

A PHILOSOPHER LOOKS AT  
ARCHITECTURE

What should our buildings look like? Or is their usability more important than their appearance? Paul Guyer argues that the fundamental goals of architecture first identified by the Roman architect Marcus Vitruvius Pollio – good construction, functionality, and aesthetic appeal – have remained valid despite constant changes in human activities, building materials, and technologies, as well as in artistic styles and cultures. Guyer discusses philosophers and architects throughout history, including Alberti, Kant, Ruskin, Wright, and Loos, and surveys the ways in which their ideas are brought to life in buildings across the world. He also considers the works and words of contemporary architects including Annabelle Selldorf, Herzog and de Meuron, and Steven Holl, and shows that – despite changing times and fashions – good architecture continues to be something worth striving for. This new series offers short and personal perspectives by expert thinkers on topics that we all encounter in our everyday lives.

PAUL GUYER is Jonathan Nelson Professor of Humanities and Philosophy at Brown University. He is the author of numerous books on Kant and aesthetics, including *Knowledge, Reason, and Taste: Kant's Response to Hume* (2008) and the three-volume *A History of Modern Aesthetics* (Cambridge, 2014).

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-82042-4 — A Philosopher Looks at Architecture

Paul Guyer

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## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,  
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79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

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[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108820424](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108820424)  
DOI: 10.1017/9781108907019

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First published 2021

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ Books Limited, Padstow Cornwall

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

ISBN 978-1-108-82042-4 Paperback

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