



The Culture of Building

Howard Davis

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The Culture of Building describes how the built world, including the vast number of buildings that are the settings for people's everyday lives, is the product of building cultures--complex systems of people, relationships, building types, techniques, and habits in which design and building are anchored. These cultures include builders, bankers, architects, developers, clients, contractors, craftspeople, building inspectors, planners, and many others. The product of these cultures, which operate building after building, is the built world of cities and settlements. In this book, Howard Davis uses historical, contemporary, and cross-cultural examples to describe the nature and influence of these cultures. He shows how building cultures reflect the general cultures in which they exist, how they have changed over history, how they affect the form of buildings and cities, and how present building cultures, which are responsible for the contemporary everyday environments, may be improved. Following the development of the idea of building cultures using several historical examples, the book lays out a framework that puts such topics as craft and professionalism, the vernacular and nonvernacular, and design and construction in common frameworks. Although the book ranges widely over different cultures and historical periods, it emphasizes the transformations that took place in architecture and building practice from the late eighteenth century to the present. Finally, the book uses a series of contemporary examples that demonstrate the building culture as a living concept. These examples, which include built work as well as innovative processes that go beyond the work of architects alone, are described as the seeds that can help the emergence of a better build world. This beautiful book features over 260 color and black-and-white illustrations, most from the author's extensive collection of slides, and includes photographs, prints, and drawings from historical archives and contemporary architectural offices.

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