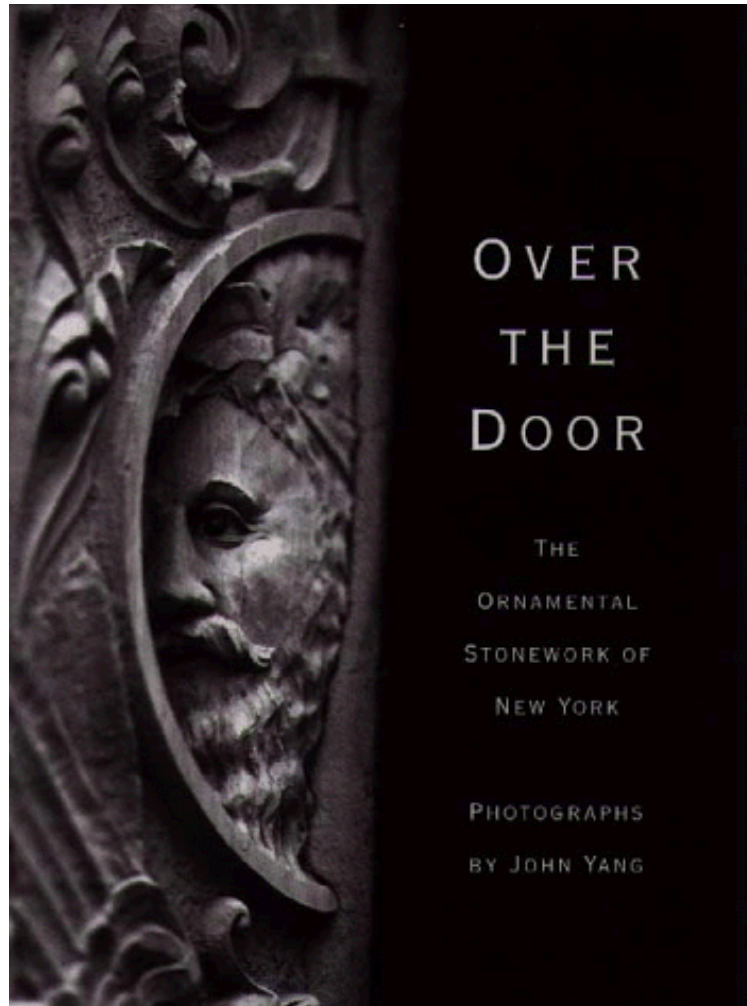


(Mobile pdf) Over the Door: The Ornamental Stonework of New York

## Over the Door: The Ornamental Stonework of New York

*John Yang*

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**John Yang : Over the Door: The Ornamental Stonework of New York** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Over the Door: The Ornamental Stonework of New York:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Excellent photographsBy David ArbogastThis is a lovely set of black-and-white photographs of decaying nineteenth-century architectural ornament found on the facades of many Manhattan buildings. The photographs are haunting and are supplement with short portions of various writers such as Ruskin on the nature of decay and memory. There is nothing terribly new or exciting here, but a really fine set of photographs.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Portal to the pastBy Roman HollidayThis handsome little volume invites the reader to look up, at hand-carved decorative elements on buildings throughout Manhattan. Whether you are actually traveling or merely sitting in an armchair this offers a lovely way to slow down and really see examples from the past that have been preserved and/or are slowly deteriorating.

John Yang is a New York-based photographer whose landscape photographs are in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Smithsonian Institution, the Chasanoff Collection at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and many other important public and private collections of photography. From 1989 through 1993, Yang undertook an intensive photographic study of the ornamental sandstone reliefs on New York City brownstones and tenements of the late 19th century. The result is *Over the Door*, a meticulously prepared and exquisitely produced volume of urban portraiture -- Yang's photographs capture the various moods of the many sculptured personalities that stand watch over the doorways, spandrels, and arches of Manhattan. The photographs are also a study of the effects of time on these carvings, which, regrettably, are rapidly deteriorating from acid rain as well as the happenstance of real estate development -- demolition and destruction each take their toll on the carvings. Yang's methodical study of these relief carvings -- he covered every block of Manhattan, from the Lower East Side to Harlem, several times in his search for subjects -- has yielded a valuable book for the sake of its subject alone; but like Atget, Walker Evans, and other great "documentary" photographers, Yang chose his specific subjects primarily for their value to him as material for his art. This dialogue between historical documentation and the artist's personal vision makes *Over the Door* a landmark book of photography, as well as a photographic book of landmarks. It also brings to the fore the artwork of another era -- faces peering down from the many layers of the modern urban streetscape.

.com Look up. New York's buildings are bedecked with a menagerie of creatures mythical and realistic, adorned by a population of gods and people genuine and imagined and trimmed with designs and details that range from the fanciful to the sublime. The architectural embellishments that decorate the city's stone buildings have suffered the ravages of time and indifference at the hands (and droppings) of pigeons, pollution, landlords, and vandals. But as photographer John Yang records in *Over the Door*, the city's architectural legacy still deserves our attention, appreciation, and protection. The photographer John Yang has made a haunting record of Manhattan's ornamental stonework, most of which hovers above the city's streets unnoticed by passers-by and uncared for by its owners. Andrew Jacobs, *New York Times Book*