

Foreword

From his early writings about solar geometry—the physics of sun and earth—Ralph Knowles has become increasingly interested in the cultural response, the rituals and built artifacts that respond to the sun. It is not only the trace of the shadow cast, it is the flux of life that responds, whether the movement of the Anasazi Indians in and around the pueblos to take advantage of daily and seasonal sun or activities of modern living. Life on earth follows the sun as it arches across our skies in predictable ways. Knowles' early books were about that geometry. The range of human responses is richer, more unpredictable, and inspiring. This book is about that poetry.

Although this book is about the sun, buildings, and cities, Knowles has not given us a text about solar design. Look to earlier books for those texts. This book is based on astute observation and reflection, and is thus far wiser. It relates incidents and anecdotes, and is thus more interesting.

I recall a lecture that Ralph Knowles gave before an audience of architecture students, faculty, and professionals. He was showing illustrations of Acoma Pueblo and his studies that indicated solar