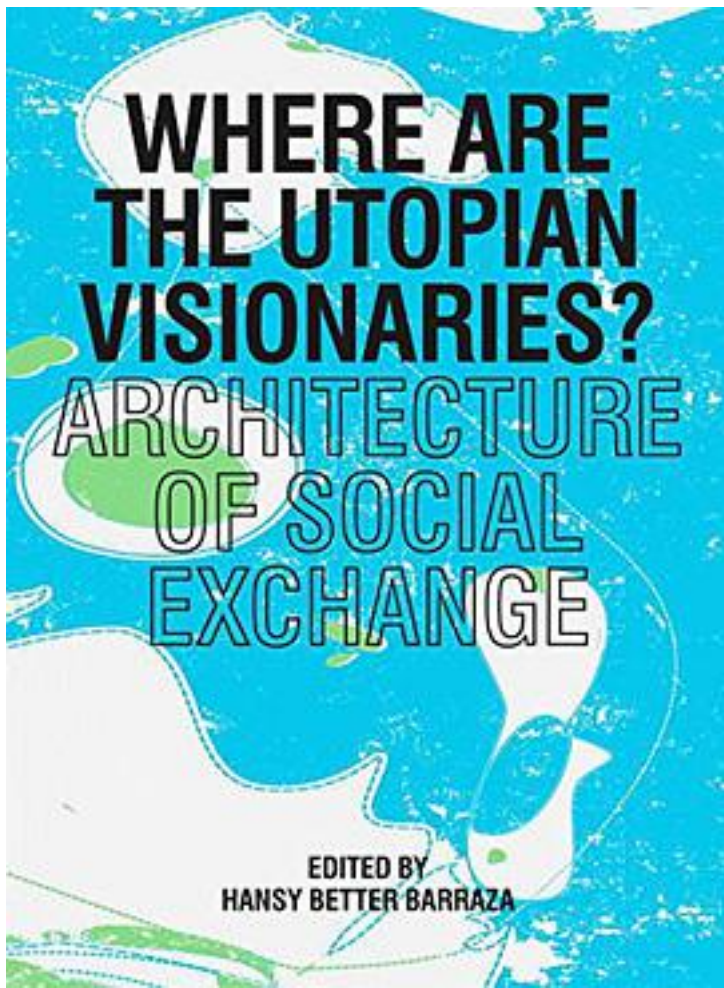


Where are the Utopian Visionaries?



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出版者:Periscope

出版时间:2012-10-25

装帧:Paperback

isbn:9781934772799

This is a book ideally suited to a world being redefined - rescued, many hope - through community service, grass roots activism, and protection of the environment. It

contains essays, mostly written by young architects, about the benefits and difficulties of working with people, materials, and types of building way off the radar for business-minded or celebrity-seeking designers. There is a memorable essay on bamboo. Jae Cha discusses her collaboration on communal buildings in remote villages of Central America. Balkrishna Doshi introduces a "housing development" in India that its inhabitants, following a few guidelines, build from debris. Each of the essays affords a glimpse into a parallel universe, some as close as Harlem, others light years away in monetary resources and available infrastructures. Like Haiti. Like Malawi. The point throughout this book is not to channel aid from developed to developing sectors of the world economy. It aims instead at reversing the usual flow of power and ideas. The essays show how much of value architects can learn from people who, if noticed by mainstream authorities, have had buildings imposed on them.

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