What theory generates the architecture of a new built environment to save us from environmental collapse? From Christopher Alexander’s long-time colleague — and principal editor of Alexander’s “The Nature of Order” — comes a synthesis that makes sense of buildings from all ages: historical, vernacular, to cutting-edge architectural creations. Salingaros provides an accessible companion-work to the first volume of “The Nature of Order”. Indispensable either as a stand-alone text, or for use in conjunction with “The Nature of Order”, this book of lectures and essays cuts through the often-incomprehensible fog of contemporary architectural discourse to reveal theoretical foundations for design. In clear, easy-to-understand chapters, Salingaros takes readers
step by step through the most important ideas of Alexander's work and his own related contributions towards understanding architecture and its connection to human life.

As an experienced professor, Salingaros displays here a well-honed skill for lucidly explaining complex subjects to students. Ten of the book's 44 chapters are co-authored either with Alexander's colleague and exegete Michael Mehaffy, or with Kenneth Masden. Five additional essays supplement this picture, including contributions by biophilia pioneer E. O. Wilson, modern classicism theorist Léon Krier, and other collaborators. Also included is a provocative exchange between the poststructuralist architect Peter Eisenman and Alexander, who points the way beyond the nihilism and cynicism of so much contemporary design, and toward a more hopeful future. The material gathered here is essential reading for design students, architects, software engineers, and anyone concerned with the evolution of modern design. It gives groundbreaking ideas for design innovation that are invaluables for every practitioner.

This book provides complete details on how to teach an inclusive and innovative course in Architectural Theory. Much of the material was developed as part of a course that Salingaros gave on the subject, introducing scientific thinking into architecture, and actually estimating factors that contribute to the success of a building. Students are helped to understand the entire range and variety of architectural forms using a common conceptual and explanatory framework. Described here for the first time is the key relationship between regional adaptivity and complexity. Students are given an invaluable entry into Alexander's work, which has led to major innovations in software, Wiki, Agile, and many other fields, as well as shaping the thinking of an entire generation of environmental designers.

From the back cover:

“Unified Architectural Theory’ is not theory at all. It is evidence. It lets us see how until recently we have always designed and built. We’ve built buildings and spaces and towns that reflect the order in our genes, in the biological world we’re part of. We’ve felt at home in them because their order makes space for our body and our soul. Now we rediscover how to build a world that does not alienate us from who we are, a world that gives us joy, a world that brings us home.” — Dr. Ir. Jaap Dawson, Technical University Delft.

“The information that I have learned in this one class has been more important than almost all the rest of my classes combined” — Jacob LeMieux, University of Texas.
