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How Architecture Works: A Humanist's Toolkit

Witold Rybczynski

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How Architecture Works: A Humanist's Toolkit Witold Rybczynski

An essential toolkit for understanding architecture as both art form and the setting for our everyday lives

We spend most of our days and nights in buildings, living and working and sometimes playing. Buildings often overawe us with their beauty. Architecture is both setting for our everyday lives and public art form?but it remains mysterious to most of us.
In *How Architecture Works*, Witold Rybczynski, one of our best, most stylish critics and winner of the Vincent Scully Prize for his architectural writing, answers our most fundamental questions about how good?and not-so-good?buildings are designed and constructed. Introducing the reader to the rich and varied world of modern architecture, he takes us behind the scenes, revealing how architects as different as Frank Gehry, Renzo Piano, and Robert A. M. Stern envision and create their designs. He teaches us how to "read" plans, how buildings respond to their settings, and how the smallest detail?of a stair balustrade, for instance?can convey an architect's vision. Ranging widely from a war memorial in London to an opera house in St. Petersburg, from the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C., to a famous architect's private retreat in downtown Princeton, *How Architecture Works*, explains the central elements that make up good building design. It is an enlightening humanist's toolkit for thinking about the built environment and seeing it afresh.
"Architecture, if it is any good, speaks to all of us," Rybczynski writes. This revelatory book is his grand tour of architecture today.

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