



Soleri: Architecture as Human Ecology

Antonietta Iolanda Lima

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As much a visionary as he is an architect, Paolo Soleri, born in Turin in 1919, worked with Frank Lloyd Wright in the late 1940s and went on to develop his own organically expressive architecture. Since 1935 he has been involved almost exclusively with the design of alternative urban planning models. By 1970 he had designed thirty "Arcologies," his term for a series of high-density, fantastically unreal megastructures for up to six million inhabitants. This comprehensive monograph, the first on Soleri to be published in the United States, follows his entire career through a presentation of drawings, sketches, and built work.

Since settling in Scottsdale, Arizona, in 1956, Soleri has made a life-long commitment to research and experimentation in urban planning, establishing the Cosanti Foundation, a nonprofit educational foundation. Cosanti's major project is Arcosanti, a prototype town outside of Scottsdale for seven thousand, designed by Soleri, which has continually expanded since construction began in 1970. Based on Soleri's concept of "Arcology," architecture sympathetic to ecology, Arcosanti embodies Soleri's urban ideals: to maximize the interaction and accessibility associated with an urban environment; to minimize the use of energy, raw materials, and land, thus reducing waste and environmental pollution; and to allow interaction with the surrounding natural environment. Antonietta Iolanda Lima's authoritative study of Soleri's long career demonstrates the fascinating evolution of this uniquely sensitive and innovative architect.

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