and light aspects of emerging subcultures.

I love his wordcraft and eclectic reach. Every time I read one of his books, I come back with at least twenty new words and a few new concepts.

Tejar

This book was a lot more fun than I had expected - a really engaging writing style with excellent photography. I kind of fell in love with California reading it. When I'm done, I'm going to give it to my friend in San Diego who just bought a house with a bedroom he's renting out as an air bnb. I think guests will really enjoy it too!

The Apotheoses of Lacspor

Fascinating subject, very useful from a historical and spiritual/religious perspective. I never knew how many places of spiritual and religious importance existed in California. It reflects a unique 'movement' that we still don't have a name for but is very much a part of America and more specifically California. The author writes with a witty humor and intuitive insight that I enjoyed more than the beautiful photos themselves. Important book to have.

Mightsinger

I bought this book when I saw one at a friend's. I'm from California and was experiencing a little homesickness in Vermont. I got so much more than beautiful photos, though they are certainly wonderful. Erik Davis's writing is so strong, and the stories he tell are abundant. Davis makes the point that perhaps growing up in this environment leads to religious and spiritual views particular to it, and I have to admit that there's something to that.

In all both a good read and a great series of photos of some places that I wasn't aware of, along with some old friends to me.

Eriean

Awesome book. Bought 2 books as gift. Very heavy. A few picture old but mostly current.

Cyregaehus

From the perfectly shot pictures, to the heavy spine and luxurious feel, to the extraordinarily engaging text, this is an ideal reference book, gift book, and tour de force of the California psycho-spiritual landscape.

Pairing textual descriptions with breathtaking images, the history of California's many spiritual and religious movements comes vibrantly to life on every page.

I was especially thrilled by the *feel* of this book. As soon as I held it, I knew I loved it. Big kudos to Erik Davis and his photographer for putting out such a fine volume.

MilsoN

This book reviews one of the reasons I love California!

...an extraordinary book, beautifully laid out and interesting histories on spectacular architectural sanctuaries gracing California's landscape, well researched and vividly presented. A true find and a great gift for anyone interested in California history, architecture, travel, art, spirituality ...an incredible journey!

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