

FIRST EARTH

Uncompromising Ecological Architecture

David Sheen

First Earth is about a massive paradigm shift for shelter—building healthy houses in the old ways, out of the very earth itself, and living together like in the old days, by recreating villages. An audiovisual manifesto filmed over four years on four continents, it proposes that earthen homes are the healthiest housing in the world; and that since it still takes a village to raise a healthy child, we must transform our suburban sprawl into eco-villages.

First Earth is not a how-to film, but a why-to film. It establishes the appropriateness of earthen building in every cultural context, under all socio-economic conditions, from third-world communities to first-world countryside, from Arabian deserts to American urban jungles. In the age of collapse and converging emergencies, the solution to many of our ills might just be getting back to basics, for material reasons and for spiritual reasons, both personal and political.

First Earth features curving art-poem dwellings in the Pacific Northwest in Canada and the US; thousand-year-old apartment-and-ladder architecture of Taos Pueblo; centuries-old and contemporary cob homes in England; classic round thatched huts in West Africa; bamboo-and-cob structures now on the rise in Thailand; and soaring Moorish-style earthen skyscrapers in Yemen. Featuring appearances by renowned cultural observers and activists Derrick Jensen, Daniel Quinn, James Howard Kunstler, Richard Heinberg, Starhawk, Chellis Glendinning, and Mark Lakeman as well as major natural building teachers Michael G. Smith, Becky Bee, Joseph Kennedy, Sunray Kelly, Janell Kapoor, Elke Cole, Ianto Evans, Bob Theis, and Stuart Cowan.

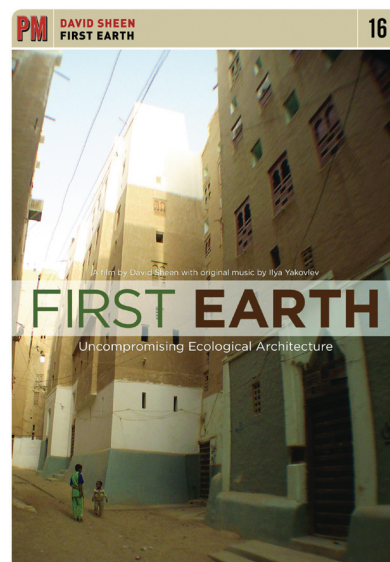
ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

In addition to authoring the scratch video *The Red Pill* (2003), David Sheen has been documenting, studying, designing, and building ecological housing since 2001. He apprenticed with Ianto Evans and Linda Smiley at the North American School of Natural Building, and at Michael Smith's Emerald Earth. He also learned biomimicry, the study of nature's design principles and its application to human habitats, with architect Eugene Tsui.

ACCOLADES

"This evocative and beautiful documentary shows why building with earth works well structurally, compels the eye and heart, is healthier for builders and dwellers than most other construction methods, and feels good to live in."

—Diana Leafé Christian, author of *Finding Community*



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