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Nicholas Clarke / Roger Fisher

Architectural Guide South Africa

Owing to its cultural and ethnic diversity, South Africa is home to one of the most complex populations of all time. It is well known in the country's history that this has led to many conflicts. Twenty years have passed since apartheid was indeed abolished with the election of Nelson Mandela in 1994 and the democratization of the country, yet in social reality this is still not fully represented - and sometimes not even in the architecture.

The *Architectural Guide South Africa* explores how colorful the country, known as the „Rainbow Nation“, is from an architectural viewpoint. The two authors Nicholas Clarke and Roger Fisher, both architectural historians from Pretoria and thus insiders and profound experts on the subject, provide an overview of the history of construction – as well as the political history – of its four largest cities Cape Town, Durban, Pretoria and Johannesburg. They guide the reader through the earliest Dutch Settlements in the 17th century, the Boer Wars, the founding of the South African Union, apartheid and the subsequent late democracy, demonstrating how these changes are more or less mirrored in the development of architecture as well: from the earliest militarily-motivated buildings to current architectural styles oriented towards England or the Netherlands, covering Art Deco and International Modernism, followed by „Monumental Nationalism“ and lastly Regionalism.

The four cities are presented systematically and in a clearly structured manner, allowing the reader to obtain a quick overview of the colorful diversity of the cities, even if they are unfamiliar with the architecture of South Africa. The cities are also portrayed by local architects in each introduction, infusing the condensed factual information with a personal touch as well as giving insider knowledge. Overall, the authors present more than 150 readily accessible buildings open to the public. Particular attention is also paid to building a better infrastructure, a task that is far from complete and which aims to remove the barriers between black and white (such as by building better connections to make the „Homelands“ more accessible to the cities). Those who travel to South Africa and wish to find out more about the nature of the cities, aside from the famous national parks, are offered the ideal platform to do so through this Architectural Guide.

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South Africa

Architectural Guide

Edited by Ingrid Stegmann, with a preface by Volkwin Marg

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