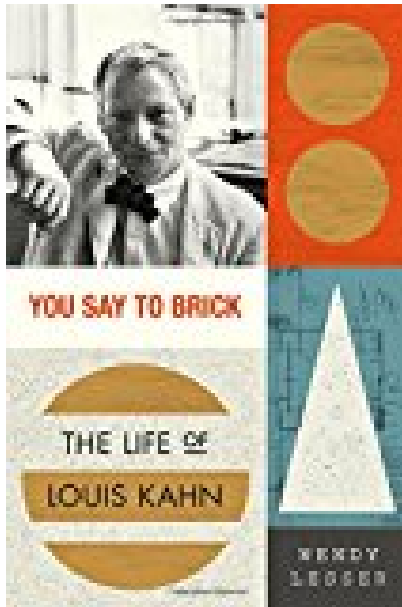


# You Say to Brick The Life of Louis Kahn

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## BOOK DETAILS

- Author : Wendy Lesser
- Pages : 416 Pages
- Publisher : Farrar, Straus and Giroux
- Language : English
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## BOOK SYNOPSIS

Born in Estonia 1901 and brought to America in 1906, the architect Louis Kahn grew up in poverty in Philadelphia. By the time of his mysterious death in 1974, he was widely recognized as one of the greatest architects of his era. Yet this enormous reputation was based on only a handful of masterpieces, all built during the last fifteen years of his life. Wendy Lesser's *You Say to Brick: The Life of Louis Kahn* is a major exploration of the architect's life and work. Kahn, perhaps more than any other twentieth-century American architect, was a "public" architect. Rather than focusing on corporate commissions, he devoted himself to designing research facilities, government centers, museums, libraries, and other structures that would serve the public good. But this warm, captivating person, beloved by students and admired by colleagues, was also a secretive man hiding under a series of masks. Kahn himself, however, is not the only complex subject that comes vividly to life in these pages. His signature achievements—like the Salk Institute in La Jolla, the National Assembly Building of Bangladesh, and the Indian Institute of Management in Ahmedabad—can at first seem as enigmatic and beguiling as the man who designed them. In attempts to describe these structures, we are often forced to speak in contradictions and paradoxes: structures that seem at once unmistakably modern and ancient; enormous built spaces that offer a sense of intimate containment; designs in which light itself seems tangible, a raw material as tactile as travertine or Kahn's beloved concrete. This is where Lesser's talents as one of our most original and gifted cultural critics come into play. Interspersed throughout her account of Kahn's life and career are exhilarating "in situ" descriptions of what it feels like to move through his built structures. Drawing on extensive original research, lengthy interviews with his children, his colleagues, and his students, and travel to the far-flung sites of his career-defining buildings, Lesser has written a landmark biography of this elusive genius, revealing the mind behind some of the twentieth century's most celebrated architecture.

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