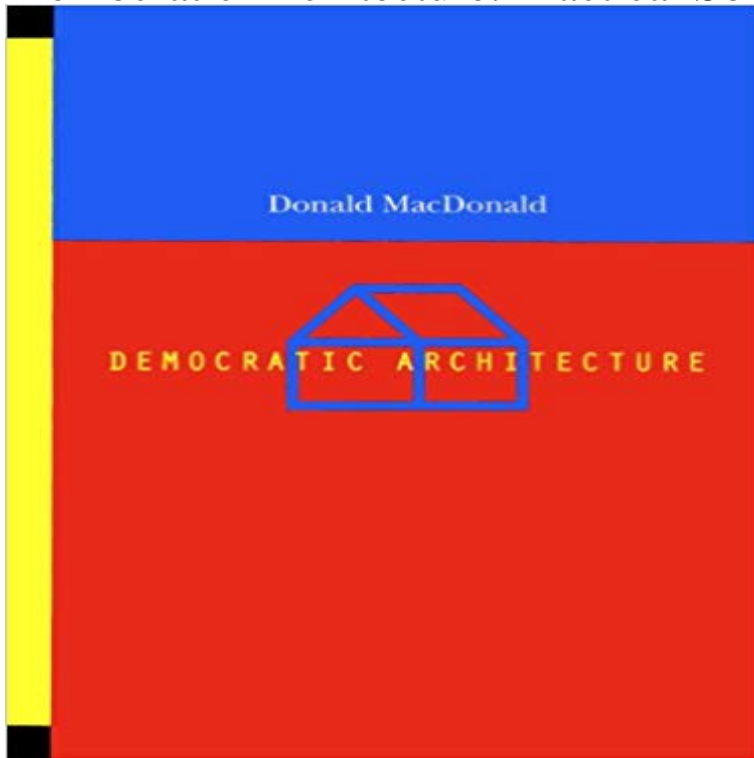


Democratic Architecture: Practical Solutions to Today's Housing Crisis



Because of the architectural professions traditional devotion to designing monumental buildings and homes for the wealthy, it has paid very little attention to the housing needs of the great majority of the people. In Democratic Architecture, award-winning architect Donald MacDonald challenges this disappointing reality while presenting a range of practical solutions to rectify this imbalance, based on the following four principles. The first is that every human being has a right to a home not just shelter but a private, secure, and congenial place to live at an affordable cost or, in the case of the destitute, no cost at all. Second, the primary goal of residential design is to satisfy the needs and desires of the people who will live in a building. Third, in deciding where and how to construct a building every effort must be made to prevent damage to the environment. And finally, design aesthetics should express the multiplicity of society, not some ideal of perfection or political ideology. For architects, adherence to these principles requires a very different attitude from the commonly held one expressed by Philip Johnson when he said, The job of an architect is to create beautiful buildings. That's all. That is not all, by any means, argues MacDonald. Architects indeed have a responsibility to do everything they can to create a more humane society. Featuring practical designs (with over 100 illustrations) for low- and lower-middle-income housing, Democratic Architecture presents exciting new opportunities for home ownership ranging from detached homes and multi-unit buildings to alternative housing models for people whose lifestyles diverge from the mainstream. Written in an engaging, spirited style, Democratic Architecture is required reading for urban planners, policymakers, students, and academics, as well as architecture and design professionals.

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