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Roberto, The Insect Architect

By Nina Laden



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Ever since he was a wee mite (a termite, that is), Roberto has wanted to be an architect. Discouraged by his wood-eating family and friends, he decides to follow his dream to the big, bug city. There he meets a slew of not-so-creepy, crawly characters who spark in him the courage to build a community for them all.

With stunning collage illustrations and witty text, the creator of the bestselling *The Night I Followed the Dog*, *Private I. Guana*, and *When Pigasso Met Mootisse* brings to life a funny and inspirational story that will encourage readers of any age to build their dreams.



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Roberto, The Insect Architect By Nina Laden Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

"Even when Roberto was little, he went against the grain. Like most termites, he melted over maple, and pined for pine. Oak was okay, too. But Roberto didn't eat his food. He played with it."

Young Roberto has a burning desire to become an architect. Even when the other termites mock his ambition, Roberto is never derailed from his dream. So, like so many career-minded youth, this mite with a mission sets off for the big, buggy city. Here, sadly, he is thwarted by his heroes, Hank Floyd Mite and Fleas Van Der Rohe. But this inspired insect decides not to wallow in his sorrows but to help out other bugs with even greater problems. Soon, a fantastic, eclectic housing development is in the works. The mysterious architect chooses to remain anonymous, but ultimately can't avoid the grateful adulation of the carpenter ants, ladybugs, and house flies he has helped.

Nina Laden's fantastic collages use old catalog and magazine images, blueprints, cork veneer, and lots more, to create buildings, cities, and buggy creatures the likes of which you've never seen. The Leaning Tower of Pisa tilts away from the Empire State Building, with Gaudi's quirky sculptural edifices looming nearby. Some of the hilarious wordplay may fly over the heads of non-architects, but the overall humorous effect--and the go-for-your-goals message--will not be lost on anyone. For more charming and artistic pun-ishment, try Laden's *When Pigasso Met Mootisse*. (Ages 6 to 11) --*Emilie Coulter*

From Publishers Weekly

This good-natured tale, whose striking collages incorporate wood products and city photographs, introduces a termite who "went against the grain.... Roberto didn't eat his food. He played with it." While other termites picnic on "wood chips" and shotgun shacks, Roberto yearns to build with boards. He also exhibits a philanthropic streak. His first project is a neighborhood for homeless bugs, including a fireproof stone dwelling for a ladybug whose first house, per the nursery rhyme, burned down. Laden (*When Pigasso Met Mootisse*) wittily imagines a termite with a social conscience, one who ensures that bedbugs have "their very own beds." She incorporates woodworking tools into her bug-themed spreads and creates furniture from carefully cropped pieces of cork and veneer. Ant-like Roberto hunches over a mahogany-brown drafting table, busily drawing blueprints for a milk-carton shelter and a conical hive with neat circular windows. Even if children don't get the gags about Hank Floyd Mite (seated at a Guggenheim-shaped desk with a sketch of Fallingwater) and Fleas Van Der Rohe, nonstop insect quips and humorous bug house illustrations keep this book buzzing along. Ages 2-6. (Oct.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 2-4, younger for reading aloud. While playing with his wood-chip dinner, prodigy termite Roberto dreams of being an architect. He moves to the city, where he tries to find a job with famous designers but all reject him. Wandering home, he meets swarms of disenfranchised, homeless bugs, and he decides to build a community for them. Planning and building the entire project himself, Roberto creates a sensation even before his identity is revealed, and once the secret is out, he becomes a legend. The lively text is filled with challenging words and some fun puns, although many of them, like the hilarious Hank Floyd Mite and Fleas Van Der Rohe, will be beyond the youngest readers. It's the elaborate, whimsical collages that are exceptional here. Nearly bursting from the pages, they combine painted, drawn, and photographed images in spreads that perfectly capture the energy of the city and the creative excitement of architecture, as well as irresistibly expressive bug characters. An architectural fantasy picture book for children who dream of

building. *Gillian Engberg*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Herbert Beckley:

Book is usually written, printed, or outlined for everything. You can know everything you want by a guide. Book has a different type. As you may know that book is important factor to bring us around the world. Close to that you can your reading ability was fluently. A publication Roberto, The Insect Architect will make you to possibly be smarter. You can feel much more confidence if you can know about almost everything. But some of you think which open or reading the book make you bored. It's not make you fun. Why they could be thought like that? Have you looking for best book or suitable book with you?

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