Building Ideas: An Introduction to Architectural Theory

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Building Ideas An Introduction to Architectural Theory This book is an essential text for students of architecture and related disciplines, satisfying the demand for an accessible introduction to the major theoretical debates in contemporary architecture. Written in a lucid and user-friendly style, the book also acts as a guide and companion volume to the many primary theoretical texts recently made available in reprinted collections. Whilst architectural monographs, collections of building precedents and polemical manifestoes are growing more and more numerous, Building Ideas is the first book to provide an introduction to such a broad range of issues in architectural theory. This text therefore serves to fill a widening gap between the everyday practice of architecture and the often bewildering field of academic theoretical debate. Beginning with a general introduction to the field of architectural theory, covering the interface between philosophy and technology in the production and interpretation of buildings, the book presents the major theoretical positions in contemporary architecture through a series of thematically structured chapters. Each chapter deals with a specific approach to the theory and criticism of architecture by presenting a series of related buildings as illustrations of a key theoretical position, as well as setting this position in a cultural and historical context. Under the five broad headings of 'Architecture as Engineering - The Technological Revolution', 'Architecture as Art - Aesthetics in Philosophy', 'The Return of the Body - Phenomenology in Architecture', 'Systems of Communication - Structuralism and Semiotics' and 'Politics and Architecture - The Marxist Tradition', the book presents a wide but critical survey of the central questions in the current theoretical debate. Providing the theoretical tools necessary for an understanding of the history of philosophies and technologies in architecture, this book is essential reading for undergraduate architectural theory courses as well as a first point of reference for anyone wishing to understand the complex connections between architecture and related fields of cultural enquiry.

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