

THE EPOCH TIMES

# ARTS & CULTURE

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High Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio designed Villa La Rotonda (Villa Rotunda) in Vicenza, in northeast Italy. Palladio's work had a lasting impact on Western architecture.

## ARCHITECTURE

# The High Renaissance Italian at the Heart of Western Architecture

Introducing Andrea Palladio, who brought ancient harmony and beauty to the West

LORRAINE FERRIER

**A**ndrea Palladio. You may not know his name, but you have definitely seen the High Renaissance architect's influence on the traditional architecture of Western Europe and indeed America.

Palladio built with beauty and honored his ancient peers.

"As one of the last great architects of the High Renaissance, Palladio translated the language of classical antiquity into a flexible and distinctive vocabulary that was

**Palladio built with beauty and honored his ancient peers.**

used internationally by architects well into the nineteenth century," according to The Metropolitan Museum of Art website.

### Ancient Architecture

Before "meeting" Palladio properly, it's good to note the general development and characteristics of ancient Greek and Roman architecture, as often the two styles are merged as "classical architecture."

The ancient Greeks cut large blocks of marble into beams that echoed their traditional timber beam-and-pillar buildings. They used three different regional styles of columns:

"Doric" from mainland and western Greece, "Ionic" from eastern Greece, and "Corinthian" from Corinth. Each column had a specific proportion and decorative scheme, consisting of a base, a capital (marble block at the top), and an entablature (a horizontal beam that sits atop the capital). Together these elements form an "order."

"Through centuries of trial and error the Greeks had evolved proportions for the various parts of their buildings designed exactly to satisfy their very highly developed aesthetic sensibilities.

*Continued on Page 4*



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"Poetry, from the Stanza della Segnatura," 1509–1511, by Raphael.

POETRY

# Ways to Join Poetry Month Festivities

JEFF MINICK

April has arrived, that season when in many places the growl of a lawnmower replaces the roar of a snow blower. It's the first full month of spring, when melted ice and snow perform their usual magic, giving birth to daffodils and grass as green as the hills of Ireland. Sunlight falls soft as down on the uplifted face, and as Lord Tennyson tells us, "a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love."

Meanwhile, the Academy of American Poets is hoping that April will turn our thoughts to poetry. Once again, the academy has launched National Poetry Month, dispatching posters, books, and creative ideas for reading and composing verse to schools across the country. Many libraries will put up displays of the likes of Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, and Mary Oliver, and some bookstores will hold special readings featuring poetry as old as the ancient Greeks and as new as a sonnet written yesterday by a high school sophomore.

Contrary to what we may think, adult Americans—at last count, some 28 million of them—still read poetry. That figure is small compared to the population at large, but it's also an indicator that poetry, which at its best is a compound of wisdom, revelation, and beauty, still strikes a chord with the public.

So if we wish to join these enthusiasts of verse, what are some ways we can ease our way into their ranks?

**Finding a Good Fit**

First, we should shop for poems and poets just as we do for shoes that afford comfort and suit our personalities. One woman likes Allbirds Tree Runners in white while her friend prefers Rockport Prowalkers in black. Likewise, they may exhibit different tastes in poetry.

Some people, for example, may enjoy poetry for the same reasons that toddlers are smitten with nursery rhymes. Kids

relish the bounce, beat, and rhyme of "Jack and Jill," "Star Light, Star Bright," and "Hickory Dickory Dock," and their adult counterparts want this same rollicking fun. They'll find the pleasures of that word-dance in poems like Rudyard Kipling's "Gunga Din," Robert Service's "The Cremation of Sam McGee," and Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "The Charge of the Light Brigade."

Some see this dance as a formal affair. They want verse dressed up, for example, as sonnets, blank verse, or villanelles, with such accoutrements as iambic pentameter and rhyme. Robert Frost once compared free verse, which is poetry without meter or rhyme, to "playing tennis with the net down." If you're inclined to agree, if you too want your poetry decked out in the black tie and evening wear of a ballroom, you'll find plenty of writers on that dance card. Granted, most of them belong to an earlier age, but even today you'll find poets of the formal school, like Dana Gioia and William Baer, who play tennis with the net up. In this four-line piece, "The History of Western Poetry," Baer gives readers a sampling of his style while taking a shot at free verse:

Meter, of course, is classicist;  
Rhyme is Catholic-medieval;  
Blank verse is lapsed and Anglicist;  
Vers libre is French (and evil).

On the other hand, if you prefer free verse, a library's worth of poetry from the last 100 years is at hand.

**Nature, War, Art, and More**

Here's another tip: Start with poems that match your interests. If you like digging your fingers into the dirt and planting tomatoes or roses, search online for "poems about gardening," and voilà, there they are. If you prefer sewing, you'll again find verse to match your pleasure. Cooking, reading, building, and housekeeping all yield up related poetry.

The same holds true for history. War-



The love of nature may draw some to poetry. "The Oxbow, View From Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, After a Thunderstorm," 1836, by Thomas Cole. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

fare, for example, has roused the attention of poets for three millennia. From "The Iliad" and "The Aeneid" to the poets of World War I, you'll find some of the best verse in Western civilization.

Likewise, poets have written about paintings, sculpture, architecture, and the theater. One example of many is John Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn," a classic of English literature. Meanwhile, The Society of Classical Poets gives us "Ballerina," in which Michael Pietrack salutes ballet while also critiquing the modern arts.

And if nature and the outdoors are your passions—hiking, camping, strolling in the park, birdwatching—no other literary genre offers the interest and impact of poetry. It is, in fact, difficult to think of a poet who has never employed nature in imagery, subject, or theme.

Gerard Manley Hopkins's "Pied Beauty," for instance, is a stunning celebration of Mother Nature's glories, as is Emily Dickinson's quieter "Nature' Is What We See." Poet Mary Oliver was an "indefatigable guide to the natural world," and William Wordsworth with his pieces like "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" is informally known as "the father of nature poetry."

**Love**

In addition to nature, two other subjects—love and death—reign as monarchs in the realm of poetry.

The attention paid by poets to love should come as no surprise, for just like the rest of us, these word-spinners have experienced the joys, regrets, and griefs of deep, intense affection.

And here, one could argue, is a profound reason for reading poetry. In our life's journey, we are always on the lookout for companions of the spirit, for others who understand and share our happiness and sorrow; we are looking for a spouse, a friend, a spiritual adviser. We treasure those who can help explain ourselves to ourselves.

In poetry, we can find such counselors. The college student who just had his world shattered by rejection may discover a friend in A.E. Housman's "When I Was One-and-Twenty" with its advice about protecting the heart. The shy high school girl can feel at one with Shakespeare's "Shall I Compare Thee to a Sum-



Many enjoy the charging rhythm of Tennyson's poem as seen here in "Charge of the Light Brigade," 1894, by Richard Caton Woodville Jr. Commissioned by the Illustrated London News. The Library of Congress.



Some prefer the more formal structure of poetry as related by the formal dance of ballet. "Don Quixote" at the Teresa Carreño Theater in Caracas, Venezuela, on Oct. 18, 2013.

mer's Day?" while dreamily gazing at the boy who doesn't recognize her existence. The elderly man who long ago knew love may find solace in "When You Are Old" by William Yeats:

How many loved your moments of glad grace,  
And loved your beauty with love false or true,  
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,  
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.  
And as with love, the poets bear witness to dying and death.

**Graveside**

The answers quick and keen, the honest look, the laughter, the love,—  
They are gone. They are gone to feed the roses. Elegant and curled

Is the blossom. Fragrant is the blossom. I know. But I do not approve.

More precious was the light in your eyes than all the roses in the world.

That stanza from Edna St. Vincent Millay's heartbreaking elegy "Dirge Without Music" tolls like a funeral church bell in the hearts of the grieving. The poem as a whole, with its signature line "I am not resigned," may or may not offer comfort, but it definitely gives a voice to ineffable sadness.

On the other hand, Dylan Thomas's "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night" acts as a vent for the anger we feel with the wasted lives of loved ones or, for that matter, our own. Clare Harner's "Do Not Stand at My Grave and Weep," Christina Rossetti's "Remember" and "When I Am Dead, My Dearest," and many other poems attempt a reconciliation between the living and the dead, an easing of the mind desired by so many who, having lost loved ones, wish they could express their regrets or say just one more time to the departed, "I love you."

If nothing else, poetry may allow us to better comprehend our tangled emotions.

**April and Beyond**

National Poetry Month is a noble effort to encourage more Americans to read poetry, and we should applaud this initiative. Yet we should also regard these festivities as a beginning rather than an end. Poetry can become a part of our daily lives, knitted into our work, chores, and leisure.

"A man should hear a little music, read a little poetry, and see a fine picture every day of his life," Johann Wolfgang von Goethe wrote, "in order that worldly cares may not obliterate the sense of the beautiful implanted in the human soul."

In our digital age, music, poetry, and art lie at our fingertips. Let's open these gifts to keep alive our own sense of beauty.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C. He is the author of two novels, "Amanda Bell" and "Dust On Their Wings," and two works of nonfiction, "Learning As I Go" and "Movies Make The Man." Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va

TRUTH and TRADITION

In Our Own Words



“With diligent effort, a journalist can map a part of the journey and present it to readers, hoping to help them navigate their own realities.”

Petr Svab  
Reporter

# The World Through a Journalist's Eyes

Dear Epoch VIP,

Thank you for your continuing support—we are at your service.

My name is Petr Svab and I've been covering politics, courts, police, immigration, economy, and other topics during my 16 years at The Epoch Times.

**It is my pleasure to work for a newspaper that stands for values I can wholeheartedly endorse and fittingly summed up in our motto of Truth and Tradition.**

I believe that truth is the living world, and an infinite journey of exploration. The more topics I tackle, the more issues I delve into, the more I realize how complex, multifaceted, and enormous the world truly is. We can never dream of grasping it all, but, with diligent effort, a journalist can map a part of the journey and present it to readers, hoping to help them navigate their own realities.

Moreover, I've found, a journalist can open doors closed to others, give readers the facts of the story, the context that enlightens them, as well as the insights of the participants.

I remember walking the streets of West Baltimore a few years ago. My plan was just to interview some local business owners to see what the city was doing about some of its issues—from piles of trash and abandoned houses to homelessness and crime.

Within five minutes of my arrival, a man on the street noticed me and started to shout: "Guy with a camera! There's a guy with a camera here!"

A group of young men further up the street took notice as I approached.

"Are you a cop?" asked one of them. He was a young man with wide eyes that looked like they'd already seen more than their share.

I introduced myself and my business of the day, handing the gentleman my card. The young man's expression softened as he realized I was here to report on a story—the story of his home.

As it turned out, the young man was not only ready to share with me his insights on the local issues, but also to offer advice on where to find what I was looking for. We parted ways with a handshake.

In all my experience talking directly to the people

involved in various events, **the truth seldom (if ever) favors partisan narratives—it's much more colorful: sometimes humorous, other times tragic.**

Consider the story, for example, of Trayvon Martin. According to some, an innocent child killed by a racist man. According to others, a thug killed in self-defense. But after filmmaker Joel Gilbert retraced Martin's last moments, weeks, and months, it turned out neither narrative was quite true. Gilbert told a story of a young man whose life was falling apart and ultimately plunged into a tragedy that nobody wanted.

So if that's truth, what is tradition, then? For me, it is the lessons of history. It's the distilled universal wisdom collected by our ancestors over millennia—the timeless lessons of the enlightened, the sages, and the saints. This treasure chest of the past is where we can turn to help us better understand the truth at present.

My work is to safeguard this treasure, let it live through the pages of The Epoch Times and the hearts of our readers.

While it may seem the foundations of the civilization itself are now under attack, I truly believe our readers will be best equipped to withstand the storm—through clarity and peace of heart. For whatever the future holds, I believe the path will be less treacherous for those who walk it steadily, making choices informed both by truth and tradition.

What I pledge to you is yet more meticulous research, analysis, and fact-finding. I'll do the digging for you, while letting you make up your own mind. Furthermore, I'll also hone my wit to give you an ever-better read along the way.

Yes, we strive to be an influential media in the world, but **I believe that our true success is measured in minds sharpened, hearts uplifted, and lives improved.**

Once again, thank you for joining us on this journey. We do live in truly epochal times, wouldn't you say?

In Truth and Tradition,

Petr Svab  
The Epoch Times



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PUBLIC DOMAIN

Experts agree that the best example of Andrea Palladio's villa designs, with its raised portico and arcades, is Villa Emo in Veduggio, northeast Italy.



ARCHITECTURE

## The High Renaissance Italian at the Heart of Western Architecture

Continued from Page 1

They made all their straight lines delicately curved to allow for optical illusions, and built their temples—their principal building type—to within an accuracy of a minute fraction of an inch,” wrote John Penoyre and Michael Ryan in “The Observer’s Book of Architecture.”

When Rome conquered and then colonized Greece, Roman architects adopted and adapted the country’s beam-and-pillar building motifs. The most notable additions that they made were the dome and arch. Romans required larger, roofed buildings, so their architects added semicircular arches for structural support instead of columns.

The ancient Romans also added two orders, the “Tuscan” and “Composite,” increasing the classical orders to five. These columns mostly took on a decorative function, sometimes almost disappearing into the fabric of the building as pilasters (flattened columns).

Experts universally agree that the Parthenon in Athens stands as the finest surviving example of ancient Greek architecture, and that the Pantheon in Rome stands as a perfect reflection of ancient Roman architecture.

**Palladio’s Ode to His Ancient Peers** Palladio, perhaps more than any other architect before him, made ancient ar-

chitecture available in an easily understood format. Born Andrea di Pietro in Padua, then part of the Republic of Venice, he lived (1508–1580) at a defining moment for classical architecture. The Italians’ interest in classical teachings and reviving the classical arts was at its height, aided by an influx of scholars taking refuge from the Turks’ recent (1453) sack of Constantinople. Those scholars brought ancient manuscripts and classical knowledge with them to Western Europe and Italy in particular.

Having trained as a builder and then as a stonemason, apprenticing with noted sculptor Bartolomeo Cavazza da Sossano in Padua, Andrea then moved to Vicenza and worked for the renowned stonemason and stonemason Giovanni di Giacomo da Porlezza. It was here that he met the humanist Giangorgio Trissino, a nobleman and amateur architect who forever changed Palladio’s life course—and his name.

Trissino gave Andrea the name “Palladio” after the Greek goddess of wisdom, Pallas Athene.

In Palladio, Trissino saw brilliant promise: “a very spirited young man with an inclination to mathematics.” He took him under his wing, educating him in the classics and introducing him to the only surviving ancient treatise on architecture, Marcus Vitruvius’s “De architectura,” written around 30–20

**Palladio, perhaps more than any other architect before him, made ancient architecture available in an easily understood format.**

B.C. Vitruvius believed that nature held the blueprint for beauty. He cited that scholars had found similarities in the proportions and symmetry of “well-shaped men” and that this mathematical formula for natural harmony and beauty could be applied to architecture.

In 1556, Palladio illustrated classical scholar Daniele Barbaro’s translation of Vitruvius’s work. Trissino first took Palladio to Rome in the 1540s, where he learned directly from drawing the ancient ruins of Rome.

Of ancient Rome’s architecture, Palladio wrote: “As grandiose ruins, the ancient buildings still give a clear and fine indication of the virtue and grandeur of the Roman nation, to such an extent that the study of these qualities of virtue have repeatedly fascinated and enthused me; I directed all my thoughts to them with the greatest of expectations.”

He shared these thoughts in his 1570 treatise “I quattro libri dell’architettura” (“The Four Books of Architecture”). It’s a treatise that spoke to Palladio’s contemporaries—artisans and his architect peers—and guided their practical work. He included woodcut illustrations of plans, elevations, and cross-sections, along with architectural details.

In the first book, Palladio describes building materials, techniques, and the five classical orders. In the second book, he covers mostly his own designs

for private houses, villas, and mansions, something unique from treatises before his. In the third, he mainly focuses on ancient Roman streets, buildings, and basilicas, and in book four he details ancient Roman temples, including sketches of the Pantheon.

“Among all the temples that are to be seen in Rome, none is more celebrated than the Pantheon, now called the Ritonda, nor that remains more entire; since it is to be seen almost in its first state as to the fabric, but stripped [sic] of the statues, and other ornaments,” wrote Palladio in Chapter XX of “The Four Books of Architecture.”

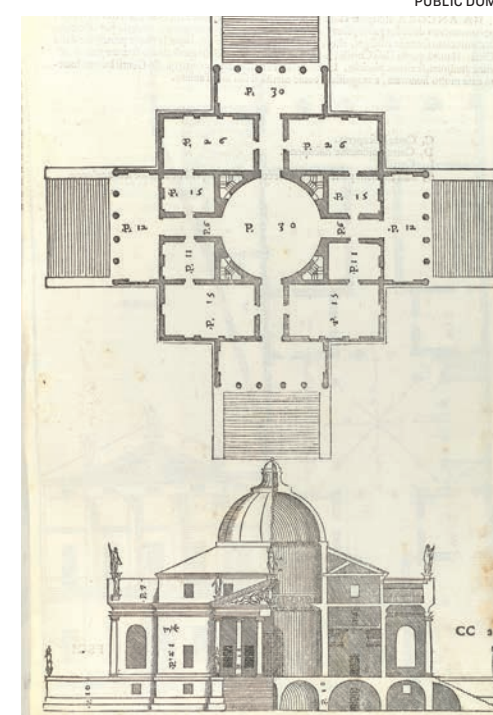
### Ancient Architecture and Contemporary Design

Along with his treatise, Palladio’s renown came from his private and public buildings in Italy. We only have to look to the Italian countryside, first to the Veneto region where Palladio lived, to see just how his architecture spread across the Italian landscape.

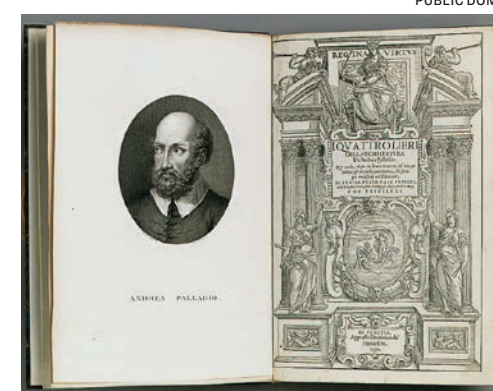
In Palladio’s day, the Republic of Venice was in constant conflict. Rather than relying on imported produce, noblemen moved to the surrounding countryside where they bought and developed agricultural land. These noblemen needed countryside homes. Palladio met that demand, defining the Italian villa thereafter.

Palladio saw the villa as a small town under one roof, where Veneto’s nobility could reflect their humanistic sensibilities for rest, study of the classics, and surveying their agricultural lands without leaving the building. Each villa had central living quarters flanked by outbuildings, such as stables, concealed behind a series of classically inspired arcades (a row of columns, called a colonnade, supporting a series of arches) creating one harmonious whole.

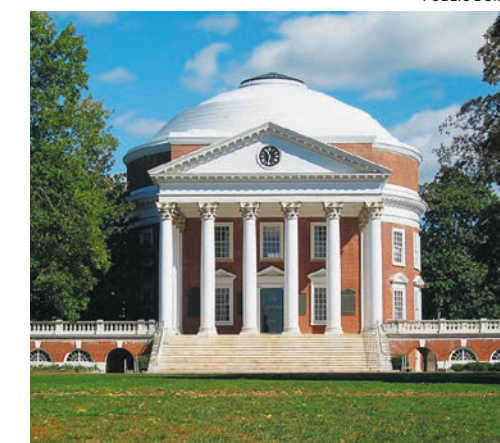
Palladio put the sacred temple structure of elegant orders on the central



“Villa Almerico” (“Villa La Rotonda”) from “I quattro libri dell’architettura” (“The Four Books of Architecture”), 1570, by Andrea Palladio. Woodcut illustrations by Christoph Krieger and Johann Krieger. Sheet: 11 5/16 inches by 7 11/16 inches. Bequest of W. Gedney Beatty, 1941. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



“I Quattro Libri dell’architettura” (“The Four Books of Architecture”), 1570, by Andrea Palladio. Title page and frontispiece with an engraved portrait of Palladio. An illustrated book, four parts in one volume. Library Purchase; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Thomas Jefferson designed The Rotunda at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. He based the design on a sketch of the Pantheon in a 1720 edition of Andrea Palladio’s “Four Books of Architecture.”



Andrea Palladio’s first villa commission, Villa Godi in Lonedo, in northeast Italy.

building block of his villa designs. He mistakenly believed, as most of his peers did at the time, that ancient Roman villas echoed the temple design.

In 1540, Palladio completed his first villa, Villa Godi, at Lonedo. His Villa Godi design contains elements that defined his later works. The villa consists of a central block flanked by two symmetrical side blocks. The central block is set back from the side blocks so that one façade projects forward while the other recedes an equal distance.

Scholars, however, agree that the best example of Palladio’s villa designs is Villa Emo in Veduggio, in northeast Italy, designed in the 1550s. With its raised portico and agricultural buildings set behind arcades, its grandeur extends even to the humble farm buildings.

In Villa Emo, Palladio put into practice what Vitruvius wrote in his treatise: that architects should design buildings of “firmitas” (strength), “utilitas” (functionality), and “venustas” (beauty).

Of Villa Emo, Palladio wrote: “The cellars, granaries, and stables, and other farm buildings are on either side of the owner’s house, and at the ends there are dovecots [dove houses] that are useful for the owner and add beauty to the place; one can move under cover throughout it.”

According to The Metropolitan Museum of Art website, “Villa Rotonda [Villa La Rotonda] demonstrates Palladio’s mastery in crystallizing classical ideals of geometric form, absolute symmetry, and harmonic proportion in plain, dignified designs.” Palladio built the villa on a hillock in Vicenza, in northeast Italy, and noted that the site was “one of the most agreeable and delightful that may be found, on a hillock with gentle approaches and surrounded by other charming hills, all cultivated, that give the effect of a huge theater.”

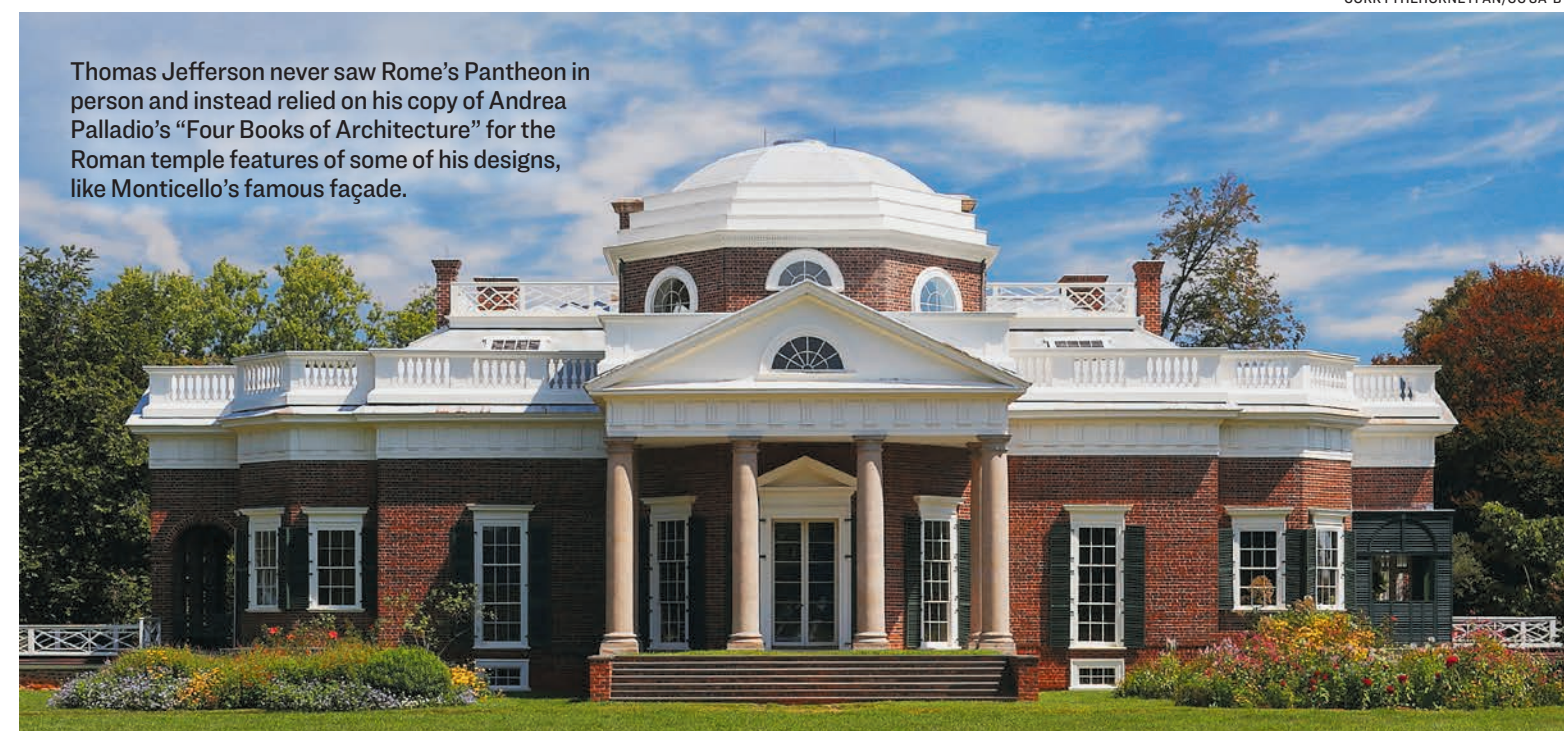
Vitruvius and Palladio died centuries ago, but the heart of their classical works lives on. Their direct influence can be seen in architect Inigo Jones’s works in England, such as the Queen’s House in Greenwich (the country’s first classical building), and in Thomas Jefferson’s works in America, such as Monticello and the academic village he created in Charlottesville, Virginia, especially The Rotunda, to name a few. But their influence can also be seen in the fabric of American life, in traditional church architecture, and even in the cornices, baseboards, and ceiling moldings of homes.

VITTORIO CARAMAZZA/SHUTTERSTOCK



Architect Inigo Jones designed the first classical building in England: Queen’s House in Greenwich, London. Jones had visited Italy in 1613–1615 as part of his Grand Tour. He brought Palladio’s teachings with him, introducing Palladianism to England.

CORKYTHEHORNETFAN/CC SA-BY 3.0



Thomas Jefferson never saw Rome’s Pantheon in person and instead relied on his copy of Andrea Palladio’s “Four Books of Architecture” for the Roman temple features of some of his designs, like Monticello’s famous façade.





"Sounder" is about an impoverished black family, the Morgans: (L-R) Nathan (Paul Winfield), Earl (Eric Hooks), Josie (Yvonne Jarell), Rebecca (Cicely Tyson), and their eldest son David (Kevin Hooks), and composer-musician Taj Mahal.

# Hope Amid Despair

**RUDOLPH LAMBERT FERNANDEZ**

Set in Depression-hit Louisiana, director Martin Ritt's film is about an impoverished black family, the Morgans: Nathan (Paul Winfield); Rebecca (Cicely Tyson); their eldest son who goes to school, David (Kevin Hooks in his debut); their younger children, Earl and Josie; and their beloved dog, Sounder.

To the Morgans, poverty isn't some distant social phenomenon; it's a lived reality. They feel it in their hunger pangs, they see it in each other's parched lips, and they feel it

in their aching bones, as they spend years sharecropping on a farm. Punishing exhaustion lulls them to sleep at night, and a grim reminder of a day's labor still ahead rouses them each morning.

For all his lack of learning, Nathan is convinced that missed opportunities matter. He laments those he's missed growing up, but instead of turning dismal, he stays hopeful for David. It's why he and Rebecca place David's education above anything else. They're thrilled that he can read and write, however haltingly, but they want him to do and be so much more.

**'Sounder'**

**Director:** Martin Ritt  
**Starring:** Cicely Tyson, Paul Winfield, Kevin Hooks  
**MPAA Rating:** G  
**Running Time:** 1 hour, 45 minutes  
**Release Date:** Sept. 24, 1972  
 ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Ritt, who brilliantly directed Jon Voight in "Conrack," delivers a similar message of yearning here, not just through David's awe of the man, Nathan, who's central to his life, but also through three women.

In his mother, David sees a life of drudgery he'd like to spare her. Through a sympathetic white woman for whom Rebecca does laundry, he stumbles upon the magical realm of books, where sheer wonders are hidden between their exquisite hardcovers. Finally, Camille (Janet MacLachlan), who is a teacher at a faraway school, kindles in him a desire to understand and face life on his terms, through intense learning.

**To the Morgans, poverty is a lived reality.**

Composer-musician Taj Mahal's bluesy soundtrack bursts with raw energy and pathos. He plays the guitar and sings as one of the supporting characters on screen, and plays other instruments, including the banjo, off screen.

"Sounder" catapulted Tyson from relative obscurity as a fashion model to stardom, winning her Oscar and Golden Globe nominations for Best Actress. Producers first refused to cast her as Rebecca because of her glamorous image, offering her the role of Camille instead, but her stubbornness prevailed.

Tyson brings a lived-in feel to her every move as a wife and mother whose gut-wrenching sacrifice and tenacity beats grueling odds. Her face is forlorn, her walk is weary, her smile is spent. But her eyes? They sparkle with a quiet fire that gives her children hope, even amid despair.

*Rudolph Lambert Fernandez is an independent writer who writes on pop culture.*



(L-R) Josie (Yvonne Jarell), Rebecca (Cicely Tyson), David (Kevin Hooks), and Earl (Eric Hooks) gather around to hear David read.

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