

## Book review

### **FAÇADES—TECHNICAL REVIEW.**

Andrew Watts. RIBA Publications, London 2007. ISBN 978-1-8594-6184-6 (soft cover), £15-00, 78 pp.

This book gives an overview of the full range of façade solutions used for new buildings. It ranges from heavyweight brickwork and precast concrete to lightweight plastic cladding systems, the only omission being the rather esoteric one of fabrics. The different façade solutions are set in the context of façade development and the recent trends are described.

For each type of façade the design considerations are discussed for the generic wall. Each chapter then goes into more detail for the most common forms of construction. Typical details are drawn showing the structural components and fixings, insulation and interfaces with elements such as windows and doors. The book is well illustrated with examples of projects that illustrate the scope of the different façade solutions.

Manufacturing and construction are discussed in terms of component sizes and the limitations arising from forming, assembly and installation processes.

The book concentrates on the detailing of façades and lacks an overview of the contribution that the façade makes to whole building performance. It is left to the reader/designer to consider the effect of different areas of glazing and the location of glazing, also the difference in building thermal performance arising from the use of heavyweight and lightweight façade solutions.

The book is a good introduction for engineers and a useful resource for architects during the early stages of façade design. It contains valuable and informative references to all of the technical literature required to follow through to a full technical appraisal of a particular façade design.

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