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## The Culture of Building

*Howard Davis*

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**Howard Davis : The Culture of Building** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Culture of Building:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A primo treatise on building and cultureBy Llewellyn SeiboldThis book is used as a text in my introductory class on architecture at a university. Although the book is above an introductory level it is the most compelling book on the building culture that I know and students, or readers, will take away an enlightened and comprehensive view of architecture and the culture surrounding it. The author provides a thoroughly researched and historically based account of ideas, precedents and challenges that shaped building cultures and challenges that face the contemporary contemporary building culture as well.0 of 0 people found the following

review helpful. Five StarsBy CustomerExcellent book. A must for planners.4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. The Real \*\*\*\*By Javier RuizThis book is absolutely vital, should be a 101 sort of book for every person involved in construction, and certainly part of every architecture school curriculum. As an architect, I am consistently bombarded with images of flash amazing buildings and projects, but as a person, I see the world is composed of perhaps 2%, if that, of such things. The great depth and breadth of architecture is forged in a manner that has very little to do with Detail or Dwell or Architectural Record (or Architizer these days). This book fills in that 98% and why things are as they are, why great built environments come from a shared base of knowledge and a healthy 'culture of building', rather than particularly potent designers noted in magazines and art history texts that we tend to fixate upon in the same way that celebrity dominates most fields of human endeavor. (Wow, such a run-on sentence, good thing I am not an author!) Highly recommended, one of my favorite books concerning my profession.

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.

"It's not often that a book appears with the potential to fundamentally change the way we think about the built world. The Culture of Building by Howard Davis is such a book."--Architecture Week"A most welcome contribution to the field...for professionals whose work is related directly or even indirectly to building and construction...[and] for use as a text in courses dealing with the relationship of building and culture."--Journal of Architectural Education"Wonderful and refreshing. It describes, for the first time, a new point of view in which the overall system and process of construction of the buildings in the world--all of them together--is viewed as a single system: and that system is analyzed for its capacity to create a living world, or not, in different traditional and modern societies. The depth of the examples, the beautiful detail that describes individual instances of building process from culture after culture, and the analytical insight in the hundreds of examples, make this book a landmark. The Culture of Building... heralds a new era in our thinking about architecture."--Christopher Alexander"With this insightful work, Howard Davis brings a refreshing breeze to ventilate our stuffy attics of architectural thought. He draws our attention away from the tired, singular icons of architectural history and directs it toward the omnipresent urban fabric that shapes our everyday experience."--Edward Allen, author of How Buildings Work: The Natural Order of Architecture"This unprecedented book should be essential reading, not merely for architects and students of architecture, but for all who are seriously engaged in the production of buildings now, and in the future."--Paul Oliver, Director, Centre for Vernacular Architecture Studies, Oxford Brookes UniversityAbout the AuthorHoward Davis is Professor of Architecture at the University of Oregon.