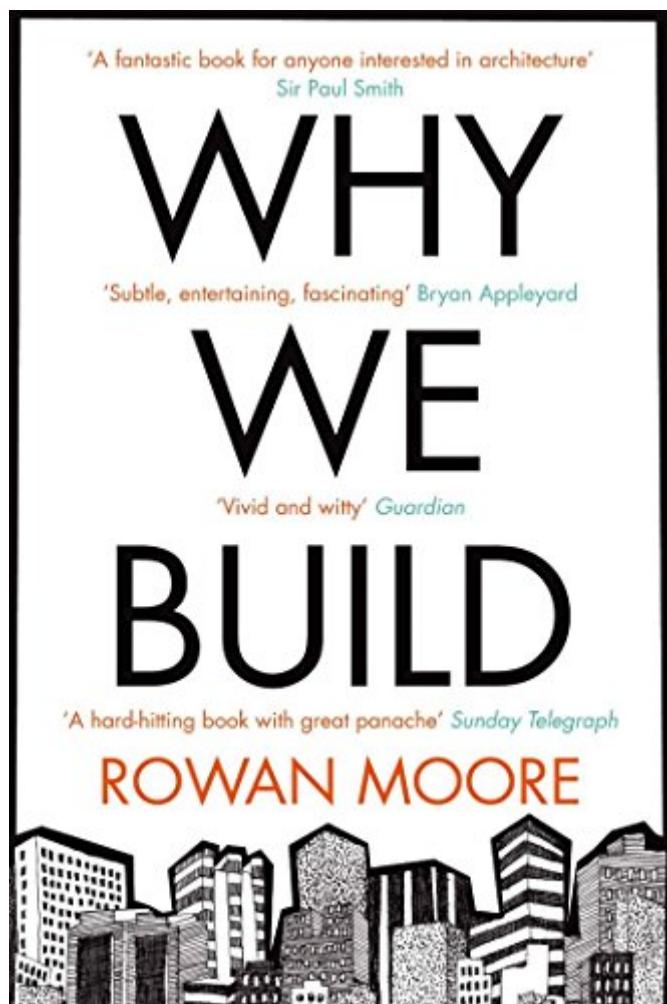


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# Why We Build



## Synopsis

Buildings are driven by human emotions and desires: hope, power, money, sex, and the idea of home. In *Why We Build* Rowan Moore explores the making of buildings from conception to inhabitation, and reveals the paradoxical power of architecture: it looks fixed and solid, but is always changing in response to the lives around it. Moving across the globe and through history, through works of folly, beauty, spectacle, and subtlety - the doomed mansion of an Atlanta multimillionaire, the phenomenally successful High Line in New York - Moore gives a provocative and iconoclastic view of what makes architecture, why it matters, and why we find it fascinating. You will never look at a building in the same way again.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Moore, a trained architect and former director of the Architecture Foundation in London theorizes about the relationship of buildings to emotions. As a critic, he calls his contemporaries on their mistakes, and is humanistic in doing so, saving his praise for those (too few) who have honored the context of their projects. Most of all, he points to the success of projects that honor the people they serve, that are quietly inserted into the life there is. Highest in his echelon is Lina Bo Bardi, an Italian-born Brazilian who, decades ago, designed an art center that simply blended into São

Pauloâ™s Trianon, a public park. Lower down is One Hyde Park, a set of âœharsh and assertiveâ• blocks of apartments selling at 15 to 140 millions of pounds to foreign investors, and spoiling the look of Knightsbridge as well as access to park views. Lowest is Dubai where spectacular and fantastic âœshow-offâ• towers rise above imported beaches and the nasty âœcrisis in the drains.â• Moore takes us around the world and across time, to discuss the visions that build pyramids and world fairs, the hope that designs housing to accommodate chronic poverty, the open mind that enables futuristic technology. He comments on the failure of the âœbig roofâ• concept (think âœairportsâ•), and success of the simplest laundry (think âœshaded poolâ•). He observes Manhattanâ™s contentious rebuilding the World Trade Center simultaneous to the collaborative re-purposing an abandoned railway track as a linear park. Moore is amused by but concerned about starchitect power plays, names that dominate the profession, some who will squash opposition.

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