Indiana Architect

MAY '63

"PROGRESS" ... by E. Roger Frey
Precasting simplifies design and construction of balconies. Five towers, each with 24 floors of apartments, are included in the huge James Whitcomb Riley Center in Indianapolis, Indiana. Each apartment (studio, one- or two-bedroom) will have its own sun terrace.

The architectural firm, Perkins and Will, suggested precast concrete balconies as an alternate to cast-in-place balconies. The principal benefits they expect from precasting on this project are:
1. Rapid forming of the main structure.
2. Reduction of dead load by casting balconies in lightweight concrete. (Structural frame is conventional-weight concrete.)
3. Quality control in the casting yard assures durability for the exposed concrete balcony components.

Installation and connection details are shown at right.

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Architects: Perkins and Will, Chicago, Illinois
Concerning the Cover

On this month's cover is a reproduction of an original painting by Mr. E. Roger Frey, ISA Associate Member on the staff of the Board of Church Extension, Disciples of Christ Church.

"Progress" was painted on commission and depicts the dramatic evolution of a redevelopment area into a luxury apartment project. A crane is demolishing an existing, time-weary structure even as the concrete skeleton of a thirty-story apartment inches skyward. (Architects for the apartment complex are Perkins and Will.)

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Eero Saarinen's Gateway Arch

A majestic man-made monument in gleaming steel—destined to be one of the wonders of the modern world—is rising 630 feet (almost twice the height of the Indianapolis City-County Building) above the river front in St. Louis, Missouri.

It will be known as the Gateway Arch. Commemorating the opening of the West after the Louisiana Purchase, the great steel edifice will be one of the most unique structures ever built. It will also be our tallest monument, exceeded in height by only 16 existing buildings in the United States. If it were built in the nation's capital, the great steel Arch would rise 75 feet higher than the Washington Monument. If it were placed in Egypt, it would tower 180 feet over the Great Pyramid of Cheops. And if it were found in Rome, it would look down on the great dome of St. Peter's, 182 feet below. Completion of the steel Arch, which will cost approximately $11.5 million, is planned for 1964 to coincide with the St. Louis bicentennial.

Triangular in shape, it was designed by the late Eero Saarinen in the graceful form of an inverted catenary curve as the dominant feature of the National Park Service's $30 million Jefferson National Memorial. (A catenary curve is the shape a chain assumes when it hangs freely between two points of support).

As construction progresses, the enormity of the project becomes more evident every day. The
engineering principles involved, though not com-
mon, are not unusually unique or difficult. How-
ever, ordinary problems of construction, fabrica-
tion and erection confronted in everyday projects
are multiplied and added to by the sheer immens-
ity of the Arch.

For instance, deviation of $\frac{1}{64}$ of an inch be-
tween the bases might result in the legs of the
Arch failing to meet perfectly at the top closure!
Also, surveying during the erection of the steel
must be so exact that it will be done at night
when temperatures on the sides of the three walls
are equal.

At ground level, the Arch will have a span of
630 feet between the extremities of each leg. In
cross section, each leg is a double steel-walled
equilateral/triangle with each side measuring 54
feet at the base and tapering to 17 feet at the top.
The double walls will be 3 feet apart at the bot-
tom, diminishing to $7\frac{3}{4}$ inch space at the top,
leaving a hollow core 48 feet wide at the base and
tapering to $15\frac{1}{2}$ feet at the top.

The core of each leg will accommodate a stair-
way of 1,076 steps from a visitors' center below
ground to an observation platform at the top; a
unique eight 5-passenger car train to the observa-
tion platform and an elevator to the 372 foot level.

The exterior surface of the Arch will be fab-
ricated of polished stainless steel panels $\frac{1}{4}$
inch thick and varying in size from 6-ft. x 18-ft. to
6-ft. x $5\frac{1}{2}$-ft. as they go upwards. This is the
largest order of stainless steel ever required for
a single project, totalling 900 tons.

The interior walls will be composed of approxi-
ately 2,200 tons of carbon steel plates
$\frac{3}{8}$ inch thick.

The outer and inner walls will be fabricated
in sections and bolted together at the Pittsburgh
plant of the Pittsburgh Des-Moines Steel Com-
pany, fabricators and erectors of the Arch. Shipped
by rail to St. Louis, the sections will be weld-
ed on the site to form equilateral triangles and
then set in position. Because of its shimmering
natural beauty, the gleaming surface of the stain-
less steel plates will be given every possible pro-
tection during shipping, fabrication and erection.

As the legs of the Arch go up, they will be
additionally strengthened by pre-stressed steel
bars embedded in concrete up to the 300-foot
level. Above that height only steel stiffeners will
be used.

Foundations for the Arch legs were begun
with blasting for excavations in August, 1961.
These foundations are sunk approximately 60
feet below the ground level, with the lower 30
feet going into bed rock.

Massive foundations and filled walls typify a
weighted catenary arch, structurally the soundest
of all arches, for the thrust passes through the
legs and is absorbed in the foundations. In other
shaped arches, pressure tends to force the legs
apart.

The first above-ground section of the south
leg was eased into place early in February.

Despite its great height and small size at the
top in comparison with the base, extreme wind
pressures will hardly be noticeable to visitors at
the top of the Arch. It is designed to withstand a
wind load of more than 55 pounds per square foot,
the equivalent of a wind velocity of 150 miles per
hour. Under such extraordinary conditions the
Arch would deflect in an east and west direction
only 18 inches.

Erection of the Arch necessitates the design
and construction of special pieces of equipment.
The first triangular sections of the Arch up to a
height of 72 feet will be handled by cranes oper-
ating on the ground. Above that height two
creeper derricks, each weighing 80 tons, will be
used to raise the 50-ton sections.

Platforms for the derricks, 43 x 32 feet each,
will be adjusted to remain level, no matter how
high they “creep.” Each one will have a tool shed,
a heated shack for the workmen, sanitary facili-
ties and communications equipment. Each derrick
will ride on the outer, or top surface of the Arch.
Horizontal beams bolted to the Arch will support
vertical tracks 24 feet apart.

The proposed method for installing the last
section of the Arch will make use of a huge 80-
ton scissors jack to hold the legs apart while the
“keystone” section is carefully set into place. With
the job completed, the jack will be removed and
the creeper derricks will lower themselves as they
back down the tracks. Bolt holes made to hold the
tracks will be plugged with stainless steel and will
not be visible.

The prime contractor for the $30 million Me-
memorial is the MacDonald Construction Co., of St.
Louis.
The close association of sculpture and the healing arts is very ancient. In fact, from the earliest recorded times, the two were inseparable, as archaeological evidence shows. Yet, the cause for its minor role, or for its total neglect in many hospital designs today is largely due to the misunderstanding of the meaning of sculpture in the sense that it will be used here. Were it merely an art, or a craft, whose sole purpose is decoration, it could, like other luxuries, be added or omitted at will. Or, were it merely a means of self-expression of the sculptor, its validity in the hospital could be seriously questioned. But sculpture, true sculpture, is much more. Let me try to explain it by analogy.

The word *writing* denotes the act of putting communicative signs on paper. But it does not define the level of that communication, which could be anything from a child writing, "My cat is black," to a verse from the prophet Isaiah. So it is with sculpture. The word denotes the act, but does not define the level of performance.

I am not going to use the words *art* or *aesthetics*. Instead, I will use the phrase *mytho-peic* sculpture. On the surface, such a phrase seems at best highbrow and at worst frightening. But it serves a helpful function because, unlike *art* or *aesthetics*, it denotes the *nature* of sculpture and helps to explain its purpose for being.

Perhaps the following will make this point clearer.

Myths are creations in sculptured forms and also in words that give man a sense of spiritual orientation. In this way they have great psychological impact on him. An example of this kind of spiritual orientation is man's concepts of gods whose acts symbolize to him ordering, unifying and protecting forces. In spite of the fact that these gods are man's creations he could not psychologically survive without them. To cite great and familiar examples we have but to look at Homer, the Old and the New Testaments, the great sculptures of Egypt, China, India, Greece, Europe and pre-Colombian Americas. The mytho-peic sense is the common heritage of all men. It should not be confused with legends or tall tales.

From time immemorial, man, motivated by the need to comprehend the living forces around him and to grapple with the great mysteries that awed him—birth, metamorphosis, pain, death, the changing seasons—found the need for mytho-peic sculpture. This sometimes took the form of composite creatures combining man, beast and bird into one image so that the controlling spirits (gods) could abide in them. These composites denoted that the gods manifested themselves through all aspects of life. In a time of joy or pain or crisis man came to the mytho-peic image to pray, to sacrifice, or to consult. For him, mytho-peic sculpture was a symbolic image that embodied the source of his faith.

Today such sculpture still is the symbolic image of wholeness.

The healing arts have long recognized that the patient should be treated as a whole man. It follows that hospitals should provide a congenial setting for this kind of treatment.

Since the post-Renaissance (from the 17th century on) there has been a tendency to ignore the mytho-peic nature of man. Sculpture and painting were torn from the mother art, architecture, and from the social body to become luxurious bric-a-brac used as cultural ostentation. With rare exceptions, the mytho-peic side of architecture was forfeited. Borrowed architectural forms were used bereft of their original indigenous content. They became cliches or cloaks to cover the community's cultural and spiritual insecurity.

When architecture finally wrenched itself from this kind of design, the organic poetry of form was almost atrophied. Breaking out of one prison the architect found himself running into blockades: the "scientifically" and "economically" oriented client had become numb to mytho-peic images.

Weaker architects, dulled by years of dependency on misunderstood borrowed forms, were unable to handle modern technology as a medium
towards mythopeic architecture. Their architecture became enslaved to the impersonality of the machine, and the lusty youngster, science, emerging from the darkness of its primitive shell, assumed a self-centered discipline in its specific fields of activity, and in matters of the spirit, it was anarchic.

There are other problems we still face. The mythopeic spirit is the keystone of the whole man who now is being virtually ignored. He has been replaced by the specialist, this is particularly true. All scientific and technological actions are, in a way, chains. Each link feels only its immediate neighboring link. Even in ordinary labor, specialization makes a man's activity but a small fragment of a process. This emphasis on specialization, which ignores the mythopeic nature of man, is reflected in the design of most contemporary buildings, including hospitals; they are mythopically faceless.

There have been some recent examples of hospitals making use of sculpture and painting in their design. In most cases, however, it was thought of as merely decorative element, or as a means of identifying the institution by a statue of Hippocrates, or, perhaps, a nurse. It is not the subject matter that is at fault. It is the unimaginative, superficial, feelingless treatment of these subjects that is often accompanied by overtones of mass production.

One of the most appropriate places for incorporating the mythopeic image is in a medical center, where the learning process and the healing of man commingle. This approach was made at the new medical center of West Virginia University, Morgantown, where the school of medicine, and the hospital are architecturally interlocked.

From its inception, the architects (C. E. Silling of C. E. Silling and Associates, Charleston, W. Va., and Vale Faro and Rudolph J. Nedved of Schmidt, Garden and Erikson, Chicago) considered sculpture as a limb of the whole. I was called in early in the planning as sculptor. I was shown the plans, the location of the sculpture and was given four monumental, marble pylons to work on. These pylons are an integral part of the architectural composition. The motifs that were to be used and the treatment of the forms were left to me.

While I had done sculpture for hospitals before, I did further extensive reading to expand my sources for subject-motifs. No matter what project a sculptor undertakes, he must have more than an average knowledge, plus sympathy, for the field from which he draws his subject matter.

Since the pylons were to be at the entrance of the medical school, I felt that along with their mythopeic functions they should also carry an historic orientation for the medical student. The medical events selected for motifs had not only to be historically momentous, but also suitable for sculptural treatment. More subject-motifs were selected than could possibly be used. This gave me a wide range of selection in creating my compositions. In some of the reliefs historical motifs from different fields of medicine that occurred decades and continents apart are woven into an organic whole.

With all the basic information at hand I built working scale models of the pylons, scaled two inches to the foot. With blue prints of the building plan in relation to its topographical setting and elevations before me, I began to compose the reliefs on the pylons, trying out many schemes and sculptural treatments.

While the experimenting progressed, I had in mind the great number of people of diverse backgrounds who have no knowledge of the history of medicine, but to whom these sculptured pylons should evoke a mythopeic affinity. I have found that, in most cases, the observer's first natural reaction to a work of sculpture is the mythopeic impact: he simply reacts to a drawing power, if it is there.

When the preliminary sketches were done, a meeting was held between architects, sculptor and a member of the building committee. All agreed that the approach to scale, treatment and subject matter was appropriate. It was now ready to be presented to the building committee and faculty of the medical school. I therefore used photographs of the preliminary studies in my presentation to this group and described the sculpture's function in relation to the medical center as a whole. I also showed slides of mythopeic images from many parts of the world and periods of time to illustrate my concept of mythopeic sculpture and to show how sculpture differs from anatomical imitation of nature. The sculptor's function is not that of the anatomist, for stone, wood and bronze are of different material substance and structure than man and beast; forms evoked in these materials live in a mythopeic context, which is different than the biologic context.

Proportions within the mythopeic sculpture also differ from nature's proportions. For example, while in nature an elephant is larger than a man, in a mythopeic sculpture it might be the reverse, depending upon the role of the form in the context of the whole. The structure of every mythopeic sculpture, if it is truly a mythimage, has a logic of its own governed by the need specific to its function, whether it be a beautiful Indian bronze of the many-armed Siva, or a fine example of an Egyptian sphinx. (Continued on Page 16)
The 1963 AIA Convention in Miami held at the Americana Hotel from May 5 through 9, was well attended by Indiana architects, with the following being in attendance:

Representing the Indiana Society of Architects:
- Warren D. Miller, FAIA—Terre Haute
- Charles J. Betts, FAIA—Indianapolis
- Wayne M. Weber—Terre Haute
- Rollin Mosher—Indianapolis
- Thomas Dorste—Indianapolis
- Richard Madigan—Indianapolis
- Ivan Ray Dahlgren—Fort Wayne
- Walter Scholer, Jr.—Lafayette

Representing the Northern Indiana Chapter:
- Raymond S. Kastendieck, FAIA—Gary
- Frank Montana, FAIA—South Bend
- James Turner—Hammond

Several Indiana members of the Producers' Council also were in attendance including Ralph Weston of Arketex Ceramics Corporation and Don Rustad of American-Olean Tile Company.

Major items approved in the business sessions included:
1. A continuation of the Supplement Dues (on a more equitable basis) and the special programs being financed by those dues;
2. Approval to mortgage the AIA property in Washington (other than the Octagon and the garden behind it) for the purpose of financing and constructing a new AIA Headquarters Office Building;

A competition, open to all AIA members, for the design of the new Headquarters Office Building will be announced at an early date by the AIA Board of Directors. The comment that the “architect” for this structure has not yet been determined, but the “client” is an impossible one to work with, amused everyone, and probably is all too true.

J. Roy Carroll, Jr., FAIA, of Philadelphia, was elected President for the coming year, and Arthur Gould Odell, Jr., FAIA, Charlotte, North Carolina, was elected First Vice President (President-Elect). These men were unopposed. In the balloting for Second Vice President, Wayne S. Hertzka, FAIA, San Francisco, defeated William J. Bachman of Hammond. For the office of Treasurer, Robert F. Hastings, FAIA, of Detroit, won out over Raymond S. Kastendieck, FAIA, of Gary, by probably the narrowest margin in AIA history. Clinton Gamble’s, FAIA, term as Secretary has another year to run.

The Convention also approved — effective next year — the election of three second vice-presidents. The first vice-president (president-elect) would then be selected from these 3 the following year. An additional AIA Board meeting each year was added and several other minor changes approved.

The Professional Program of the convention entitled “A Quest for Quality in Architecture” consisted of three half-day sessions that were outstanding. Each of these sessions presented a challenge to all in attendance and were most stimulating. It is hoped that at least a portion of this program can be presented at the combined meeting of the East Central Region and Indiana Society of Architects Convention at French Lick in October.

At the Formal Dinner concluding the convention, the rank of Fellow was bestowed by President Henry L. Wright, FAIA, on 35 members from throughout the country — including Charles J. Betts and Frank Montana from Indiana — for distinguished performances. The entire profession is justly proud of these men.

The entire convention was well organized and smoothly run—it was a pleasure to attend.
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To achieve such a single, standard format, industry and the government is now reproducing its drawings at an incredible pace. For example, four million drawings at Westinghouse; fifty million in the Department of Defense: all have been brought to a single, standard size. The operating medium is microfilm, small rectangles of microfilm mounted individually or in a series in tabulating-size reference cards. For viewing, a deck of cards representing a single job may be used on a reference viewer; the deck may be inexpensively and quickly reproduced to other cards; obsolete drawings may be purged or replaced in moments; paper work prints may be made in reduced or full size at the press of a button; printing vellums may be made in the same manner.

"This is fine," you may say, "but I don't have millions of drawings, and most important, I don't have the resources of Westinghouse or Uncle Whiskers."

Granted. But recent developments stemming from the costly research and development programs of the big-budget boys have now brought to the system benefits within reach of the 4-board office. Let's take a look at the system and some representative costs.

The system comprises two basic units, the deck of microfilm image cards and a reader to bring the image back to readable size. The capital outlay for equipment may thus be as little as $200 to $400 for a conventional reader, or as high as $3500 for a reader which will produce a vellum print on demand. The card decks are produced on a weekly or monthly schedule by the local com-
mmercial microfilming laboratory; the cost of the delivered cards is roughly equal to the commercial price of a D-size diazo print. Each card is less than 4 x 7½" in size, carries the microfilm image and drawing number, and provides plenty of writing space for any notes to be entered on the card. An 8" drawer 24" deep will hold a file of 3,000 drawings. A small reader can be taken into a client's office for a demonstration of past performance.

A large and active office might wish to investigate the desirability of installing a camera in the office. Companies such as ours offer a wide selection of equipment for sale, so our interest can be quite objective about the economic comparisons between microfilming service and installing a complete in-plant system. Cameras suitable for architectural drawings range from $1,500 to $13,000; film processors are available in the $1,000 to $9,000 range; blank film cards cost from 3 cents to 15 cents each, depending on quantity; card mounters run a little under $1,000; and card duplicators about $150. The rest of the cost of an in-plant operation lies in the integral costs of film, chemicals, labor and overhead. An intelligent evaluation of the true costs and advantages of an in-plant set-up versus contracted services will follow certain guide lines. We have reprints of "The Economics of Microfilming" available, listing some of these guide lines, and will provide copies on requests sent us at P.O. Box 20224, Indianapolis.

We have mentioned duplicate decks of cards several times in this article. These sibling cards perform several functions: provision of a second copy filed off premises for security against loss by fire; provision of a second copy to submit to local planning commissions and other governmental agencies; provision of extra sets for cooperating architects. An interesting fringe benefit: one of our engineering customers now sends sibling cards instead of full size drawings to its overseas plants, at a savings of several thousand dollars per year in postage alone.

It is an impressive sight to go into an engineering department anywhere in the Bell System and see nothing but clean desks with a compact microfilm reader on the corner of each desk. (The boards and tables for reference use have been transferred to drafting). Over 20,000,000 microfilm cards of drawings were sent to these departments on the original changeover, and 5,000,000 new and revision sibling cards flow to the field each year.

Taking into consideration the different requirements and problems between engineering and architectural systems, the progress in architectural microfilming has been rapid in recent years. The new systems, equipment, and techniques available will provide such impetus that within a matter of months we expect to see 20% of all metropolitan architects in Indiana on an active microfilm system.
C. Charles Lowe, AIA, a partner in the Indianopolis architectural firm of Wright, Porteous and Lowe, was one of eight architects in the country admitted to Professional Membership this year in the Church Architectural Guild of America. The memberships were bestowed during the annual conference of the Guild held recently in Seattle (at which Mr. Charles J. Betts, FAIA, of Indianopolis, served as general conference chairman).

Mr. Lowe's membership was bestowed in recognition of his work on the Centerary Methodist Church in Lebanon, the Fishers' Methodist Church, and the twelve panels he executed for the Faith Presbyterian Church in Indianopolis.

The Indiana Society of Architects' annual convention is being held in the Fall this year, due to the Society's shift from a fiscal year to a calendar year operation. Several members have called concerning the convention, especially since the traditional and very well-attended Producers' Council Golf Outing was held last month. The Golf Outing normally is held in conjunction with the ISA convention.

The convention site will be French Lick, for a change of pace, and it will be basically a weekend convention for the convenience of all members. The dates are October 18, 19 and 20. Among the features being planned is chartered bus service between Indianopolis and French Lick (with refreshments on board), via Brown County, which should be in full Fall glory.

The convention will coincide with the first general membership meeting of the East Central Region, and the ISA Board is striving to put together an outstanding program.

Word has been received that Walter Scholer, Sr., FAIA, who recently suffered a heart attack and who was hospitalized in Arizona, is recuperating very well and has, in fact, returned to Lafayette.

Happy birthday to Lennox, Matthews, Simmons and Ford, who this month place thirty candles on their corporate birthday cake.

The Indianopolis architectural firm was established on May 1, 1933, as a partnership between Richard C. Lennox, AIA, and Joseph C. Matthews, consulting engineer. During early World War II, the firm associated with the then Vonnegut, Wright and Porteous (now Wright, Porteous and Lowe), also of Indianopolis, to form Allied Architects and Engineers. Included in the projects designed by Allied is the new Indianopolis City-County Building.

In 1946 the original firm was reactivated with two associate partners, Edward E. Simmons, AIA, and Wilson L. Ford, AIA, and the firm assumed its present name. Officers and principals in the firm today are Joseph C. Matthews, president; Wilson L. Ford, AIA, vice-president and treasurer; Edward E. Simmons, AIA, vice-president, mechanical department; Marion L. Cramer, AIA, vice-president and chief engineer; Robert L. Ehrigott, vice-president, architectural department; Louis E. Penniston, AIA, architectural department; and Richard C. Lennox, AIA, secretary and chairman of the board.

Congratulations are in order for the Acoustical Department of Hugh J. Baker & Company for an outstanding technical presentation program last month. The luncheon program (presented on two consecutive days) started and ended on schedule and the technical information was effectively presented and demonstrated.

The material being introduced was a newly-available acoustical ceiling tile, Decortone, produced by the U-S-Perlite Corporate of Momence, Illinois, and Canada. Effective visual demonstrations at the presentation included tests proving
absolute "zero" smoke contribution and incombustibility and immunity to water damage.

Ken Wood, chairman of the ISA Civic Planning and Design Committee, reports that two more seminars on urban design have been presented to interested groups, one in Lafayette and the other in Terre Haute.

These seminars are designed to stimulate an awareness of the need for urban design and to urge action by local citizens, leaving the choice as to procedures and methods of financing up to the local community.

Architects are urged to take the initiative in arranging for a presentation of this seminar at civic groups to which they belong. It is an excellent program, and information on it is available from either Ken Wood or the ISA office.

Five college students have been named winners of a nationwide architectural scholarship awards program sponsored by the Portland Cement Association. Each will receive an expense-paid trip to this year's summer session at the world famous Fontainebleau School of Fine Arts outside of Paris, France.

Selected on a regional basis, the 1963 winners are: Eastern Region: Nathan S. Leblang, Carnegie Institute of Technology; Midwestern Region: Stanley L. Anderson, University of Illinois; South-eastern Region: Howard R. Garriss, North Carolina State College; West Central Region: Joe W. Johnson, University of Nebraska; Rocky Mountain and South Central Region: Larry J. Hoskins, University of Oklahoma.

Twenty-three accredited schools of architecture took part in the competition, which was open to all fourth year students. The winning entries were selected from designs submitted by the students as part of their regular class assignments. Each school was limited to a single entry that had been picked beforehand by the faculty.

All of the entries had to utilize concrete as the principle building material and had to meet residential area needs. The term "residential area" include single-family homes, garden apartments, row housing or small offices and commercial buildings.

A distinguished panel of jurors made the selections. Its members consisted of Craig Ellwood of Craig Ellwood Associates, Los Angeles; Richard M. Bennett of Loebl, Schlossman and Bennett, Chicago; and Peter Blake, managing editor of Architectural Forum magazine, New York City.

The PCA scholarship program has been set up to provide new educational opportunities for top students and to encourage new approaches to the use of concrete in architectural design.

A Sculptor Looks

(Continued from Page 10) in basalt, or the seemingly realistic Moses by Michaelangelo, or Donatello's dancing putti. Mythimages like these appear so organically right to the eye, mind, and heart that it does not occur to the observer to question their anatomical correctness.

The sculptured pylons are not the only integral sculpture in this medical center. The hospital now under construction will have in it an interfaith chapel. The architects and I felt that this should not be an austere or impersonal room, which seems to be a characteristic of many chapels that try to accommodate impartially the Protestant, Catholic and Jewish faiths. Nor, we felt, should it be a room whose focal point was innocuous abstract forms lacking in mythopeic significance.

Because it was thought of early enough in the design stage, the composition of the sculpture and the chapel developed together.

The sculpture serves the dual function of a Holy Ark and a reredos. The subject-motif is from Isaiah 6:3:

"And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory."

This verse is an integral part of the ancient Jewish liturgy, of the Catholic Mass and the Protestant Communion. The ark opening, which is part of the total design, is large enough for the Torahscroll (Pentateuch). The Torahscroll, however, is there only during the Jewish services. The altar, which is movable, is drawn forth from the free-standing arkeredos for the use in Protestant and Catholic ritual. At these times, the opening will be closed by a translucent gold curtain. The interior of the ark is to be lit through a gold glass top, the light coming from the same source that will light the whole sculpture.

Foremost in our minds was that the chapel must be a place where the mythopeic spirit of man can find itself oriented, a sanctuary radiating a sense of "the beauty of holiness." When people of different faiths find the need for meditation and are in the chapel at the same time and the symbols of their specific faiths are not in their presence, the sense must prevail that they are not in an alien place.

It is only when each can be himself and at the same time feel himself an integral part of the many that man is truly man. The glory of man is that he needs and creates mythopeic images that are his tangible symbols of the unity that underlies diversity.
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