Divine by Design

Minnesota’s sacred architecture grows more diverse

Cover: Hindu Temple of Minnesota Page 28
Architecturally Bold & Beautiful

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“Sacred architecture that fosters an ecumenical spirit seems relevant not only in terms of attracting the millennial generation to places of worship,” writes Thomas Fisher. “With so much strife occurring among religious groups around the world, finding a spiritual common ground has become an urgent geopolitical matter, and one in which architecture—and architects—can play a role. The more our religious buildings convey what different faiths have in common, the more faith communities might come to understand that about themselves.”
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MODERN HISTORY

Several months ago, Architecture Minnesota contributors Frank Edgerton Martin and Carol Ahlgren came bounding into the AIA Minnesota office to comb through archived issues of Northwest Architect (this magazine's name until 1975). As historians and preservationists of midcentury architecture and landscapes, they were looking for the commentary of the day on the midcentury-modern churches and temples that were sprouting all over Minnesota in the 1950s and 1960s. Before leaving, Frank popped into my office to deliver photocopies of several articles from the March/April 1960 edition on church architecture. He knew I'd find them interesting reading as I planned the contents of the sacred-architecture issue you hold in your hands.

Frank also pointed out the symmetry between 1960 and 2010: In 1960, Northwest Architect produced its church issue for a national church architecture conference held in May of that year in Minneapolis, the theme of which was "The Modern Church: Its Message and Its Architectural Challenge." Fifty years later, Architecture Minnesota marks the national Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art & Architecture (IFRAA) conference in November in Minneapolis with an issue highlighting the growing diversity of sacred architecture designed by Minnesota architects.

Both issues include a photographic tour of Minnesota churches and temples that conference-goers were/are encouraged to visit, and two of the buildings in the older portfolio—Eric Mendelsohn’s Mount Zion Temple (page 48) in St. Paul and Emmanuel Masqueray’s St. Paul Cathedral (page 49)—make an encore appearance in our current one. Also, in the introduction to the 1960 issue, architect Gordon Schlichting, a conference chairperson, made a bold assertion, albeit in a Minnesota-nice sort of way: "We have been told on more than one occasion by visitors to this area is indeed the cradle of the birth of contemporary church architecture in these United States. We like to think so." This issue presents time-tested evidence in support of that claim by revisiting iconic modern churches of that era, including Eliel and Eero Saarinen’s Christ Church Lutheran (page 51) in Minneapolis, Marcel Breuer’s St. John’s Abbey Church (page 46) in Collegeville, and Ed Sovik’s Westwood Lutheran Church (page 32) in St. Louis Park.

Sovik, the designer of a number of notable midcentury churches in Minnesota, wrote an article for the 1960 issue, titled "Symbolism in the Modern Church," whose formal style offers a window into the past. "[T]he church designer is not simply concerned about the problem of building shelters which are as efficient as modern technology can make them," Sovik wrote. "Nor is it sufficient to add to this concern the concern for what we might call the modern architectural aesthetic. The problem which precedes both of these, if we are to be faithful to the purposes of the churchmen, is the problem of communicating with whatever clarity, vigor and consistency can be mustered the ideas which are the reason for the existence of both the church and the church building."

I hear clarity, sobriety, and humility in these words—the same qualities that describe many midcentury churches and temples. Time marches on, of course, and in the past half-century we’ve seen our religious architecture adapt to new cultural trends and technologies. But as these older buildings hit the 50-year mark—generally the age at which they can be designated historic by the National Park Service—it’s high time we prize them for their quieter architectural and spiritual qualities. On this count, the Christ Church Lutheran community, which for years has warmly opened its doors to local and national preservationists, and the Westwood Lutheran congregation, which recently completed an inspired renovation of its light-filled sanctuary, have shown us the way.

Christopher Hudson
hudson@aia-mn.org
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Check out the recently revamped Threshold at thresholdblog.org for weekly built-environment news and opinions, informal project features, and tie-ins with Architecture Minnesota content, including additional images of the Hindu Temple of Minnesota (page 28).

In Plain Sight | FORT RIDGELY Posted by Brandon Stengel

Sitting high above the Minnesota River bluffs in the south-central portion of our state, Fort Ridgely is a unique State Park because of its bloody past, quirky present, and controversial future. Yesteryear, it was a police outpost for the new settlers pouring into the 35 million acres "purchased" from the Eastern Dakota tribe in 1851. Fort Ridgely then became a training base for Civil War volunteers, and, when the U.S.-Dakota war broke out in 1862, it was unsuccessfully attacked by Native forces.

We may soon be reminded of the fort's controversial history. A proposed plan to move the campground entrance station from a mobile home into the historic commissary is being met with strong opposition from lawmakers and historic organizations... The plan would require expansion of the parking lot onto open prairie where Little Crow appeared with his Dakota warriors. >>CONTINUED ONLINE

Exploded View | FUTUREFARMERS AT THE WALKER'S OPEN FIELD Posted by Matt Olson

Judging by the pictures I see daily on Facebook of smiling people engaged in outdoor art-making activities at the Walker Art Center, the Walker's Open Field has been a smashing success. The large empty lawn on the west side of the Walker has become a kind of staging ground for all kinds of creative projects, from loosely organized community book clubs and classes to more formal projects by artists....

All summer I've been looking forward to A People Without a Voice Cannot Be Heard, a project by the San Francisco-based collective Futurefarmers. ... Futurefarmers is led by artists Amy Franceschini and Michael Swaine. The two were kind enough to chat a bit about this project and their work in general. >>CONTINUED ONLINE

RE-generation | CAN YIMBYISM MAKE A DIFFERENCE? Posted by Heather Beal

Sure it can. So what's prevented the yes-in-my-backyard (YIMBY) attitude toward sustainability from spreading like wildfire among green professionals? High costs. Or, rather, the perception that greening our homes will cost too much.

"People hear 'green' and they think 'renewables' because so much media coverage has focused on achieving energy independence," said Christine Bleyhl, during the presentation she gave with Cindy Ojczyk at the Greening the Heartland conference in Minneapolis in May. "Professionals working on sustainable commercial projects are also used to researching the costs of alternative energy sources. But you don't have to install a wind turbine, solar panels, or a geothermal system to make your home more sustainable." >>CONTINUED ONLINE
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In this charitable shopping event featuring the goods and services of Minnesota-based, women-owned design companies, a silent auction will benefit Free Arts Minnesota, a campaign dedicated to bringing the healing powers of artistic expression into the lives of abused, neglected, and at-risk children and their families. www.maidenminnesota.blogspot.com

Minneapolis' fashion scene is heating up again in November

Anna Lee has been busier than ever this year. The Minneapolis-based milliner (under the label Ruby3) and founder and executive director of MNfashion, an emerging nonprofit that provides resources and professional development to the Twin Cities independent fashion industry, organized the annual Spring and Fall MNfashion Weeks in April and September. Highlighting the spring week was the popular Voltage: Fashion Amplified, an annual rock 'n' roll fashion show at Minneapolis' vaunted First Avenue music club. With the fall week behind her, Lee shared with Architecture Minnesota several upcoming fashion events in Minneapolis.

-third Thursday Fashion Show
Minneapolis Institute of Arts
NOVEMBER 18

Third Thursday and MNfashion challenged four top Twin Cities designers—Emma Berg, Samantha Rei (Blasphemina's Closet), Laura Fulk, and Raul Osorio—to create looks inspired by the MIA's collection, and the designers have worked for months to bring their visions to life. Don't miss this gala runway show. www.arts Mia.org

Local-to-Global Jewelry Artist Mart
Walker Art Center
NOVEMBER 6

A jewelry market showcasing original pieces in a variety of materials by artists and designers from Minnesota and around the world. Be sure to check out the work of local artist Tia Salmela Keobounpheng; her jewelry is a beautiful mix of art, craft, and design. www.walkerart.org

MNfashion Holiday Bazaar
Grain Belt Bottling House Atrium
NOVEMBER 13

This event will feature the latest from local boutiques, salons, and designers, including exhibitors presenting sustainable fashion options in the Twin Cities. Buy some beautiful baubles and jewels, plan your holiday shopping list, indulge in decadent local treats, and sip cocktails or cocoa—all while giving something back to the local industry. www.mnfashion.org

-Compiled by Jen and Matthew Kreilich
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CHURCH AS VILLAGE
In the late 1960s, Pastor Arthur Rouner had a dream for his congregation. “His vision,” says Jensen, “was to build a church that was set up like a small village.” Colonial Church is not a single structure but a collection of peaked-roof buildings connected by wide hallways. The hallways—the village streets—have flat roofs and floor-to-ceiling windows. The rationale for this design is the Congregational idea of unity. The place where services are held, for example, is called the meetinghouse, and the compound boasts four fireplaces, where people can gather around the hearth. The village idea reinforces the church’s mission.

VARY SIZE, NOT FORM
The peaked-roof buildings, including the meetinghouse, gymnasmum, fireside room, and great hall, are the major gathering spaces. These buildings have the same roof slope, circular window with cruciform Mullions, and brown wood siding. But they’re not all the same size. The varying height, width, and depth of these roof forms create interest while maintaining consistency across the complex.

EXTERIOR VISIBLE FROM THE INTERIOR
The large windows in the hallways and meetinghouse support the church-as-village idea by creating views from within these spaces to the other peaked-roof buildings. They lend the pilgrim architecture a modernist feel while offering visitors a clear sense of where they are in the village.

Colonial Church of Edina
Colonial Church strikes a notable pose along the Crosstown just west of Highway 100 in Edina. Its brown, wood-clad buildings, steeply sloped roofs, and 90-foot-high bell tower are a pleasant diversion from the office buildings that dominate this stretch of highway. Designed by Richard Hammel of HGA and built in 1971, the church was meant to, in the words of assistant to the senior minister Jennifer Jensen, “capture the Congregational tradition’s intertwining with the pilgrim history of the United States.” Its overtones of old New England are unmistakable, but how does that make it such a well-loved and oft-noticed place of worship?

—Adam Rehn Arvidson
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Step into SJA Architects' third-floor studio in the stately Tech Village building in Old Downtown Duluth and you may feel a pang of office envy. With its high ceilings and wall of windows, the space offers a serene lake view over the roofs of the 19th-century brick storefronts across the street. A telescope is poised for ship watching, and sun pours over the desks.

But that's not the only reason you'd want to work there. SJA boasts a who's-who clientele—its high-profile projects include the University of Minnesota Duluth Library, the ultra-green Hartley Nature Center, and the expansion of the Duluth Entertainment and Convention Center (DECC)—and an office culture that retains some of its original family-firm flavor.

SJA president Ken Johnson, AIA, arrived in Duluth in 1983 to work for D.E. Stanius, a firm whose founding partner, Don Stanius, worked with his two sons, Rick and Ron. Don's wife Adeline ran the front desk and did the bookkeeping. In those early days, the family gave the company its form. "When I made partner," says Johnson, "people joked that Don would have to adopt me first."

The offices of then-named Stanius Johnson were on Duluth's Central Hillside in an earth-bermed and skylighted building constructed during the OPEC-driven fuel crisis (the energy-efficient building cost only $300 annually to heat). The building's open plan created a collegial environment, but the firm eventually outgrew the space and spilled into a house across the street.

With the split the company culture changed: Employees were in one building, senior partners in another. What had been a free flow of information and knowledge ceased. "We lost the open culture," says Johnson. "We learned the lesson of space."

So five years ago SJA moved into its current home, designing the studio for the 30 people the Duluth office then employed. (SJA also has an office in St. Cloud.) "Young people learn by osmosis," says Johnson, "and when you don't have the senior people in the same space, that learning doesn't happen. We could feel the stagnation in the old space. Now, if I hear a conversation on the other side of the room about design issues, I can jump up from my cubicle and offer some direction."

—Ann Klefstad
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This past spring, my wife Linda and I took a two-week cruise from Miami to Rome, retracing the transatlantic crossing I'd made on an Italian ocean liner with my University of Minnesota architecture class in spring 1968. As we neared Tenerife, the largest of Spain's Canary Islands, after seven days at sea, we were surprised and delighted to see stunning architecture that could only be Santiago Calatrava's—a concert hall with a curved, triangular, gravity-defying concrete-shell roof. While others took package tours of the town's lively market or the mountain villages, I spent the day experiencing and photographing the Auditorio de Tenerife from every angle I could.

The City of Santa Cruz de Tenerife had expressed "a desire for a dynamic, monumental building that would not only be a place for music and culture but would also create a local point for the area," writes Philip Jodidio in Calatrava (2009). And that's exactly what Calatrava delivered in 2003. The auditorium occupies a spectacular oceanfront site adjacent to a medieval fortress, with high visibility from the sea and easy access from the city. It's only fitting that the heavy stone fortress, which for centuries served to defend the island from foreign intrusion, is now outdone by architecture that is light and graceful and welcomes visitors from all around the world.

—William Armstrong, AIA
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In an interview with Phillip Glenn Koski, AIA, **ALAN REED** of St. John's Abbey shares his thoughts on the intersection of faith and architecture on the hallowed campus he's called home for nearly a half-century.

If you're looking for insight into the internationally celebrated modern architecture at St. John's Abbey and University, Brother Alan Reed is the person to talk to. Reed has been walking the campus since the 1960s, when he was a student there. He witnessed the construction of several of the Marcel Breuer–designed buildings in the late 1960s and later participated in the planning of buildings by Hugh Newell Jacobsen, RRTL Architects, and, most recently, VJAA. And with master's degrees in fine arts and arts education—he's taught the history and the craft of art and now serves as a St. John's curator—Brother Alan is attuned to the ways that art and design feed the spirit, and he uses his ability to describe the ethereal nature of light and reflections, for example, on the many architecture-oriented campus tours he guides each year. We caught up with Reed in August to get his insider perspective on the power of quality design.

**The St. John's campus is home to a monastery and a men's liberal arts college. How do these two communities relate to each other?**

The monastery is the anchor of the campus. It's at the spiritual heart of why both monks and students are here. The two communities interact both in the classroom, where some monks teach, and, maybe more significantly, in the student residences, which all have at least one live-in monk. There are also "meet a monk" sessions for students, faculty, and employees, as well as a number of programs devised to help students learn more about the monastic life and the search for God.

A fundamental value of monastic life is the notion that the path to God occurs best in community. Partly because of the influence of the monastic community and partly because of the high percentage of students who live together in campus housing, community becomes an integral part of the St. John's vocabulary and experience.

And I know from experience that alums of these two Benedictine institutions maintain those bonds that were begun here.

**Because of its iconic concrete-and-glass structures by modern master Marcel Breuer, the St. John's campus has become a kind of pilgrimage site for architecture students and practicing professionals from across the country. How has the Abbey Church's** (page 46) **architectural status competed with or complemented its primary function as a place of worship?**

Because it's a significant piece of modern architecture that we are entrusted with, there is the sense of our guarding a monument. But the monks don't own St. John's in any traditional sense. In fact, when a monk makes his final vows, he signs a document stating that he will own nothing and what he has is for his use but...
AIA Minnesota awards its 2010 Gold Medal to Edward Kodet Jr., FAIA, for his unrivaled service to the profession

By Thomas Fisher, Assoc. AIA

SERVICE WITH A SMILE

Few architects have contributed as much time and talent to the American Institute of Architects as Edward Kodet Jr., FAIA. AIA Minnesota’s 2010 Gold Medal winner. He has served as the president of AIA Minneapolis, president of AIA Minnesota, a regional director and vice president of the National AIA, a regent of the American Architectural Foundation, chair of two Gold Medal and Firm Award juries, chair of the Octagon restoration committee, and bursar and currently chancellor of the AIA College of Fellows, among many other positions. When asked how he manages to find time to sleep given his remarkable record of service along with the demands of his own firm, Kodet Architectural Group, Kodet lets out his jovial laugh and shrugs. “I’m pretty persistent and organized,” he says. “I was taught early on that you finish what you start, and you do it well or you stay with it until it’s done well.”

Those values come from his upbringing in the small town of Belvidere, South Dakota. “I decided to become an architect,” he recounts, “after coming across an article on architecture in an encyclopedia in the high school library, having read all of the other books in the library.” After receiving his undergraduate degree in architecture from the University of Nebraska, he came to Minneapolis to attend the University of Minnesota’s School of Architecture as a graduate student. “I hit it off right away with Ralph Rapson and John Meyers,” says Kodet. He started teaching the summer after his graduation and served as an adjunct faculty member in the school for more than 20 years. “It was my favorite job,” he adds.

Kodet’s liking of school led to his serving on the advisory boards of both of his alma maters, Nebraska and Minnesota. And it has prompted him to mentor and hire students, especially from Minnesota, offering to others the opportunities he had coming out of school. “In 1968, I joined Bissell, Belair, and Green,” says Kodet, “a very supportive firm.” In 1970, he joined Art Dickey, forming Dickey/Kodet in 1976. He established Kodet Architectural Group in 1983. “We do a lot of churches, schools, and public work,” he says. “I get along well with committees,” he adds, something that requires both patience and humility, evident in his response to receiving the Gold Medal.

“I was surprised and very pleased to receive the Gold Medal,” says Kodet. “I’ve either applied for or been appointed to all of my other AIA positions, so I appreciate this honor.” And characteristic of his service mentality, he adds that he wants to use the Gold Medal to advance the cause of architecture and the value of design. “Design is all-important,” he says, sitting in his office, surrounded by photos of his firm’s many award-winning projects. And such words coming from an architect as widely esteemed as Ed Kodet are as good as gold. AMN
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Only once in the past decade has an issue of Architecture Minnesota focused on sacred architecture. That’s largely because the most divine churches and temples often appear as Honor Award recipients in our annual awards issue before they can be published as a group. But over the past few years we’ve been following a flock of new or rejuvenated sacred spaces—a Christian church, a Hindu temple, a Buddhist temple, an interfaith house of prayer, and a Unitarian church—that beautifully illustrates the range of sacred architecture designed in Minnesota. We tour these sanctuaries and halls in the following pages, along with an older project—New Melleray Abbey outside of Dubuque, Iowa—that embodies the spiritual quality of timelessness. These buildings were designed to nurture their community’s highest aspirations, whether those aims are to worship, promote peace, steward the environment, or preserve the spiritual and cultural traditions of a homeland. Spend a few moments contemplating these spaces, and see if your soul isn’t stirred.

—Christopher Hudson
Built with the help of volunteer architects and engineers, the new Hindu Temple of Minnesota connects followers from five states to Hindu traditions from across India. **By Linda Mack**

In Maple Grove, past the Wal-Mart and Sam's Club, past abandoned farms and decaying corncribs, rises a Hindu temple complete with a dazzling 60-foot-high tapered tower called a gopuram silhouetted against the Midwestern sky. The story of its construction is as dramatic as its unexpected presence among the cornfields.

In 1998, leaders of the Hindu Society of Minnesota, which had been worshipping in a former Lutheran church in Northeast Minneapolis, considered buying 80 acres of land south of I-94 and west of the developed part of Maple Grove for a future temple site. As called for by Hindu tradition, the site was rectangular in shape and had an elevated spot surrounded by water.

When two members of the society, Byron Byralah, an electrical engineer with Leo A. Daly, and Minneapolis structural engineer Swami Palanisami,
Passage to India
The TEMPLES are smaller-scale replicas of famous temples in India. Each represents a region and a deity, here one from northern India.
"There is no place in India that has all these temples together. IT'S LIKE INDIA UNDER ONE ROOF."

-BYRON BYRAIAH, LEO A DALY

HINDU TEMPLE OF MINNESOTA

Location:
Maple Grove, Minnesota

Client:
Hindu Society of Minnesota

Architect:
Leo A Daly
www.leodaly.com

Principal-in-charge:
Robert G. Egge, AIA

Project lead designer:
Daniel Larson, AIA

Mechanical engineer:
Raj Maheswari

Construction manager:
Rochon Construction

Size: 42,000 square feet

Cost: $9 million

Completion date: June 2009

Photographer: George Heinrich

The SITING of the temple heeds the ancient Sanskrit instruction for the prayer hall to stand on high ground sloping north and east. A mile-long walkway encircles the building.

Large BRONZE DOORS (below) made in India face east and open to the prayer hall. In India, these doors are opened by elephants.

wrote to the Maple Grove city planning department to discuss building the temple there. "We were told the land would be zoned in 2020 and we should come back then," recalls Byraiah, who managed the decade-long project. "There were no roads, no water, and no sewer."

But the society persevered. Its leaders bought the land, the City of Maple Grove agreed to put in a road and grant a conditional use permit in 2002, and a largely volunteer architecture and engineering team led by Leo A Daly's Minneapolis office collaborated to design one of the largest Hindu temples in the U.S. The 42,000-square-foot structure includes a 20,000-square-foot prayer hall lined with 21 mini-temples to Hindu deities. Each mini-temple's deity and architecture represents a different region of India. The northern India icons are made of white marble; those from southern India are of black granite.

"There is no place in India that has all these temples together," says Byraiah. "It's like India under one roof." The temple serves the 50,000-plus Indians

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Faithfully
Restored

WESTWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH
SANCTUARY RESTORATION AND RENOVATION

Location:
St. Louis Park, Minnesota

Client:
Westwood Lutheran Church

Architect:
Kodet Architectural Group, Ltd.
www.kodet.com

Project architect:
Edward J. Kodet Jr., FAIA

Project manager:
Heidi Neumueller, AIA

Project team:
Ken Stone, AIA; Bruce Hassig, AIA;
Teri Nagel

General contractor:
Karkela Construction

Size:
9,000 square feet

Cost:
$1.2 million

Completion date:
August 2010

Photographer:
Dana Wheelock,
Wheelock Photography
The renovation of a mid-century sanctuary in St. Louis Park blends 21st-century amenities with a return to the architect’s original vision for flexible seating

Architect Ed Sovik was ahead of his time in the early 1960s. His plan for a new sanctuary for Westwood Lutheran Church called for, among other things, individual chairs that could be moved into a variety of configurations to accommodate intimate gatherings as well as large worship services. In the end, the church chose traditional pews bolted to the floor. When the sanctuary opened in 1963 its mid-century design drew high praise, winning a national church-architecture award and a Merit Award from the Minnesota Society of Architects (now AIA Minnesota).

This past summer, almost a half-century later, Sovik’s original design was restored and enriched, thanks to a long-needed renovation by Kodet Architectural Group that made removing the pews one of its many priorities. “We all have huge respect for Sovik’s work,” says John Stark, AIA, who chaired the church’s building committee. “So restoring and altering the sanctuary’s mid-century design wasn’t a hard sell. Neither, anymore, was promoting the flexible space.”

“We had no intention of forgetting about the original architect and his ideas,” says Kodet Architectural Group’s Ed Kodet, FAIA (page 24). “So we met with [Sovik]. He’s as current in his thinking about worship space as anyone. He assured the congregation that change is good, and that things had moved forward since he designed the church. Because the congregation viewed the renovation as an opportunity for renewal, they were supportive of the changes.”

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Pilgrim’s Rest

By Linda Mack
Concealed in a loblolly pine woods west of Little Rock, the Arkansas House of Prayer is reached only by an intentional journey. Follow a curving crushed-rock path designed by noted Arkansas landscape architect P. Allen Smith to a large granite boulder and there it is: a serene structure of stone, copper, and glass, with a roof that swoops toward the sky.

Step onto the square bluestone courtyard planted with four magnolia trees and already you have left the everyday world. Enter the cross-shaped reception area, remove your coat and shoes, and quiet yourself for the next step: crossing the threshold to the 16-sided meditation room that enfolds you in its embrace.

Here, all is silent, except for the sound of breathing. Maple walls and a layered maple ceiling create a warm reverberation. A circle of stones around dirt grounds the room in the earth. An oculus opens to the light of the divine. Ahead, the glass walls of a meditation niche frame a view of the forest.

You leave through a different door, one that takes you to another courtyard, this one with an ipe deck enclosed by dry-laid stone walls that descend 25 feet to the forest floor. "It's private, removed," says Cunningham Group Architecture's Brian Tempas, AIA, one of the lead designers of the building. "Pilgrimage was a major component of the design."

Sixteen years ago, Cunningham Group designed a meditation space for the Episcopal House of Prayer retreat center on the campus of St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota. Sheathed in maple and grounded in the earth, the eight-sided oratory is "like being inside a guitar," said firm founder John Cunningham, FAIA, at its opening. The nondenominational space features neither crosses nor any other religious icons. It's open to all.

In 1999 Rev. Susan Sims-Smith of St. Margaret's Episcopal Church in Little Rock saw a photo of the oratory on the cover of The Living Church magazine, cut it out, and pasted it in her day-timer. When she visited Minneapolis for a national meeting several years later, she called Cunningham and asked to buy the plans.

But the project Sims-Smith was preparing for differed from the Episcopal House of Prayer in several ways, notes Tempas. It wasn't to be part of a residential retreat center, for one. Its site was on the grounds of a church on the outskirts of a city. And its central space would invite silent meditation rather than the variety of meditation that the oratory hosts. "All I wanted was a place for people to be quiet," says Sims-Smith, who has practiced and taught silent meditation for more than 30 years.

So Cunningham Group designed the project as a variation on the St. John's theme: The meditation space, similar to the oratory in shape, size, and materials, achieves the same womb-like feel. The oratory has two private niches, the Arkansas prayer room three. The retired Episcopal priest who had made the simple wooden chairs for the oratory was commissioned to do the same for its sibling.

Inside and out, the interfaith Arkansas House of Prayer quiets the souls of its visitors.
ARKANSAS HOUSE OF PRAYER

Location:
Little Rock, Arkansas

Client:
Episcopal Diocese of Arkansas

Architect:
Cunningham Group Architecture, P.A.
www.cunningham.com

Principal-in-charge:
John W. Cunningham, FAIA

Project lead designers:
Brian Tempas, AIA;
Chad Clow, AIA;
Dan Grothe, AIA

Energy modeling:
Cunningham Group Architecture, P.A.

Landscape architect:
P. Allen Smith and Associates, Inc.

General contractor:
East Harding, Inc.

Size:
1,500 square feet

Completion date:
March 2007

Photographer:
Tim Hursley
Photography
The Arkansas House of Prayer is designed to foster a journey into one's soul. The swooping roof (bottom) echoes the sloping site, and the courtyard invites visitors to slow their pace. With its small reflecting pool and view of the trees, the meditation garden (below) prepares visitors to reenter the world.

The building slopes up while the ground slopes down, mirroring the landscape,” says Tempas.

“The building seems to hover.”

Since the Arkansas House of Prayer opened, in March 2007, it has attracted hundreds of people of every faith—and no faith—at every hour of the day and night (with the help of a clever key-fob entry system). Because all prayer is silent, “A Buddhist could sit next to a Hindu could sit next to a Baptist next to an atheist,” says Sims-Smith. “People we don’t know come. A woman who has lost her husband can’t sleep and goes there at night. A Sikh meets friends at the airport and takes them there for prayers. It’s really being used.” AMN
NATURE SANCTUARY

A contemporary, conservation-minded addition to a Unitarian church reflects the congregation's deeply held beliefs

BY AMY GOETZMAN
Sometimes a site is already perfectly completed by nature, and taking steps to build upon it can be painful. Destruction precedes construction. When the congregation at White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church began planning a much-needed expansion of their building, they hit a spiritual roadblock. Healthy trees would need to come down to accommodate the project.

“They thought of themselves as ‘the little church in the woods,’ and they really didn’t want to lose that,” says Locus Architecture principal Paul Neseth, AIA. “Their trees meant a lot to them.” The wooded site, edged by wetlands, provided a living, ever-changing backdrop for the church’s activities, and it served as a reminder of some of the most important intentions of the community. Many of the church’s activities focus on celebrating nature and taking meaningful action to counteract humans’ negative impact on the environment.

But the growing congregation needed more space. In compromise, they selected Locus Architecture to do a green remodel and addition that would double the church’s size but reduce its carbon footprint through strategic design, solar energy, and an innovative permeable-asphalt parking lot. The expanded building would ultimately sit more gently on the earth, and that sat well with the people it would serve.
"Our goal from the very beginning was to create a sacred space here," says pastor Victoria Safford. "Although our need was to create a larger space, our hope was to create a space where a sense of community and intimacy could flourish the way it had in our small building, a space where the people gathered can feel the sense of peace, or the possibility of peace. And that has been accomplished. The new building is reverent before the land it sits on."

More than reverent, the addition is in many ways integrated with the land. Its corridors all lead to inspiring views, and the new meeting hall features a richly nuanced Douglas fir paneling that highlights the artistry of nature. (The artwork of this creative congregation, meanwhile, is displayed in new gallery space just outside the meeting hall.) A careful study of the wetlands that encompass nearly half of the site led Locus to position the addition tightly to the existing church and with strategic water management in mind. And the Cor-Ten exterior, now a saturated, earthy orange tone, will continue to rust and evolve over time.

"Nature will finish this building," says Neseth. "Some buildings are the best they're going to be on the day they open, and after that they deteriorate. This building is going to age nicely from use and time and weather. That involves a little bit of letting go on the part of the congregation, but that openness fits nicely with how this church views its place in the world."

Indeed, understanding this church was a crucial part of the design process for Locus. The existing church originally served a Methodist congregation, and Neseth says the Unitarians felt "squeezed" by its traditional design. "You really don't want to box in a Unitarian," he says, laughing. "They look beyond the borders of their space more than most other churches do. The idea of a sacred space is incredibly important to them, but it's not defined in the usual way. We connected all the spaces and corridors in the building, and placed windows to take them spiritually and emotionally beyond the building."

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After the building was complete, architect Paul Neseth came back with his daughter, who is now 14. "I was taking some pictures, and after we'd been there for about half an hour, she said, 'Dad, I think I'd like to get married here,'" Neseth recalls. "To me, that's the ultimate compliment."

"Although our need was to create a larger space, our hope was to create a space where a sense of community and intimacy could flourish the way it had in our small building. And that has been accomplished. The new building is reverent before the land it sits on."

— PASTOR VICTORIA SAFFORD
MUNISOTARAM
MINNESOTA

The colorfully ornate
WATT MUNISOTARAM
the spiritual and cultural
home of thousands of
Cambodian Minnesotans,
sits proudly on the
Minnesota prairie

BY BRANDON STENGEL, ASSOC. AIA

WATT MUNISOTARAM
Location: Near Hampton, Minnesota
Client: Minnesota Cambodian Buddhist Society
Architect: Rice-Stromgren Architects
www.ricestromgren.com
Principal-in-charge: Jeff Stromgren, AIA
Project lead designer: Jeff Stromgren, AIA
Size: 10,000 square feet
Cost: $1.5 million
Completion date: July 2007
IN DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION, it's sometimes said that there is good, there is cheap, and there is fast, and you can choose only two. As the Minnesota Cambodian Buddhist Society (MCBS) near Hampton continues to expand its facilities—a collection of colorful and intricately detailed structures that rise in vibrant contrast to the surrounding landscape of dusty farmland and beige houses—its choice is clear. A religious society that teaches the continuum of one's mind through endless cycles of birth, life, death, and reincarnation is not concerned about the time required to construct its places of worship.

The story of Watt Munisotaram—a compound of lively gardens, ornate pagodas, and a 60-foot-high temple completed in 2007 after more than five years in construction—began in 1988, when MCBS purchased a 42-acre farm between Farmington and Hampton. The story unfolded further this past summer when MCBS broke ground on a 74-foot-tall stupa (shrine). It, like most of the facilities here, was designed by Minneapolis' Rice-Stromgren Architects and will be built almost entirely with volunteer labor.

"I began by helping the society with upgrades to existing buildings, and we’ve been able to collaborate several times since then," says Rice-Stromgren principal Jeff Stromgren, AIA.

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New Melleray Abbey

A 1970s renovation of an 1870 monastery building in Dubuque, Iowa, created an interior of timeless, breathtaking simplicity

By Bill Beyer, FAIA
ON SEPTEMBER 10, 1849, on a mere day's notice, Brother Kieran Patrick Mullany and 15 of his fellow Trappist monks were ordered by their abbot to depart their home, the Abbey of Mount Melleray in Ireland, for new assignment in America. Sailing from Liverpool, the monks reached New Orleans on November 6, then steamed north into winter for Dubuque, Iowa, as riverboat deck passengers. By their arrival 20 days later, 6 monks and 20 other passengers had died of cholera. The next day, the 10 surviving monks slogged 12 miles up the bluffs and across the winter prairie to their new home, the freshly minted Monastery of New Melleray.

After enduring more Iowa winters in makeshift quarters, the monks began construction of permanent buildings in 1867. The north dormitory and east chapter wings of what was planned as a quadrangle were completed by 1870. The two-story north wing was 36 feet wide, 212 feet long, and 52 feet to the ridge board (where the rafters meet), with 43-inch-thick limestone walls on foundations extending 10 feet below grade.

In 1973, HGA was retained to repurpose the north wing from a hodgepodge of neo-Gothic interiors into a single worship space. Stripping out the upper-floor structure, wall plaster, and decorative ceilings exposed the essence of the original construction: a serene volume defined by site-quarried limestone rubble walls and timber-and-iron king-post roof trusses, washed by daylight from two ranks of Gothic arched windows.

The architects were wise enough to let the revealed soul of the place speak for itself, adding only fir roof decking, quarry tile floors, and oiled oak furnishings and trim. Their considerable restraint earned HGA a National AIA Honor Award in 1977.

Brother Kieran recorded the hard beginnings of monastic life at New Melleray until his death in 1894. In the sultry stillness of a July afternoon, a visitor can feel centuries of Trappist community, contemplation, and manual labor resonating in the simple worship space.
In Search of Spiritual Space
In Minnesota, sacred architecture large and small offers spiritual common ground to a new generation of seekers.

BY THOMAS FISHER, ASOC. AIA

I recently toured several religious buildings in Minnesota with a colleague of mine, Michael Crosbie, the editor of Faith & Form magazine. All the while, I kept thinking about a recent Pew survey showing that 72 percent of the millennial generation consider themselves more spiritual than religious. What, I wondered, did that mean for churches and temples—as institutions and as works of architecture—and what kinds of spiritual spaces would we need in the future?

We visited six buildings: St. Paul Cathedral, designed by Emmanuel Masqueray; Mount Zion Temple in St. Paul, by Erich Mendelsohn; Christ Church Lutheran in Minneapolis, by Eliel and Eero Saarinen; Bigelow Chapel in New Brighton, by HGA; St. John's Abbey Church in Collegeville, by Marcel Breuer; and St. John's Blessed Sacrament Chapel, by VJAA. The structures represent a range of religious faiths and a variety of physical forms. But they also have spiritual qualities in common that point to what a more ecumenical future might entail.

Sacred architecture that fosters an ecumenical spirit seems relevant not only in terms of attracting the millennial generation to places of worship. With so much strife occurring among religious groups around the world, finding a spiritual common ground has become an urgent geopolitical matter, and one in which architecture—and architects—can play a role. The more our religious buildings convey what different faiths have in common, the more faith communities might come to understand that about themselves.
With so much strife occurring among religious groups around the world, finding a spiritual common ground has become an urgent geopolitical matter, and one in which architecture—and architects—can play a role.
It seems ironic that so much conflict among religions revolves around territorial disputes—West Bank settlements, Kashmir boundaries, Belfast neighborhoods—because every faith seeks, in different ways, to help us overcome our attachments to the material world. The buildings on our tour made that paradox amply evident. However much they occupy prime real estate or employ elaborate architectural effects, all of them embody the opposite: a sense of the immateriality of the material world.

St. Paul Cathedral and St. John’s Abbey Church accomplish this through sheer size and scale. While carefully detailed and beautifully crafted, these two structures are most memorable for their enormous volume. Their power, in other words, lies not in their mass but instead in their void—an interior so vast that it takes on a presence all its own. These soaring spaces remind us that we all breathe the same air and occupy the same earth.

The smaller buildings on our tour achieve something similar by connecting congregants to a larger realm beyond their sanctuary’s relatively diminutive dimensions through the manipulation of light. In Mount Zion and Christ Church Lutheran, for example, daylight floods the main worship space from windows concealed from view, either above and behind the worshipers or from the side behind a projecting wall. Meanwhile, in Bigelow and Blessed Sacrament, daylight comes filtered through wood screens—either very thin wood veneers in the case of Bigelow or very thick wood reredos in the case of Blessed Sacrament. In all four spaces, light refers to a reality that transcends the walls we erect, reinforcing the pointlessness of turf battles in the name of religion.
While each of these buildings serves its denomination and responds to its program and site exceptionally well, all have a spiritual quality that reminds us of our commonality as mortal creatures and our shared hopes as human beings.
Irony also pervades the denunciations and demonizing that occasionally occur among—and even within—religions. Behind the diverse rituals and traditions of every religion lies the same goal of reconnection, evident in the Latin root words for religion (re-ligare, meaning “to reconnect”) and spirit (spiritus, meaning “animated or vigorous”). Vigorous reconnection, in other words, lies at the very center of all religions.

The buildings on our tour demonstrated this in various ways. The two largest structures—St. Paul Cathedral and St. John’s Abbey Church—allow people to reconnect in part by accommodating large numbers of congregants in their sea of pews. Their openness to any and all who might enter made me wonder what would happen if members of warring religions sat down in each other’s space, not to worship but simply to be in each other’s presence. How many would still take up arms?

The smaller structures we saw achieve this sense of welcome in equally disarming ways. The nearly windowless brick exterior of Mount Zion looks like a garden wall inviting all to enter and share in the rich bounty within, while the elemental forms and materials of Christ Church Lutheran bring to mind the almost primordial act of humans coming together to pray. Bigelow Chapel bathes all who enter in the warmth of our shared sun, while the tiny, wood-lined Blessed Sacrament Chapel recalls the wooden resting place that awaits us all at life’s end. These structures show how life and death unite us, and how religions exist to help us deal with our mortality, not to hasten it with bullets or bombs.

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Reed Between the Lines

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belongs to the community. It's a radical form of commitment to a group. It certainly alters the way we look at what we have. Since we don't own the buildings, we have them for our use and an important part of our usage of them is to share them.

Yes, there are times when tourists wander through the church while the monks are praying the psalms in choir. Or a flashbulb explodes with light during a liturgy. Shortly after the church was completed, one monk was heard to say something like, "Now we should build a church where we can pray." But St. Benedict in his Rule for monasteries says that guests should be welcomed as if they were Christ.

The College of St. John was founded in 1857, and its early buildings were rather conventional brick-and-stone structures. With the construction of the Breuer buildings in the 1950s and 1960s, it seems there was a conscious decision to embrace modernism. Did this new direction in architecture follow a concurrent philosophical shift within the monastery, or was it simply a matter of following the aesthetic trends of the time?

This is a complex question because the monastery is always a part of the culture in which it exists. The national enthusiasm of the postwar era, the country's rapidly growing economy, and other changes probably affected the planning as much as the rumors of liturgical change.

What amazes me is the intersection in the early 1950s of 1,500-year-old Benedictine monasticism and 25-year-old Bauhaus theory. But perhaps I shouldn't be amazed; the two traditions share an emphasis on simplicity, honesty (of materials), the integration of art and life, the necessity of a community of either artists or monks, and so on. It was the right fit.

More recently, St. John's worked with Minneapolis architects VJAA on several projects, all of which have received accolades for their sophisticated design. How has the quality of these projects impacted the lives of the monks and students in ways that cheap, ordinary buildings don't?

VJAA's guesthouse has been extremely successful at attracting visitors to the monastery and campus, but perhaps even more at demonstrating monastic principles through its forms and spaces. Almost everyone I've talked to who has stayed in the guesthouse or even shared a meal there with one of the monks has said that the building gives off an aura of quiet thoughtfulness and spirituality.

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The Blessed Sacrament Chapel (page 46) is almost a more complex experience than the guesthouse because of its dependence on surfaces that must convey the quality of the sacred. Like the Breuer church, the chapel is dependent on ethereal qualities—in this case, light and reflection. So it can be harder for people to read. Traditional images are not present (nor are they in the church), but the light and its interaction with the surfaces of the room guide us to sense it is a significant place.

In addition to its commitment to design, St. John's has undertaken several sustainability initiatives, such as the enormous solar-panel array erected in nearby farm fields. What other projects or programs are you implementing to help create a sustainable future?

The solar farm has been very successful, so we're now in the process of studying wind energy. In addition, both St. John's University and the College of St. Benedict have hired sustainability directors to help guide the institutions. This academic year has been designated the Year of Sustainability, with a goal of working that topic into all areas of the curriculum and encouraging its practice.

Most people view monasteries as places that are intentionally isolated from the world. Yet St. John’s Abbey is seen as a vital part of its local community. How would you define your historical and current relationship with the secular world down the road?

There are different expressions of monasticism. Some emphasize the internal life of prayer and work and in their strictest forms evolved into the Trappist and Carthusian orders. The rest of us attempt a balance between the inner life of the monastery and a need to serve. The six monks who arrived here in 1856 were sent from Pennsylvania to serve a growing German population in central Minnesota. Our purpose from the beginning was to live and pray together and to offer religious service and education to others.

What is your favorite place on the abbey grounds?

There’s a bosque of linden trees designed by landscape architect Dan Killey in front of the auditorium building, with crushed rock as the ground surface. With some metal tables and chairs it has become a favorite place, like a little French park.

You’ve guided many campus tours over the years. What are some of the unexpected reactions visitors have had to the architecture?
Reed Between the Lines

My favorite tours are with people from the arts and architecture communities. I love watching them explore the tiniest details—how a brass plate is attached to concrete, or how different materials never touch but are separated by "shadow lines." But the most common response is something like, "Oh my, this is amazing."

Does St. John's have plans for any new buildings in the near future?

A significant updating and expansion of Breuer's 1965 Alcuin Library was recently proposed. The only other talk I've heard is about wind-power structures and, in the future, renovating the Breuer-designed monastery. As a 54-year-old building, it has plumbing and electrical systems that are either breaking down or severely inadequate for 21st-century needs. When it was built, energy and plumbing needs were very different from what they are now; it's pretty far from being an energy-efficient building. And, on a personal note, on a day that is reaching close to 85 degrees with high humidity, it has no air-conditioning.

Passage to India

in the Twin Cities and draws from a five-state area and southern Canada.

A VOLUNTEER EFFORT

When the Hindu Society put out a request for proposals for architects, one thing was clear: Much of the work would be pro bono. Minneapolis' Setter Leach & Lindstrom, now part of the national firm Leo A Daly, was selected and worked with experienced engineers who volunteered their services. "We met lots of Saturday mornings," says lead designer Daniel Larson, AIA.

When Larson got involved, an Indian temple architect had already completed a concept design, but a charrette with society members led to a revised design that fit the site. "Our charge was to create a container for the temples and a structure that could accept the decorative features that would be added over time," says Larson. "I've never done a building like that before."

As called for by Sanskrit writings, the temple stands on a high spot that slopes to the north and east. The gopuram, a traditional decorative
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Passage to India
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tower that marks the temple entrance, stands at the center. From there, visitors can go up to the high-ceilinged prayer hall or enter the cultural center on the ground floor that includes a 450-seat auditorium, 250-seat dining hall, and meeting rooms that can all be opened to each other for large crowds attending feasts or weddings.

Also as spelled out in Hindu writings, the prayer hall can be entered from the east via a sloping walkway that leads to an outdoor terrace and two sets of 10-foot-high brass doors that open to the prayer hall. (The elaborate doors were made in India, where they would be opened by elephants.) A mile-long walkway provides a ceremonial path for festivals and allows worshippers to circle the temple as they would in India.

PROPORTION AND HARMONY

While the Leo A Daly team developed the concept and construction drawings, Indian temple architect Padmasree Muthiah Sthapathi, whom Palanisami had known from a temple project in Houston, oversaw the design and completion of the gopuram and mini-temples. Since temple construction started in 2005, dozens of craftsmen from India have come to add their traditional ornamental artistry.

Palanisami, of the engineering firm Palanisami & Associates, made sure the elaborate and often delicate decorative features were structurally sound, and that the ones outside would withstand Minnesota's harsh climate. For the nine levels of sculptures and ornament on the gopuram, he tested a special fiber-strengthened plaster by leaving it outside over a winter. The decorative plaster and brick exterior is tied to the interior concrete structure so it can move without cracking.

The weight of the mini-temples inside the prayer hall also created a structural challenge. Each one sits on a concrete mat and, as required by Hindu belief, is grounded on the earth. Proportion and harmony are also central to Hindu architecture. The temple is "a unique combination of ancient wisdom and modern ingenuity," says Dr. Shashikant Sane, chairman of the society's construction committee.

And with its unusual infusion of volunteer expertise, the Hindu Temple of Minnesota is also an inspiring testament to the patience and faith of both the Hindu community and the dozen-plus architects who put their hearts and souls into the project. "No amount of money could repay this volunteer work," says Byraiah. AMN
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In addition to removing the pews, the architects seamlessly integrated doors to the adjacent courtyard and tastefully outfitted the sanctuary with state-of-the-art audio and visual technology, to accommodate contemporary worship. "We were having traditional worship in the sanctuary and contemporary worship in the gym, so we were like a family with two living rooms," explains senior pastor Tania Haber.

With a large video screen embedded in a new concrete beam, and audio (as well as a new sprinkler system) hidden behind a ceiling of acoustical clouds, says Haber, "we can now unite our whole community in one beautiful space." The renovation also added new ceiling lighting, replaced 240 custom-shaped, single-pane windows with new energy-efficient glass, and restored original doors, hardware, walls, columns, and the floor.

To better support the church’s theological and liturgical orientation, the design team also removed the masonry chancel platform and replaced it with a movable one constructed of contrasting light-colored wood. "We can now move the platform and rearrange the chairs for choral or chamber-music concerts," says Haber.

The travertine-marble baptismal font, which had been hidden in a corner, now sits in the middle of the sanctuary. "Theologically we believe our journey starts at the font, and we live out of our baptisms, and now the font is central to our worship life and theology," Haber explains. Also, the cross, which is affixed to a tall wood pole, was brought forward from the back into the chancel area, "so it rises up out of the middle of the congregation, and we can gather around it," adds Haber.

"Our sanctuary now provides wonderful teaching moments and new configurations for services," Haber explains. The sanctuary, which seats 800, can be easily reconfigured for more intimate gatherings. The first funeral in the new space occurred next to the baptismal font, as did the first wedding.

"Everything was done with the idea of respecting Sovik’s original design," says Kodet, "while incorporating the lighting, technology, and theological ideas Westwood Lutheran requires to conduct services in the 21st century. Ed’s design is still quite timely and reinforces that mid-century modern is good architecture."  

Faithfully Restored
<< continued from page 33

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"It all started when an MCBS representative walked into my office and asked if I could design a temple."

The Stromgren-designed temple—the largest of the more than 80 Cambodian Buddhist temples in the U.S., according to MCBS board member Sophal Mey—beautifully adheres to an ancient style while incorporating modern-day building techniques. "The walls of the lower level are made of insulating concrete forms (ICFs), the floor and plaza are precast, and the upper level is wood frame," Stromgren explains. "The precast was installed by the supplier, but otherwise we were very careful to design things so that they could readily be constructed by volunteers—many of whom had never seen architectural plans before."

The two-level temple sits at the rear of the site, atop a gentle bluff overlooking the countryside. The lower level, an expansive banquet hall, accommodates large social gatherings and displays Buddhist relics and a set of the Vinaya texts, a collection of the 227 rules for male monastics. On the upper level, a smaller, taller room is reserved for meditation. Here, a 15-foot-tall statue of Buddha faces east, and 25 murals circle the room, depicting the major events of his earthly life.

Outside, along the temple exterior and elsewhere on the temple grounds, sit hundreds of intricate concrete castings created by Cambodian sculptor and painter Socchea Yav. Yav is currently working due west of the temple where foundations are being poured for the stupa, a multilevel shrine that will house a mausoleum for MCBS members, a meditation space, and a very rare relic to be shared with a temple in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The relic, a Buddha statue containing pearlized crystals said to be found in the cremated remains of ancient monks and proof of Buddha’s enlightenment, will be one of only two such relics in the U.S.

The construction of the stupa, expected to take five years, promises to be another beautiful addition to the MCBS home. "Working with Jeff [Stromgren] and the society is a rewarding process," says Sophal Mey. "We have wonderful leadership, and construction brings the community together."
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Where does reclaimed wood fit into your next project?

Nature Sanctuary
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The new spaces are also distinguished by their simplicity, which Neseth says runs counter to the trend of churches becoming more theater-like with multimedia technology. "There are a large liberal congregation in what they believe, but they are very traditional in that they don't have all the screens going," he explains. Adds Safford: "We're not a Luddite congregation. We're engaging contemporary society as vigorously as we can. And yet we were so hopeful we could preserve one hour within the week when people's connectedness to the Internet, cell phones, and technology could be shut down." Here, all that is turned off, and quiet comes forward.

And those lost trees? It turns out they weren't entirely lost after all. The Locus team understood that the old oaks were more than just landscaping to this congregation. So they suggested milling them for use in the new design—an idea that was immediately embraced. Now the oaks line the entry hall, welcoming the people inside. AMN

In Search of Spiritual Space
continued from page 51

MILLENNIAL WORSHIP

The millennial generation sent a clear message in that Pew poll. When religion becomes a cause of conflict and source of bloodshed, most youth, understandably, want no part of it. By embracing spirituality instead, young people seem to yearn for a more vigorously uniting form of reverence, rather than the divisively political nature of so much religion today. This does not mean that religions—and religious buildings—will disappear. (One religious commentator, upon seeing the survey results, worried that we may "see churches closing as quickly as GM dealerships." But the poll does suggest that a spiritual revival of some sort lies ahead.

In that regard, these buildings have sent a clear message of their own. While each serves its denomination and responds to its program and site exceptionally well, all have a spiritual quality that reminds us of our commonality as mortal creatures and our shared hopes as human beings. As with all great works of architecture, their universality arises out of their specificity. By transcending their differences, they show us how we might transcend our own, while relearning a truth, now too often forgotten, that the diversity of faiths represents not an excuse for divisiveness but evidence of the divine. AMN
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Email: bmc@rmconstruction.com
www.rmconstruction.com
Established 1981
Other MN Office: Minneapolis (612) 305-2133;
Bloomington (952) 893-8807
Total in MN Office: 100
Other Offices: Denver, Phoenix
Total in Other Offices: 7
Contact: Jeff Weiman, Exec VP

RJM provides pre-construction, general contracting and construction management services to its commercial, healthcare, tenant interior and community clients. They embrace collaboration with the project team in order to define final project parameters – taking clients’ unique vision, budget and schedule to deliver customized, well-built spaces.

Crosstown Medical, Edina, MN; Prairie Seeds Academy, Brooklyn Park, MN; Acosta, Eden Prairie, MN; United Bankers Bank, Bloomington, MN; Methodist Hospital Emergency Center, St. Louis Park, MN; Maple Grove Town Green Band Shell and Pavilion, Maple Grove, MN

3650 Annapolis Lane North #101
Plymouth, MN 55447
Tel: (763) 235-3819
Fax: (763) 559-8101
Email: luann@rochoncorp.com
www.rochoncorp.com
Established 1985
Total in MN: 21

Company Principals
Jerry Bratton, CEO
Scott Larkin, Pres.
Jeff Weiman, Exec VP

Rochon Corporation is a construction company focusing on general contracting and design/build construction in the commercial, senior housing, retail, office, and industrial building markets. Our annual sales approximate $47 million. The majority of our contracts are with repetitive clients that work with us on a negotiated basis. In which they request we participate in the project from inception through occupancy. Other methods used to obtain work are invited bidders and publicly-bid projects. “Hard Bid” projects, such as those, keep us close to the forces that influence the competitive marketplace.

ATK Office Building (120,000 sf office with parking), Eden Prairie, MN; Hindu Temple of Minnesota, Maple Grove, MN; Park Wood Pointe, Burnsville, MN; The Village at Mendota Heights, Mendota Heights, MN; Shops at Plymouth, Plymouth, MN; Kozlak Radulovich Funeral Home, Maple Grove, MN

50 South 10th Street, Suite 300
Minneapolis, MN 55419
Tel: (612) 492-4000
Fax: (612) 492-3000
www.ryancompanies.com
Established 1938
Total in MN Office: 280
Other Offices: Cedar Rapids, Chicago, Davenport, Des Moines, Phoenix, San Diego, Tampa
Total in Other Offices: 298
Contact: Paul Kieffer, Dir. Proj. Dev., MN Region, (612) 492-4000

Company Principals
Pat Ryan, CEO
Tim Gray, Vice Chrm.
Collin Barr, Pres., Minnesota Region
Mike Cairl, Exec. VP Construction
Will Jensen, VP A&E
Mike McElroy, Pres., Real Estate Mgmt.

Ryan Companies US, Inc., a national recognized developer, builder and real estate manager, has specialized in fully-integrated solutions for more than 70 years. Ryan builds lasting relationships with their integrated project model based on full-service customized solutions and total collaboration – pairing the customer’s needs and expectations with the talents of a team of developers, financiers, architects, engineers, constructors and property managers.

Whipple Federal Building, Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport, MN; Target Store, Madison, WI; Cargill Regional Ops Center, Omaha, NE; Toro Distribution Center, Tomah, WI; University of Nebraska-Lincoln (Abel/Sandoz Residence Halls), Lincoln, NE
SHAW CONSTRUCTION INC.
6385 Corporate Way
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
Tel: (952) 937-8214
Fax: (952) 934-9433
Email: jshaw@shawconstruct.com
www.shawconstruct.com
Established 1977
Total in MN: 4
Contact: John N. "Jack" Shaw, (952) 937-8214

Company Principals
John N. "Jack" Shaw, Pres.
Earl Gebauer, VP Construction

Shaw Construction, Inc. is a design/build, general contractor successfully providing: new construction, additions, tenant improvements and unique construction within the commercial, light industrial, manufacturing and retail construction markets. Through its construction services and products, Shaw Construction, Inc. has developed long-lasting relationships with owners, developers, architects and engineers throughout the Upper Midwest.


SHAW-LUNDQUIST ASSOCIATES, INC.
2757 West Service Road
Eagan, MN 55121-1230
Tel: (651) 454-0670
Fax: (651) 454-7982
Email: info@shawlundquist.com
www.shawlundquist.com
Established 1974
Total in MN: 56
Other Offices: Las Vegas, NV; Hudson, WI
Contact: Paul Nelson, (651) 234-8885

Company Principals
Hoyt Hoia, Pres./CEO
Thomas J. Meyers, VP
Paul Nelson, Business Dev.

Shaw-Lundquist, a leading general contractor in the Metro area, is also the largest Asian-owned contractor in the nation. They provide general construction, construction management at risk, agency construction management and design-build construction services, and are proven performers on large and complex projects. Started in 1974 by Fred Shaw, the company has over $70 million in revenues in fiscal 2010. For more information, visit www.shawlundquist.com. Improving lives by building with integrity and PRIDE (professionalism, respect, innovation, diversity and ethics).

Lake Superior State Health and Science Building, Duluth, MN; Iowa State University Beyer Hall and State Gym (expansion/renovation), Ames, IA; Wal-Mart (expansion/renovation), Franklin, WI; Venetian Resorts (various projects), Las Vegas, NV; Southwest Transit Parking Ramp, Chanhassen, MN; Minneapolis Public Housing Authority Construction Manager HiRise Program, Minneapolis, MN

SHEEHY CONSTRUCTION COMPANY
360 West Larpenteur Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55113
Tel: (651) 488-6691
Fax: (651) 488-4992
Email: info@sheehyconstruction.com
www.sheehyconstruction.com
Established 1955
Total in MN: 43
Contact: Dan Krause, (651) 488-6691

Company Principals
Dan Krause, Pres.
Ned Blankenship, VP
Blair Juffar, VP
Mike Klun, VP
Jim Schoenberger, VP

Since 1955, Sheehy Construction has been building the places where people work, worship, learn, and travel through with an uncompromising standard of craftsmanship and integrity. Our services include pre-construction, general contracting, construction management, and design-build in a wide variety of markets. From airports and railways to universities and museums or healthcare, industrial, office and retail buildings - we've come up with innovative and cost effective solutions when even the most challenging situations arise.

Eagle Brook Church, Blaine, MN; Heraeus Medical Components, White Bear Lake, MN; Hiawatha LRT (platform extensions), Minneapolis, Bloomington, Fort Snelling, MN; Pierre Federal Building (curtainwall replacement/renovations), Pierre, SD; Beth El Synagogue (renovation/expansion), St. Louis Park, MN; Fort Snelling National Cemetery (expansion/columbarium), Fort Snelling, MN

WATSON-FORSBERG COMPANY
6465 Wayzata Boulevard, Suite 110
Minneapolis, MN 55426
Tel: (952) 544-7761
Fax: (952) 544-1826
Email: cindyh@watson-forsberg.com
www.watson-forsberg.com
Established 1965
Total in MN Office: 35
Contact: Dale Forsberg, (952) 544-7761

Company Principals
Dale Forsberg, Pres.
Mike Ashmore, VP
Paul Kolas, VP
David Forsberg, Sec./Treas.
Donna Lucero, Controller
Dave Carlson, Senior Project Mgr.

Watson-Forsberg Co. builds: commercial, multi-family, retail, religious, educational, medical and industrial. New construction projects and renovation range from $10,000 to $25,000,000. Watson-Forsberg constructed the environmentally-responsible Seward Co-op (LEED Gold). The Redeemer Missionary Baptist Church restoration won the National Trust Preservation Award. Projects are also recognized by the AIA Committee on Urban Environment, Best in Real Estate, and Minneapolis HPC

Franklin Portland Gateway (The Wellstone and Jourdain), Minneapolis, MN; Gale Mansion/Event Center (renovation), Minneapolis, MN; Ripley Gardens Apartment and Historic Renovation, Minneapolis, MN; YMCA (addition/remodel), Woodbury, Shoreview and Minneapolis, MN; Open Arms, Minneapolis, MN; The New San Marco, Duluth, MN
Hindu Temple of Minnesota
page 28
Location: Maple Grove, Minnesota
Client: Hindu Society of Minnesota
Architect: Leo A Daly
Principal-in-charge: Robert G. Egge, AIA
Project lead designer: Daniel Larson, AIA
Project manager: James Sokolowski
Project architects: Daniel Larson, AIA (Leo A Daly); Padmasree Muthiah Shapathii (Chennai, India)
Structural engineer: Swami Palanisami, Palanisami & Associates
Mechanical engineer: Raj Maheshwari
Electrical engineer: Byron Byraiah, Leo A Daly
Civil engineer: James Sokolowski, Leo A Daly
Lighting design: Ray Johnson, Leo A Daly
Interior design: Sonia Prickett, Miller Dunwiddie Architecture
Sprinkler design: Sanjeev Dabade, AST Fire Protection Company
Construction manager: Scott Larkin, LHB, Inc.
Concrete work: Hanson Spancrete Midwest
Photographer: George Heinrich

Westwood Lutheran Church Sanctuary Restoration and Renovation
page 32
Location: St. Louis Park, Minnesota
Client: Westwood Lutheran Church
Architect: Kodet Architectural Group, Ltd.
Principal-in-charge: Edward J. Kodet Jr., FAIA
Project lead designer: Edward J. Kodet Jr., FAIA
Project manager: Heidi Neumueller, AIA
Project architect: Ken Stone, AIA
Project team: Edward J. Kodet Jr., FAIA; Heidi Neumueller, AIA; Ken Stone, AIA; Bruce Hassig, AIA; Teri Nagel; Mike Schellin, AIA; John Brandel, Assoc. AIA; Benjamin Delwiche, Assoc. AIA; Ryan Diedrich, Assoc. AIA; Abby Evans, Assoc. AIA; Ryan Grunklee, AIA; Mark La Venture, Assoc. AIA; Loren Morsch, AIA
Acoustic and audio-visual consultant: Kirkegaard Associates
Structural engineer: A.M. Structural Engineering
Mechanical engineer: Erickson Ellison and Associates Inc.
Electrical engineer: Erickson Ellison and Associates Inc.
Interterior design: Kodet Architectural Group, Ltd.
Photographer: Dana Wheelock, Wheelock Photography

Arkansas House of Prayer
page 34
Location: Little Rock, Arkansas
Client: Episcopal Diocese of Arkansas
Architect: Cunningham Group Architecture, P.A.
Principal-in-charge: John W. Cuningham, FAIA
Project lead designer: Brian Tempas, AIA
Project designer: Chad Clow, AIA
Project manager: Brian Tempas, AIA
Project architect: Brian Tempas, AIA
Project team: Dan Grothe, AIA; Charlie Stoffel, AIA; Army Randy
Energy modeling: Cunningham Group Architecture, P.A.
Structural engineer: Lindau Companies, Inc.
Civil engineer: White Daters, Inc.
Lighting design: Cunningham Group Architecture, P.A.
Interior design: Cunningham Group Architecture, P.A.
General contractor: East Harding, Inc.
Landscape architect: P. Allen Smith and Associates, Inc.
Landscape project team: P. Allen Smith; Ward Lyle, AIA
Stone: East Harding, Inc.
Concrete work: East Harding, Inc.
Photographer: Tim Hursley Photography

White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church
page 38
Location: Mahtomedi, Minnesota
Client: White Bear Unitarian Universalist Church
Architect: Locus Architecture, Ltd.
Principal-in-charge: Paul V. Neseth, AIA
Project lead designer: Paul V. Neseth, AIA
Project manager: Phil Hofstad
Project architects: Paul V. Neseth, AIA; Wynne G. Yelland, AIA
Project team: Paul V. Neseth, AIA; Wynne G. Yelland, AIA; Phil Hofstad
Energy modeling: Craig Terr
Energy Concepts
Structural engineer: LHB, Inc.
Mechanical engineer: LHB, Inc.
Electrical engineer: LHB, Inc.
Civil engineer: LHB, Inc.
Lighting design: Locus Architecture, Ltd.

Interior design: Locus Architecture, Ltd.
Construction manager: Tim Siegfried
Landscape design: Locus Architecture with Laura Baxley
Cor-Ten: Atomic Architectural Sheet Metal, Inc.
Photographer: Peter J. Sieger Architectural Photography

Watt Munisotaram
page 42
Location: Near Hampton, Minnesota
Client: Minnesota Cambodian Buddhist Society
Architect: Rice-Stromgren Architects
Principal-in-charge: Jeff Stromgren, AIA
Project lead designer: Jeff Stromgren, AIA
Project manager: Jeff Stromgren, AIA
Project architect: Jeff Stromgren, AIA
Project team: Jeff Stromgren, AIA
Structural engineer: LS Engineers
Mechanical engineer: M & E Engineers
Electrical engineer: M & E Engineers
Civil engineer: Anderson-Johnsons Associates
Flooring systems/materials: Spancrete
Concrete work: By owner
Photographers: Andrea Rugg; Brandon Stengel, Assoc. AIA

CORRECTIONS
Mohagen/Hansen Architectural Group was mistakenly omitted from the September/October issue’s Directory of Interior Architecture and Interior Design Firms. In the same directory, we omitted Thomas J. Dornack, RA, in the list of BWBR principals.
Cities, Neighborhoods, Landscapes. The places we love, as seen through a photographer's eye.

"On my first trip over the new I-35W bridge, I was filled with awe as I reflected on the tragic collapse and the speed with which this new structure materialized. It wasn't until I drove under the bridge at a later time that I realized how aptly the design, particularly the lighting, marks this site as sacred in its own circumstance." —Photographer Pete Siger, AIA