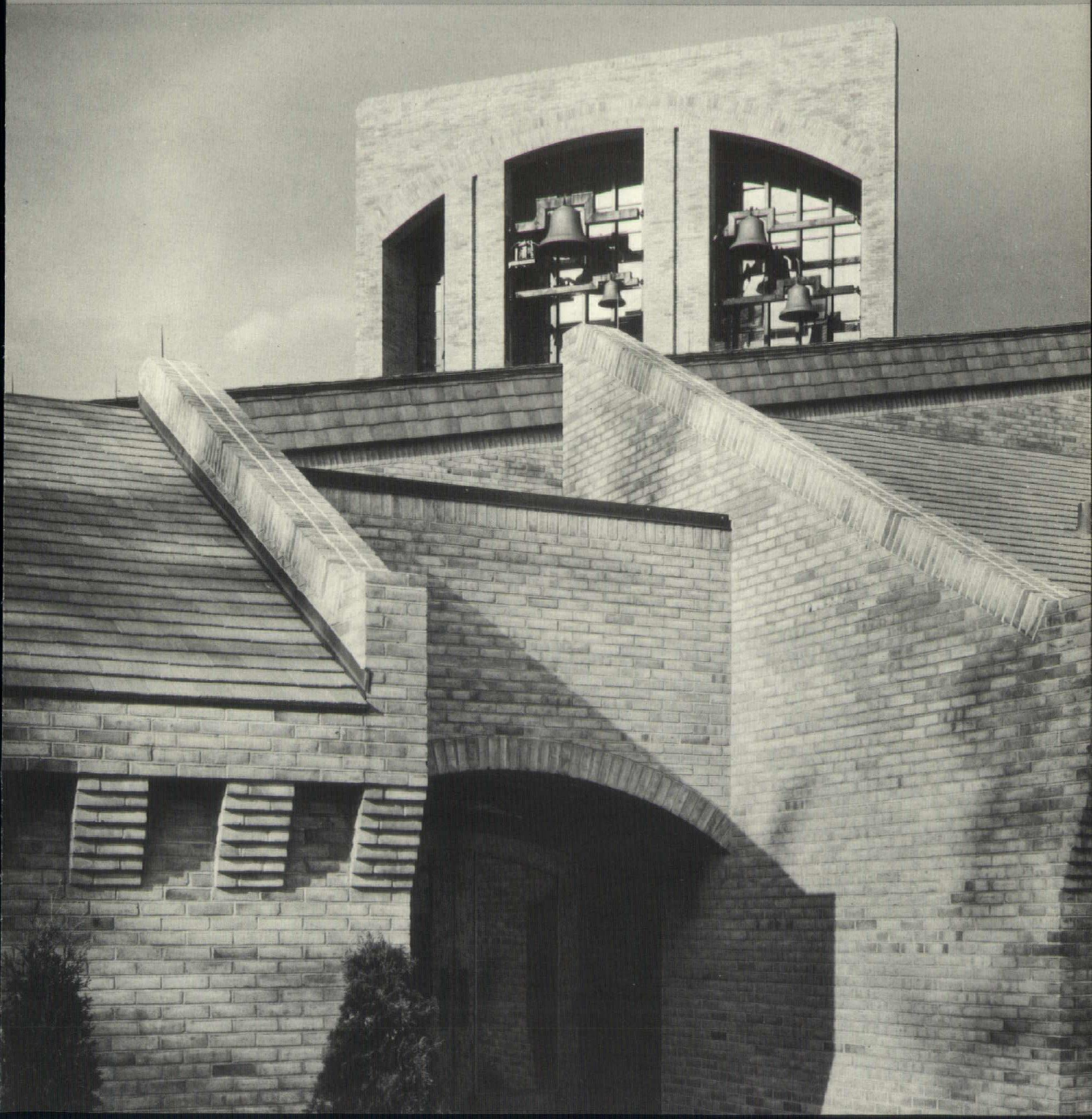
FAITH & FORM

JOURNAL OF THE GUILD FOR RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE / AFFILIATE OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS / VOL. VII, FALL 1974



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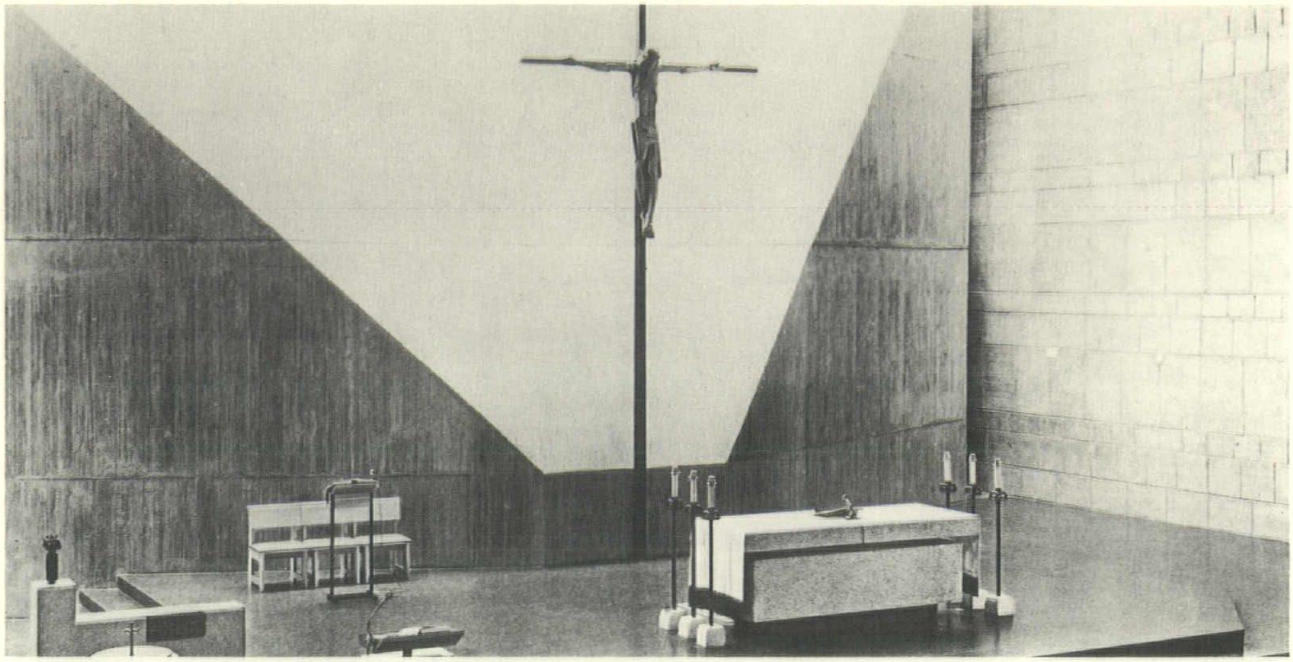

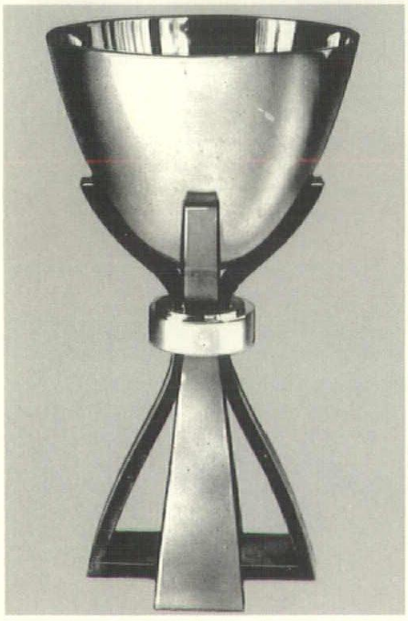

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Next Issue—Spring 1975
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Columbus, Ind.
Church Design—
Its Impact upon the Community

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St. Lawrence Seminary Chapel & Friary
Photo: Hedrich-Blessing

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aubusson: fine art in tapestry

As the new tapestry renaissance, unparalleled since the Middle Ages, spreads throughout the world buyers look to the Aubusson region of France for tapestries of the highest quality. It is here that the centuries-old House of Pinton, premier Aubusson tapestry weavers, are located.

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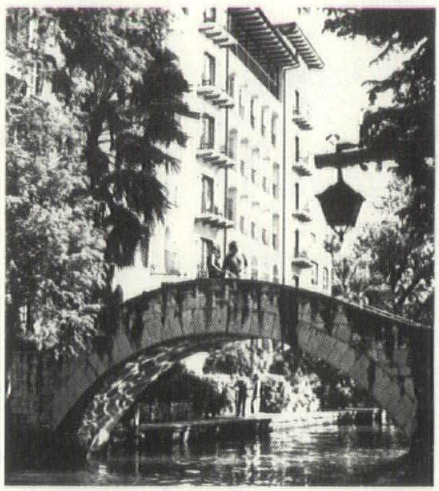
NOTES & COMMENTS

1975 San Antonio Conference —OLD ROOTS— NEW SHOOTS

How can religious structures serve the general good of society? How should religious structures relate to the world of nature? How should religious structures relate to the urban scene? How can religious buildings help to unite communities? How can diversity also be served? In a transient and changeable society is durability a virtue? What value do we put on beauty in contrast to utilitarian values?

These are the questions which confront thoughtful designers and concerned religious leaders—and it is to questions such as these that the 1975 National Interfaith Conference on Religion and Architecture (to be held in San Antonio, April 14-16) will direct itself.



San Antonio is a particularly fitting place for the 1975 Annual Conference to meet. It is a city distinguished by its heritage of historic architectural beauty, and equally distinguished by an exemplary urban development program focusing about its river.

The earliest builders in San Antonio, if we read them through their architecture, respected their own tradition—the Spanish culture. At the same time, they saw the need and the opportunity for change to suit the American scene. Their missions have come to be treasures not only to those who are their cultic heirs, but to all the people of the city. So the Church became a benefactor of all.

The designers of the city center, which has been in process of development for forty years, started with a respect for the elemental virtues of a river and a commitment toward a human city. They have rallied support from diverse sources toward a common humanistic ideal.

What is notably humane in San Antonio has roots in history and nature. The human character exists because people have recognized their roots—and equally because they have met the present and planned for the future. It is our conviction that religious communities—like all human communities—live and grow from roots; and that it is in recognition of those roots that healthy communities respond to the present and to the future.

ASCA Regional Seminar in California

The American Society for Church Architecture will hold its third 1974 regional seminar in Glendale, Cal. on Monday, December 2 at the Russell Lemmon Youth Center of the Glendale Adventist Church. The theme for the conference is "Architecture for Total Ministry." Flexible, multiple use of space will be illustrated, discussed and demonstrated. The aim is to bring together architects, clergy, artists and lay persons to share what can be done with both old and new religious facilities to serve both congregation and community.

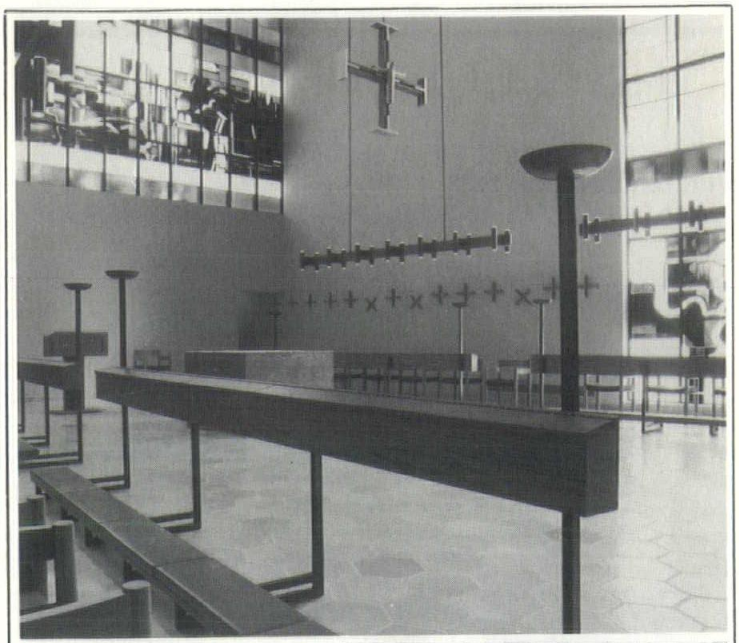
A feature at the seminar will be the use of two filmstrips produced by Lutheran Film Associates of New York: *Toward Understanding Modern Churches* and *Toward Understanding Flexible Church Space*. The writer and producer, Ruth E. Fryhle, is the Coordinator of ASCA Regional Seminars and will moderate small group discussions and panel presentations. Also planned are workshops devoted to an analysis of current problems and creative solutions in church architecture.

The regional chairman for the seminar is Mr. Robert Burman, AIA, architect of this exciting new facility which serves equally well for recreation, fellowship, education, dining or worship. Registration for the seminar (9 a.m. to 5 p.m., including lunch) is $30.00; $15.00 for students. A dinner (at additional cost) will be served at 7:00 p.m., followed by an experience in new forms of worship illustrating the flexible use of the space.

For further information, write or phone Mr. Robert J. Burman, Burman and Rasmussen, AIA-1441 E. Chevy Chase Dr.—Glendale, Cal. 91206—213/245-1343.

Third International Congress

A telecast on the Third International Congress on Religion, Architecture and the Arts—held in Jerusalem, September '73—will be shown on CBS, Sunday, October 27, 10 a.m. EST on the network show "Lamp Under My Feet." Participants in the Jerusalem Congress will remember the CBS crew that followed the Congress program with keen interest. For those of us who were there, it will be an opportunity to relive a memorable experience; for those unable to attend, it will afford a bird's-eye view of the third international meeting involving architects, clergymen, artists and craftsmen from all over the world. ■



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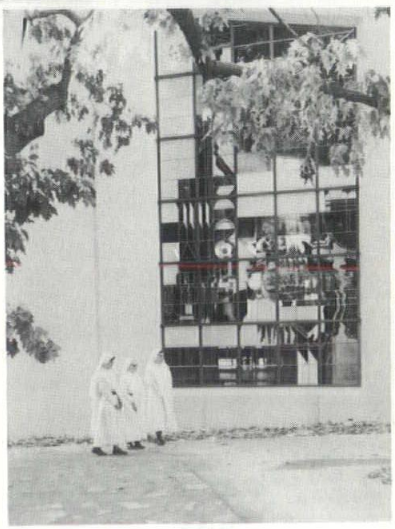
The Rambusch Associates:
Willy J. Malarcher, liturgical design consultant.
David Burliuk, lighting.
David Wilson, leaded glass.
H. Fred Christian, wood and metal cultic appointments.
Peter Hermans, bronze tabernacle relief.
Patricia Malarcher, tapestry.
Richard Zimmerman and **Ronald Millard,** religious art.



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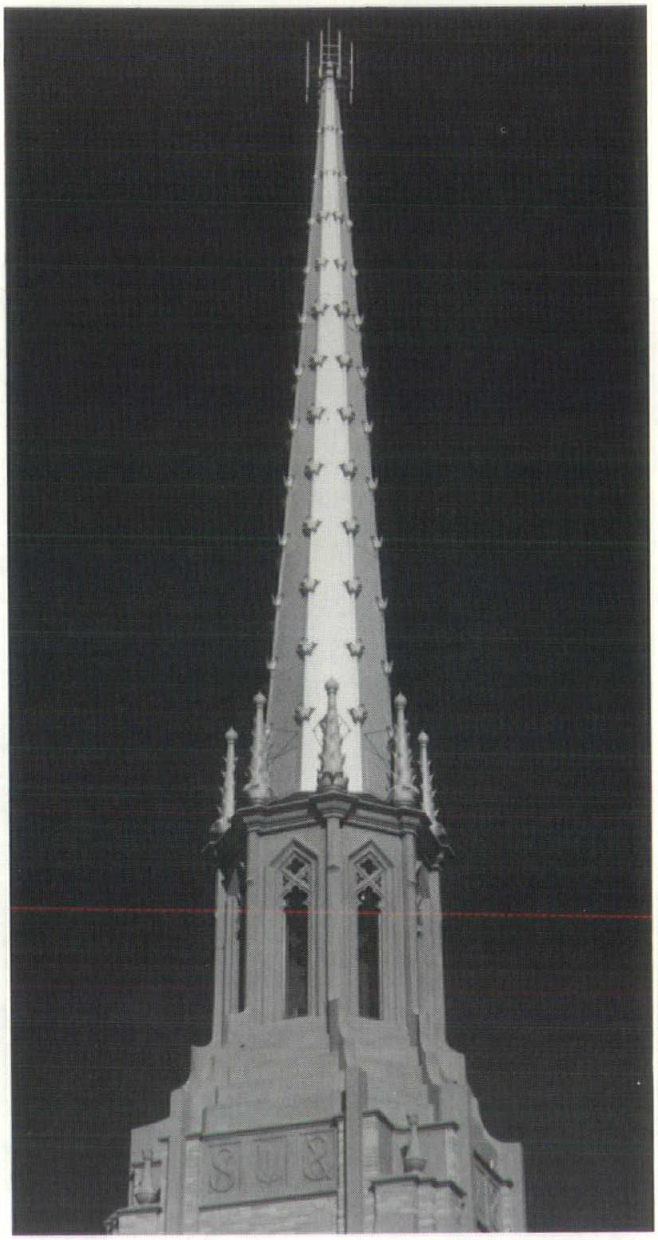

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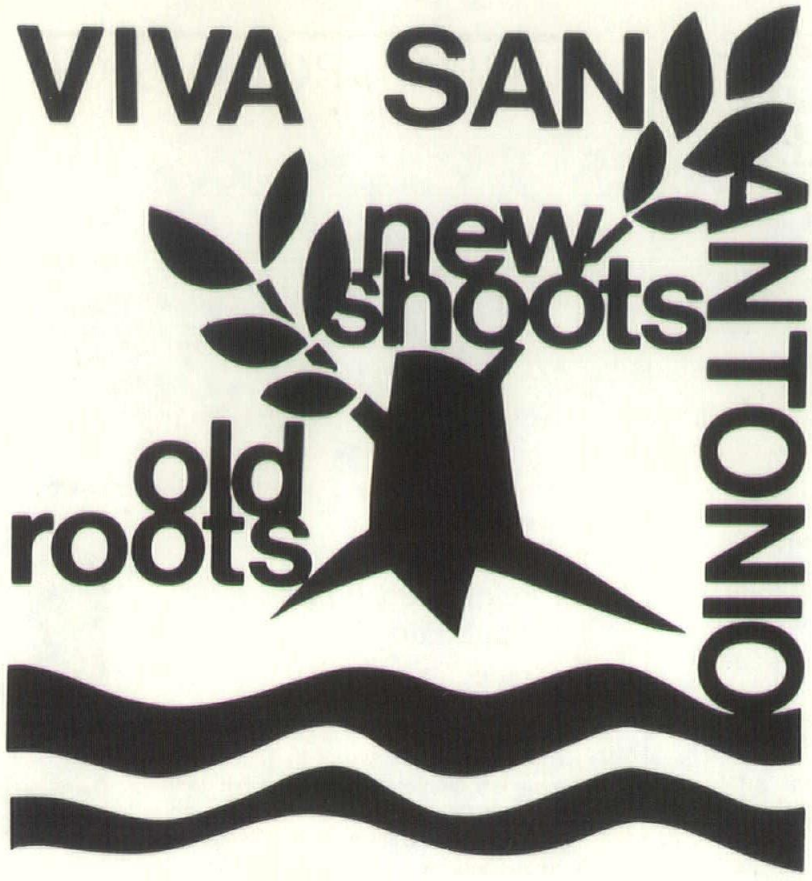

1975 National Interfaith Conference on Religion and Architecture

San Antonio, Tex.—April 14, 15, 16
Hilton Palacio del Rio

Convened by:
THE INTERFAITH RESEARCH CENTER
representing the Guild for Religious Architecture • Commission on Church Planning & Architecture/NCCC • Liturgical Conference • Union of American Hebrew Congregations.

What Are the Roots of the Past that Provide Life for the Future?

How Do We Deal with the Present-Day Diversity of Human Experience within Religious Spaces?

What Is the Church's Response to Human Urbanism?

What Is Architecture's Response to the Changing Mission of the Church?

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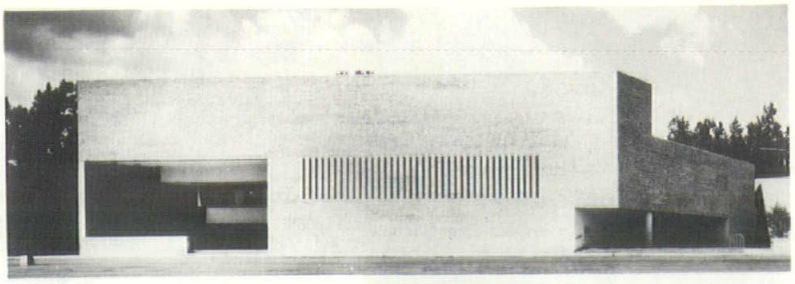
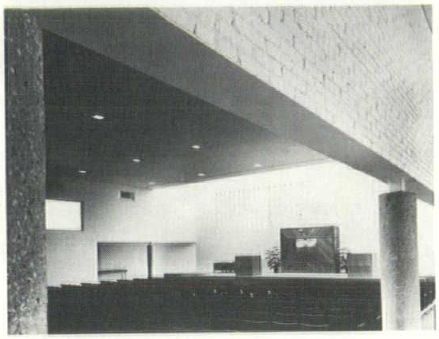
NEW PROJECTS OF INTEREST



Lakeside Congregation for Reform Judaism— Highland Park, Ill.

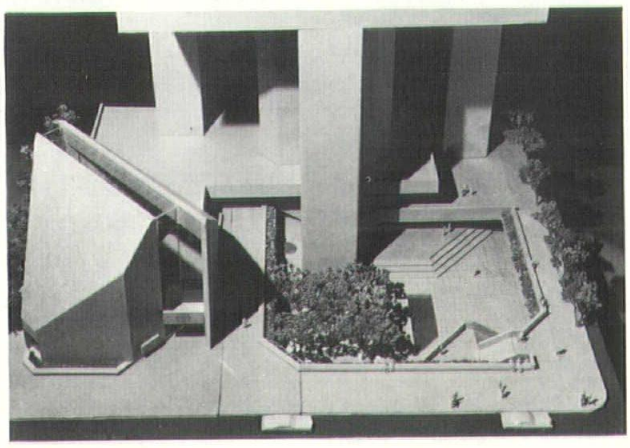
Architects:
Fitch, Larocca & Carington, Inc.—Chicago, Ill.

The Lakeside Congregation for Reform Judaism is a simple geometric plan, built with a common brick exterior and painted common brick inside. The sanctuary seats 500 and is not expandable. This expressed the feeling of the congregation that the mood of most sanctuaries is violated by opening up the room to a social hall during the high holy days. The congregation had indicated their concern that the character and special feeling of the room be exactly right—particularly during the two great services of the year.



The complex contains the sanctuary and lobby, classrooms, library, a social hall and administrative offices. All furnishings and liturgical fittings were designed by the architectural firm.

Fitch, Larocca & Carington, Inc. received the Chicago Distinguished Building Award for its design of Lakeside Congregation.



St. Peter's Lutheran Church, New York, N.Y.

Architects:
Hugh Stubbins & Associates, Cambridge, Mass.

St. Peter's Lutheran Church is the first major urban church to be built in mid-town Manhattan in many years. Its location within the large Citicorp Center commercial complex makes it doubly unique, for this is the first church to be combined with an office building on a condominium basis. Replacing, on almost exactly the same site, a turn-of-the-century Gothic church demolished when the site was cleared, the new St. Peter's continues its tradition of worship and public service in the vernacular of the modern city.

Shaped like two hands loosely cupped in prayer, the basically cuboid form is separated into two halves by a top and side skylight which permits daylight to fill the interior. The sanctuary is located on a concourse level opening out onto a landscaped plaza. The Church's program of outreach to the urban community through its various social, arts and counseling programs is reflected in this design feature, which also enabled the architectural firm to provide seating for 800 people in the sanctuary by extending part of the space under the sidewalk. ■

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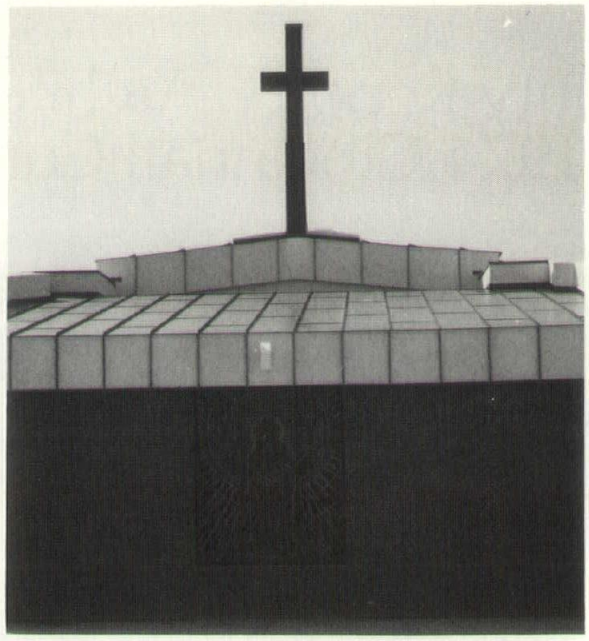

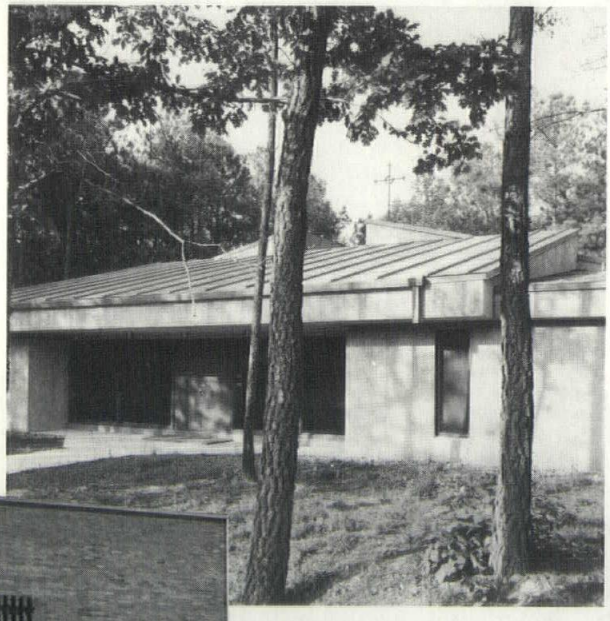

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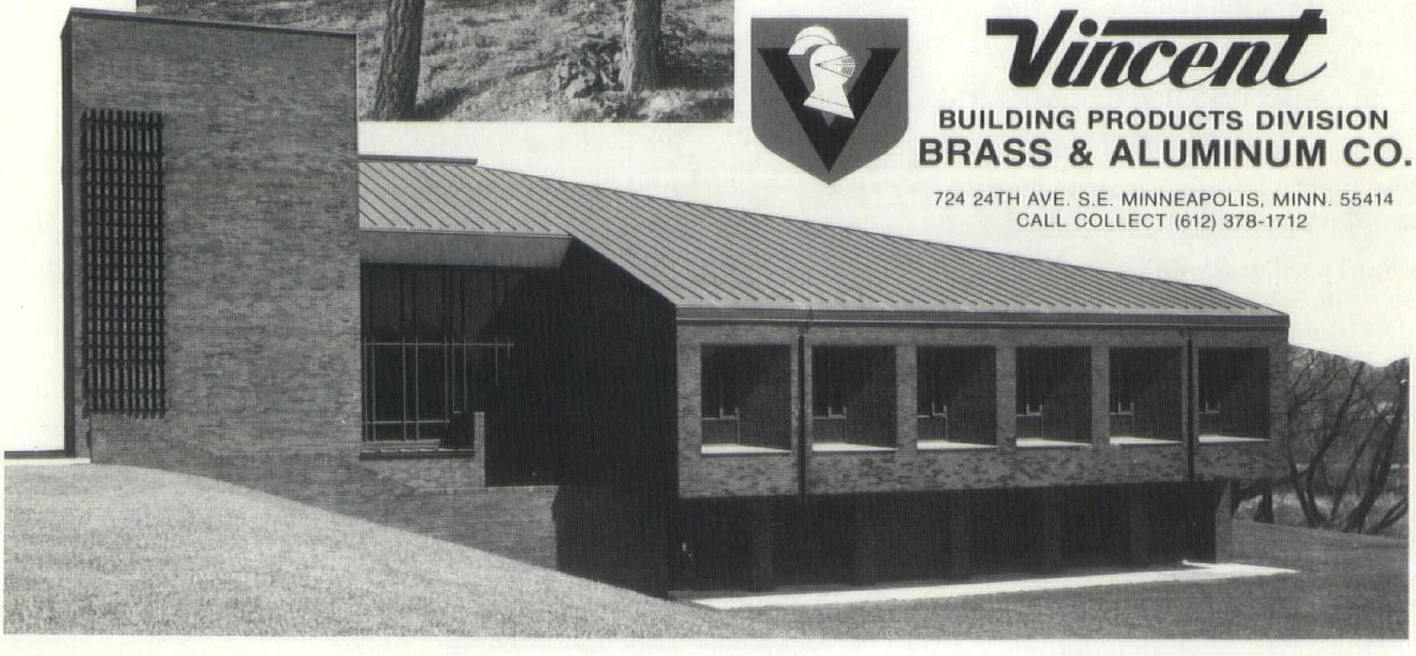

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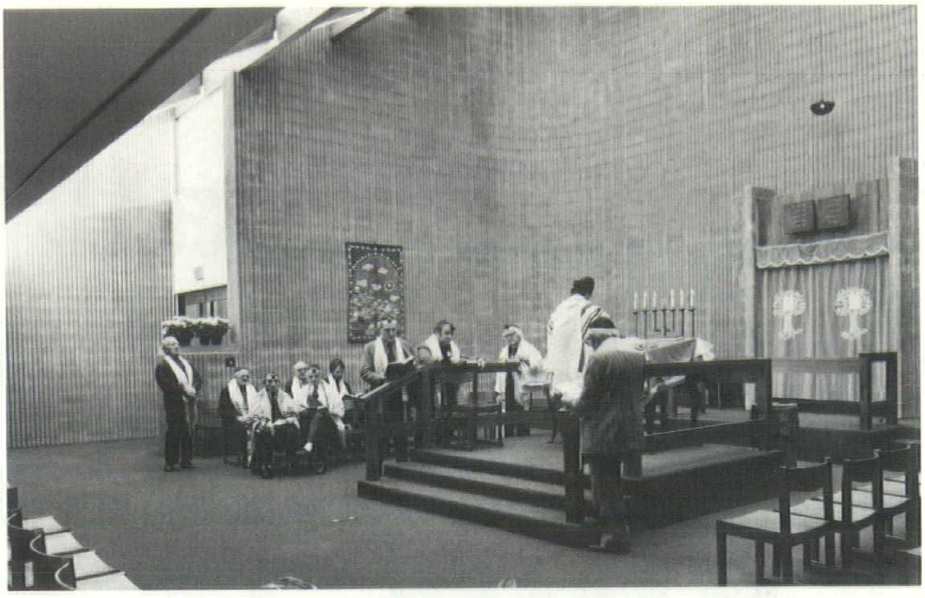
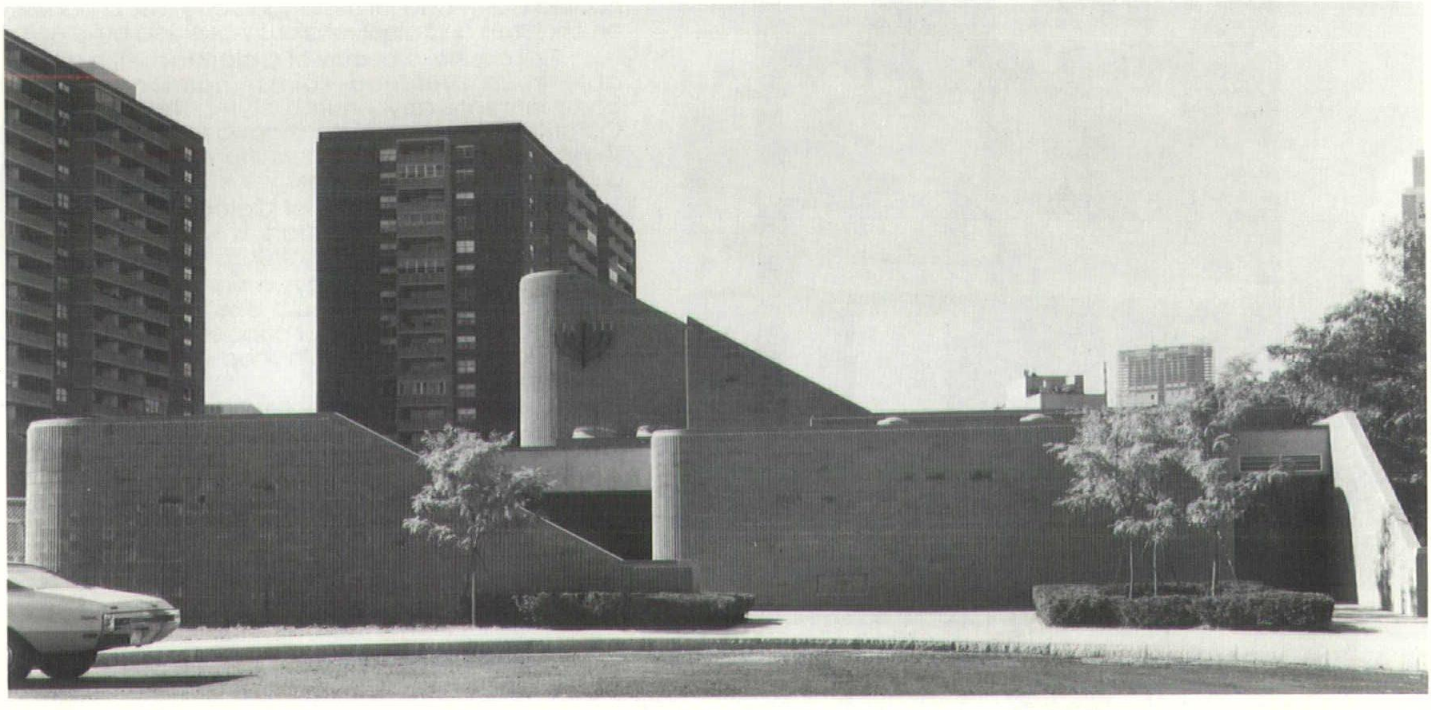
Jury Report—Architectural Exhibit—1974 Cincinnati Conference

ARCHITECTURAL JURY COMMENT:

P. Arthur D'Orazio, Youngstown, Oh., AIA, GRA—Chairman
Gerald S. Hammond, AIA
Robert C. Koepnick
Richard H. Peacock, AIA
The Rev. Raymond L. Sturm

As an over-all summary, the jury commented that there was a noticeable breaking off from traditional liturgy. It expressed general concern with regard to the lack of good economical solutions. The non-church solutions presented were very interesting but not generally of outstanding design quality. From the entries, the jury selected one First Honor Award, two Honor Awards and five Merit Awards.





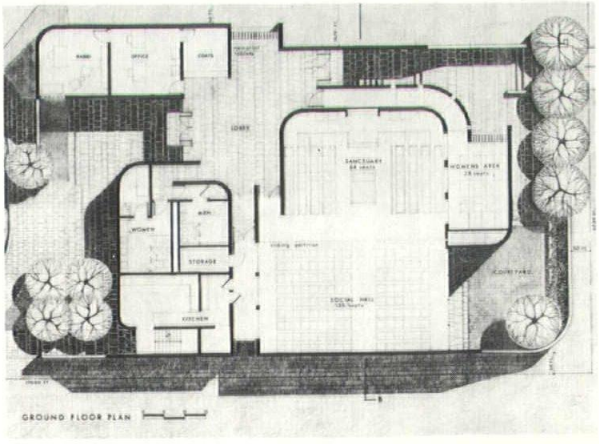
Photos by Hutchins Photography, Inc.

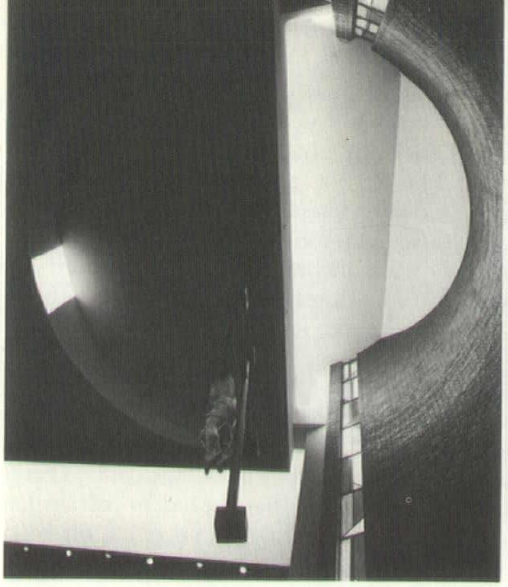
FIRST HONOR AWARD

Beth Amedrish Agudal
Beth Jacob Congregation
Boston, Mass.

Architects:
Childs, Bertman, Tseckares Associates
Boston, Mass.

. . . fine sensitive solution with good inter-relationship of form and functions. The jury commented on a certain vagueness to site conditions. Unanimous jury selection for First Honor Award.



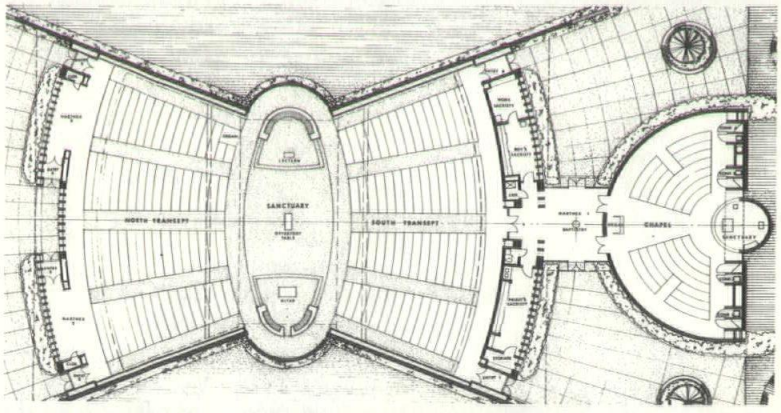


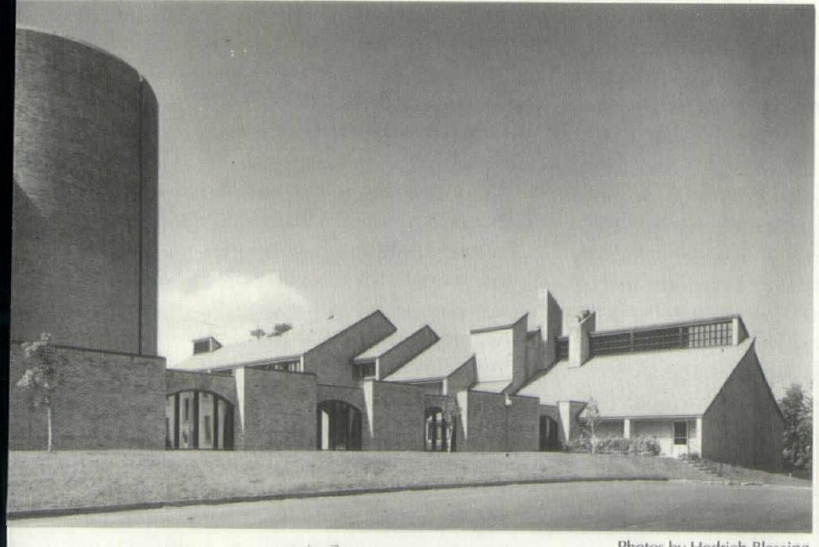
Photos by M. E. Warren

HONOR AWARD
Our Lady of Hope Church

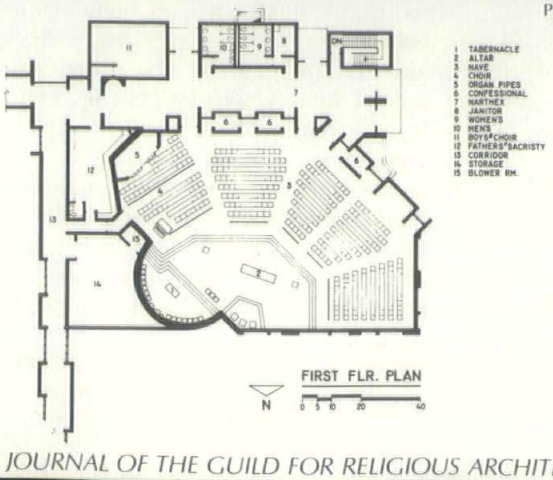
Architects:
Gaudreau, Inc.,
Baltimore, Md.

Good solution considering basic liturgical goals, very strong form. Some difficult pedestrian-vehicular conflicts. Art work questioned as not particularly sympathetic. A "strong impact on religious spirit," both internal and external. Generally agreed to be a superior solution.





Photos by Hedrich-Blessing



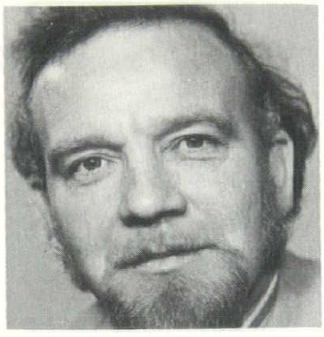
HONOR AWARD
St. Lawrence Seminary Chapel & Friary

Architect:
Charles Edward Stade,
Park Ridge, Ill.

. . . warm humane usage of space. Interesting application of traditional forms. Sensitive site plan. Certain geometrical indulgences are forgivable but expensive and not essential.

SACRED SPACE: PARAMETERS AND POETICS*

by
Patrick J. Quinn, AIA
Dean, School of Architecture
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Troy, New York



I was most pleased to be invited back to speak at the National Interfaith Conference. The last time was eight years ago in San Francisco and now once again I found myself in a city of hills and water and elegant scale, a mixture of old and new, the worst and the best of what architecture can offer.

I did not present a paper, and so this article is an attempt to recapture the spirit rather than the letter of what I said in Cincinnati. When I try to remember whether I said anything worthwhile it is difficult to be fully honest. The talk I gave was more a polemic than a scholarly treatise. Because the slide projectors did not have adequate power available (a slow motion slide show cannot come close to slow motion movies) I introduced some light entertainment in the form of the results of a survey of attitudes among seminarians of several different denominations. I had just reached the point of revealing that less than 15% of the study sample showed any inclination to venture into the traditional pastoral forms of ministry when my pent-up audience had its concentration shattered by two shafts of light signalling that the projectors were fully powered. Statistics cannot compete against a magic lantern show. I suppose I should have continued with a dissertation on the more profound implications of the survey for the future of sacred space, but the temptation to show some cleverly-matched images was too strong, however, and soon we were wondering why a post-World War II German church bore such a striking resemblance to a Berkeley eatery, formerly known as Woody's Smorgasburger. It is easy to juxtapose shrewdly-taken slides showing similarities among forms of diverse origin and totally unrelated function, and to speculate about the shallowness of the "form-follows-function" dogma. It is so marvelously clever to lead an audience deeper and deeper into confusion about the truths that architects hold about design principles and then skillfully to whisk away the clouds of uncertainty by revealing that what Louis Sullivan really said was "form follows function is mere dogma until you realize the higher truth that form and function are one." It is perhaps fortunate that one cannot see beyond the headlamps of the slide projectors where a few blank faces are registering "so what?" looks.

It takes some mental effort to remember that the assignment was to speak about sacred form and sacred images and sacred space. A good collection of slides can be used to make the point, vividly, that certain forms seem to hold universal appeal to the extent that their use in architecture can imply profundity even where it is not. How wonderful it is to take people on a visual trip from the raked sand and rocks of Ryoanji to the river-reflected sunlight on the bark of an overhanging tree. One can quote Cassirer, Langer, Eliade, Louis Kahn, Abbot Suger and a host of others about the non-intellectual, non-rational, non-logical response to form that is evoked when it has inherent beauty. "Sense of the sacred" is a cleverly shaped phrase which, with good timing, one can drop in just at the point when people begin to suspect that you are a little unsure of the validity of what you are saying. If the words "sacred" and "beautiful" seem not yet to have escaped from the taboos of the sixties (tacitly imposed by architects and theologians alike) one can quietly sneak in that old chestnut, "the symbolic function." "Behavioral response to environmental stimuli" is a more fashionable label to use for speculation about our feelings for architecture, but "the symbolic function" is still sufficiently enigmatic and controversial to be a good substitute without sounding overly scientific in discussing space for religious functions.

But after all this, one still is faced with a few questions whose answers cannot be found in either pious or pompous phrase-juggling. For example: Do people really feel that some forms are more sacred, or more evocative of a sense of the sacred than others, or do they merely respond as they think they ought? Do our concepts of the sacred in architecture really change over time, or is formal evolution really the changing fashion of expressing something constant. Knowing that trying to blend theology and architecture is as futile as trying to fabricate a soul in styrofoam, is it not perhaps a little ridiculous to talk about sacred form in the first place?

And what about the recipients of our attempts at building sacred form, the users, the congregations, the pastors and communities in ten thousand large and little churches? Do they have, before we build for them, a concept of the sacred? Do their concepts change with time? Do our buildings change their notions or their attitudes? In the almost forty years of the modern liturgical movement in America, has anyone really ever tried to find out the answers to some of these questions? What data, what facts, what substantive answers have emerged from the many meetings of the Guild for Religious Architecture? Now that we have become mature enough to cross denominational boundaries in seeking answers to the question of how and what we should build for worship or whether we should build at all, do we have any reliable information on how people regard the spaces they use for liturgical functions? The rather disconcerting answer is that we have almost none.

It is quite surprising to discover that while behaviorists have collected enormous amounts of data on attitudinal responses to schools, factories, offices, airports, railroad stations, drug store lunch counters, and park benches, buildings for religion have been left virtually untouched as a source of data.

It is true that a great deal has been written about the art of church building, about programming liturgical space, about adaptability, flexibility, recycleability, etc. but myths about what people need and what people want as built environment are easily perpetuated. Designers (architects) constantly search for

*Edited transcript of material presented at Cincinnati Conference, April 1974

formal innovation that will be valuable. We experiment with space in the name of architecture, but how do we measure our results? Why is it that in forty years we have produced a greater range of formal variety in religious building than in the previous four thousand years? In a time of religious decline doesn't the fact strike one as rather odd? This is not to overlook the consistent work of architects like Schwartz, Maguire and Uhl who seem to have searched for appropriate solutions by using each design as a critical base for the evolution of the next. The number, however, who seem to view a commission to design a church as an opportunity to have fun with form is myriad.

Finding fault with the architects is currently a popular game among behaviorists and liturgists alike, but if one percent of the money spent on church building in the last twenty years had been allocated to research and study of how people actually feel about these forms and spaces, the general results might have been at once more relevant to human need, more economical, and more beautiful. Ten years ago a group which included Edward Sövik, Robert Rambusch, Peter Hammond and others proposed that a center for the systematic study of such questions be established in Washington, D. C., funded jointly by the American Institute of Architects and by major religious bodies. It was a wonderful idea and it led to the First International Congress on Religion, Architecture and the Visual Arts in New York in 1967 and formation of the Interfaith Conference on Religious Architecture.

But bishops must build their cathedrals and pastors must build their parish churches as evidence of progress; then there is usually little time or money left over to bother with studies of whether it makes sense to build in the first place, or if it does make sense, to discover what to build. And as for the nature and value of sacred form . . . well, most bishops and fund-raisers know what they like and what will sell.

Some months ago the New York *Times* in one of its Sunday issues had a major article by Professor Robert Sommer, psychologist, in which he described the thoughtlessness with which waiting spaces are planned at our major airports. He had collected much data, much evidence, to indicate that the seating patterns were, to say the least, de-humanizing. If you read closely you will find that the seating patterns he found so revolting bore a close resemblance to the seating patterns in many of our churches. Some readers may dismiss this as a silly observation, but it is worth recalling that Rapoport and Kantor in an earlier study found remarkable similarity in the environments of prisons and mental hospitals. Such comparisons can lead to poor interpretations and unsound judgments, but the very existence of the similarities ought to suggest to both the designer and the user that more systematic and serious study is in order.

Within the limits of ordinary practice, however, an architect can begin to find out some facts about his buildings and their users, which can provide valuable input to the field of knowledge which is needed. An experiment over the last four years helps to illustrate the point.

The experiment was a comparison of attitudinal responses to space between two communities of similar profile on opposite sides of the United States. The opportunity for comparison was quite accidental. The original experiment was to compare the attitudes of a community before the building of their new Parish Center with their attitudes three years after its completion.

It happened that in the third year a similar community approached me with a similar problem and I decided to find out if their attitudes in 1973 compared with the attitudes of the first community in 1969. I was also interested to find out if any apparent changes in the attitudes of the first community over time might be used as a basis on which to predict potential change in the attitudes of the second community. In each case I used the same series of thirty-two major questions with fifteen sub-questions.

The first community was in northern California. A new parish, spun off from an older one, consisted of approximately two hundred families whose pastor had rekindled his interest in serious theological reading and who was charged with the task of having a church built. His initial approach to me was stimulated by two considerations: first of all, my interest in liturgy and architecture, and secondly, my concern with the economics of good building (his community did not have much money). The parish, located in northern California, had a large number of healthy and vigorous elderly people (sometimes euphemistically called senior citizens). In addition, it had a wide range of members, newlyweds with young children, laborers and craftsmen, teen-agers, college professors, elementary school teachers, etc. The general tenor of the community and indeed of the entire district was conservative. Many of the older members of the parish were self-made, self-employed and proud of their capacity to get things done. There was a large number of retirement homes in the area. In short, the parish represented a particular cross-section of suburban white America, where living was relatively cozy, the climate conducive to a continuous feeling of well-being, and the problems of major metropolitan areas some distance removed; and they wanted to build a church so they hired an architect. The process of arriving at a suitable design was a long and painful one, but the results were gratifying, not only because the building won two national awards, but because the community seemed to keep discovering new and better ways to use it.

The survey of community attitudes was conducted in early 1969. The building was completed in 1970 and the same series of questions was re-submitted to the community in mid-1973. The responses to the various questions were entered as percentages of the total sample, positive and negative, and the percentages over the time span were compared to see if any change had taken place; and indeed a number of changes had.

To my knowledge this is the first time that an architect pursued such a survey over time and the results therefore should be of some interest to other architects, not to mention to pastors and bishops of other parish communities.

The second community was almost identical in profile and make-up to the first. The only real difference was in location. The second one was in south Florida. But the number and cross-sectional profile of the parish was surprisingly similar to that of the Western one. The pastors were of similar ages and seemed to be concerned with similar theological questions. Again the south Florida parish was typical of mostly white suburbia with a parallel percentage of retired couples and senior citizens, and with a similar sense of removal from metropolitan social problems. Just like the California group, they were worshipping in a school cafeteria when I was first introduced to them. Just like the California pastor, the man from Florida felt that my concern with liturgy and the economics of building was important, and so after some initial discussions in which the community had to be persuaded that I had no golden formulae for the design of efficient and beautiful

Cont. p. 26

1974 Cincinnati Conference

RELIGIOUS ARTS JURY STATEMENT

Ms. Kristin L. Spangenburg,
Curator of Prints,
Cincinnati Art Museum,
Chairwoman:

On behalf of the Religious Arts Jury, I am pleased to make the announcement of 1st, 2nd, 3rd and honorable mention awards. In reviewing the jury's three award winners, I discovered that they had one feature in common. Each work was an integral part of an architectural environment. First place winner Emanual Milstein's bronze *Memorial to the Six Million* creates a dynamic spatial tension between the wall placques and recovered capital. Second place winner Gerald Bonnette's bronze *St. Matthew* in its simplistic shape contrasts with the angularity of the surrounding courtyard. Third place winner Dorothy Wolken's embroidered *Torah Covers* amplifies the embellishment on the surrounding ark. An honorable mention goes to Barry Johnston for his bronze *Tribulation (Freedom from War),* which in its intimate scale reveals great sophistication in conception and use of the medium.

The preliminary selection of entries was based not only on aesthetic merits, i.e. use of materials, etc., but how effectively it served the designated function as an object in a specific location. We were unanimous in our feelings that a structure does not end upon completion of the physical plant, but includes the selection of the appropriate furniture.

Religious Arts Jury:
The Rev. Joseph W. Goetz, Assoc. Prof. Theology, Mt. Saint Mary's Seminary of the West
Richard E. Glaser, AIA
Mrs. Ellen Brown, Art Critic, Cincinnati Post
Robert E. Beaven, Sculptor, Assoc. Prof. Fine Arts, University of Cincinnati

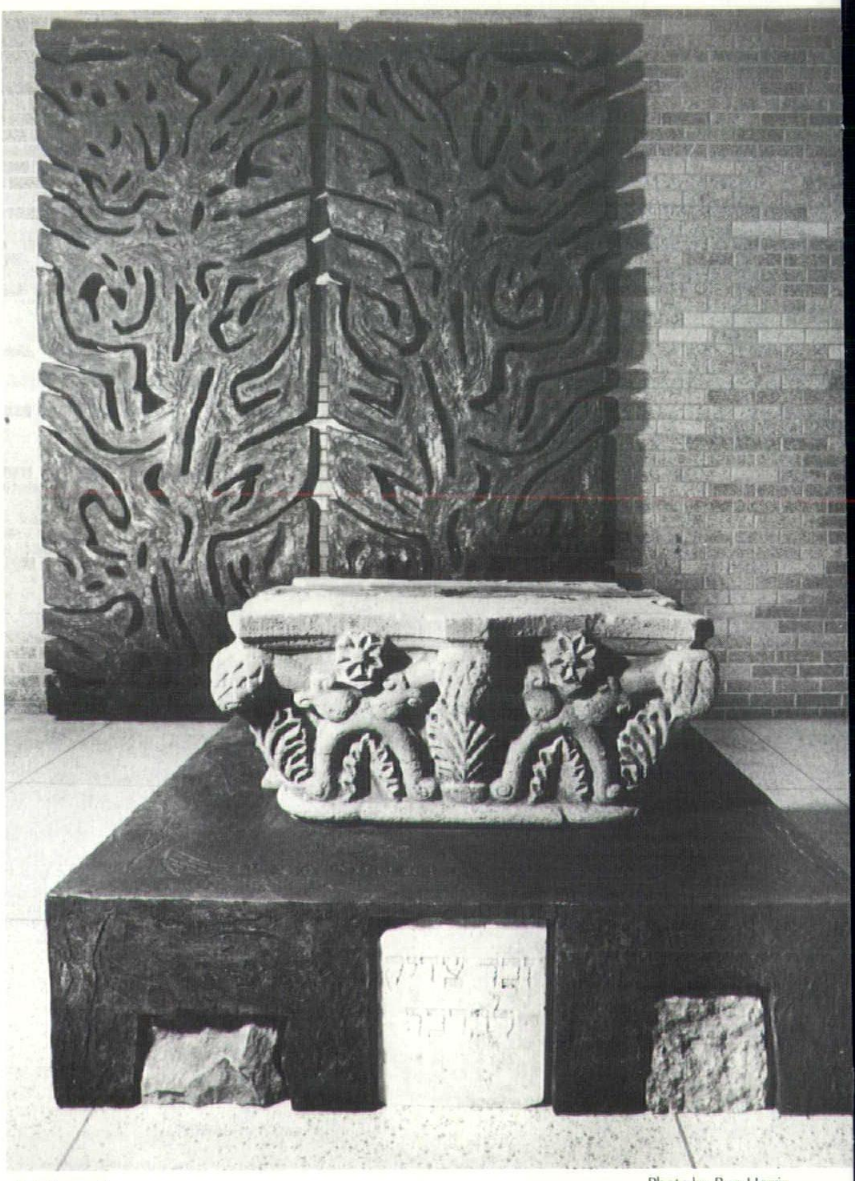
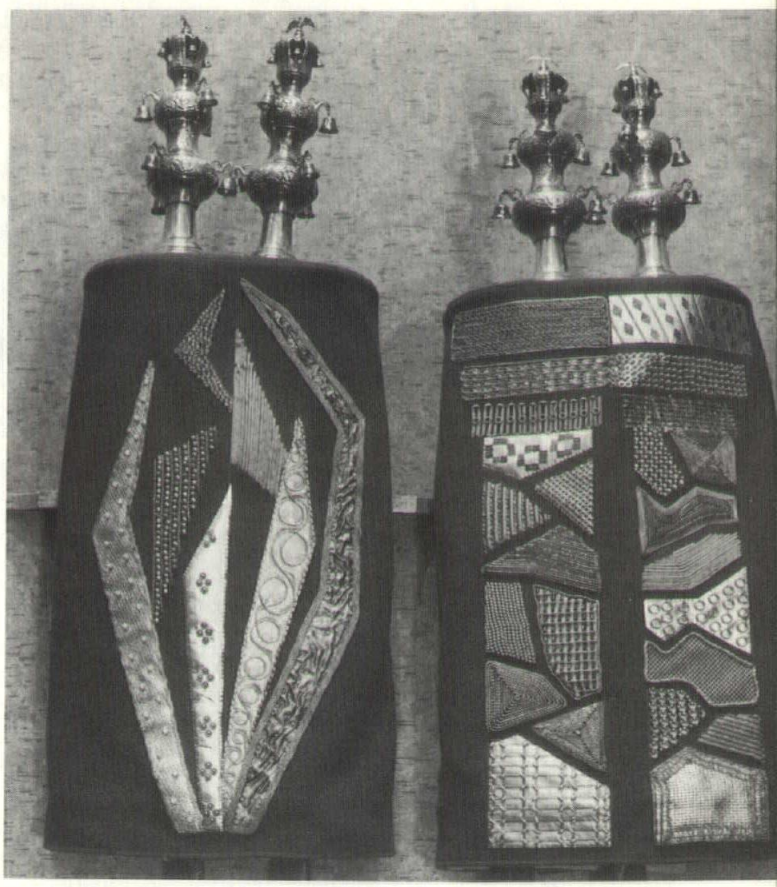


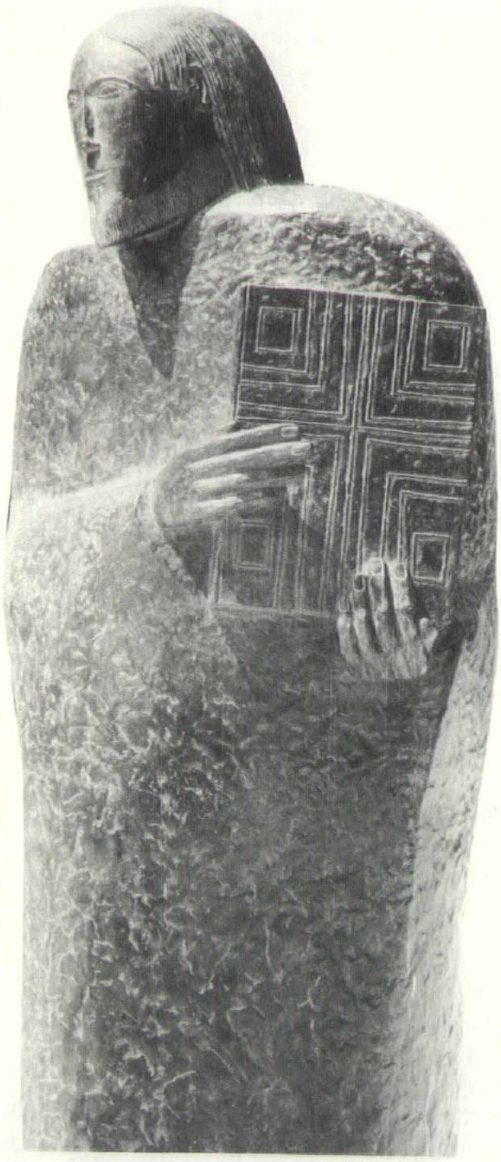
Photo by Ron Harris

1st Award
Memorial to the Victims of Nazism
at Congregation Habonim, N.Y.C.
Sculptor
Emanuel Milstein
R.D. #1 Box 81C
Marlboro, N.J. 07746

3rd Award
Emboidered Torah Covers
Temple Emanuel—
Pittsburgh, Pa.

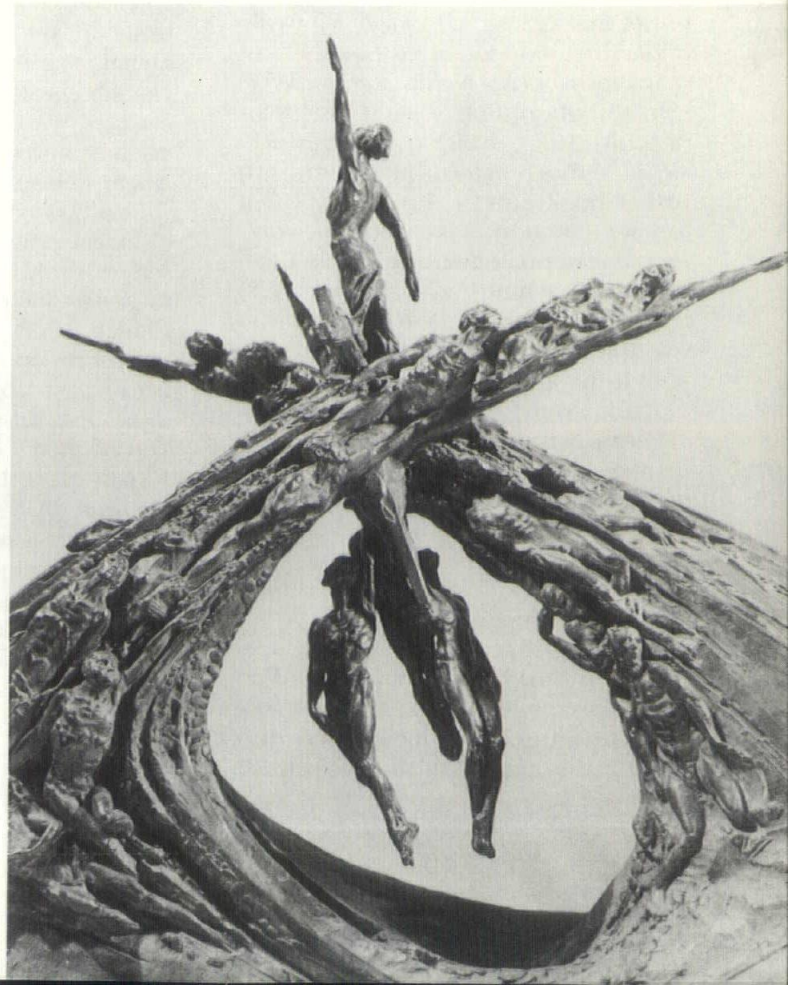
Ms. Dorothy E. Wolken
7021 Penn Ave.
Pittsburgh, Pa. 15208





2nd Award
St. Matthew (life size bronze)
St. Matthew Church
West St. Paul, Minn.

Sculptor
Gerald Bonnette
12487 40th St., So.
Newport, Minn. 55055

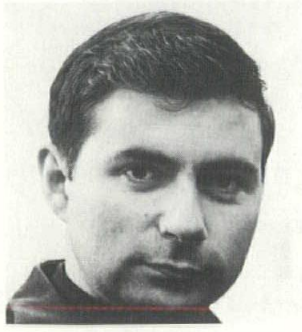


Honorable Mention Award
Tribulation (Freedom From War)

Sculptor
Barry W. Johnston
1622 Q St., N.W.
Washington, D. C.

A WORD OF CAUTION AGAINST EXORBITANTLY SACRED SPACE*

by
The Rev. James T. Burtchaell, CSC, Provost, The University of Notre Dame



I am very pleased to be invited to speak to you. I have to admit from the outset that what I say tonight is heavily under the shadow of Ed Sövik's most marvelous book, *Architecture for Worship* (Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis 1973) which I am pleased to say is in much agreement with my own recent book—and I shamelessly call it to your attention. It is called *Philemon's Problem* (Foundation for Adult Catechetical Teaching Aids, Chicago 1973). If I leave you without the clarity which I was told to possess tonight, you may be able to remedy this by consulting some of the ideas there.

I am a layman speaking to practitioners in the field of religious architecture, design and furnishing. Of late there have been important trends affecting your profession, at least as it bears upon ecclesiastical buildings. Fewer new starts have been made for churches. Such churches as have been built had to be based on more slender financing. Worship space, which was previously considered to be among those spaces most specifically and peculiarly dedicated to a single use, has now begun to be made available for other uses not exclusively sacred. One can think of a few instances which, if not typical, are at least properly suggestive. Government moneys used for the construction of buildings such as college dormitories almost invariably preclude the construction of a chapel. And so college dormitories are built here and there around the country with what are called meditation rooms, where worship goes on, probably to the chagrin of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. The Cathedral of St. John the Divine has offered its premises to such things as modern dance companies. The Black Panthers took over a Methodist church in New York City, I believe, to turn it into a breakfast facility for neighborhood children. I understand that the transformation was not at the request of church authorities; nevertheless, it took place.

Now I presume that there is at least one very strong reason for some of these changes. There are not as many capital funds available today for ecclesiastical buildings. Ed Sövik would make a virtue out of this necessity because he claims that it is time to stop putting up all these cultic buildings, and he calls us to return to the domestic paradigm of the pre-Constantinian church. As you know, the Church was not a great builder before the time of Constantine, and it took a good long time even after Constantine really to get underway in stone and mortar. The early liturgy of Christians, like the classical liturgy of Jewish predecessors, was most often a domestic celebration held on private premises among rather small groups.

I really don't have a quarrel with Ed's historical point but I would add to it somewhat. It is admittedly very difficult to disdain the custom and usage of the Church in all times subsequent to the earliest period of nonestablishment. It is an unreasonable task to disinherit or dispossess ourselves of the entire tradition of church building, even in its unhealthy days. I would prefer to argue, however, that a more appropriate venue for worship is not secular space so much as what we might call polyvalent space. I will try to explain what I mean a little later on. I would find also that this use of a single space for many types of activity, among which some are sacred, is quite theologically congruent with our religious tradition. Now I speak as a Christain theologian of Catholic background and foreground, but I think that what I say is not disharmonious with Jewish, Oriental and other religious traditions. Let me indicate some peculiarities of Christian belief, which have, or should have, a great influence upon our attitude towards sacred space.

No man has seen God; he is not to be seen. When we think about him, talk about him, or pray to him, we have to figure or depict for ourselves how he is, drawing upon our human experiences, because we have seen men. History bears out that most men have fashioned gods after their own image. Unfortunately, in fashioning their understanding of God they have drawn into his image many of the less attractive human traits that we find disagreeable even in our fellows. For example, since in almost all religious traditions God is worshiped and believed to be powerful, he is described and depicted as having some of those questionable qualities which human beings are said to develop if left in power long enough. God is sometimes described as vindictive, short of temper, or jealous of his prerogatives. Now the Christian tradition has no different method whereby to depict our God. We have simply to look at human beings and try to draw from them some picture of what their Creator would be. What we do believe we have is a different human being to look at, and that is Jesus of Nazareth.

In looking at him one is invited to see the Father in the Son, and this Father is rather peculiar among gods. One peculiarity I would particularly dwell upon briefly here. The Father of Jesus is said to love us, but not for what he finds in us. The Father of Jesus loves us not because we are lovable, but because he has no alternative character than to be loving. Unlike ourselves who scrutinize one another, evaluate one another, and then react to what we find there, being drawn to what is lovable and repelled by what is unlovable, we believe that the Father loves us irrevocably simply because he is loving. Unlike us he does not respond; he is an origin. He does not react; he initiates. And his act of love, very desirable to us, very enviable to us, yet so difficult for us to comprehend, let alone imitate, is a love which is entirely unselfish, since it has no benefit for himself.

We believe that the father has a devouring love for men, and that unlike all other gods as we understand them, he loves sinners. Now that may sound quite passé and commonplace, but it is not. You see in most theological traditions gods do not love sinners. They will love sinners when they stop being sinners, and they are prepared to be tolerant of

*Extract from address, Cincinnati Conference, April '74.

them in their periods of waywardness, but in effect they cannot love sinners as long as they remain sinners. The thing that overturned the minds of Jesus' disciples was that after seeing him yield himself to death, they got a glimpse of a love which was regardless of the qualities of the others and had no regard for whether one loved him back. This dedicated affection, so unspeakably unselfish, was only a suggestion of the love of his Father.

Now if the Father has a relentless love for all men and loves them regardless of their behavior, if this Father can be called (as a proper name) Love or Forgiveness, with a capital L or a capital F, this really overturns a lot of theology. This vision of God has so often faded in Christian history that most of our theology has allowed itself to wander from this very basic and essential principle.

What difference would this view of God have upon worship? Worship has traditionally been viewed by Christians as a series of activities designed to renegotiate the relationship between man and God and to bring God more favorably towards man in his need. This is a blasphemy, but this is what we live by a good deal of the time. This understanding of God, of course, presumes that man is the initiator and God the respondent—that the idea of their union is somehow more man's than God's. And it also has a terrible problem in that it imagines that there are certain enactments which those in the right religious tradition know, and which have a peculiarly powerful and telling effect upon God. This too has messed up theology. A proper understanding of ritual for Christians would be that ritual acts are not the stuff of salvation in themselves. The only way that man is reconciled to the Father is by cherishing his brother in his need.

The real business of salvation takes place in those substantial interchanges and transactions between men, and ironically ritual is an interruption in this because ritual involves symbol and the substantial transactions which really change us. The curious thing about ritual is that it is a pause in the saving acts which we are obliged to be about. In the Eucharist, for example, people are fed, but they are fed in a token way. The danger in ritual for a Christian is constantly to imagine that something goes on in ritual which makes up for what doesn't go on outside. Christians are repeatedly tempted to imagine that there is a sort of a magical ability in church whereby they can renegotiate with God to make up for their failures outside the church. And one imagines that he deals indirectly with God outside Church, and directly, inside.

All of this is to misconstrue what sacred activity is. The purpose of ritual is revelation. It is in the order of knowing. The grace in worship, according to a proper Christian theology, would be that there is even in the most routine type of worship the occasion for a brilliant rediscovery of what is going on in eternity. This means then that worship is a highly derivative activity, in no way autonomous, and its great danger is that it could pretend to be autonomous, that something would go on in worship of its own value, strength and merit. But the proper belief has to be that one can legitimately celebrate nothing which one is not already doing elsewhere in a substantive way. Ritual has within it a power to release all the great forces that can be held down by our blindness. Yet it cannot do this truthfully, effectively and fruitfully unless what we celebrate is congruent and resonant with what we live.

Now let me bring this all back to a suggestion or two that I have with regard to the fabric of houses of worship for I think that this has some very specific bearing on how we, as Ed Sövik says, shelter our worship. First of all, if the purpose of the Church is to disclose the love of God, our own stubborn selfishness, and the possibility of our yielding and being transformed by him, then we are basically to be concerned about proper understanding, right disclosure, and the truth beyond expectations.

The church therefore can hardly indulge itself financially. One can be greatly disturbed that very few church congregations can claim that they do not spend the bulk of their financial resources on themselves. In fact many congregations do not even tithe in the manner in which they expect their members to; that is to say, they do not even send their needy neighbors as much as ten percent of their annual income. Least of all can the church afford to lavish whatever money it assembles upon the fabric of its buildings, because if it does, it will continue to reveal—but it will reveal an awful truth. I think that this is not to conclude that the church must not construct and hold title to buildings, even large buildings, but note our difference of attitude towards one set of buildings or another. If the church builds orphanages, or hospitals, or retirement homes, or large warehouses for food relief in poor countries, this continues the venerable tradition which built the old almshouses in the Middle Ages. This is different from building bishops' palaces or large tombs or mausoleums—perhaps even churches.

Now the churches of the past were built by those who had excess capital: the princes, the guilds of merchants, the squires, or most recently, the state. In almost no case was any church before the 19th century constructed by the people because the people simply did not have the wherewithal to do it. Only since the industrial revolution has it been possible for church structures to be built from the contributions of the people. In some cases I fear that the clergyman exercised the same role that the prince once did—in that he construed this as a memorial to himself rather than as a structure for the congregation. Even that seems to be on the wane. Yet if the people are indeed now building the church, not as memorials to whomever holds the wealth, but functionally for worship, then it is important that the church disclose what they stand for and they cannot stand for self-indulgence.

I come from the state of Oregon and in my state someone repeatedly introduces a bill into the state legislature to remove the tax exemption of churches. The bill stems from the belief that orphanages, hospitals and other eleemosynary institutions should retain their tax exemption, but masonic or fraternal organizations, churches and athletic clubs should lose theirs. What is the argument used? That there is one set of institutions which serves others, and another set of institutions which serves itself. One set turns outward toward the needs of others; the other is a shelter for the comfortable. Obviously some people are convinced that the church is like a fraternal organization, and they point to its use of money to argue the point. Therefore, if churches are to be congruent with the faith of the worshipers, they have to be sparely built and they can no longer be lavish.

But let me go further. If worship gives meaning to secular activities, if it discloses the meaning that is already there, then its own symbolism and its own surroundings should be congruent with those other secular activities. This is often not the case. For example, the

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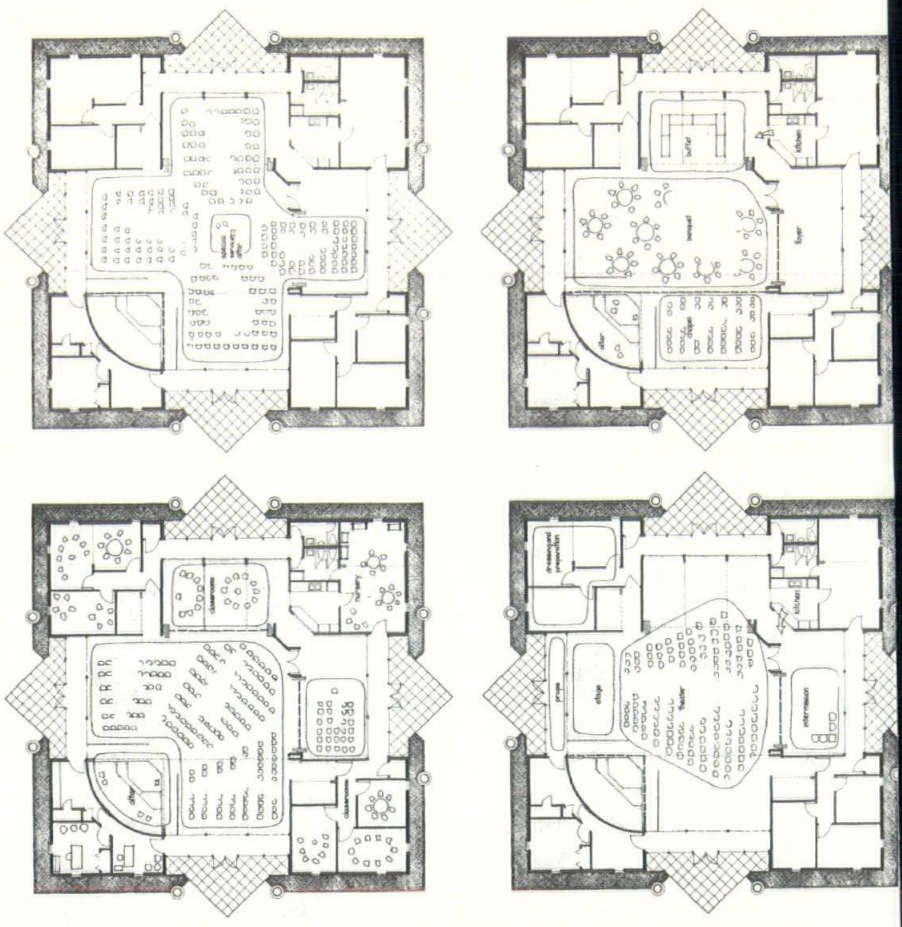
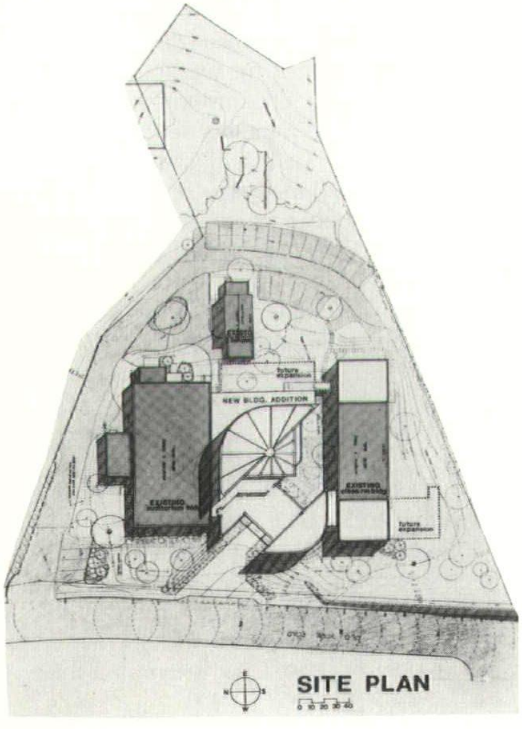
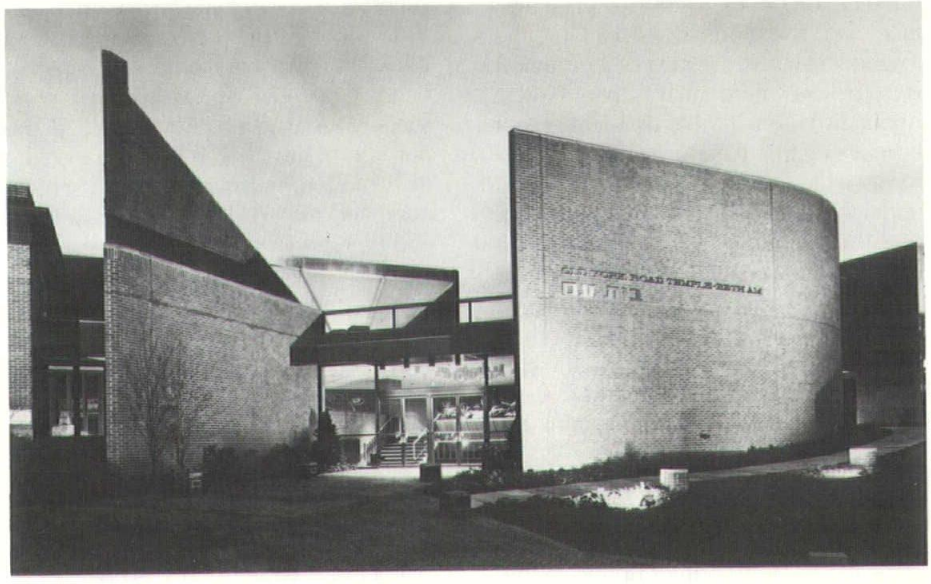
Jury Report—Architectural Exhibit—1974 Cincinnati Conference



MERIT AWARD
St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church
Architects:
Highfill & Associates, Inc.,
Richmond, Va.

Very good concern for program possibilities. Some question on entry to parking circulation. The exterior agrees with criteria, i.e., residential character. Some forced geometry.

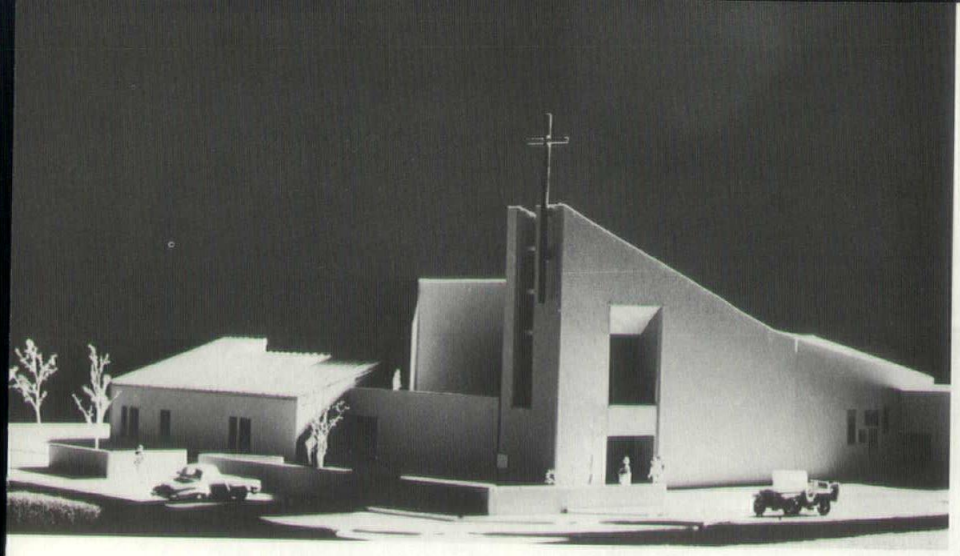


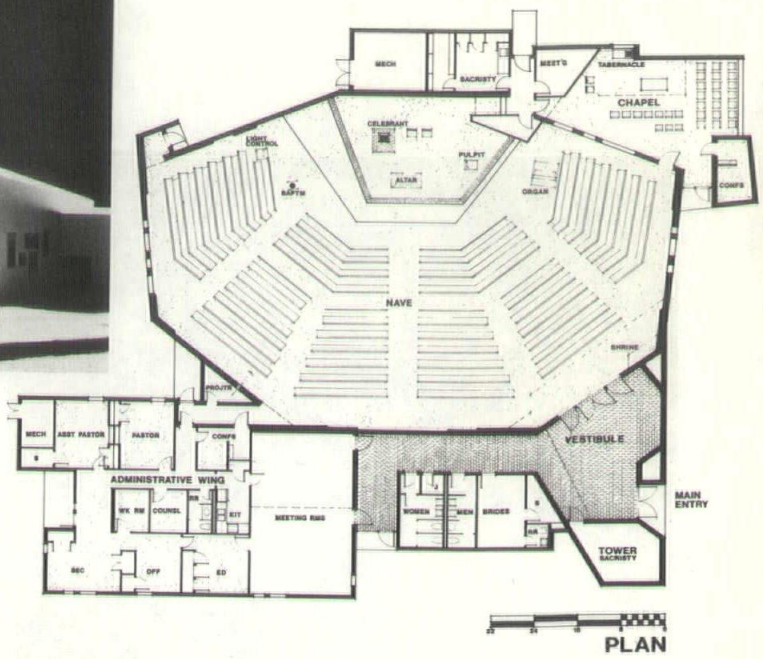


Photos by Harris & Davis

MERIT AWARD
Old York Road Temple—Beth Am
Architects:
Vincent G. Kling & Partners,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Extremely sensitive site plan and solution of problem in fitting between existing buildings. The jury particularly liked the exterior-interior spaces. A strong statement is made by the building with an interesting handling of light and space.



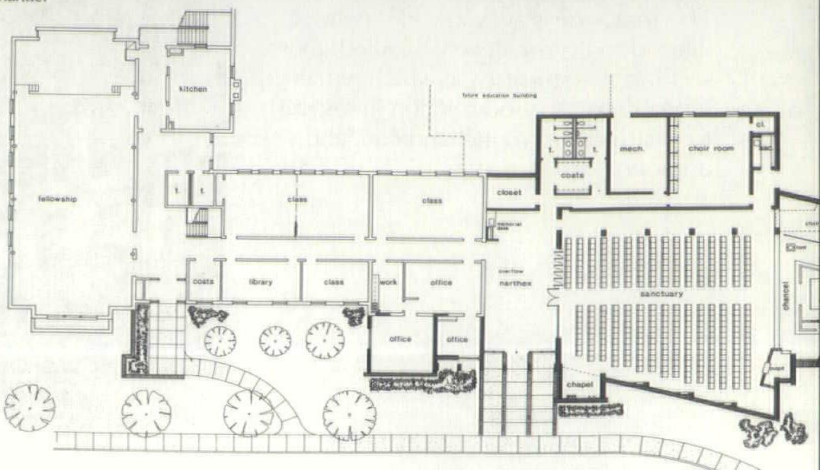


PLAN

MERIT AWARD
St. Rita's Church
Architect:
Paul M. Deeley,
Ft. Worth, Tex.

. . . good form-plan relationship. Entry location questioned. Fenestration interesting.

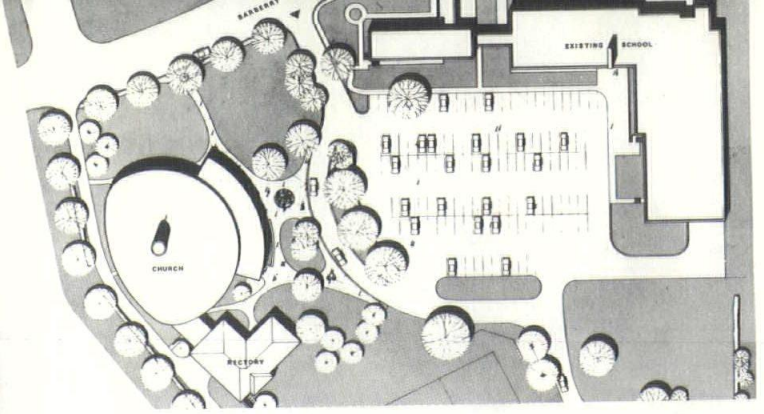
Photos by J. Alexander



MERIT AWARD
St. Matthew's Methodist Church
Architects:
Benjamin P. Elliott Associates,
Silver Spring, Md.

Extremely difficult problem—sensitive interiors with strong statement in regard to change of philosophy and a building expressing the change.

Jury Report—Architectural Exhibit—1974 Cincinnati Conference



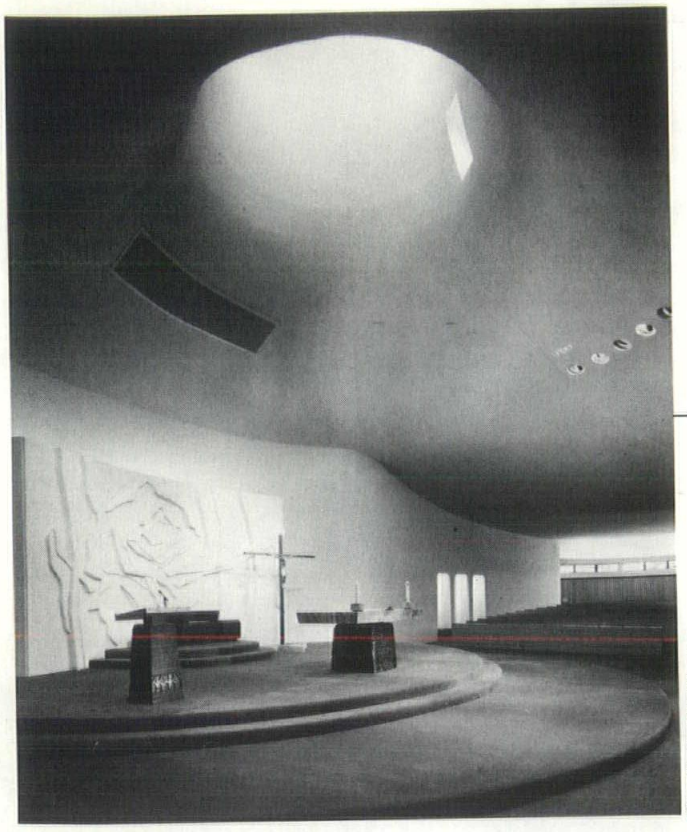
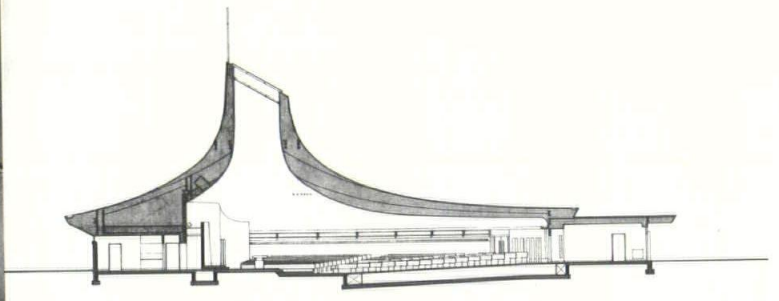


Photo by Hedrich-Blessing



MERIT AWARD
Christ the King Church

Architects:
Graham, O'Shea & Wisnosky,
Springfield, Ill.

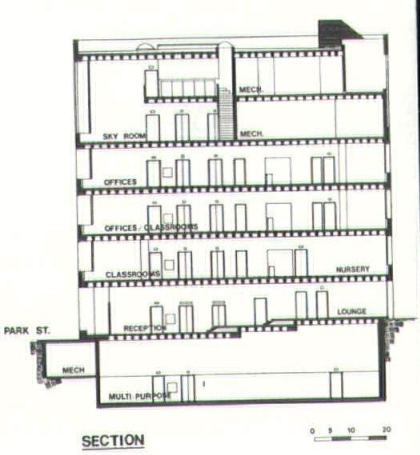
Good site plan—tough problem in view of existing building location and forms. Pedestrian-vehicular movement well handled. Good interior design—but stations lost. Structure non-communicative.

SPECIAL MENTION
New Ministries Bldg.,
Park Street Church

Architects:
Stahl/Bennett Associates,
Boston, Mass.

Undoubtedly a very strong statement. The jury spent considerable time discussing the total concept and relationship of the "old and the new." The rear—or graveyard side—was agreed to be sensitively handled; more so than the streetscape which remained a problem. A good solution in respect to relationship to the landmark and adjacent structures.

Photo by Steve Rosenthal



SECTION

Gimbels East, N.Y. Abbott-Merkt & Co., N.Y., Architects. Photo: Gil Amiaga

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THE ARCHITECT AS LITURGIST*

by
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The divine command, "Make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them" (Ex. XXV.8), left Moses perplexed. "He was taken aback and he trembled," comment the classic rabbinic interpreters of the Bible. "Heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him," Moses protested, "how can I build Him a sanctuary!" But beyond the seeming absurdity of attempting to build a dwelling place for an invisible, incorporeal, all-pervasive Presence—even if he would somehow find an acceptable rationale for constructing a tabernacle—Moses felt totally inadequate for the task. He had neither the technical training nor the artistic sensitivity and skill. In vain did the good Lord reassure His faithful servant: He showed Moses, according to the 2nd and 3rd century rabbinic exegetes, the heavenly tabernacle which was to servé as the model for the terrestrial one; God gave him precise blueprints, scale models of the holy vessels; He even showed Moses samples of the shades of blue, red, green and white he would use; but all to no avail.

Moses undertakes the project only after the Lord tells him, ". . . I have specially chosen Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur . . . I have filled him with divine spirit, making him skillful and ingenious, expert in every craft and a master of design . . . Further, I have appointed Oholiab . . . to help him. I have endowed every skilled craftsman with the skill which he has. They shall make everything . . . they shall carry out all I have commanded you" (Ex. XXXI.2-11).

Moses was much relieved. The lawgiver, whom subsequent generations viewed as the ideal, the paradigmatic Rabbi *(Moshe Rabbenu)*, felt considerably more comfortable and confident in his more limited role. He was to transmit the instructions, the requirements demanded by his perception of the Divine Will, and Bezalel, the architect, would give them form and substance. In the process of translating Moses' theoretical vision into concrete form, Bezalel, the artist, would even help resolve the theological dilemma which left Moses shaken and bewildered. Just as the musician and the poet help the worshipper overcome the inevitable limitations—the anthropomorphisms, the idolatrous nuances—inherent in prayers of praise, petition and adoration, so does the "master of design" express the universal in the particular. He helps the worshipper experience the God who is beyond all place in limited space. Artistic genius communicates as paradoxical realities of experience what reason and the syllogistic process can describe only in nonsensical contradictions: the invisible is "seen;" the temporal is timeless; the infinite is in the finite and "God is in His holy temple."

A third century homiletician discerned this response to Moses' dilemma in the words of Scripture. He interprets the Biblical text to say: "If you make the sanctuary below to correspond with the one above ('. . . which was shown you . . .'—Ex. XXV.9), I, the Lord, will leave my celestial court and descend and contract my Presence to dwell among you below. Just as Seraphim stand at attention, upright, in my heavenly retinue, so do the upright planks of acacia wood in the terrestrial tabernacle (Ex. XXVI.15). Just as there are stars above, so are there the 'gold fasteners' below (Ex. XXVI.15). Rabba Hiyya the son of Abba said, 'This comes to teach that the gold fasteners (which "joined the hangings one to another and made of the Tabernacle a single whole"—*ibid.)* were experienced in the Sanctuary as stars in the heavens.'"

Bezalel, like other Biblical figures, was for the Talmudic Sages and subsequent Jewish teachers the prototype, the ideal model. They attributed to him the spiritual and artistic qualities for which all future architects should strive and which, with dedication and arduous effort, they may attain. The Rabbinic Imagination thus pictures Bezalel as playing an even more creative and direct role than that of merely translating into his own idiom the vision of the religious teacher and guide. The architect is—as was Bezalel—immediately in touch, at least potentially. He may himself discover and communicate intimations of ultimate reality.

The Rabbis dwell elaborately on the difficulties Moses experienced with the lampstand which he was to place in the Tabernacle (Ex. XXV.31-40). God's instructions repeatedly eluded him. Even after the good Lord showed Moses a model candelabrum made of fire and carefully pointed out every detail, he still could not form a clear conception of the intricate design. Finally, Moses is told, "Go to Bezalel; he will make it aright." And Bezalel immediately constructed an exact replica of the fiery candlestick God had shown Moses. Whereupon Moses cried out in amazement, "God showed me again and again how to make the lampstand, yet I could not properly grasp the idea; but you, without seeing a model, with your intuitive insight, made it exactly as God had instructed me. You truly deserve the name Bezalel, 'in the shadow of God' (the Rabbis vocalize Bezalel to read *B'zel El* which means 'in the shadow of God'). You must surely have stood in God's shadow when He showed me the lampstand and you saw and heard."

Bezalel intuited with his artistic sensitivity and genius that which Moses the prophet and teacher could not grasp. In a parallel homily, one Talmudic sage suggests that Bezalel even corrected Moses' mistaken conception of God's instructions (B. Tal. Ber. 55a). And another rabbinic authority, Rav, who founded the outstanding academy in Babylonia, says that "Bezalel knew how to combine the letters by which heaven and earth were created." His creation was of a piece with and shared in an ongoing process of transforming chaos into cosmos.

These and numerous similar state-

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ments found in the classic sources of Judaism—most often expressed in the mythology, the imagery, the "tool-world" characteristic of the time—underline the indispensable role of the aesthetic in the religious enterprise. Artistic creation may be—as the great masters, classic and modern, frequently described it—acts of worship and adoration. It reflects and evokes experiences of sublimity—awe, reverence, mystery, power and helplessness. "In my sculpture," Jacques Lipschitz once said, "I strain to bear witness to the invisible, ever-living God."

It would be a distortion of historic Judaism to suggest that it gives preeminence to the aesthetic over the rational and ethical. If priorities are to be assigned, Judaism would place the ethical act—"deeds of loving-kindness"—at the center. No less a personage than Rabbi Akiba, the giant of the Rabbinic Period, teaches that "You shall love your neighbor as yourself (Lev. XIX.18)" is the "greatest principle in the Torah" *(Siphra, ad. loc.)*. Similarly, devoted study—rational control, the discursive process *(talmud Torah)*—is "the context of it all." Judaism does insist, however, that "worship of the heart" *(Avodah)*, its term for the aesthetic, is no less essential in the religious life than are the rational and the ethical. The two thousand year old classic, *The Ethics of the Fathers*, summarizes: "The world stands on three things: on study, on worship of the heart and on deeds of loving-kindness." The true, the good and the beautiful are an organic unity as components of the religious experience.

The central affirmation of the Jew repeated daily in the synagogue (Deut. VI.4 ff.) includes the verse, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart . . .." Jewish tradition understands this commandment to mean, "Love Him with *all your inclinations*, with every aspect of your being." (The Hebrew *l'vav'kha* is translated as a plural, "hearts.") The poetry, art, drama, the music of the synagogue—its space, light and sound—are not external means. They are essential acts of worship, in themselves. They are not merely catalysts which heighten or speed up a process without participating in it. They are not only artifices with which to manipulate the worshipper; devices to induce attitudes, moods, feelings. They are constitutive of and intrinsic to the worship experience.

The architecture of the religious structure, the design of the sanctuary, of the ark, the eternal light, the candelabra—the worshipper's experience of and response to them—are acts of prayer in themselves. They are essential aspects of our response to the imperatives "to give glory" and "to worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness" (Ps. XXIX.2). They are concretizations of our search, our yearning for the ultimate and for intimations of His creative Presence.

The artist, the composer, the musician and the architect are thus—whether they use the terminology or not—authors of prayers which inspire myriads. They pray and lead in prayer. The vocabulary of the master of design is uniquely his own: line, form, light, shadow, color, space. Myth and symbol—not in diluted demythologized or rationalized form, but in stark immediacy, experienced, felt, appropriated—convey the profound nuances of the artist's prayerful reach. The approach to this aspect of the liturgy is through the *anima*, our poetic being. The liturgy created by the poet or the architect is not descriptive; it is evocative. Their symbols and images conjure up and elicit. Their communication is non-verbal, ineffable. Past and future merge in the "now." Dread and love, mystery and brilliant clarity, anonymity and identity, "to be" *and* "not to be" are experienced simultaneously as paradoxical polarities in dialectical tension.

The aesthetic experience, in isolation, when divorced from the religious, is essentially amoral. It borders, within a secular context, on the Dionysian and the pagan. It may easily degenerate—as Schoenberg brilliantly portrays in his *Moses and Aaron*—into idolatry and orgiastic debauch. The Nazi lackeys who pandered to Hitler's and Göring's passion for music and art and architecture taught us this lesson well in our own lifetime. But when the artist is impelled by his own experience of the sacred as refined by an historic, ethico-religious tradition, he communicates in his unique vocabulary the most exalted celebration of the holy.

The student or teacher of religion, or even the devout worshipper whose language is denotative—who deals with words, ideas, concepts—can tell the artist very little to guide him. Moses remains a stammerer—"slow and hesitant of speech"—after all. He cannot communicate to Bezalel that which he experienced on top of the mountain. All that he can do is to invite Bezalel to stand beside him "in the shadow of God," to pray, yearn, strive with him, to experience with him and then to communicate the depth of it all in the connotative language of artistic genius.

Rational explanations of signs, of symbols and myths are largely irrelevant and ex post facto. The worship dimension of the piercing call of the ram's horn on the New Year *(Rosh Hashanah)*, or of enveloping oneself in a prayer shawl with its tassels and strands of violet reminiscent of the sea and sky; the numinous element in a brimming cup of wine, or in the communal sharing of a loaf of bread, or in the flickering glow of the eternal light—they cannot be explained. They can only be experienced. The attempt to demythologize and rationalize, however appealing and lofty, reduces poetry to prose and diminishes to a pale one-dimension what is a rich syndrome of inexhaustible depth.

Words and ideas are inevitable and indispensable. They control the free flight; they mitigate the hazard of subjectivity. They root in historic tradition and provide the moorings—the religious context. Judaism, except for rare, maudlin interludes, has been wary of melody without words as a form of worship. But the artist's creative contribution transcends the words of the liturgy, even as it is inspired, guided and controlled by them.

The authoritative voice of Jewish tradition, the Rabbi and scholar, can and must interpret the requirements and experiences of historic Judaism to the architect and artist. A layman's perusal of secondary literature or even a careful study of selected, pertinent passages from the primary sources often mislead. The literal statements, products of a specific time and place, may reveal a particular stage in the development of the Jewish reach which is alien to the dominant spirit of a living, dynamic Judaism. A broad overview and a profound understanding of the total tradition, in addition to a sensitive awareness of current reality, are the necessary prerequisites for defining what Judaism requires in the here and now.

Talmudic Literature indicates, for example, that a synagogue is to be built on the heights of a city; that no dwellings tower above it; that it have windows; and that its doors be in the eastern wall. But these rules were not accepted unanimously, nor did they become normative in practice. The law concerning the elevation of the synagogue was qualified already in the Talmud. External circumstance determined by the all-powerful Church and Mosque made of this

regulation a theoretical principle, mostly forgotten in day-to-day usage. The requirement of windows, too, is limited by Maimonides only to private worship in the home and is not requisite for the synagogue. Similarly, the prescription concerning the doors was never unanimous. It was restricted by some only to areas east of Jerusalem and most often disregarded. The Holy Ark was, almost universally, portable in the early centuries of this era. It was carried into the sanctuary at the beginning of the service. The stationary, not to say elaborate, Ark was a later development. The frequent analogy between the Ark and the Holy of Holies in the ancient Temple in Jerusalem is a retrospective justification for the ever more impressive Ark which comes into Judaism only in the late medieval period. The Eternal Light in the synagogue, as well, though reminiscent of the light which was to burn continually in the Tabernacle (Ex. XXVII.20), and is explained by one Talmudic teacher as "witness to all men that God dwells in the midst of the Israelites," is, nevertheless, not considered essential. Some pietistic authorities even strongly opposed the introduction of the Eternal Light into the synagogue as an alien import.

An intimate awareness of the Jewish saga and a thorough knowledge of the literature enable the authoritative interpreter to say to the architect: "You are not burdened with nor limited by a prescribed traditional design. The absolute requirements are minimal. The Jew prayed and felt very close to the holy God in Roman and Greek style temples, in Moorish, Byzantine and Gothic structures. Use the tools-at-hand, your shapes, textures and colors, the metal and wood and plastics and glass and fabrics, your space and lights and shadows to express your own and to enhance the congregation's experience of the sacred. The twentieth century has greatly increased your vocabulary. The synonyms and shadings at your command are of almost infinite variety. Use your architectural forms to heighten the worshipper's awareness that God is in the midst of the congregation."

Beyond the form which follows function in the obvious and naive sense; beyond the need for a prayer hall, a chapel, classrooms, rabbi's study, offices and other practical and very important requirements of a contemporary congregation; beyond the form which grows out of the limitations of space, the type of terrain, the geographic locale, regional climate, the architectural tradition and tenor of the total community—beyond all these, there is the profounder function which emerges from the authentic role of the synagogue in Jewish experience. This deeper impulse must be probed and appreciated with the help and guidance of a specialist and then appropriated by the designer so that he may give it architectural expression.

In a study I published some years ago entitled *Jewish Prayer and Synagogue Architecture* (summarized by A. Kampf in his *Contemporary Synagogue Art*, Jewish Publication Society, Phila., 1966. pp. 154 ff.), I attempted to formulate aspects of this experience as a guide for the architect on the basis of an analysis of the Jewish Liturgy and of Judaism. I summarized the lengthy discussion as follows:

> We would ask the architect that he design a structure which would enhance the feeling that the synagogue is . . . of the past, yet of the present and future; that one is removed within the synagogue yet deeply involved in the world, its problems and tasks; that one is part of a group without losing the sense of individuality; that one stands in God's presence, but with the dignity of one who is worthy of His concern and of one who is created in His image; that the Jew is of the total community, yet bears special witness.

I am not quite as confident today as I was at the time I wrote these words that the polarities, which are not resolved in prayer but are experienced in creative tension, are helpful as guides for the artist. I question whether they are even legitimate categories with which to confront the architect. Can line and form and space express feelings or evoke responses which are largely culturally conditioned and require sophisticated conscious processes and mature self-awareness? But then must not the artist too be helped and guided in his experience and only then left to his own devices to create in freedom as his artistic integrity demands? I am more inclined today not to expect a specific result, not to "ask of the artist . . ." but rather to pose questions, hopefully to challenge and perhaps even inspire. And so I persist and suggest several other experiential categories implicit in the liturgy and with some hesitancy ask: Can you and how would you say it in your artistic terms?

One of the central strivings in Judaism as reflected in its millenial literature and in the set liturgy of the synagogue, *The Siddur*, is to create and to encourage a deep sense of community, to feel an obligation and be responsible to the community and to derive strength and spiritual sustenance from it. "Do not separate yourself from the congregation," was the great Hillel's urgent imperative in the first century B.C. and it was adopted as the motto for all communal endeavor throughout the ages.

Down through the centuries the theme is endlessly repeated: "Only in the synagogue and in the midst of a congregation can one experience the depth of true prayer." "When men pray together in a house dedicated to the Holy One, Blessed be He, separateness and isolation, those fragments of black humor, slowly fade and vanish. The rift is made whole. The worshippers open to each other. They fuse into one." "He who prays with a congregation is credited with redeeming me and my children." "Man's prayer is heard only in the synagogue." "If there be a synagogue in a city and a man does not enter it for worship, he is called a bad neighbor." "One prays truly only when one feels himself at one with all other praying souls. . . . Only when each soul forces open the prison doors from within and unites with all other souls—only then is the broken vessel restored—only then do the liberated fragments leave the world of chaos and find restitution in the Rock whence they were hewn. Not in solitude does one pray, but with others, in the midst of a worshipping congregation. Private prayer, when alone, is separation—precariously close to the shade and its chill." "Only the synagogue remains to exalt our spirit. Only within these sanctuaries will man be inspired to consider the welfare of the group for he will feel that he is a member of a very large body."

With the call to worship, "Praise ye the Lord," the beginning of every congregational service, a miraculous transformation occurs. Separate individuals from differing backgrounds, with widely divergent interests, fuse into a unified whole. They are transformed through worship into a congregation. All prayers are now recited in the plural. The Biblical prayer, "Heal me and I shall be healed" (Jer. XVII.14), now becomes, "Heal *us* and *we* shall be healed."

The visual symbol of the worshippers as a corporate entity is the Reader. He

Cont. p. 32

STUDENT COMPETITION

National Interfaith Conference on Religion and Architecture— Cincinnati, April 1974

THE PROBLEM:

Sophomore architectural students enrolled in the course, *Principles of Environmental Design II*, were given one week to design a small, interdenominational chapel for a wooded site within a larger urban community. A large park near the University of Cincinnati was used and the students were permitted to choose their exact site from several possible locations as well as external forms. The course curriculum included a study of the relationships between man and his physical environment, with an emphasis on the development of a design vocabulary. Understanding of various design processes as well as space-time inter-relationships were also considerations of the course.

In summary, the jury felt that many students tried too hard to develop an unusual space without regard to some of the practicalities and feelings of the spaces created. The final award winners did an excellent job of resolving the uniqueness of a religious workshop space with the demands of functional utility, while respecting and responding to the demands and attributes of the surrounding natural environment.

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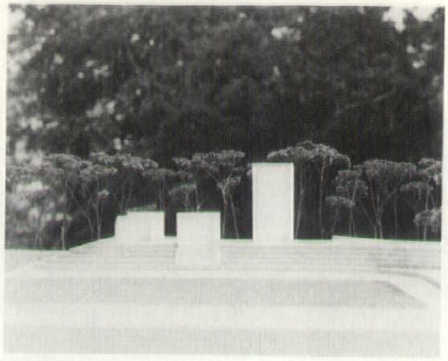
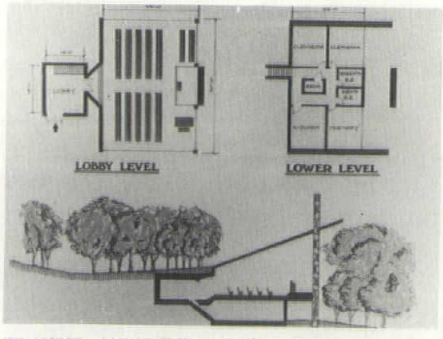


FIRST AWARD—Kenneth Purtell

An underground structure with skylight turrets rising above ground level. Probably the most imaginative design project in fitting the park site and involving the least amount of visible interruption to the natural environment of the surrounding areas.

SECOND AWARD—Donna Boudot

The student chose to minimize the inclusion into the area of man-made structural materials by using a cable-supported structure. It was felt that the solution fit the site and provided an open-air worship space—the structure of which did not destroy awareness and feeling of a park-like environment.



THIRD AWARD—John Berry

The most traditional design of the three winners. Materials, form and worship space were conventional and recognizable. The scheme was felt to be superior in terms of its level of functional planning and development, while still fitting the site very well.

HEAVEN CAN'T WAIT — The Transcendent in the Everyday*

by
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Three commonly accepted viewpoints on the present state of religion are: 1) things were never worse; 2) things were never better; and 3) the more things change, the more they stay the same. Peter Berger notes:

> Whatever the situation may have been in the past, today the supernatural as a meaningful reality is absent or remote from the horizons of everyday life of large numbers, very probably of the majority, of people in modern societies, who seem to manage to get along without it quite well.[1]

The prognostications of the prophet of positive cheer, Norman Vincent Peale, have seemed less relevant since Watergate, while Guy A. Swanson, comparing statistics of American religious and political activity sees little change in the way things are. For example:

> Approximately 60 per cent of the American electorate votes in national elections. Approximately 68 per cent of the adult population attends religious services in any given four-week period . . . .
>
> Approximately five families in every 100 made a financial contribution to a political party or candidate (in 1956). At least 40 in every 100 made a financial contribution to a religious body. . . .
>
> 51 per cent of the American people correctly named the first book of the Bible. That is about the proportion that knows the number of senators from its own state—and that can spell "cauliflower." [2]

Andrew Greeley defines religion as an "explanation of what the world is all about," adding that "most men . . . need some sort of ultimate explanation."[3] Most cultures explain the ultimate in the visible, as art, artifact and architecture. Expressing the ultimate without the visible limits the believers' access to the experience of the transcendent in the everyday life. Has contemporary man, *homo religioso*, lost or rejected his ability to express his beliefs in forms that can be seen? Or, are man's expressions of religious beliefs in different forms?

Theatrical productions and films on religious subjects enjoy increasing popularity to judge from the reception of *Godspell*, *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *The Exorcist*. One cannot equate the sensationalism of *The Exorcist*, the "our gang" frolicking of *Godspell*, or the rock *Oberammergau* of *Jesus Christ Superstar* with ultimate concerns. Iconoclast Protestant America appears incapable of creating serious religious films, unlike European countries with a sacramental religious tradition: Italy (Fellini, Pasolini), France (Bresson), Spain (Bunuel) and Scandinavia (Dreyer and Bergman). American religious films do not raise the everyday to the level of the transcendent; they reduce the transcendent to the vulgar. Our notion of escalation is in the wrong direction. We're going down when we should be going up.

Today, few artists delight in everyday subject matter, in portraying the ordinary as transcendent as do the still lives of Chardin, Cezanne and Braque. Where artists duplicate the ordinary, they are often incapable of trancending it, for example, Norman Rockwell. Contemporary artists appear more interested in the questions than in answers. Their lust for novelty blinds them to their link to the past, and to the present as the past made imminent. The viewing public is disoriented by questions without some answers, novelty without some constancy.

Artists are traditionally associated with the social issues of their time. Their prophetic gifts consist in their seeing beyond the ordinary man's ability to express. Present day art neither celebrates nor communicates a prophetic stance on peace, civil rights or prison reform. Artists as people protest; artists as artists do not.

In April 1937, German bombers practiced saturation bombing techniques on the small defenseless Spanish village of Guernica. Picasso's powerful visual statement of this senseless brutality indicted not only the Spanish Civil War, but all modern warfare. Have American artists abandoned their prophetic and charismatic roles? In 1974 the United States government continues a senseless involvement in the Southeast Asian war. For ten years our peace symbols were imported—the Aldershot peace circle and the Picasso dove. American artists are apparently incapable of generating a peace symbol for "our" own war.

While Christo was busily draping sea cliffs with drop cloths, American bombers were dropping napalm canisters and defoliating Asian agricultural land. While Norman Rockwell sentimentalized American folkways, the President of the United States, his Cabinet members and advisors appeared to be violating Constitutional guarantees.

We have the Leonard Baskin of the Nazi concentration camps, but no Leonard Baskin of the Con Son tiger cages and Attica. Where is the Francisco Goya to remind us of the Kent State killings? Who will stir our national conscience on My Lai as Ben Shahn did on the nuclear test fallout on Japanese fishermen? At the Kent State and My Lai massacres, the camera eye and not the artist eye recorded. If artists do not give expression to ultimate concerns, how will people be attentive to them? When ultimate concerns, war, life, peace and justice face us, to whom do we turn for the articulation and incarnation in everyday terms?

Do we turn to the American Catholic Bishops, who protest continually the fetus' right to life, while for so many years ignoring the right to life of American soldiers and Vietnamese soldiers and civilians? Bonhoeffer told his co-religionists in Nazi Germany that the man who has not cried out for the Jews may not sing Gregorian chant. American Jewry has been noticeably silent at times about our government's stance in the Southeast Asian war.

Do we turn for leadership to the National Council of Churches of Christ who have phased out the Church and Culture Department, the one group whose avowed aim was to integrate worship into everyday life?

Making daily life spiritually meaningful is the continuing concern of many. The Rev. James Burtchaell sees the need to relate eating to the Eucharist, to relate hospitality in the parsonage to ritual in the sanctuary. As the Japanese tea

*Statement at Cincinnati Conference on Religion and Architecture, 4/25/74

ceremony raises to ritual an everyday action, so too is the good host the good celebrant.

Many people see the religious multi-purpose building as an uneasy compromise between the sacred and the profane, the temple and the money changers, the extraordinary and the ordinary. They fail to see that a multi-purpose building can incarnate the transcendent in the everyday. An appeal to the history of religious building enables many to see it as exclusive. The word *temple*, from the Greek, means to cut off. The history of incarnational theology opts for inclusion, the embodiment of an ideal in the everyday. Multi-purpose religious buildings are often generated by economic constraints, cheap in construction and tawdry in material. Competent architects and perceptive congregations sense the importance of humanizing forms and appropriate materials in the articulation of a flexible space. Within this space are integrated all the social and educational aspects of community life, orienting the celebration of these values in ritual.

The American Shakers are characterized by the Rev. Edwin Lynn by:

> their sensitive use of natural materials, straightforward flexible spaces, and emphasis upon the worship of a gathered religious community.[4]

The Shakers did not have a "church" but a meetinghouse. The community that meets is more important than the building for the meeting. Worship involves people first and not the place. When the term church is synonymous with a building, it denotes an object orientation with locus as the symbol. A better understanding of church as the people of God reflects a primacy of a community as symbol with the ritual action as the focus. The building's environment actively confirms and enhances a worshiping community when the scale, the material, the form, the disposition of space, cultic elements and the arts effectively engender flexibility not rigidity. They engender process not props, hospitality not anonymity, profundity not sentimentality, restraint not exuberance and participation not passivity. Anatole France's dictum: you show me what is in your pocket and I will tell you what you are, applies equally to our environments for worship.

The esoteric nature of some contemporary art forms can be contrasted with the transcendent quality of the Shakers' everyday artifacts. Primitive societies endow everyday objects with a reflection of their culture's integrated transcendent values. Much of what we call primitive and folk art was once relegated to anthropological exhibits in museums and universities. Special art museums are now built to house these everyday masterpieces.

As museums enshrined cerebral and minimalist contemporary art, the viewing masses became disenchanted. Such fine art proved esoteric and anemic as a visual diet. If people can't eat cake, let them chew and view McDonald's hamburger rolls. The great artistic put-down of pop art was the apotheosis of the vulgar. A distinction should be made between the literal honesty of pop art and the sentimental dishonesty of kitsch religious art. Pop art's vulgarity reflects the tawdriness and garishness of our societal values; kitsch art panders to nostalgia and parodies transcendent insights in a saccharine fashion.

Our society lacks sensitivity to the transcendent quality in the ordinary. It confuses vulgarity with the everyday. Pop art was a hit when introduced at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Given the perspective of time, we now realize that primitive and folk art belong in art museums and pop art belongs in cultural anthropological exhibits. It is the difference between the transcendent expressed in the everyday for reflective use and vulgarity proposed for commentary.

For too long we have separated the fine arts from the everyday artifacts, as if beauty and usefulness were mutually exclusive. In an industrial society the consecration of the beautiful tended to sanctify its uselessness. The exaltation of the functional justified its ugliness. Octavio Paz describes craftwork (the artifact) as the mediator between the extremes of beauty and efficiency.

> In the work of craftsmen there is a constant shifting back and forth between usefulness and beauty. This continual interchange has a name: pleasure. The pleasure that craftwork gives us is a twofold transgression: against the cult of usefulness and against the cult of art . . . handcraftsmanship is a sort of fiesta of the object; it transforms the everyday utensil into a sign of participation . . . Craftswork has no history if we view history as an uninterrupted series of changes. There is no sharp break, but a continuity between its past and its present. The modern artist has set out to conquer eternity, and the designer to conquer the future: the craftsman allows himself to be conquered by time . . . The craftsman does not seek to win a victory over time, but to become one with its flow.[5]

America has a tradition of pioneers and millenarians who saw transcendence present in America, the new Zion. One pioneer wrote from the wilderness to his separated family: "My dears, heaven is a Kentucky of a place." The Shakers had an integrated view of life in their cooking, artifacts, architecture, song, dance and work. Necessities of life were executed directly and simply for if the craftsman looked to truth and goodness, beauty would look after herself.

The Shakers had an adage that observed "do all your work as though you had a thousand years to live and as you would if you knew you must die tomorrow." The Shaker Eldress, Marguerite Frost, of Canterbury community in New Hampshire said: "Heaven is all around us, there's just as much God in this room as in St. Patrick's Cathedral or Riverside Church. You don't have to sprinkle yourself with water, or get down on your knees, or dance and sing like the early Shakers, religion is what you are, not what you put on." The Shakers, millenarians and integrated people today live and want the future now, so they live in the world to come while they are here in this world. They bring a future believed in into the present. They create artifacts of transcendental beauty here as daily expressions of the hereafter. Heaven can't wait—the transcendent is in the everyday. Dag Hammerskjold notes:

> God does not die on the day when we cease to believe in a personal deity, but we die on the day when our lives cease to be illumined by the steady radiance renewed daily of a wonder the source of which is beyond all reason.

We should bring attention, being present to things, as well as intention, our purposefullness into our everyday lives. Then we may say as the man illumined by that steady radiance, we do everything the best way we know how, we live every day as a work of art.

FOOTNOTES:

1. Berger, Peter L., *A Rumor of Angels*, Doubleday, Garden City, N.Y., 1969, p. 7.
2. Swanson, Guy A., "Modern Secularity," *The Religious Situation: 1968* (Donald R. Cutler, Editor), Beacon Press, 1968, pp. 811-13.
3. Greeley, Andrew M., *Unsecular Man—The Persistence of Religion*, Schocken Books, Inc., New York, N.Y., 1972, p. 55.
4. Lynn, The Rev. Edwin C., *Tired Dragons*, Beacon Press, Boston, Mass. 1973.
5. Paz, Octavio, "In Praise of Hands," *The Atlantic*, May 1974, Vol 233, No. 5, p. 45.

■

Quinn – Cont. from p. 11

churches, the same series of questions was submitted to them as had been submitted to the northern California group four years earlier. Their responses coincided in kind with the second set of responses from the northern California group. Some of the results are worth quoting here. I should point out that the responses in the case of each community numbered well above fifty percent of the membership and therefore can be considered reliable samples. For the sake of convenience in listing responses let us call the first survey, "Chico '69," the second, "Miami '73," and the third one, "Chico '73." The numbers under each survey date indicate percentage affirmative response.

	Chico '69	*Miami '73*	*Chico '73*
Are changes since Vatican II generally good for the layman?	95%	98%	84%
Do you think of your church building as "second home"?	50%	50%	56%
Would you object to dining in church?	37.6%	41%	6.5%
Do you prefer to sit instead of kneeling at confession?	31.1%	31.5%	61%
Does your church need stained glass?	54%	44%	30%
Does it need sculpture?	73%	42%	33%
Would you like a stained glass window in your dining room?	20%	20%	41%
Should your church be a place of grandeur?	11%	10%	5%
Should it be modest?	87%	91%	79%
Do you prefer fixed pews to movable chairs?	40%	62%	33%
Are vestments important to the liturgy?	72%	69%	50%
Should your parish center include a pastor's residence?	85%	97%	66%
Should your parish center include or allow political meetings?	32%	26%	50%
Should your church building have a sense of the sacred? (does it?) (It doesn't)	90%	90%	40%

The last question is a critical one. Although the others are only a random selection from the entire list of questions asked, they indicate a certain similarity in the initial responses to the questions on the parts of both communities. They indicate some changes in the attitudes of the Chico community. When it came to the question of a sense of the sacred, both communities registered exactly the same percentage. I asked each community to compare their capacity for meditation and private prayer in a very traditional (neo-gothic, neo-mission, etc.) church (St. "X") and in a more recently constructed "modern" church nearby. Again both communities were similar in response. Upon completion of the second survey for the Chico community some interesting points emerged. The number of respondents who said they could meditate better in St. "X" church increased, just as the number who responded affirmatively to the "sense of the sacred" question has decreased. This would lead one to suspect that the community might be disappointed in its new church building. When we asked them to make a preference between the two buildings, however, the older and their new one, the preference had changed overwhelmingly for the new structure despite its apparent lack of the traditional "sense of the sacred."

If a sufficient number of such surveys were carried out we might have some extremely reliable data. As things stand, the responses I have provide merely the beginnings of some answers. The beginnings of an indication of what kind of questions needed to be asked and what kind of questions need be forgotten. The beginnings of an indication that communities change not only with time but with new environments, at least in their attitudes towards the spaces in which they worship. A peculiar thing about each community was that through participation in the programming and planning, they seemed to acquire a growing vigor, a growing commitment to finding answers, and a growing vitality as communities. For many of the members the questions presented to them had never been presented before in any organized way. Certainly the questions had not been asked in the context of the design of a new building for them. The very involvement in a discussion of what we mean by "sacred space" seemed to open new avenues, not only of speculation, but of self-assessment in both community and individuals.

In the Miami community, for instance, an adult religious education class spent a number of weeks studying Frederick Debuyst's *Architecture and Christian Celebration*. Very few architects have even heard of the book and probably fewer bishops and pastors. It is included in a minuscule number of seminary libraries and it is difficult to find it in most Schools of Architecture. It was well-known, of course, to those attending the Cincinnati conference, but it is difficult for such conferees to realize how remote their concerns are from those of the real world of the day-to-day religious community and its administration. Perhaps the realization that mine was the only survey of its kind may spur some action on the part of members, and indeed of readers of this article, to pursue the idea further; but I suspect that that is highly improbable. My apparent cynicism must be forgiven because it is not cynicism, merely a realization of the present state of our understanding and our knowledge of what we mean by religious buildings as opposed to what we mean by sacred space and sacred form. I can illustrate further.

In my 1966 talk to the Interfaith Conference which met in San Francisco (whose theme was appropriately enough, "An End to False Witness"), I called for the end of the concern with shallow symbolism and suggested that if, in our approach to design, we were deliberately anti-symbolic we might allow for a new and vital symbolic order to emerge. I suggested that rather than hold major conferences every year (at that time the attendance numbered somewhere around one thousand), we invest in research workshops and experiments in communities throughout the country for a period of three years and at the end we might have something to hold a conference about. We might have some findings of real value. I suggested that perhaps we could examine and use some of the methods and techniques which were being adapted from the sciences and particularly the behavioral sciences in the study of human response to architecture, and that we might apply these approaches to the questions of future church building and sacred space. It is unfortunate that my paper at that meeting caused angry denouncement on the part of many participants. But what is perhaps more unfortunate is the fact that no systematic examination of the problem has been undertaken, and that in the intervening years the number of those attending the conference has dropped from over one thousand to approximately two hundred; that a meeting which once made headlines in major

newspapers now produces minor boxes in the columns of the *National Catholic Reporter* and goes unreported in most newspapers.

My conclusion at the Cincinnati meeting was that it was too late for the organized churches in their present form to have any real or significant impact on our understanding of architecture (where they once provided the leadership), unless of course trends of the times are recognized and some action is taken. The seminary survey which I mentioned at the beginning of this article was conducted among the membership of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley with the assistance of the Survey Research Center at the University of California. It was surprising to find that trustees of some of the seminaries absolutely disbelieved the conclusions which the surveys inevitably revealed. I suppose it was equally difficult for the Catholic hierarchy in Ireland to believe the dramatic results of the recently conducted survey of the religious practices of contemporary Irish Catholics. One feels a little like a Tom Hayden must feel in a post-Vietnam Watergate era, and one wonders does it make any sense at all to discuss the question of sacred form or symbolic function or religious building.

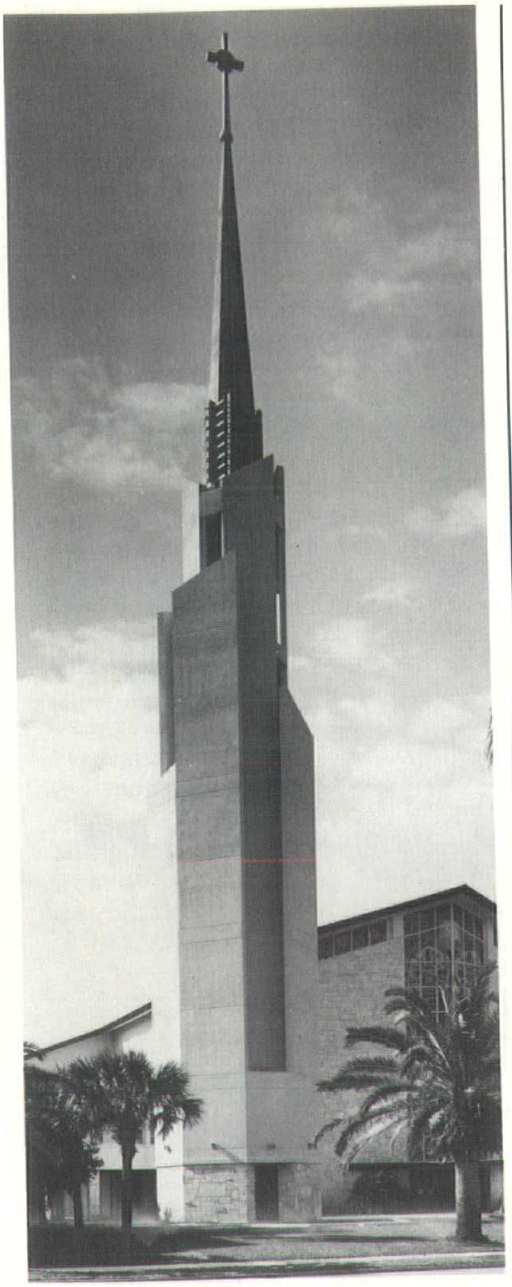
At Cincinnati I suggested that there was a broader context in which the question could be examined and it is a social context, the context of social change.

Instead of meeting yearly to talk about spiritual dimensions of architecture next to an exhibit of aluminum spires, foam-covered pews, electronic carillons, etc., a strong concerted gesture towards solving a particularly pressing environmental problem that affects religious building might have both more impact and more value.

For example, the ten percent of the United States population who are physically handicapped are denied access to many buildings because the issue of accessibility is not considered at the programming stage. In fact, most building programs ignore the question. Buildings sponsored by religious groups are in general no different. Such accessibility is demanded under law for buildings financed from state or federal funds, but the laws are so woolly and so varied that it is easy to ignore the need and the principle behind them, the principle of fuller participation in the physical environment for all.

If the Interfaith Conference could strongly support, say, a move to make *all "sacred" spaces accessible to the handicapped within ten years* after the bicentennial, it would have a certain dramatic impact, not to mention the benefit for the users of the buildings.

A resolution to that effect could have been forwarded from Cincinnati to the annual meeting of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. The latter hosted a three-thousand-strong meeting in Washington, D. C. with the then Vice President Ford as keynoter. But no such resolution was even proposed at the Interfaith Conference, despite the urging. Perhaps it is too much to ask of a body in a state of apparent decline, but it was a wistful, wonderful thought, potentially more far-reaching than speculations about the "sacred" in architecture or surveys of the attitudinal variations in a diocese where the bishop insists that the nave be entered axially and at right angles to the street. If the word "accessible" were substituted for "entered" that particularly irrelevant directive might make a little more sense. Granted the building should be accessible, but what then? Access to what? To sacred space, whatever that is? To space



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that is more evocative of spiritual response than others? That is yet another level of questioning that needs to be pursued after we get through the first. That is when we get back to what architecture is all about. When the grungy, pressing, day-to-day problems of efficiency, organization, economics, survival, are taken care of by good planning and programming, the poetic possibilities begin. God knows it is hard to break from verse into poetry but architecture is, if nothing else, poetic. It is, at its best, visual poetry, and the fact that it evokes emotional as well as intellectual response is not something to decry, but something in which to rejoice.

Others may say it is time to forget all about the down-to-earth needs (we haven't been very successful in tackling them anyway), and let us pursue the poetic dimension alone in a consistent effort to provide a real spiritual charge for the users and viewers and visitors. Like Kahn in Dacca or in Brynmar, like LeCorbusier in Ronchamp where the technicalities were subservient to the view that "the key is light"; like Van-Eyck in designing a school for difficult children (making provision for all the things that the children are not supposed to be allowed to do) "if architecture is built meaning, get close to the meaning and build."

There are convincing arguments for both approaches to the problem, but whether one starts with the pursuit of the poetic or the establishment of functional parameters does not in the long run really matter. What matters in this particular context is that it is worth going beyond efficiency. My pitch is for poetry, the poetry of walls that work. Accessible architecture can be poetic architecture can be sacred architecture. Clifford Howells, S.J., put it better when he said, "Never build a wall until you know what you are walling in and what you are walling out." ■

Burtchaell—Cont. from p. 15

Eucharist grows out of two earlier activities: the service of the word in the Jewish synagogue and the service of the meal in the Jewish and later the Christian home. Yet how many people leave the Eucharist in churches of any Christian denomination and have any imagery in their head that they have been to a supper?

I would argue that we have to be very sensitive in constructing houses of worship lest they be dissonant with what goes on there. Let me give one example of what I mean by dissonance. Two psychiatrists and I were talking the other day about emergency wards in hospitals. If you have a psychiatric crisis you are taken to an emergency ward. You arrive in an extremely anxious state and are put in the same room that you'd be in if you had broken your arm. You are surrounded by oxygen equipment and clamps and swabs and hoses out of the wall and rather ugly beds on wheels. Everything is guaranteed to increase your anxiety and fright. It has apparently never occurred to those who design emergency rooms that even the people who arrive with physical problems are in a state of anxiety. All of their effort ought to go toward designing a ward that is as relaxing and reassuring as possible, but such is not the cases; this is dissonance.

Back to the church building and its need for a rapport with the meaning of

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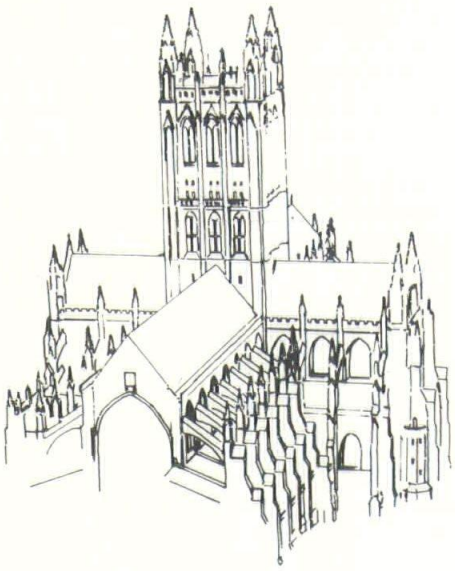
the worship that goes on there. One problem is that there are so many different kinds of worship. In our own sacramental tradition we have the rites of birth and death in the same space. We baptize and we send off for burial. We have the rites of the consummation of love in marriage and the coming of age in confirmation, the service of the word and the breaking of the bread. All of these have very significantly different dynamics. Yet if all of them can be imagined as going on in one and the same space, then is it not possible even further to diversify the space so as to incorporate other activities which would give credibility to the worship that went on there? I think that worship is well enacted in space where other growth-giving services occur; and indeed although one can have no quarrel with the existence of churches in our past tradition, I would argue as an allowable alternative that we have churches where throughout most of the time other activities also go on—entirely appropriate to the worship that is performed there.

A parish community should pray where it works, where it corporately makes some contribution to the community. The credibility of the worship is related to the self-giving of the community, and the best contextual place for a worshiping community would be in a room where the community does other things. It has been observed that most Catholic priests are really terrible at saying Mass. One day it occurred to me that one of the constitutional hazards we have as celebrants of the Eucharist is that we are supposed to be presiding at the head of the table where the world is supping—yet most us do not host people regularly at dinner. We do not have households, dining rooms nor the experience of offering hospitality from which one learns how to act at the head of a table. One of the most impressive priests I ever met is a Scotsman who looks like George Washington, has flowing white hair, and is the chaplain at the University of Edinburgh. He is also the chairman of the Scottish Parole Board. He lives in a house with about 23 people—including a couple of evicted families, half a dozen students, a few convicts out on parole trying to get a job, a few who have jobs, etc. What holds it together is this one man. He makes it a household instead of a commune because there's a father there. I don't know how many hours a day he's there, probably not very many, but I am sure that when he sits down to dinner he presides, and when he celebrates the Eucharist he has incorporated in his bones the wherewithal to represent Jesus at the head of the table.

If you have built many churches I am sure that all of you have at one time or another built a complex for a parish that could not quite afford its church yet, and so built a school or an educational center and then had services for some years in the parish gym. Wouldn't it be better the other way around? Imagine a large building wherein the parish had its boy scout and girl scout meetings, meals for the elderly, an adult education program and neighborhood meetings for model cities so that all houses could be brought up to code. There would also be a day-care center for mothers with dependent children and wedding receptions. Imagine a room where it was entirely proper to celebrate a marriage and then—without



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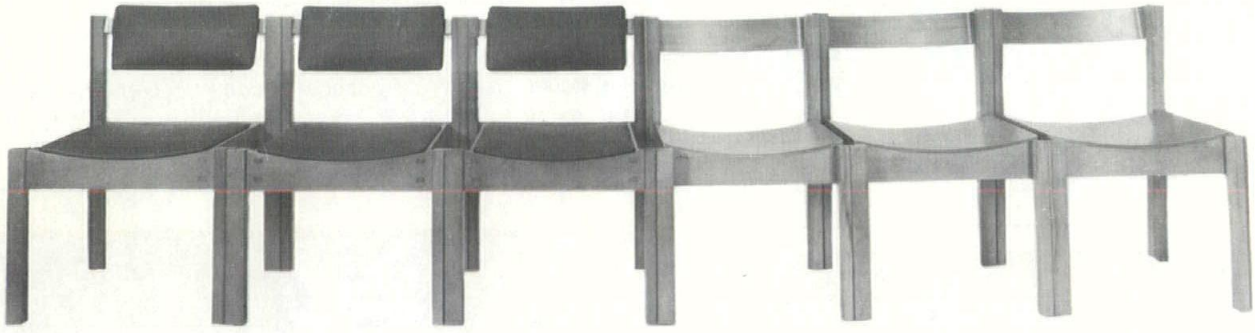

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going somewhere else—to have the reception. Imagine a single space so polyvalent that people could do those substantial favors for others which cause them to grow and then could, in that same environment, celebrate their belief that they are breaking bread with the world and cleaving to their Lord.

Does it not say something that we think we have to do these things in different places? Does it not say that we think they are unrelated? And that when we worship we don't even know what it is we are celebrating, and often have nothing else to celebrate because of that. I argue not for celebration of worship in secular space, but for celebration of worship where those things which give meaning to the worship also take place. If you marry your daughter and you don't have a cast of thousands present, would you not prefer to give her in marriage in your own home than at the local Holiday Inn? I hope so. I am not arguing that worship be left entirely in the open. It needs to be sheltered, but it should not be so absolutely withdrawn that it submits to the temptation to have its own meaning and sense and value, for in truth it has no value by itself. I am not suggesting that the Eucharist be celebrated in Horn and Hardart's or that skydivers should most appropriately be married at 15,000 feet, falling fast. Ritual should be celebrated apart, but that space should serve many purposes—or at least I argue that it could very well do so. We address ourselves to the Father in circumstances reminiscent of and dedicated to brotherly service. Congregations should have premises in buildings, and one point that I particularly like in Ed Sövik's book is that he says any community intent upon service has to have a building as its resource. Most of the services in this world do need cupboard space. However, this space should serve many needs. Structures which serve only a single need often serve that need poorly. I think you know that better than I and I would love you to dwell on that sometime. Think of structures which are so apparently specified towards a single activity and ask yourself if the more specified they are, the more inhumane they don't become. I am asking architects to be more imaginative than worshipers. But this is a challenge which architects have never shirked. ■

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audibly recites all the prayers. He gives voice to the common petitions of the worshippers and they give their assent by responding: "Amen." At one point in the service in traditional synagogues, the Reader actually changes position to indicate the changed status of the worshippers. He leaves his place in the midst of the congregation and faces the Ark, as a dramatic act, to indicate that he is now the embodiment of the group as a unity.

How does the architect express this transformation from individual to community? Is it a relevant category for his design? Can he perhaps place the pews in the round so that the congregants face each other. Does he insist on common pews, without separation, so that the worshipper is in close physical contact with his neighbor? Can he design the prayer hall to convey and encourage intimacy and closeness?

There is, however, a subtle interplay in the liturgy. After achieving community, the mood changes. Each worshipper prays silently as an individual. He gives voice to private petitions. How does the architect express this tension: to be part of the group, but at the same time to remain separate and affirm individuality in the Presence? As enthusiastic as historic Judaism undoubtedly is in its espousal of community, it insists no less on the infinite worth of each individual. "Therefore was Adam created a single one, unique," the Mishnah says, "to teach that he who rehabilitates one human being saves all mankind and he who destroys one man destroys all mankind." Community and individuality—not either/or but both in polar tension.

Each paragraph in the liturgy reveals and evokes a significant aspect of the Jewish experience of the holy: From the paeon of praise to the Creator who "renews daily the works of creation;" who is discovered in history and phenomena and who in His mercy grants man the significant role of being a "partner in a continuous creation;" to the experience of God as the teacher and lawgiver, who demonstrates His love and concern for man by revealing "statutes and ordinances, laws and judgements," the Torah, the law of love, which "begins and ends with deeds of loving-kindness;" to God as the Redeemer, the Author of a redemptive history, who is discovered in an ongoing transformation of "the real" by "the ideal," who guarantees that the "world was not created a chaos but was made to be inhabited," the Rock who assures that "the day is not distant when all men shall be brothers" and that "He shall be one and His name shall be one."

The religious imagination of historic Israel symbolized this central triad, Creation, Revelation and Redemption, in the Eternal Light, in the requirement of "much light" for the sanctuary, the Ark, the tablets of the Decalogue, the Bimah and in the image from the Song of Songs, "He peers through the lattice." How do the architect, the artist, the musician communicate their vision of the possibility of creation; how do they aspire for that which is experienced as a present reality in worship: the brotherhood of man under the fatherhood of God. In his struggle and yearning to experience, to express, to communicate and evoke, the architect is an inspired liturgist. ■

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