



Bricks & Mortals: Ten Great Buildings and the People They Made

Tom Wilkinson

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Long-listed for the Guardian First Book Award.

We don't just look at buildings: their facades, beautiful or ugly, conceal the spaces where we live. We are born, work, love, and die in architecture. We buy and sell it, rent and squat it, create and destroy it. All of these aspects of buildings--economic, erotic, political, and psychological--are crucial if we are to understand architecture properly. And because architecture molds us just as much as we mold it, understanding architecture helps us to understand our lives and our world.

In this book, ten buildings from across the globe tell stories of architecture from the beginning of civilization to the present day. From the remains of the Tower of Babel to the Summer Palace in Beijing, built and destroyed by Europeans, to the Ford car plant where the production line was born, Tom Wilkinson unpicks these structures to reveal the lives of the people who built and used them. Architecture has always had a powerful and intimate relationship with society and the lives of those who build and live with it. It has often been used to try and improve society. But can architecture change our lives for the better?

The buildings are: the Tower of Babel, Babylon; Nero's Golden House, Rome; Djinguereber Mosque, Timbuktu; Palazzo Rucellai, Florence; the Garden of Perfect Brightness, Beijing; the Festival Theatre, Beyreuth; E.1027, Cap Martin; Highland Park Ford Plant, Detroit; and the Finsbury Health Centre, London.

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