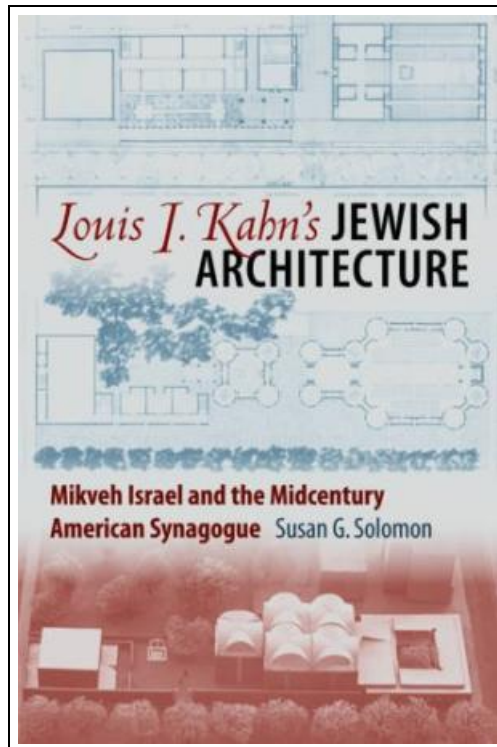


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Brandeis University Press, Waltham, 2009. Hardcover. Condition: New. pages. Hardcover with dustjacket. New book. ARCHITECTURE. The evolution of the postwar American synagogue illuminated through the plans for Louis Kahn's unbuilt Mikveh Israel. In 1961, famed architect Louis I. Kahn (1901-1974) received a commission to design a new synagogue. His client was one of the oldest Sephardic Orthodox congregations in the United States: Philadelphia's Mikveh Israel. Due to the loss of financial backing, Kahn's plans were never realized. Nevertheless, the haunting and imaginative schemes for Mikveh Israel remain among Kahn's most revered designs. Susan G. Solomon uses Kahn's designs for Mikveh Israel as a lens through which to examine the transformation of the American synagogue from 1955 to 1970. She shows how Kahn wrestled with issues that challenged postwar Jewish institutions and evaluates his creative attempts to bridge modernism and Judaism. She argues that Kahn provided a fresh paradigm for synagogues, one that offered innovations in planning, decoration, and the incorporation of light and nature into building design. Susan G. Solomon is the author of *American Playgrounds: Revitalizing Community Space* (UPNE 2005) and *Louis I. Kahn's Trenton Jewish Community Center*. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and heads her own research firm, Curatorial Resources & Research in Princeton, New Jersey. "Valuable . . . Solomon presents a careful and very readable study of those designs, clearly connecting the congregation's religious and communal needs with Kahn's evolving vision. She demonstrates where Kahn's concepts of site, space, light, landscape, and ritual continued to develop, often outpacing the congregation's own ideas. In this, the book is an introduction to Kahn the architect and the idealist. Solomon also offers lengthy and informative excursions into post-World War II views of Jewish identity and community, and of the lively professional and public debate about...



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