

FAITH & FORM

JOURNAL OF THE INTERFAITH FORUM ON RELIGION, ART AND ARCHITECTURE
VOLUME XXXI • NUMBER 2, 1998 • ISSN 0014 7001

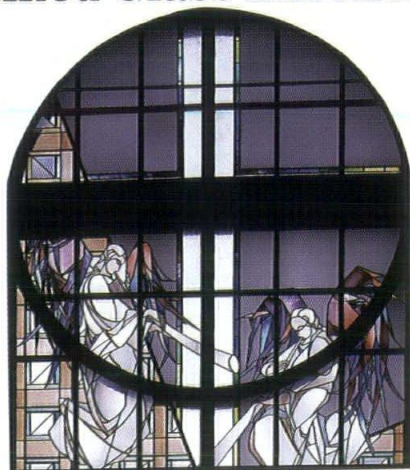


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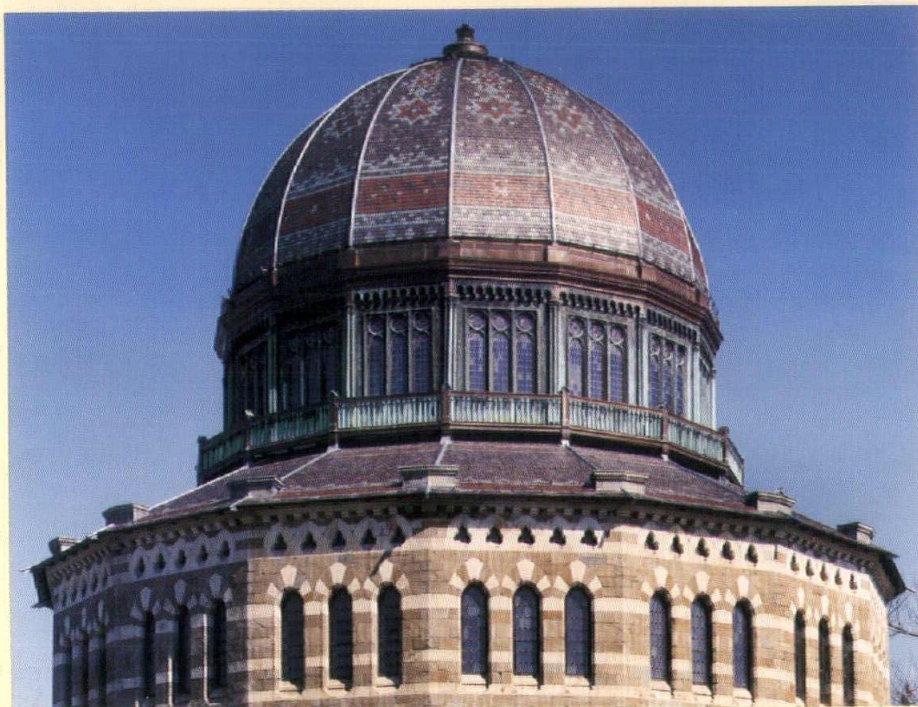
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Faith & Form, the official publication of the Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art & Architecture, is independently published three times a year. Copyright © 1998 by *Faith & Form*, c/o CT Corporation System, 1025 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005. Third Class Postage paid at Washington, D.C. Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of *Faith & Form* or IFRAA.

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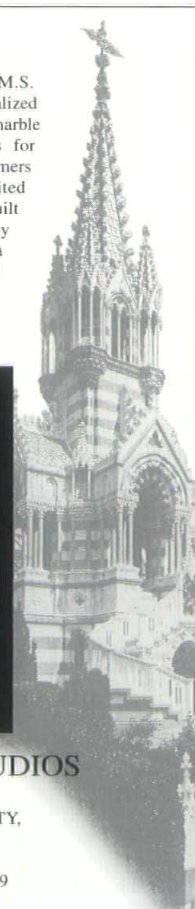
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Cover photo: Church of the Year 2000, courtesy of Richard Meier & Partners Architects. (See page 7.)





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Notes & Comments

Abstract Art As Teacher

The West Brattleboro Temple in Vermont is exploring Judaic traditions through abstract art. Lauren Olitski Poster, a past president of the congregation and a respected artist herself, and Rabbi Noah Kitty planned an arts festival that included paintings, sculpture, ceramics and textiles. All of the works explore the strong connections between Judaism and art. Because the second commandment forbids making images, abstract art seems particularly appropriate to Judaism. Many of the 45 pieces were from New York Galleries and the artists were friends of the renowned colorfield painter Julius Olitski, Lauren's father.

A New Position

Donald B. Meyer, a former assistant secretary of the U.S. Commission on Fine Arts, has been appointed Clerk of the Works for Washington National Cathedral. He will oversee all art projects and identify concerns and priorities in collaboration with the Building Committee. As an architect for the National Park Service he wrote one of the first specifications for the restoration of the Washington monument.

Covenant and Community

In the fall of 1994, the presidents of Hebrew College and Andover Newton Theological School met at a meeting of the Boston Theological Institute. Later conversations included their respective boards and resulted in a special collaboration. Hebrew College is planning to build a new campus on land being purchased from Andover Newton. During the summer a joint art exhibit, *Covenant and Community* heralded the beginning of a unique sharing between two traditions.

Designing for the Disabled

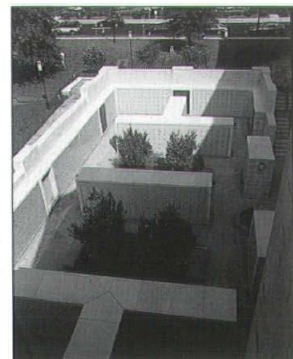
Health and safety reports show that nearly 20 percent of Americans today have a physical disability. Caring Solutions is a newly formed company that specializes in architectural design and construction and the adaptation and renovation of existing facilities for the disabled. They work closely with the doctors, rehabilitation clinics and occupational therapists to provide the most feasible plans. Requiring accessibility is important, but there are many more needs to be met. For information: Caring Solutions, Michael Jarman, 248-524-3652.

Chiesa Oggi

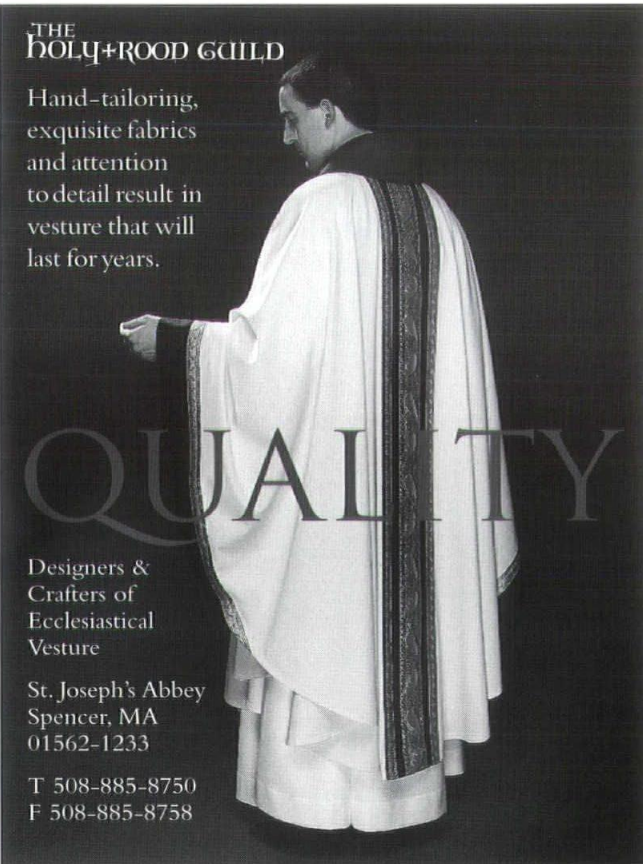
Is the name of the Italian journal on church architecture and communication. Its latest issue writes of the need for all of us to have a wider perspective on religious architecture. For instance, the "Brother Sun" prize given to Tadao Ando indicates a preference for simplicity and ascetic purity while the award-winning church of Jujol is exotic in its ornamentation. The different sensibilities of these architects created divergent architecture the editorial states, but "the spiritual message is crystal clear and extremely direct in both cases." In this capacity to bring together spiritual intention and concrete expression we find pure architecture that is worthy of the Church."

The Columbarium as a Choice

Churches are considering the possibility of a columbarium for those whose family members have been cremated. For an inner-city church land use must be a careful consideration. Centenary Methodist Church (5,000 members), Salem, North Carolina, asked Columbarium Planners, Pinehurst, N.C., to submit a design, cost and revenue projections. Dr. George Robinson, senior minister, commented: "For centuries the church was the place of choice for burial but gradually land and maintenance costs made it impractical. The church is our spiritual home from birth to death and



(continued on page 6)



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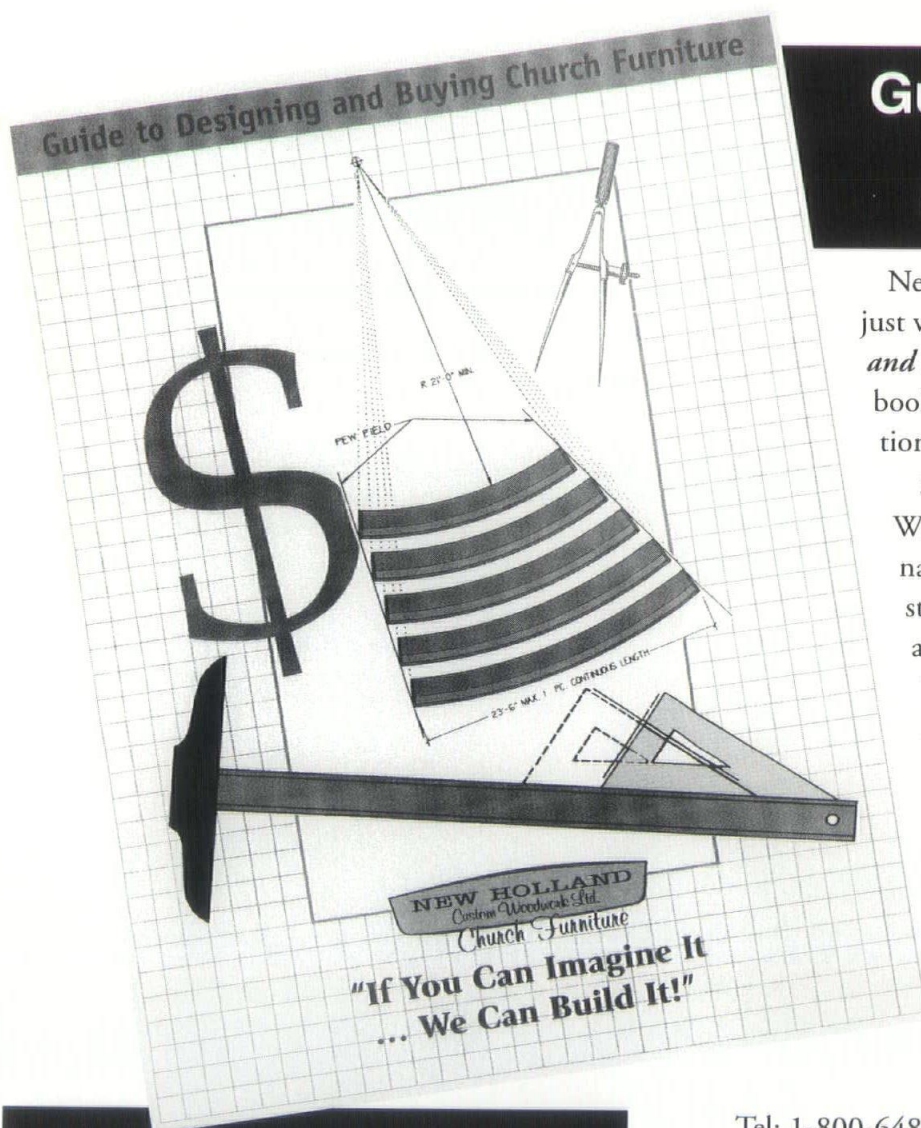
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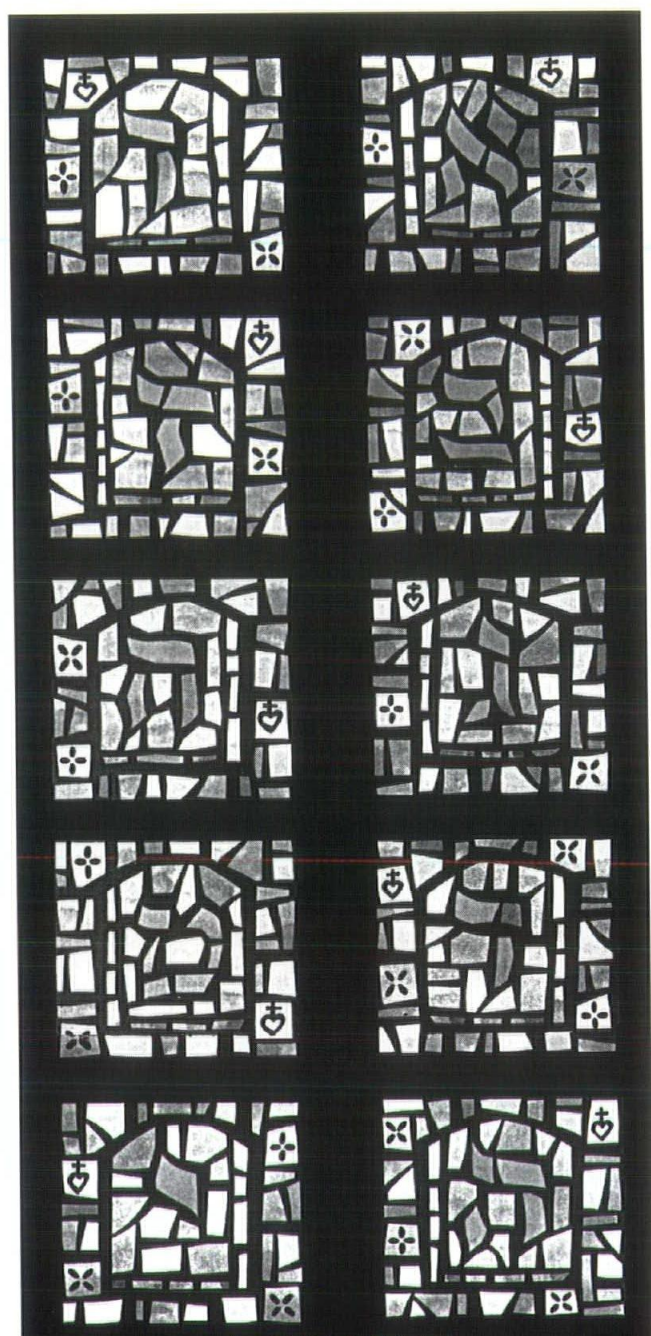
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Notes & Comments (Continued from page 4)

now we can again make it a place of memory." Tom Davis, president of Columbarium Planners, said, "We really like to work with the architect at the master plan stage and offer a design that gives unlimited flexibility.

Religious Education

Temple Tifereth-Israel in Beachwood, Ohio, is the proud recipient of a new \$1.2 million library with separate rooms for adults and children. The temple school has more than 990 students who will enjoy 11 computer work stations with internet capabilities. There is also a puppet theater, a salt water aquarium, and a newly established fund to purchase thousands of books on Jewish culture and history. The rabbi's study will honor Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver and given by Dolores and Lee Hartzmark.



Daniel Utley organizes the new computers at the Lee and Dolores Hartzmark Library at Temple Tifereth-Israel in Beachwood, Ohio.

Congratulations

... to Steven Papadatos as a winner in the nonprofit institution category for restoration of The Cathedral of SS Constantine and Helen in Brooklyn, New York, awarded by the Municipal Art Society of New York.

... to Dan Peter Kopple and Associates for the rehabilitation of Park East Synagogue, a Manhattan landmark. The award was presented to the Philadelphia firm by Friends of the Upper East Side Historic District.

... to Celli-Flynn for its restoration of St. Joseph's Cathedral in Wheeling, West Virginia. The design won the AIA West Virginia Award for Achievement in Architecture.

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RICHARD MEIER'S CHURCH OF THE YEAR 2000

By John Dillenberger and Daniela Ford



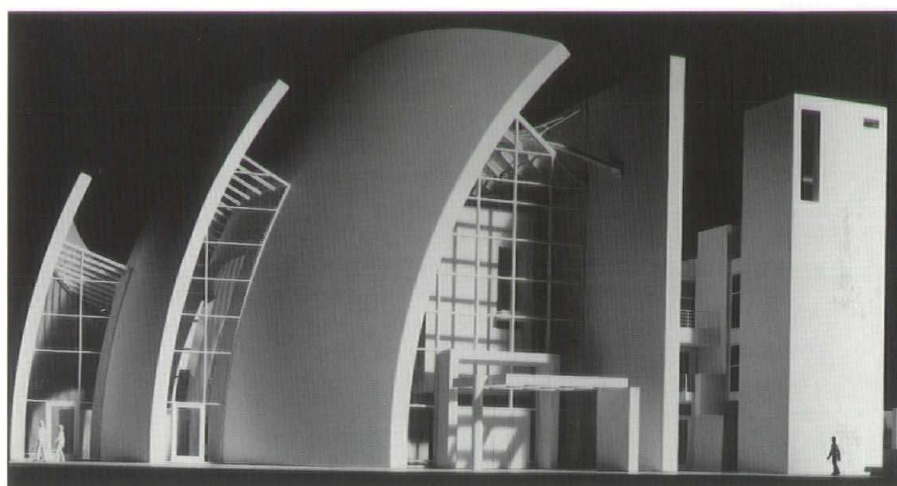
Seldom is the social and concrete setting of a commission to an architect so relevant to understanding the final product as in the case of this commission to Richard Meier. Of the six architects in the competition, only Richard Meier's plans took the total setting with utmost seriousness. Here were plans for a beautiful building that fit into and orchestrated an ambiance for the hopes of people for whom hope was hardly characteristic of their lives. His imagination and insight encompassed the whole, an appropriateness that combined beauty with social setting, and congruence with the theological outlook of the sponsors. What follows is an attempt to flesh out the morphology of this commission.

The Social Setting

A tremendous influx of people into Rome from the outskirts and other parts of Italy occurred in the 1950s and '60s, putting tremendous pressure on existing housing. The result was the rapid rise in the '70s of undistinguished apartment complexes, many from 8,000 to 10,000 people in areas that already were impoverished and had few places of work or social amenity, including active churches.

By the middle 1990s, the Vicariato di Roma (hereafter referred to as the Church of Rome) decided that parish life had to be renewed and that the church needed to be visible and active in these somewhat desolate parish communities. The new evangelization, as it was called, included the plan to build 50 new

JOHN DILLENBERGER, *professor emeritus, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California, is a theologian with a special interest in art and architecture. DANIELA FORD is an art historian, presently living in central Italy.*



Church of the Year 2000, Rome, Italy. View from the entrance plaza. Richard Meier & Partners, Architects.

churches, together with community centers, hopefully by the year 2000. Given that the Church of Rome was unprepared for the magnitude of problems such a venture involved, it now speaks of this as a long-term goal. By the year 2000, probably no more than a dozen of the eventual 50 will have been built. But the project will continue.

Following the Italian guidelines of the "Order of Architecture and Architects, the Church of Rome created the initial competition for the first two churches, one in the Dragoncello district of Acilia, on the Via Ostiense, some 12 miles southwest of the city center, and one at the Tor Tre Teste site, just inside the Ring road, six miles east of the center of Rome. More than 500 architects applied, each acceding to the \$300 entrance fee, a practice apparently normal in Italian circles. The Milanese architect Bruno Bozzini was selected to do the Dragoncello project together with an artist, a rather interesting idea. The Tor Tre Teste project

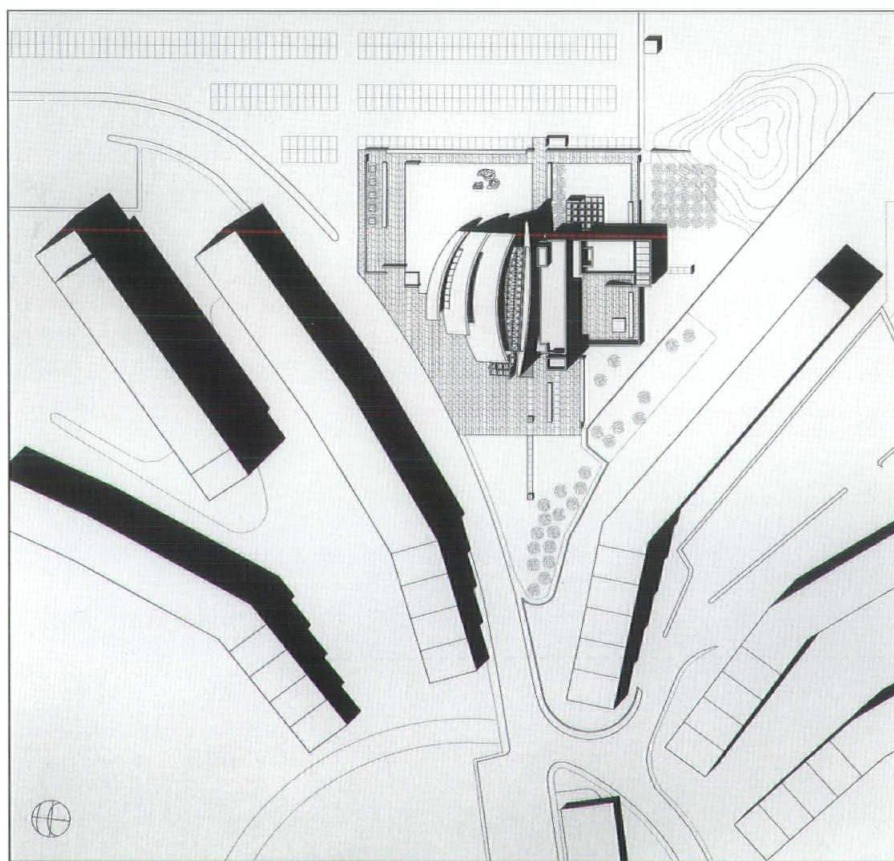
received only a third prize award, but now, as will be noted in what follows, it is destined to be the "flagship" in the development of Rome's new churches.

Whether there were too many architects to deal with or a jury that could not handle the scale without professional help, the above results were discouraging. It was decided to slow down the process of securing architects for the 50 churches. Alternative plans were needed. Camillo Ruini, Vicar Cardinal of His Holiness pope John Paul II and head of the Church of Rome, instructed Monsignor Luigi Moretti to see what interest there might be among distinguished international architects in building churches in Rome. The response was encouraging. As the Dominican Giacomo Grasso has pointed out, the work of the National Office of Cultural Assets and of the National Liturgical Office (the latter headed by Giancarlo Santi, a priest and architect) had already used the technique of inviting specific architects to

PHOTO © JOCK POTTLE/ESTO



Looking east, from back side of building.



compete for special projects. When well managed, such procedures had elevated the quality of the resultant buildings.

A second factor entered the scene. The Vatican suddenly found itself faced with the Jubilee Year 2000, for which the planning had not been extensive. Pope John Paul II was known for his pilgrimage throughout the world, but a Jubilee year emphasized returning to Rome, a city which the Papacy had neglected in recent

decades. The Church of Rome document describing the new competition specifically states "this will be virtually a reversal of the apostolic pilgrimages of Pope John Paul II. Instead of the Pope visiting the Churches scattered throughout the world, the Church of Rome will welcome those Churches to itself." The notion of pilgrimage to a recent place of note as well as to traditional sites was exhilarating; hence, the partnership between the

Vatican and the Church of Rome in a new competition for the Tor Tre Teste site.

The New Competition

The decision for an invitational competition, organized in accord with the regulations of the International Union of Architects, was made in the office of Cardinal Ruini. The "Competition Regulations" refer to six invited architects: Tadao Ando (Japan), Gunter Behnisch (Germany), Santiago Calatrava (Spain), Peter Eisenman, Frank O. Gehry and Richard Meier, the latter three from the U.S.

The regulations further specify the judges or jury members, though minor changes were made. Bruno Zevi, the distinguished architectural historian, could not serve because of a temporary illness. Monsignor Luigi Moretti represented the Cardinal; Gino Amicarelli, the Office for the Propagation of the Faith and the Construction of New Churches. Aside from such church representatives, the majority of the jury members were either knowledgeable in architecture or architects themselves: the Dominican theologian Giacomo Grasso (Italy), George Baird (Harvard), Glauco Gresleri, Nicola Pagliara, Piero Sartoga (three Italian architects), Piero Vago (Paris), Romualdo Loegler and Stefan Westrych (both Polish architects appointed by the International Union of Architects). Although jury deliberations are usually secret, publications have indicated that in the deliberations Meier was given the commission by a majority of votes and that Gehry came in second.

Though not official jury members, three persons had and continue to have a special role in the realization of Meier's project. Francesco Garofalo and Sharon Yoshie Miura are a husband and wife architectural team who ran the competition and continue working with those who do the planning with Meier and his partner, John Eisler. But probably the most important and astute leader in the conception of the competition and the ongoing work with Meier and Eisler is Ignazio Breccia, the architect and engineer in the New Churches Office.

Surely the selection of six architects of such note indicates that the intent was to move from an initial disaster to creating a church that would be a flagship, and that in the face of a site that in the eyes of the Church of Rome itself was not promising. The site is ancient, the ruins of the Alessandrino aqueduct running

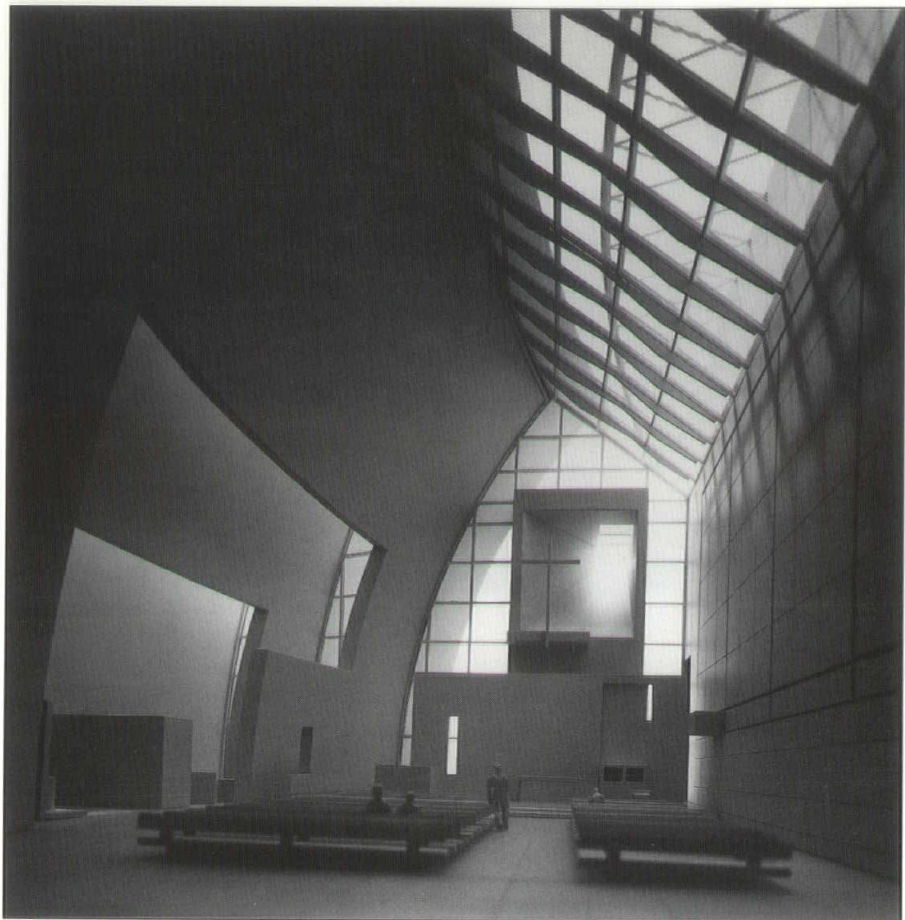
along the southern end, while the name Tor Tre Teste dates from three heads carved as a bas relief in a medieval guard tower. While this was a country settlement going back to the 4th century, it was only in the 1970s that a master plan was carried out with apartment buildings erected in two distinct areas. In the southern part of these will be built the new church building and community center for the S. Silvestro Papa Parish, which currently functions in a small tin-clad building adjacent to the site of the new structure.

In addition to the apartment buildings, which fan out from the main street, there are a few office buildings, one supermarket, and a few stores. The total population is about 8,000, of which 30 percent is under the age of 18; 10 percent between 18 and 26; and 20 percent over 65. Approximately 2 percent of the population is well off; 55 percent in fairly decent conditions; 30 percent in retirement and 13 percent very poor. Problems include marginalized youth, persons with mental and physical handicaps and troubled families.

In addressing that situation, the Church of Rome document reads: "The location for this church is in the outer periphery of the city where there is an urgent need for welcome from the point of view of the urban landscape, the sociological condition and the pastoral situation. The area is degraded, but could be ennobled with a new edifice, a place of welcome, a place of 'Church' in the fullest sense of the word. Under these circumstances, to build will mean to serve genuine human needs as well as to provide a focal point consolidating a rather fragmented segment of the city. Two modern issues of the Church's mission will thus be addressed, entering difficult areas, and giving expression to the 'new evangelization.' The new evangelization refers to the full implementation of the gospel in its social as well as personal dimensions.

The document then adds that "the architect is thus asked to propose a space that bespeaks welcoming, assembly and Church. This is the only limitation imposed. It is left to the architect's imagination and design to realize this meaning." In ending this section, the architect is then "gently asked to represent in his work the 'timeliness of beauty,' as spoken by H.G. Gadamer."

This is not a plea that the church change the society around it, but rather



Church of the Year 2000 interior.

that the church provide a place, a space of welcome, where human enhancing and religious activities take place. The space is meant to ennoble those who enter it, both in terms of the structure and in the activities that take place within and around it. It is the cathedral function in modern terms, a community space and a liturgical space, distinct but related to each other.

This is summarized in the Guidelines for Church Design (Conferenza Episcopale Italiana): "The relation between the church and its surrounding area is important because a church can make an impact on what quite often appears to be an anonymous urban setting; it can even influence and improve the surroundings; the building will also be a sign of the living presence of God among men. This means that the parochial buildings must be related and in a position of dialogue with the surrounding territory and also enrich it."

While written in the light of Vatican II, the guidelines, to modern American eyes, are fairly conservative. Specific instructions are supplied for the altar

(appropriate stone), ambo (more than a reading stand), the president's seat (not a throne, but a seat plainly visible to the assembled) and furniture generally (not just decoration or function, but a noble simplicity and genuineness of the materials). The placement of altar, ambo, etc., are important matters: There must be due regard for the lines of vision of the congregation and for the movements required in the liturgy. The assembled people require both fixed areas and appropriate freedom of movement. Here there is no thought of the assembled gathered in mutual sight lines with each other, no thought that the space is primarily a meeting place in the midst of which liturgical functions are performed. Externally, the building should speak for what it is, not by signage or necessarily other appendages, but by the structure itself, the form for which the imagination of the architect is expected to play a decisive role.

It is not apparent that the local community has a major voice in what will happen. The community was not consulted in the planning for a church and in

PHOTO © JOCK POTTLE/ESTO

the competition. Currently, the pastor of the local church, Gianfranco Corbino, sometimes is present for planning sessions. When asked how the community views the developments, the pastor stated that there was great expectation and excitement going on because a distinguished architect had been asked to do the church. Such views are far from the community consciousness so characteristic of much of U.S. church building. They represent the difference between two cultural and theological outlooks.

There are levels at which the European Catholic church has been remarkably open to architectural developments. From Paul VI on, papal leadership has had a pronounced interest in better church architecture. The press has made much of the fact that three architects in the competition were Jews. It is known that Pope John Paul II called the "chief rabbi" and asked to be received in order to resume contact with his "higher brethren." There have been significant movements in the direction of new relationships of the Roman Catholic church with the Jewish community and all but direct apologies for the negative role of the church in relation to Jews throughout history. But the three Americans were not chosen because they were Jews; the evidence is they were chosen because they were among the top architects of our time.

Richard Meier's Project

None of the six contestants was known as a church architect, though Ando had designed a church. As Oxford chaplain Allan Doig points out, Meier had done a building for a theological school, Hartford Seminary, including, at his own suggestion, a special chapel. At the time of its completion in 1981 (between Meier's New Harmony Visitors Center and the High Museum in Atlanta), it received considerable attention, but it is frequently ignored in less than complete retrospective accounts of his work. Even Herbert Muschamp, in his December 15, 1996, article in *The New York Times*, while recalling Meier's 1963 show and catalogue of synagogue architecture at the Jewish Museum, comments that Meier seems to be occupied with such issues for the first time in 33 years, and makes no reference to the Hartford Seminary project. Still, it is technically correct that Meier had not done a church, nor is there evidence that this issue ever emerged for the jury or for Meier. Meier's buildings always have traces of their predecessors;

but each is a new creation in which form, function, style and beauty come together making each one different and special.

Meier won the competition because his conceptions of the task more closely fit the concerns of the sponsors. The other candidates took liberties with the plan that made their projects less congruent with the reigning conceptions. For some onlookers, that makes the others more compelling than Meier's. But if the aim is to express spatially what the sponsors intended, then Meier fits the bill in every way. Visiting the site about a year ago, the American architect Patrick Quinn, no friend of monumental architecture, noted that Meier's proposal was the only one appropriate for the site, a judgment with which I agree.

Meier's buildings are always different from those adjacent, but they seem to live comfortably with neighbors while enhancing the whole. The placement of Meier's white building at Tor Tre Teste, in the spot where fairly white apartment houses fan out from the main street of the complex, will make it a needed anchor for the area. As one moves from the main street toward the complex, one's eyes will be drawn directly to the church, although the main road veers off to the left. The church is welcoming in that the lines of access are so visually clear and also provide a view into the building and through the whole to the various outdoor areas. Apparently realizing that the L-shaped community center hindered such sight lines, Meier has removed the obstructing wall included in the original plan. Instead, the auditorium and classrooms will be placed below ground, with a low wall above ground as a part of the outdoor terraces, but affording natural light below. The above-ground part of the community center will contain the parish offices and classrooms on two floors and the residence of the priest on the third floor.

These horizontal lines are in harmony with the vertical thrust of the church, punctuated by three curving walls that respectively cradle and relate three functions: the weekday chapel, the baptismal area and the nave. To the right of the church and in line with the adjacent community center stands the bell tower, separate but connected with the church by a passageway, more a vertical anchor than necessarily the sign of a church. Looked at from the outside, the building will call attention to itself. The building is not obviously a church, yet what else

could it be?

There are those who see religious symbolism in various features of the building, making the metaphor of the curving walls as sails, or finding an analogy to Bernini's welcoming enclosing forms in front of St. Peter's. Even Meier himself writes with respect to the three spherical shells together with the spine wall that "the whole discreetly implies the Holy Trinity." It is perhaps safest, however, to let such ideas remain subterranean.

The church and the community center are surrounded by terraces, courtyards, a meditation area, trees, play areas, parking, etc. The north side of the site, the area of the community center, is particularly oriented to the apartment building, there being no street thoroughway on that side of the complex. The church is on an east-west axis, with a major thoroughfare sloping to the left, between it and the apartment houses on the south side. Thus, the sightline on the main street is direct from the east toward the west. In addition, the east-west and south orientations of the church allow the movement of the sun to light the entire church, without overwhelming it, through the various, deliberately created apertures. Thus, light and shadow enter the church and play on its various surfaces.

For Meier, a building must be a work of art in itself. It does not need accompanying signs and accouterments. It is space and light that give it reality. In spite of his friendship with Frank Stella, whose paintings grace Meier's New York apartment, Meier is generally not interested in adding works of art to his buildings, though he has designed many museums. He affirms that the reality of a building is infinitely more than a tent or envelope. Thus, it can be a space in which things take place in ways that would be different were the building only a frame for something else. This leads Allan Doig to wonder what will happen when Catholic trappings creep into the building after its completion should the works of art not be as great as the building.

Having been head of Hartford Seminary when Meier was chosen to be the architect for the new building and during its construction, and then having lived in the completed building, I concur that space is not more space. On the one occasion when we questioned an aspect of Meier's design, he listened quietly with a few questions as a colleague and I tried to articulate issues and concerns. After an hour of conversation, he said, go

wander about, and give me 20 minutes. Upon our return, there was a new design for the areas we had discussed. Was it a translation into space of what we had talked about? Was it a new creation? Neither; it was a transfiguration, something new but beyond all that we had talked about or thought about.

Living in a space Meier designs is not a cozy experience. The space becomes part of what is happening, a way of being challenged, motivated, enriched, enlivened. It is the joy of being stretched, of being affirmed, of mysteries enveloping and unfolding. In short, there is a certain magic in Meier's space.

In his own account, Meier talks of the building project as partly secular, partly sacred, thus confirming both the upgrading of the community and the special liturgical functions. He does not talk about creating sacred space, a phrase so current today. Nor do the competition guidelines speak in these terms. Giacomo Grasso notes that while architects interested in doing churches "are almost always concerned to get 'the sacred' into their design, I add that 'the sacred' does not belong to the Christian set of notions. The six invited architects are not asked to introduce 'the sacred.' Nor much more are they asked to introduce the holy." Those who come may then call it sacred or holy, but that is not the architect's concern, he adds. Rather, "What is required of the architect is techne, art, technique, capacity to do, nothing else."

But that in itself is not simple. Grasso and the authors of the guidelines include in techne the range of human experiences, those that take the water of the secular and turn it into the divine wisdom, those who are capable of creating places of welcome, of beauty, of renewal. That is what is needed and architects should have the genius to provide it, by their art and being.

Finally, the reference to Gadamer both in the brief for the jury and in Meier's own statement is not incidental. In fact, Meier states that "in our deliberate exposure of the entire complex to the simultaneous play of both light and movement we have echoed his [Gadamer's] words only too directly...." Then, Meier also quotes from *Relevance of the Beautiful*, the section in which Gadamer refers to human play "as a free impulse and not simply negatively as freedom from particular ends.... We only have to think of certain expressions like the 'play of light'

and the 'play of the waves' where we have such a constant coming and going, back and forth, a movement that is not tied down to any goal." These quotations, and others from de Rougemont, refer to the many themes that echo Meier's own education and conviction.

In the Church of the Year 2000, Meier provides form and light, structure and movement, an ontology that is both given and active. The elegance of Meier's buildings is not contrived, but is their very essence. That is what Beauty is about, a transfiguration that is appropriate for a church. What I have tried to suggest is that the nature of the commission and Meier are well matched in their core values and expectations.

There are, as always, technical issues to be worked through in the process. Meier had originally wanted stucco to cover the apparent roughness of concrete panels. Experimentation in the construction with concrete panels, approximately four feet by four feet, proved that the concrete was smooth enough. Further, refinements have led to concrete panels using crushed marble as aggregate, some eight to ten feet in size, each weighing over ten tons. But Eisler and Meier have acknowledged that this experimentation, undertaken by Italcementi, has slowed the building process.

Encouraging experimentation is also being completed on acoustical issues, for the space involves concave rather than convex walls. Sketches exist in Meier's office for altar, ambo, confessionals or reconciliation rooms, and baptistery, the latter involving both water below the floor level as well as a plinth. Meier himself will design an abstract cross to be placed behind the altar as well as a cross at the entry to the church. A processional cross will also be designed. Attention is being given to holy water fountains at the entrance and to the space for the tabernacle. Finally, the current disposition is to use texts for the Stations, apparently the wish of the architects and sponsor.

Funding the project is a continual issue. Since this site is to be a contemporary showcase of the Church in connection with the jubilee year, it is understandable that standard cutbacks will not work for this project. The script and specifications for the community center of each of the proposed 50 churches is strictly spelled out, with great regard for keeping within modest budgets. More imagination and change is permitted in constructing the church

than in the community center, somewhat counter to what one might expect. In addition, there are problems of code, of slow-moving Italian bureaucracy. For Meier's church, the Vatican has been able to push slow traditional bureaucracies, for this church is supposed to be finished for the Jubilee Year.

In church circles, the Church of the Year 2000 will be watched, as the museum world watched the emergence of the Getty Center. In many ways, the two are different. The Church of the Year 2000 is, after all, a modest project designed for 500 people, but intended to set a precedent in Italian church building. Many American church persons and architects will watch it, not with regard to the objectives and how they were met, but by theological concerns that prefer concentrating on the assembled people living out their own experiential spirituality, in which architectural quality will not be a high item. By contrast, Rome will again be true to its glorious troubled history, enlisting us in an enterprise in which great buildings are a living history. □

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"AND JESUS WEPT . . ."

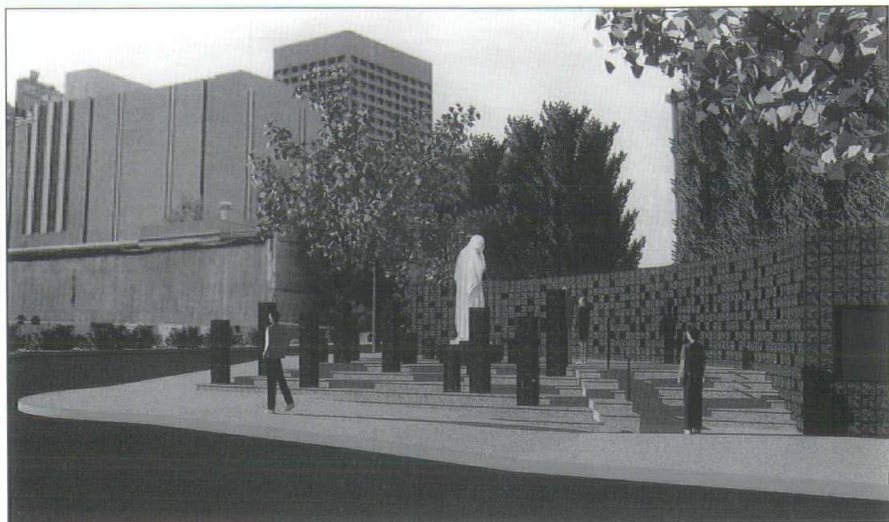
The bomb that shattered downtown Oklahoma City in 1995 also shattered St. Joseph's Cathedral across the street from the Alfred P. Murrah building. St. Joseph's was the first structure in the area to be restored and to reopen its doors. Paul Meyer, the architect whose firm was responsible for the church restoration, comments: "This was a once-in-a-lifetime situation. You hate the circumstances that caused the need but from it all the parish is being reborn."

Before work could begin, just receiving security clearance to enter the building was a formidable procedure. The downtown area was ribboned with police tape and rubble was everywhere. Once on site, the design team saw that exterior brick was loose, the roof structure was faulty, wall plaster, wood molding and chandeliers were cracked and failing. Century-old treasures and stained glass windows lay in pieces. The rectory was damaged beyond repair, and the office building required total interior demolition.

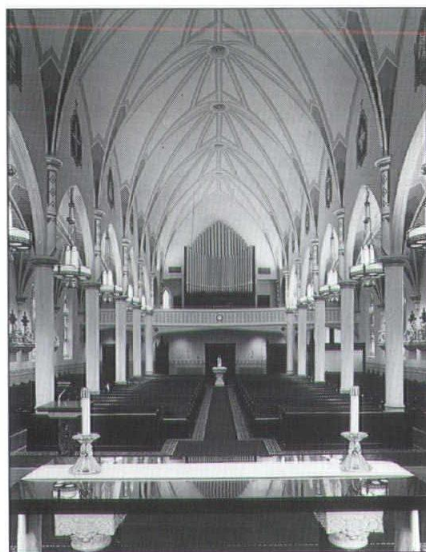
Meyer saw the opportunity to create a new master plan in addition to restoration. The church buildings had been built at different times and in different styles. The parish office building was remodeled to serve contemporary needs and a new rectory was built closer to the church.

Archbishop Beltran asked that a monument of healing be designed on the site of the old rectory and that it have some reference to the history of the Cathedral. David Meyer, son of the architect and an award-winning sculptor who was the artist for the Oklahoma Tribal Flag Plaza on the Oklahoma State Capitol Mall, decided to design a wall after noticing that at any time of day or night people were viewing the site of the bombing and placing mementos on the fence. The monument wall has 168 recesses for remembrance, and it is hoped that on the anniversary of the bombing, votive candles will be burned in remembrance

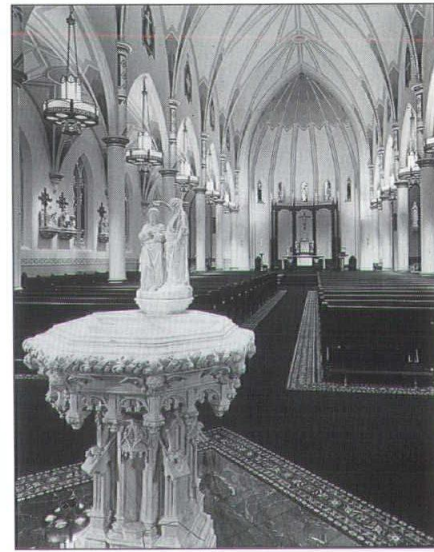
PAUL MEYER, ARCHITECTS, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, includes Paul Meyer's sons Gregg Meyer, architect, and David Meyer, sculptor.



"And Jesus Wept" monument wall; St. Joseph's Cathedral on left.



St. Joseph's Cathedral, restored by Paul Meyer, Architects.



as well. In front of the wall is a bronze statue of Jesus that stands nine feet in height. It is mounted on a granite base with water flowing over the surface and down the sides.

The sorrow expressed reminds one of the Biblical verse, "And Jesus wept . . .," that He lived in human form and shared in the emotional trauma of the physical world.

Several black granite columns rise at random around the sculpture and direct attention to the site, providing an

atmosphere of enclosure while retaining an open view of the monument. Their abstract form is a means to stimulate the viewer to contemplate the tragedy that transpired here and hopefully to meditate on the complexity of the human condition.

Just eight months after the \$3 million project began, the Cathedral was rededicated and is clearly a monument to the religious faith of this community, which, in spite of the tragedy, was determined to rebuild and continue. □

AN ICON OF AMERICAN PROTESTANTISM

By David Morgan



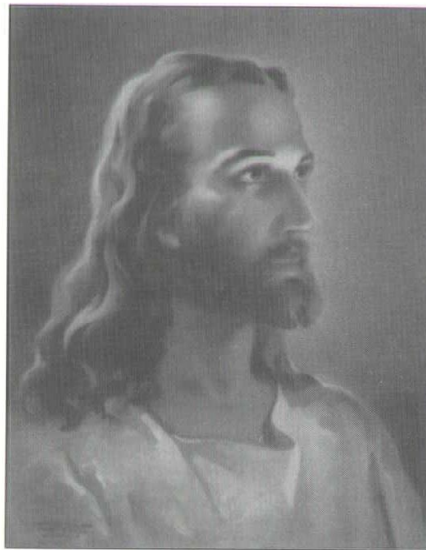
At the heart of the popularity of Warner Sallman's widely reproduced *Head of Christ* (1940) is the recurrent claim that the picture resembles Jesus. But what can it mean to say that a picture looks like Jesus when no one can present the evidence corroborating the claim? Research shows that people must qualify the flat assertion, yet many remain confident that this picture does resemble Jesus.

The Sallman Archives of the Jessie C. Wilson Galleries in Anderson University (Indiana) placed ads in religious magazines in 1993 soliciting letters for research purposes. Correspondence and documents received suggest three major levels to consider in a study of the popular reception of Sallman's art. I call these levels (1) optical, (2) virtual and (3) ideological-psychological.

The Optical

A direct statement of this belief came from a woman in Arkansas who wrote: "Looking at this picture brings me peace of mind. It's hard to explain why I like it so much. I guess I picture Christ just as he looks in this picture." For a great number of respondents, Sallman's *Head of Christ* is optically "correct," an "accurate" image of the historical individual, Jesus of Nazareth. One person went so far as to say that for her "the picture is a true photo of Jesus." Another "an exact likeness" because it was not the fabrication of Sallman's imagination, but a revelation from God.

DAVID MORGAN, Ph.D., is a professor in the Department of Art at Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana. His new book, *Visual Piety: A History and Theory of Popular Religious Images*, is published by the University of California Press.



Warner Sallman, *Head of Christ*, 1940, oil on canvas. Jessie C. Wilson Galleries, Anderson University; purchased by Warner Press and Anderson University.

Virtual Likeness

This level in popular reception comes close to transforming representation into presence. Sallman's images cease *looking* like Christ and virtually *become* him. Viewers encounter the image more as a pictorial sign; the image speaks and moves as Christ himself. Typically the image is addressed as if it is Christ, or a special avenue to him, or as a sacred substitute that deserves reverence. Thus, a 1947 *Newsweek* article reported that *Head of Christ* was appearing in business offices in Richmond, Virginia, with the salutary effect of inducing better behavior in the workplace. As one business man pointed out: "No one has cursed in my office since the picture has been on my desk." Another respondent indicated that she felt the image in her home had exerted "a big influence on conversation

and activities in our home." The son of a Lutheran pastor who had committed an offense was compelled by his mother to "tell Jesus you're sorry" while standing before Sallman's painting in the living room. This son later became a prison chaplain with no use for the picture.

Ideological-Psychological

This third level concerns the tendency of the images to corroborate or objectify ideological expectation or psychological need of the viewer. This is a more subtle process of the imagination when the physical likeness of the figure is transformed by an individual's or group's particular requirements. The image becomes an authentic likeness when seeking Christ's presence they adapt it to their lives, either in solution to a crisis or, more frequently, as a formative force in their lives. The power of the image in the formation of Christian character—to make believers *like* Christ, has always been accepted by parents and educators in the church. Many have asserted that Sallman's image proactively shapes one's inner life into the likeness of Christ. More than merely curbing certain behaviors, the *Head of Christ* is credited with inspiring the imitation of its subject. In 1947 in an article in the *Reader's Digest*, a Baptist clergyman argued that "we tend to grow like the pictures we live with; every person should have a worthy hero, an ideal in the flesh . . . that he looks up to and wants to be like." He recommended Sallman's picture as such a worthy image.

Negative Response

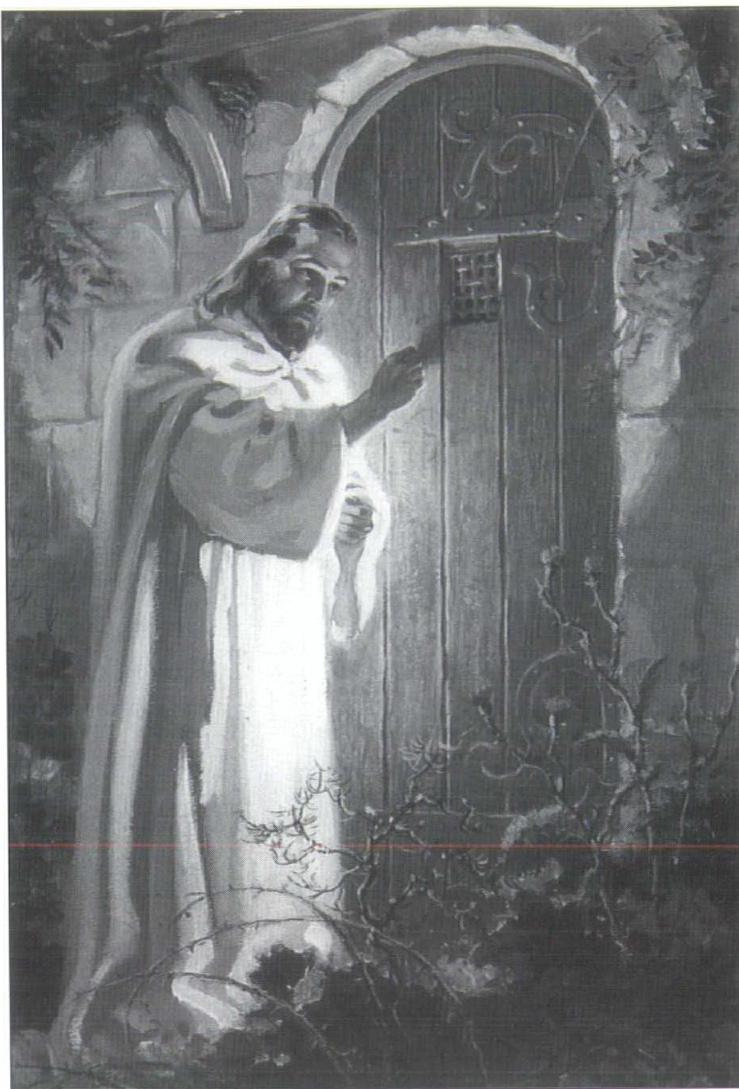
In many attempts to see in the image a reflection of their own experience or likeness, others have summarily dismissed the image for the difference they see in

separating the Christ *they* envisage and the one in Sallman's picture. Their objections have appeared in the religious and secular press since the 1940s. When response was invited in one poll, it divided into six categories. They found the image offensive because it is (1) ethnically and culturally inaccurate; (2) theologically misinformed and scripturally proscribed; (3) racist; (4) effeminate; (5) homoerotic; or (6) any one of the following: sweet, weak, soft, anemic, sentimental or syrupy.

These critics stress explicitly how *unlike* the image is to their ideological, theological and/or psychological expectations of who Jesus was and what he looked like.

A large number of negative responses came from those who regard Sallman's image as ethnically inaccurate. Most consider the image inappropriately Caucasian, even Anglo-Saxon or Nordic. One writer objected strongly to what she saw as "just one more tragic example of the ethnocentricity of many Christians. How many people of color can relate to this picture? Jesus was a Jew and not a fair-skinned, blue-eyed person in all likelihood. Let's tell it like it is." African American respondents were unalterably opposed on racial grounds, yet those whose names indicated Hispanic or East Indian admired the image. The sampling, however, was not large in number.

The greatest number of complaints were theological in character. Idolatry was the most frequent charge—either because of an implicit claim of Anglo superiority or because scripture proscribes the creation of images of God. A Lutheran woman wrote that "Christ is in our heart not visions; no images of Christ are authentic." Others stressed that Sallman's picture was "only an artist's conception" and could not bear any direct relation to the appearance of the



Warner Sallman, *Christ at Heart's Door*, 1946. Jessie C. Wilson Galleries, Anderson University; purchased by Warner Press and Anderson University.

historical Jesus. Many went so far as to quote, misquote or paraphrase a variety of scriptural texts which they believe demonstrate the unrepresentability of Christ. The use of these passages is often tendentious, such as 2 Corinthians 5:7: "For we walk by faith, not by sight" or texts that suggest the image's inaccuracy such as 1 Corinthians 11:14, which states it is degrading for a man to have long hair. "Would JESUS have sat for a portrait?" one respondent asked. "I don't think HE would have. HE wasn't vain, HE was without sin."

Prominent in the negative reception is a rhetoric of a sublime deity that reveals a gendered conception of God. "...negative response." It is clear that the sublime, untouchable, unrepresentable, disembodied, impersonal, and universal God of Protestant iconoclasts is unam-

biguously *male*. Occasionally, revulsion at the image is directed against the emasculation of Jesus. This is the claim of one respondent, a self-described "5-point Calvinist," who referred to the image as "effete":

This is a Jesus who would be aghast if you tied your shoes wrong. If our Lord had been anything like the man in this portrait, Galilean fishermen and publicans would have given him a sound thrashing rather than following him, which only a handful of spiritual masochists would have done.

One clergyman wrote this "namby-pamby Christ" is not equal to the prophetic tradition of social justice.

* * *

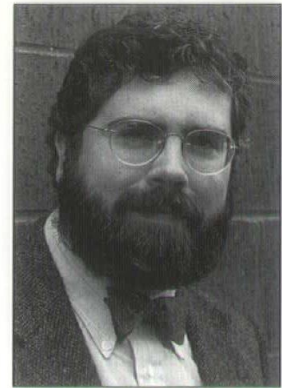
The image of Christ inevitably becomes like those whose faith it is appropriated to assist. Response to Sallman's imagery cuts both ways. Negative response for many is motivated by deep opposition to what they think the image represents of the domestic Christianity of women. One critic likened the Sallman picture to the "Precious Moments" figurines sold in greeting card stores. The frequent obser-

vation that the image is effeminate is one made largely by men, male clergy in particular. It is revealing when we consider the pictures are used largely in the home where decoration and daily care have traditionally been the domain of women.

Significantly, respondents were women by a factor of two to one. What many critics resent in the image is an icon of feminine Christianity; a sentimentalization of Christ as the personalized, intimate Jesus of conservative Christianity. The nurturing effeminate Jesus reminds them of a religion dominated by women: their mothers, aunts, grandmothers and Sunday School teachers. As undeniable as it is unsurprising, Sallman's detractors, no less than his admirers, assimilate their deity into a cultural construction. □

URBAN RELIGIOUS SPACES: DESIGNING FOR LITURGY

By Michael J. Crosbie

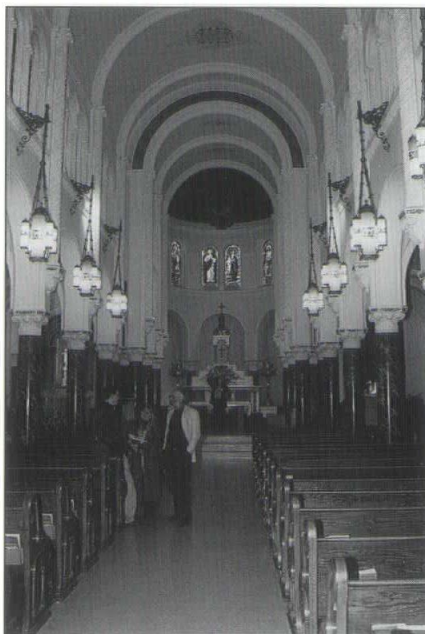
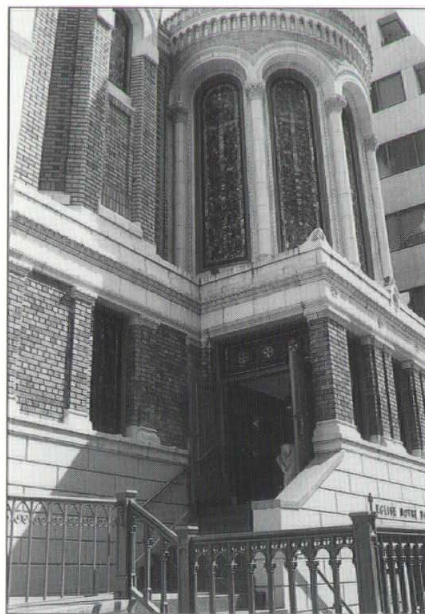


The spring IFRAA conference on religious art and architecture in San Francisco, which dovetailed with the American Institute of Architects' annual convention in May, offered a wide range of responses to the questions: How does liturgy inform the design of sacred space? and how does space shape liturgy? The conference allowed participants to examine this issue in the context of Christian and Jewish religious buildings at a variety of scales and design complexity. The event was then brought to a close with the announcement of the winners of IFRAA's student design competition, in which some of the same liturgical issues discussed during the day were revisited.

Notre Dame des Victoires

The day started with a tour of the recently refurbished Notre Dame des Victoires, a jewel of a church that dates from 1915, which replaced an earlier 1856 structure that was lost in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Notre Dame, the city's French Catholic church, is sited between Union Square and Chinatown and is distinguished by its brick facade and intricate stained glass windows. Beyond the brick structure of the narthex, the nave is composed of concrete and steel. Even with this structure, however, Notre Dame was a seismic risk and needed to be reinforced according to the city's code. The church also needed to provide access for the disabled, so the refurbishment presented an opportunity to accomplish both goals.

According to tour leader and architect Roberto Campoamor of Campoamor



Notre Dame des Victoires

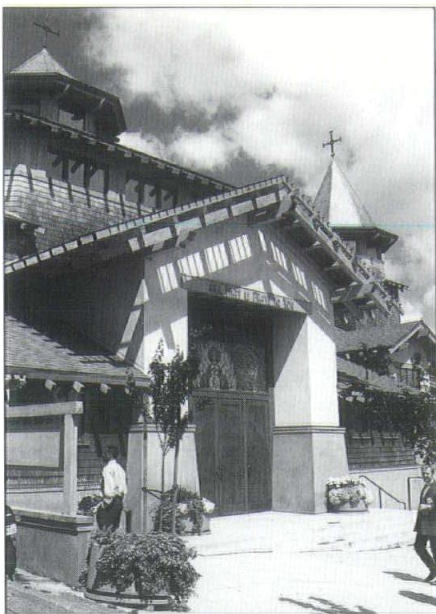
Architects, the structural upgrading of Notre Dame was achieved by inserting two transverse reinforced concrete shear walls—one between the narthex and the nave; the other at the chancel, tucked behind an existing wall to keep it out of sight. The narthex shear wall extends through the building into the rectory, which is directly adjacent and shares a brick wall with the church. At the sanctuary level, the narthex shear wall needed to fill the openings to confessionals on the back wall. The confessionals were removed but their original ornate wood fronts were relocated on the now solid wall to preserve their original appearance, and a new reconciliation room was built just off the narthex. Removing one confessional also allowed for a new elevator for the handicapped, which now makes the sanctuary level accessible with a meeting hall in the basement.

The concrete shear walls extend to the basement level, where they now tie into existing columns. According to the architects, while work was underway it was discovered that the basement columns had no reinforcing connecting their shafts to the footings, so they were properly reinforced and tied into the new shear wall footings. The two shear walls are joined by a concealed steel frame over the aisles that functions as a horizontal steel truss. Plywood diaphragms were also added to the roof structure to reinforce it.

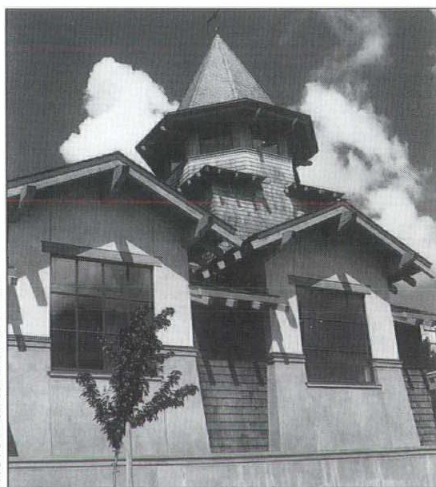
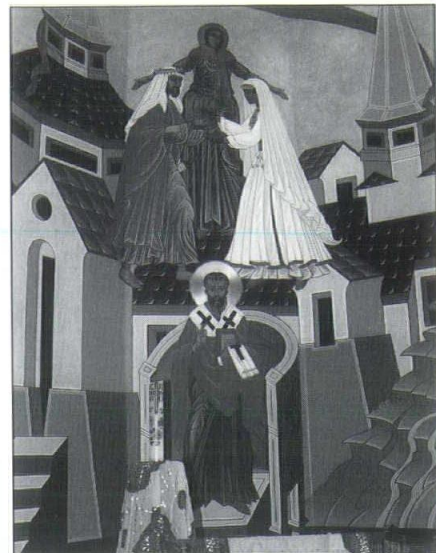
Along with its beefed up structure, accomplished in subtle and inconspicuous ways, Notre Dame now enjoys a bright new meeting hall, which previously was a bit dark and dismal. The architects explained that the space was dominated by a decrepit drop ceiling, which was removed to reveal the columns' decorative Ionic capitals.

MICHAEL J. CROSBIE, Ph.D., RA, is an architect with Steven Winter Associates in Norwalk, Connecticut.

PHOTOS: DOUGLAS HOFFMAN



St. Gregory's Episcopal Church



PHOTOS: DOUGLAS HOFFMAN

Raising the ceiling also allowed the windows' full height to brighten the room, while a new ceiling plenum at the center allows for more efficient distribution of the HVAC system.

The conference attendees got a chance to wander freely throughout the renewed Notre Dame, admiring the new French limestone flooring, casement windows, interior and exterior lighting, roofing, copper gutters, and a completely refurbished organ. What impresses most about Notre Dame is how the architects and their team managed to breathe new life into this church with delicate dare, making their design work dovetail seamlessly with this important landmark.

St. Gregory's Episcopal Church

If there was one building on the itinerary that seemed to capture the very essence of the theme "Designing for Liturgy," it was St. Gregory's. This 6,600-square-foot

church, which was completed three years ago and won a 1998 AIA Religious Architecture Award, breaks fresh ground in its interpretation of the liturgy and in its accommodation of the special way in which parishioners of St. Gregory's worship. In wood, stone, mosaic and paint, St. Gregory's expresses a new direction in church design, and it is already a landmark building in the history of religious architecture in the U.S.

The building grew out of the vision of Rev. Richard Fabian and Rev. Donald Schell, the co-rectors of St. Gregory's, which was founded 20 years ago. The tour of the building and recounting of its history were led by Schell and Fabian, who had high praise for architects. "We are grateful for your profession," Schell said, "in the ways you think about space." And space is at the heart of St. Gregory's distinction. Combining their study of early Jewish worship traditions and Christian churches of the 4th and 5th centuries, the priests devised an approach to liturgy that makes it more engaging for the congregation and far less "a spectator event," as Schell describes religious services today.

Accentuating the cleft that occurs in the Episcopal service between the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, Fabian and Schell conceived of a church where congregants would move between a space where the word was read to a space where communion is celebrated. They discussed their ideas with San Francisco architect John Goldman, who had never designed a church before this commission. This was no doubt in the architect's favor, for he

brought no previous church design baggage that might close him off from the unusual requests of his clients. The priests had high praise for Goldman's interest in their new concepts of liturgical space and his experimental nature.

As it occupies a corner site in a San Francisco residential neighborhood, St. Gregory's takes the basic parti of two large rooms: a rectangular space with low roof structure on axis with a bell tower and oculus, in which scripture is read and hymns are sung; and an octagonal space with a high roof and at its center an altar table, around which the entire congregation gathers to witness the consecration of bread and wine and to partake of communion. One enters St. Gregory's directly into this Eucharistic space, which serves as a welcoming narthex and fellowship hall before services start. On the opposite side from the entrance is a glass wall and double doors that lead to a sliver of a garden that is dominated by a nearly vertical wall of ivy-covered serpentine rock. In the garden, on axis with the altar table, is a hand-hewn mound of rock, from the top of which springs a trickling stream of water that flows down the rock's surface and into a baptismal font. The effect is at once life-affirming and ancient, primal and mystical.

The spatial arrangement of church entry, altar table, scripture space, with baptismal beyond, is a radical one—it turns on its head the traditional route by which one becomes part of the Church. In most Episcopal churches one first encounters the font, past which is the sanctuary and the altar. The traditional

route is one of first joining the Church through baptism, and after that partaking of the Eucharist. St. Gregory's sends a different message: Welcome to the Church through the word and communion, after which you may choose baptism.

One is struck by the fact that, as radical a departure (or return to its ancient Christian and Jewish roots) as St. Gregory's interior is, its exterior is closely wedded to the cultural and architectural traditions of the San Francisco Bay Area and the scale of this intimate neighborhood. Its shingle cladding, hefty stucco base, gentle gable roofs, exposed rafter tails, and other craftsman details are steeped in the local architectural vernacular. Overtones of Asian shrines and the architecture of Siberian wooden churches also recall the cultural and historical influences in the neighborhood. While the twin peaked roofs express the dual spaces within the church, the unorthodox design is barely hinted at through its elegantly detailed and executed exterior.

The attention to detail and craft is carried inside, with elegant material joints, modulated light and expressive structure. As the conference participants settled into their chairs in the wing of the Word, Schell spoke about the low, multifaceted ceiling surfaces that acoustically accentuate the reading of scripture. Even with seating for 200, this is an intimate space, with congregants facing each other across a central elevated promenade on access with a 20-foot-high icon designed and painted by local artist and parishioner Mark Dukes. At one end of the raised promenade is a lectern for scripture readings, surrounded with exotic objects such as an early 19th century Russian menorah and ornate Ethiopian Orthodox crosses. At the other end, Schell sat in front of the tall icon on an elephant seat that serves as a presider's chair. To demonstrate the room's acoustics, he led the conference participants in a rousing round of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat." Schell explained that the room's acoustics are tuned to the spoken and sung word, with shorter reverberation times.

We then left our seats and moved to the Shaker-like octagonal interior, where we formed a circle around the altar table. The acoustics of this space allow for longer reverberation times, accentuating music and song. Fabian and Schell explained the icon work in this space,



Temple Emanu-El

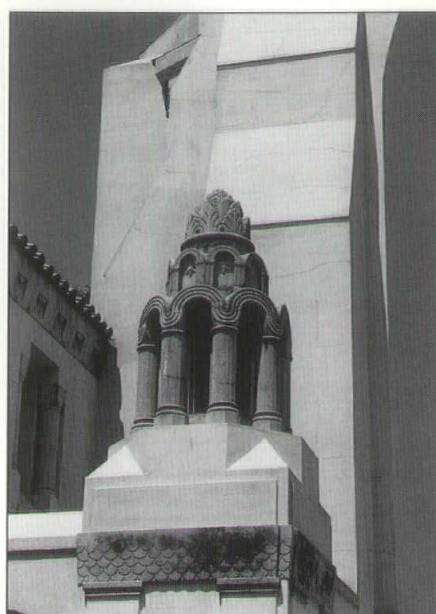
which is dominated by an unfinished icon of a dancing Christ. Opposite this icon is a single completed panel of eight "saints" holding hands with left feet raised in dance. Among them are Queen Elizabeth I, who joins hands with Malcolm X, in a dance line led by the African American slave Sojourner Truth. These eight are the first of 74 saints that traipse across the walls surrounding the altar table—a line dance of historical figures compiled by St. Gregory's parishioners. Among the saints to come are Albert Einstein, Lady Godiva and Thurgood Marshall.

The icons of the dancing Christ and saints set the liturgical tone for this space, where parishioners gather around the altar table for their own light-footed celebration of the Eucharist. Fabian spoke of the historical roots of dance and liturgy, noting that early church theologians, as part of their scholarly duties, often danced in public squares to the delight of their students. To give us a taste, Fabian donned a drum and led the conference participants in a line dance around the altar—two steps forward and one step back—to the Shaker tune "Simple Gifts."

There is no doubt that something special about worship is happening at St. Gregory's. It was a treat to experience this new kind of sacred space with the people who conceived and designed it.

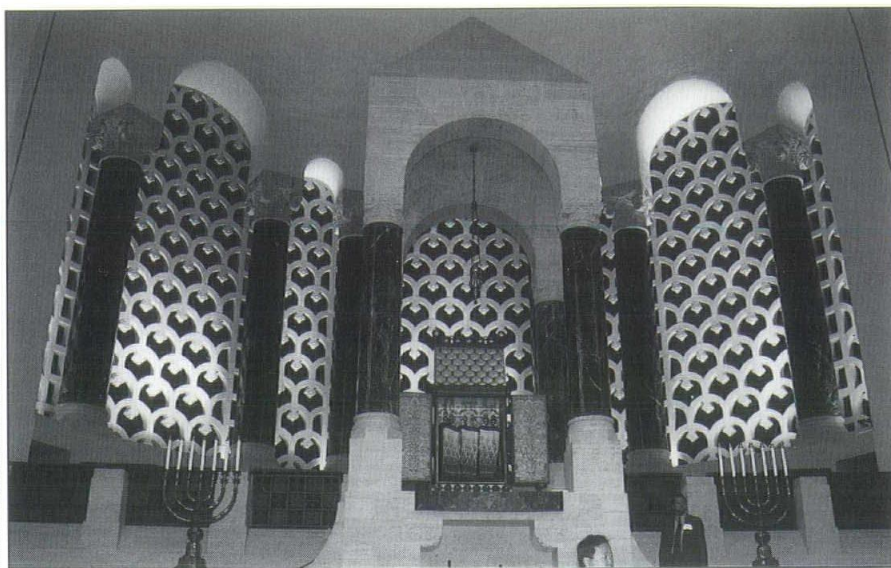
Temple Emanu-El

Commanding a prominent site in an upscale residential neighborhood,



Temple Emanu-El was designed by the noted architect Arthur Brown of the architectural firm Bakewell & Brown—responsible for several civic landmarks around the state of California in the early 1900s. The temple is a substantial building, executed in a burly Byzantine style, with a muscular presence on its hill overlooking the city of San Francisco. Conference participants gathered in the sunny courtyard, punctuated by a fountain and the playful sounds of school kids. Renovation architect Ted Hochschwender Jr. of RMW Architecture + Design explained that the goal of the refurbishment was to tune the temple sanctuary to reflect changes in worship rituals and to bring previously underutilized spaces in other parts of the temple complex into full use and accommodation of a variety of activities.

Once seated in the cavernous temple interior—large enough to accommodate 1,800 congregants—architect Alan Kawasaki took participants through the design strategies that informed the refurbishment of this space. A major issue was removal of asbestos from the sanctuary's textured ceiling and application of new acoustical plaster to match the appearance of the original. The plaster was carefully applied so that it is thick towards the back of the sanctuary and thinner toward the front to better modulate the sanctuary's acoustics. A new computerized sound system was installed, which replicates the natural reverb of the space so that sound is amplified without harsh overtones.



Ark and organ, Temple Emanu-el

Kawasaki said the sanctuary was too dark, so it was determined that a new lighting scheme would enliven the space. The chandeliers were retrofitted with uplights to throw illumination on the dome interior. The sanctuary's central dome was provided with an oculus to introduce more light into the space.

Impressive as the refurbished sanctuary is, according to temple Executive Director Gary Cohn, the congregation felt the need for a more intimate space for services as worship styles had changed. An opportunity presented itself in the form of an underutilized auditorium space in the adjacent 50,000-square-foot Temple House, which was renovated to accommodate 200 to 300 congregants. This reclaimed space was brightened by stripping the windows of heavy curtains, constructing a deeper stage to accommodate services, and replicating such decorative details as the stenciling on the beams executed according to the original 1924 drawings. New carpeting in this space has the same design as the ceiling of the temple narthex—a decorative theme found throughout the new work. According to Cohn, the reclaimed space is now the most utilized area in the temple complex—a popular choice for Friday night services, concerts and lectures. Renovated and redecorated reception spaces on the lower level of the Temple House provide accommodations for bar mitzvahs and large social gatherings.

The Chapel of St. Ignatius

This project, which won a 1998 AIA Religious Architecture Award, is a very

skillful blend of church history and subtle design. Conference attendees were treated to an in-depth discussion of the ideas behind the chapel and how it relates to the life history of the sainted founder of the Jesuit order. Found within the cavernous interior of St. Ignatius Church—an imposing, domed structure constructed in 1914 that surmounts a hillside overlooking the city—the Chapel of St. Ignatius is a contemporary commentary on the life of the saint. The chapel, found in one of the side altars of the church, is built as a memorial to loved ones and is sponsored by parishioners and friends of St. Ignatius Church.

Rev. Thomas M. Lucas, S.J., gave conference attendees a first-rate overview of the project, from its inception to completion. One of the driving forces behind the project, Lucas is a scholar of the saint's life and began to research appropriate iconography for the chapel while at the Jesu in Rome. It was determined that a copy of the saint's death mask, made on July 31, 1556, would come closest to capturing the true visage of St. Ignatius. The mask is cast in a rich bronze to echo the materials found throughout the church interior. Lucas also selected the Jesuit seal (dating from 1600 and found in archival records, which bear the initials "IHS") as a backdrop to the statue, emblazoned on a wood volute on the chapel's back wall. The stained-glass oculus in the small dome above the chapel is also Lucas's design.

Brayton & Hughes Design Studio of San Francisco worked closely with Lucas to bring these pieces together in a coher-

ent whole that creates a most contemplative chapel. Architect Joel Villalon explained that his approach to arranging the chapel's contents was to create a metaphor for the life of St. Ignatius. According to Villalon, the chapel pieces represent stages in the saint's life journey: sit to rest; kneel to pray; stand to honor; move to serve, touch and learn. Thus, starting on the right wall of the chapel interior is an elegantly designed and detailed bench positioned so that one may sit to rest and gaze at the profile of the saint's death mask. Moving in a clockwise fashion, one next finds two kneelers incorporating votive candles, where one kneels to pray. Like the bench, the kneelers are of Honduras mahogany, stained dark so that they contrast with the chapel's lighter interior. The kneelers rest on slabs of cast stained glass that reflect the candles and the illuminated dome above allowing those with heads bent in prayer to catch slices of the elegant chapel that unfold around them. Continuing the journey to the left, one finds a podium of the same materials as the kneelers and the bench, upon which is a book that lists those memorialized and their patrons. It is here that one stands to honor those who have supported St. Ignatius Church.

Moving to observe, touch and learn is an underpinning of this welcoming chapel. Unlike every other side chapel in the church, with heavy railings along the aisles, this chapel is open to allow visitors to wander freely through it. The bronze death mask is mounted on a limestone pedestal exactly 5'3"—replicating the stature of the saint himself. The walls are painted a light green and on two sides are inscribed with writings relating to the saint's life.

As one circulates around the chapel, the true subtleties of the design are revealed. Mounted on the back wall behind the death mask is an elegant volute of stained Nordic birch veneer—with a surface that appears to shimmer when one gazes at it while moving from side to side. The volute shape at first appears arbitrary, but Lucas explained that it is a common decorative flourish in Jesuit architecture and recalls an architectural element identified with St. Ignatius. Emblazoned on the volute is the crest of the Society of Jesus that Lucas described as the order's "logo," carved into the veneer and gilded with 23K gold. The oak inlay floor suggests crosses, while the inner surface of the

dome above is rendered in Dutch metal leaf, a gold color that constantly changes in tone and shadow as one moves beneath it. Overall, the Chapel of St. Ignatius is just as Villalon described it: a simple, yet modern and powerful homage to this patron saint.

Following the visit to St. Ignatius

Church, attendees returned to a reception at Notre Dame des Victoires, where Fr. Tom Lucas presented the names of the winners of an IFRAA student design competition (see sidebar) and commented on the jury's deliberations.

There was informal discussion and comment among the participants about

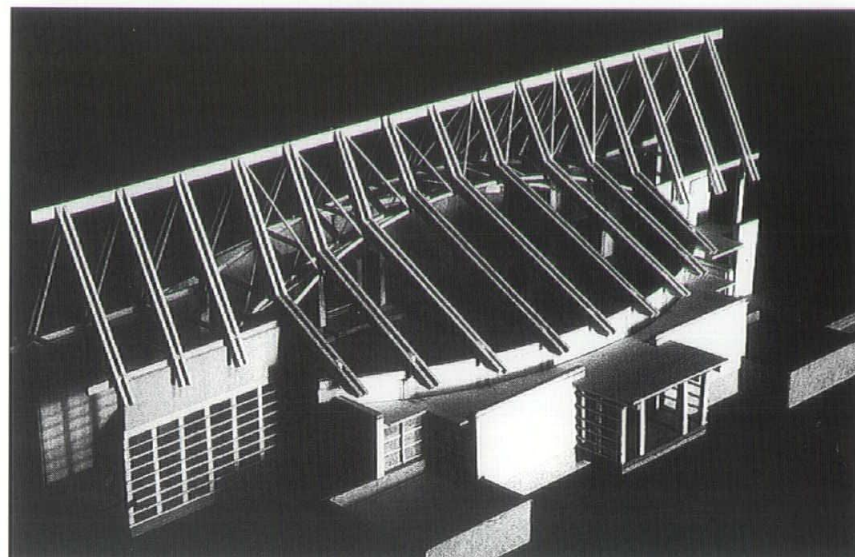
the day's events—the schedule, pace and relevance of the buildings visited to the "Designing for Liturgy" theme. Overall, the conference received high marks from attendees, who appreciated the new approaches to design that support the worship patterns of a variety of faiths.

STUDENT DESIGN COMPETITION

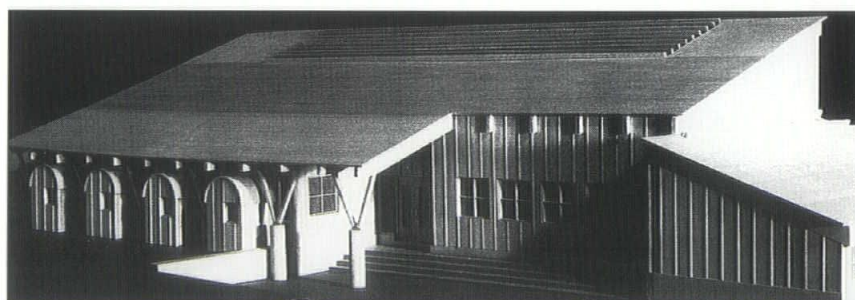
An important feature of the San Francisco IFRAA gathering was the opportunity to see the entries of a student design competition, judged by a panel representing architects, artists and clergy. The competition invited students to submit designs for a religious center on two sites in San Francisco—one urban, the other wooded. The center, according to the competition brief, "should be designed to attract young people in their 20s and early 30s to experience a contemporary expression of a specific religious tradition such as Judaism, Christianity or Islam." Primary spaces should include an assembly room for religious services and fellowship appropriate to the particular faith and ancillary spaces for offices and the center's activities.

The competition drew several dozen entries from the University of California at Berkeley and California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. The jury cited three projects for first, second and third place. First place was awarded to "The Center for Creation Spirituality," designed by Berkeley student Fernando Marti, which the jury praised as a "refined, coherent scheme," extremely "user and site friendly." Second place was awarded to "The Center for Jewish Community," by Berkeley student Seth Bender, which the jury praised for its "theological sophistication" and its integration into the landscape. Third place was given to "The Gathering," by Cal Poly student Aaron Wilch, which the jury found appropriately urban for its inner-city site, particularly in how it "addressed the corner" of a busy thoroughfare.

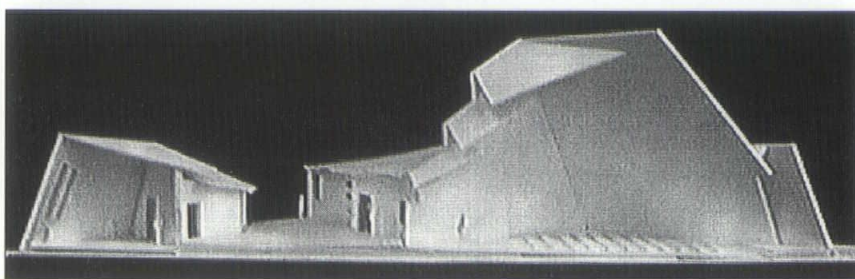
Three projects were recognized with Honorable Mentions: "Buddhist Temple in North Berkeley" by Berkeley student Seonho Hahn; "Taoist Community Worship Center" by Berkeley student Jay Rambo; and "An Episcopal Student



First place: Center for Creation Spirituality by Fernando Marti.



Second place: Center for Jewish Community by Seth Bender.



Third place: The Gathering by Aaron Wilch.

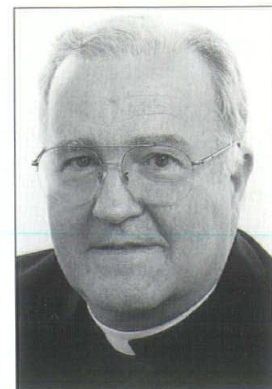
and Community Center" by Berkeley student Sara Sweeney.

Jurors for the competition included

Rev. Thomas M. Lucas, S.J., a Jesuit priest; Eliza Linley, an architect; and Nancy Chinn, an artist.—M.J.C.

RENOVATION AS OPPORTUNITY

By Thomas A. Krosnicki



Fr. Krosnicki delivered the following address at the dedication of the Chapel of the Word at the Divine Word Missionaries Visitors Center in Techny, Illinois. His words were well received, expressing the design intent and representation of divine transcendence over the secular.

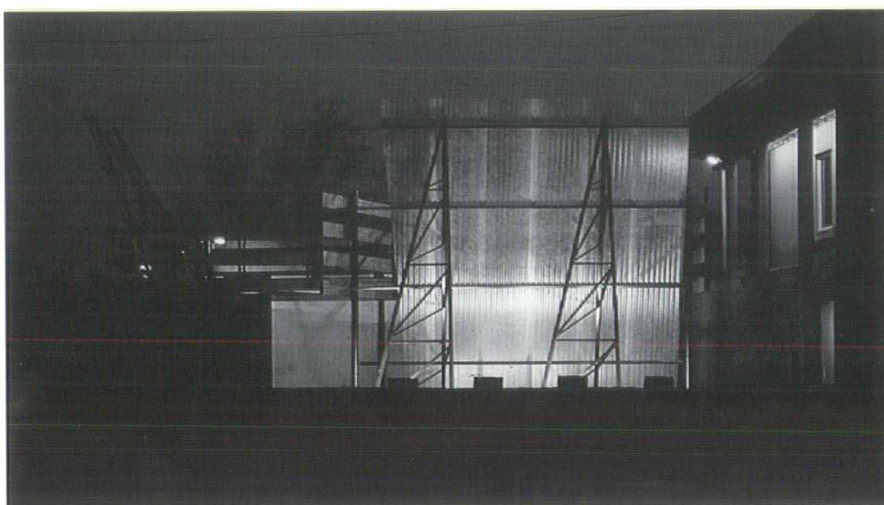
Renovation is always a challenge. It can also be a moment of opportunity. That is what Divine Word Missionaries discovered when we redesigned the Mission Center in Techny, Illinois. Along with a contemporary mission gallery and a spacious conference room, a small prayer chapel was contemplated. With David Woodhouse Architects, a Chicago-based firm, Chapel of the Word—the heart of the Center—was designed.

The chapel is not a parish church, capable of housing hundreds of Sunday worshippers. It is a modest space that provides an intimate place for private prayer and public worship—the small gathering or individual wayfarer.

This is a visible chapel, and therefore, a sign of the pilgrim people (Church with a capital "C"). Yet, it also transcends the present to reflect the mystery. It evinces a noble beauty, meeting Thomas Aquinas's criteria for the beautiful: proportion, integrity and clarity.

As one approaches the chapel, one is confronted with an exterior of wooden shapes and sizes. The medley of intricate wooden patterns, in seemingly provisional tension, jars the beholder with intrusive tentativeness. Angularity—jagged, poked, protruding pieces—domi-

THOMAS A. KROSICKI, SVD, is director of the Mission Center of the Divine Word Missionaries in Techny, Illinois, an international Catholic missionary congregation with more than 5,700 members at work in 60 countries.



Chapel of the Word, Divine Word Missionaries Visitors Center

nate as it mirrors the surroundings of daily life. The harsh and grating, the pulls and pushes, the anxieties and troubles, doubts and puzzles, sins and temptations, wars and conflicts, are all stacked, in strident, wooden display. Here one confronts and contemplates the reality of creation's "unredeemedness," sculpted on the outer wall of the chapel. One desires, unconsciously, to flee the disturbing wall, to eschew life's troubled reality. One seeks a transcendent transforming sanctuary of solace and salvation: the Holy, hidden deep within all created reality.

Passing through the outer wall of discord, one enters the heart of the Chapel of the Word. The contrast is remarkable; the feeling is tangible. Inside the chapel there is accord, harmony and tranquillity. As one moves into the Presence, an inner sense of peace and security transcends the reality that disturbed.

The inner circle of the chapel, without marked beginning or end, provides the

limits of the space's inner form and a wholesome sense of architectural completeness and integrity. The walls' strident outer roughness has acquiesced to encircling inner harmony. Smooth horizontal beams, afloat on cherry spacers, rest unruffled and inviting to the human touch. Discordant shapes of the outer skin, by carpenters' artistic alchemy, have been transposed into patterns of accord. Shafts of light from outside, pierce through the breathing spaces between boards, like God's grace, dispelling the inner darkness of time and space. A harmony of being embraces the one who stops to pray. Tranquillity and composure inevitably enfold and entice the soul to a sense of the transcendent: to acts of worship, hidden in all created reality.

The appointments—altar, ambo and chair—are hand-crafted with integrity of material and clarity of design.

The altar serves as the clear axis of attention for all who enter the chapel. It is clear that various woods have been

PHOTO © BARBARA KARANT



Interior, Chapel of the Word.

selected, tailored and woven together in artistic unity. Here is a reflection, in wood, of the unity that should pervade the Church. God's peoples called from various nations are crafted into one at the hand of the sacramental Christ. Each people keeps its proper characteristic; each lends its richness to the whole.

The wooden altar stands firmly, as the chapel's focal point, on a wedge of black slate marking the sanctuary area that serves as a visual reminder of the centrality and uniqueness of the Holy. It is here that prayer resounds through heaven and earth as a plea for the world's salvation. It is to the altar that the community is drawn; it is from the Eucharistic table that the community is sent out in mission.

The Bible is enshrined, tabernacle-like in space, upon its proper stand within reach and sight of all. The ambo holds the Scriptures firmly, yet open in a gesture of welcome to all.

"Approach and read" it seems to invite. "Allow the Divine Word to be a continual challenge to personal and ecclesial conversion and renewal." "One does not live by bread alone, but by every Word that comes forth from the mouth of God" (Mt 4:4). The metaphor of woven wood, at the base of the ambo, replicates that of the altar.

The priest's chair, in visual harmony with the other chapel appointments, stands as a symbol of the office of presiding over the assembly and of directing prayer. The chairs of the assembly encircle the altar and provide place for the individual to sit in God's presence and pray.

The chapel floor covering is not imported marble or poured vibrant terrazzo. Rather, the coarse earth-tone coir matting gives a feeling of standing on the earth, firmly rooted in the material and temporal while aspiring to the eternal and spiritual.



The ceiling limits vertical sight as it hints subtly at clouds and tree tops. It serves as a canopy for the community, bathed in the light of God.

The materials employed in the construction of the chapel, like the overall design, are all authentic. The inspiration that gave shape to the Chapel of the Word came from the simple, primitive, circular houses one finds in certain countries of Africa.

David Woodhouse, AIA, who designed the Chapel of the Word, is principal of David Woodhouse Architects in Chicago, Illinois. The chapel was recently featured in the Interiors issue of *Architectural Record*. □

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A CIRCLE OF STONE

An Invitation for All Women

By Margo Fish

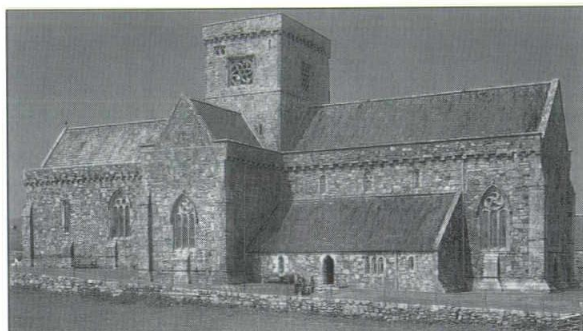


Women of all faiths from every continent are forming a circle of stone through which they hope to rebuild an ancient nunnery on the island of Iona off the coast of Scotland.

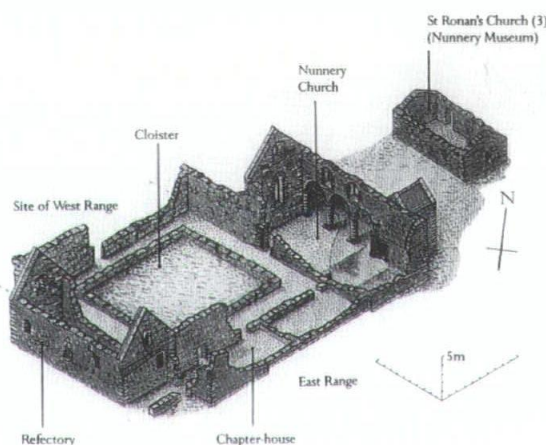
Much of the history of Iona is shrouded in mystery but the Druids named her the Sacred Isle of the Blest. Between the spirit and the material world the veils are thinnest at Iona, we are told. The transition from Druidism to Christianity was evident in the legend of St. Bride of the Isles, a Celtic goddess believed to be a midwife to Christ. The tiny isle became the ecclesiastical seat of Scotland and a spiritual home for Celtic Christianity.

Forty-eight kings of Scotland as well as four Norwegian kings are reputed to be buried there. Scholars believe the Book of Kells (900 A.D.) was created on Iona. Alas, both the abbey and the nunnery, which had been built around 1203, ended in ruins with only a frame recognizable in outline on the stony grounds. The Duke of Argyll began a restoration of the ruins and made ownership to the Iona Cathedral Trust. By 1910 the restoration of the abbey was completed and its expression of the Eternal was heard once more. Today, a congregation worships there and is connected to the Iona Community, a Church

MARGO FISH is a professional painter with a studio in New York City. Her work has been exhibited both here and abroad. She is an active member of the Society for the Arts, Religion and Contemporary Culture. She may be reached at Paraclete, Lake Placid, NY 12946; 518-523-1861; fax: 518-523-8180.



Restoration of the Iona ruins off the coast of Scotland.



of Scotland World Community dedicated to peace and justice.

The nunnery, which was not restored, is the project that has now been adopted by women around the world. In 1953, my husband and I were in Edinburgh as graduate students, and I was aware then that my cousin, The Reverend George McCloud, had taken skilled and unskilled workers from his Glasgow congregation to help with the restoration of the abbey on Iona. We made a pilgrimage to the abbey and almost immediately the echoes of its origin became audible to us. We worshiped before an altar whose pillars were once toppled but now stood in solemn support. But when we entered

the fallen shape of what once had been the nunnery, it was still only an outline of ruins. I began to think and dream about its resurrection.

I realized that theologically the image of God is changing and that the two structures cannot be defined in terms of the patriarchal and matriarchal. But in terms of symbol and form the nunnery represents a feminine dedication apart from the masculine and any theological perspective, and I think this should be preserved. Fortunately, others have thought so too, and now, after many years, the consecration of the project has been celebrated and the actual work has begun.

The architect and current executive director of the Iona Cathedral Trust, Crichton Lang, gave the dream an authority, and Eleanor Detiger, The Rev. Norman Shanks and John Homfray were also of great assistance.

Women from all over the world are invited to come to the island to work as apprentices under the direction of the architect. As members of the Circle of Stone we will share our labor, our art and our funds in ways appropriate to our strength and talents. We anticipate a few will come and remain for longer periods, and others for the limited time they can share. Others will not be able to come in person, but by joining the Circle will enable the work to go on and will share in the fulfillment of the dream.

We expect the work will take at least five years, but the energies expended we feel are the energies the mystics call holy. The names of the women helping will be inscribed in a book that will be displayed at the nunnery. □

Religious Regionalism

SOUTHWESTERN SACRED SPACES

The Biennial Conference of the Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art, and Architecture

A Professional Interest Area (PIA) of the American Institute of Architects



October 8–11, 1998 • Adam's Mark San Antonio Riverwalk • San Antonio, Texas

This conference will explore the diversity of indigenous religious art and architecture in an attempt to better understand the uniqueness of the Texas experience and to recognize how it contributes to the panoply of religious and cultural expression in this part of the country.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

- IFRAA PIA General Membership Meeting
- Opening Reception/Registration

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 9

- Tour of Agudas Achim Synagogue, a 44,000 sq. ft. complex built on an 11-acre site. Tour leaders: *Maurice Finegold, FAIA*, of Finegold Alexander & Associates, Boston, and *Rabbi Richard Spiegel* of San Antonio
- Tour of Alamo Heights United Methodist Church, 86,000 sq. ft. on a 13-acre site within a planned community development. Tour leaders: Architects *Davis Sprinkle* and *Richard Garrison*.
- Awards Banquet, a popular biennial event that pays tribute to the recipients of the IFRAA and Faith & Form Religious Art and Architecture Awards.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

Workshop Session 1

- "Political Ramifications of the Loss of Religious Restoration and Freedom Act"
Greg Davis, AIA, Fr. Anthony Cummins, and attorneys *Douglas Laycock* and *Thomas Drought*
or

- "Vernacular Sacred Art"
Fr. Virgilio Elizondo, renowned theologian, author, and pastor, and *Cynthia Tapia*, local artist and liturgical design consultant

Workshop Session 2

- "Process Orientation: Design Approach and Consensus Planning"
Doug Hoffman, AIA, and *Richard Garrison, AIA*, will lead this interactive session.
or

- "Regionalism and the Missions"

Carolyn Peterson, FAIA, and *Fr. Balthasar Janacek*

- Afternoon Session: Tour Missions at Concepción and San José

- Closing Session

Nathan Mitchell, PhD, Associate Director for Research at Notre Dame's Center for Pastoral Liturgy and author-blocks from San Fernando Cathedral.

Continuing Education

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For more information on the program and conference, call 202-626-7482 for a conference brochure.

Conference Registration

To register, complete the registration form on the back of this page and send with payment to: The American Institute of Architects, IFRAA/Religious Regionalism, PO Box 64146, Baltimore, MD 21264-4146. For credit card payments, you may fax a copy of the completed registration form to: (202) 626-7399, or call: (202) 626-7482.

Hotel Accommodations

A block of rooms has been reserved in the name of the AIA at the Adam's Mark San Antonio Riverwalk, 111 Pecan Street East, San Antonio.

A special rate of \$159 for single and double rooms is being offered to conference attendees. Reservations must be received no later than Tuesday, September 15, 1998. Tell the reservations agent that you are attending the AIA IFRAA conference.

(Registration Form on reverse side)

REGISTRATION FORM

Religious Regionalism: Southwestern Sacred Spaces

October 8–11, 1998 • Adam's Mark San Antonio Riverwalk • San Antonio, Texas

Registration Policy

Registrations postmarked after September 24, 1998, will not be processed in time to be included on the attendee's roster or to get a preprinted name badge. You may obtain a postconference attendee roster after the conference by calling the PIA information line at 800-242-3837.

Cancellation Policy

Full refunds, less a \$30 cancellation fee, will be made for cancellations received in writing before September 24, 1998. Refund requests after September 24 will be limited to 50 percent of the

registration fee. No cancellation refund is available after October 5.

Travel

Call Rudow Travel Group, 800-920-2525 or 301-656-7100 between 8:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. EDT to make your travel arrangements.

Transportation to and from the hotel, located just 8 miles from San Antonio International Airport, is offered by Star Shuttle which leaves from the baggage claim area every 20 minutes. The fee is \$7 per person each way. Taxicabs will cost approximately \$14 from the airport to the hotel.

Name	<input type="checkbox"/> FAIA	<input type="checkbox"/> AIA	<input type="checkbox"/> Assoc. AIA	<input type="checkbox"/> Allied
Firm				
Address				
City	State	ZIP		
Phone	Email			
AIA Member Number				
Name of Guest				

No. of Registrations _____

	Postmarked by Sept. 24	Postmarked after Sept. 24
IFRAA Member	\$195	\$225
AIA Member	\$215	\$245
Nonmember of AIA	\$235	\$265
Student	\$115	\$115
Guest	\$145	\$145
1-day (specify _____)	\$145	\$145
Subtotal	\$ _____	\$ _____

Registration fees include Opening Reception and dessert program on Thursday evening*; continental breakfasts on Friday and Saturday; lunch on Friday and Saturday; and all tours and workshops on Friday and Saturday.

Not included in fee: Awards Banquet on Friday; vendor/host dinners on Saturday; and optional activities on Sunday.

**Additional tickets to Thursday evening's reception and dessert program may be purchased for \$20.*

Thursday Reception/Dessert (\$20): No. of tickets _____ x \$20 = \$ _____

Awards Banquet (\$50): No. of tickets _____ x \$50 = \$ _____

TOTAL PAYMENT ENCLOSED: \$ _____

Method of Payment

☐ Check payable to AIA ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ AMEX ☐ Purchase Order No. _____

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COMMISSIONING FINE ART

By Brenda Belfield



The arts are flourishing everywhere. For the last 25 years, there has been an explosion in the production of all levels of art from fine art crafts to sculpture and painting. Architects have responded to this heightened interest in the arts by designing spaces where the works of talented and creative artists are featured. (Who could imagine the National Gallery East Wing in Washington, D.C. without the magnificent Calder mobile?) Site-specific tapestries, light fixtures, ceramic tiles, metal work and glass now join with bronze, marble, oil and canvas to enrich the interiors and exteriors of today's structures.

But where do you find the specific artist for your project? And once you have found an artist, how do you arrange a commission? It is always interesting to tour the local galleries and museums and to get to know the talent available in your area. It takes time, however.

Realistically, you may need to talk to someone who already knows the local talent such as a gallery dealer or an art consultant (who is a dealer without a gallery). The Yellow Pages lists museums, galleries, dealers and consultants, and this may be your first step in finding a local artist. The advantage of a local artist is obvious: Not only are they closer to work with but chances are they will have work and references in your area.

Other organizations such as your local

BRENDA BELFIELD is a stained glass designer with 25 years of commissions in religious and secular spaces. Her work includes 60 windows in the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. and also appears in the American Embassy in Saudi Arabia and a NATO base in Sicily, Italy.



Stained glass windows, 6'x7', for residence in Alexandria, Va. by Brenda Belfield.

art league or arts council, state artists association or Artists' Equity will provide a resource slide library of their members' work.

Reading the art journals such as Art News, Art in America, Sculpture and Art Forum for painters and sculptors, and The Guild, American Crafts and Ornament on crafts will familiarize you with new and exciting directions in the art world as well as provide some resource names. But again, the chances of locating just the right person in a short period of time are small.

All professional artists read the art journals, and those interested in commissions pay special attention to those opportunities listed in their classified sections. Some journals such as Art Calendar exist mainly to provide artists with possibilities for exhibits and commissions throughout the country. Many site-specific commissions are advertised in this way to a broad readership of nationally recognized artists. By listing your design criteria or call for prospectus, you will get responses from those artists

who are experienced in responding to such offers and are prepared to deliver work to your area.

The next step is to review slides and resumes. You may be able to select work already available. If you wish instead to commission a work, there are a few ways to proceed. Depending on the circumstances, you might interview artists and based on their work and experience simply select one for your commission. Another approach is to ask a few of the leading candidates to create for a fee a maquette of their proposed solution to the design criteria that you have provided.

The successful integration of art and architecture requires a thoughtful collaboration among all concerned. The requirements of the space are provided by the architect, and the inspiration and execution of the idea are the responsibility of the artist. As an artist, I enjoy the challenge of site-specific commissions as they frequently lead me into new artistic directions.

Once the selection process is completed, the commission begins with a meeting between the architect and client to establish the criteria for the art work and to experience the site if possible. If I am commissioned to design walls of stained glass or walls of canvas and paint, I will prepare several preliminary designs for the architect's review. Then a final design for the work to be fabricated is presented for approval prior to its execution. I always reserve the right to make final artistic decisions yet the client understands that the final art work will be carried out as closely as possible to "the spirit" of the approved design.

A wonderful work of art in a beautiful space heightens the experience of both the art and the architecture. □

TRADITION AND COMMUNITY: SHAPERS OF RELIGIOUS SPACE

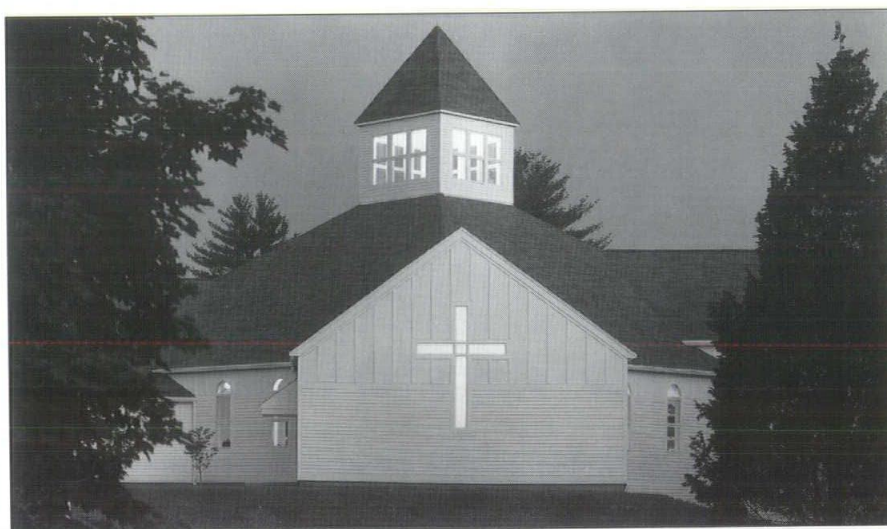
By Cecilia Lewis Kausel



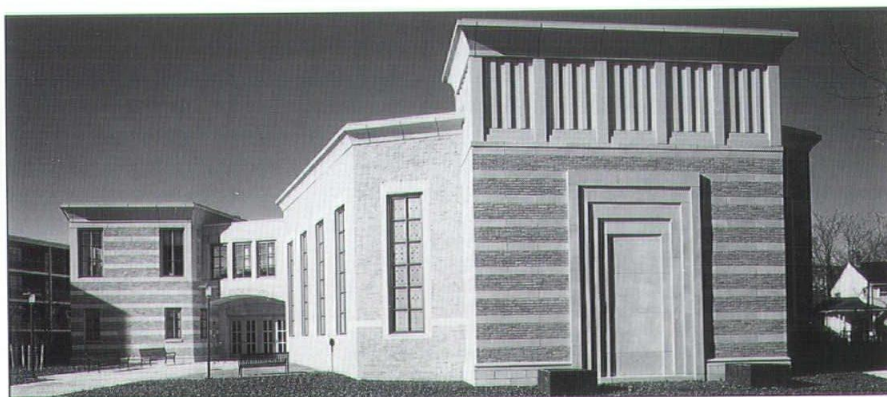
This was the theme of two forums sponsored this past spring by IFRAA's Northeast Region. The first was at Christ Church in Brockton, Massachusetts, designed by architect Brett Donham. Professor Robin Jensen of Andover-Newton Theological School presented slides of religious spaces from biblical times to the present and posed the questions: What makes a space sacred? Can a sacred site be independent from human ritual? Architect Donham described how he began the project by studying traditional designs but decided that while tradition may be "picked up" it must be expressed again in the new. Rev. William McCoy, church pastor, spoke movingly of the added richness that the communal life of the church adds to the space. Monsignor Sheehan, a neighbor and admirer of Christ Church, said that ultimately what makes space sacred remains a mystery, which we may never completely understand.

The second forum was held in the new Young Israel Synagogue of Brookline, Massachusetts, replacing one that was destroyed by fire in 1994. Rabbi Gershon Gewirtz, the lay leaders and the Orthodox Union focused on defining the concept of synagogue and created an integrated and collaborative "Kehilla," a spiritual, social and learning community. David Kahan, who moderated the panel, remarked that sophisticated and unsophisticated members gave thoughtful consideration to design and that there was communication, sensitivity and trust. Both Rabbi

CECILIA LEWIS KAUSEL is a professor at Chamberlayne College of Design in Boston, Mass. She is the IFRAA Northeast Regional Director and has contributed several illustrations to Faith & Form.



Christ Congregational Church, Brockton, Mass. Donham & Sweeney Inc., architects.



Young Israel Synagogue, Brookline, Mass. Graham Gund, architect.

Gewirtz and Dr. George Goodwin, an architectural historian, agreed that if a fabulous building had been achieved but the congregation had ended up divided, all would have been lost. Architecture is the servant of the communal strength.

Architect Graham Gund led a tour of the building and spoke of the design of a religious building as an emotionally strong process for the designer. He lis-

tened carefully to the wishes of the building committee, he said, because it was of primary importance to design what they wanted. He was careful to maintain his own integrity as an artist, however, by reflecting on the roots of his conception for the final design.

Dr. Goodwin paid him a supreme compliment: "This gentle, caring architect has sung a new song to the Lord." □

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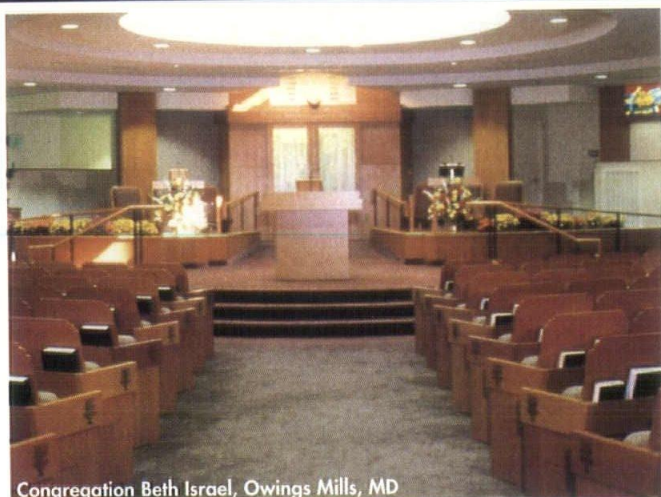
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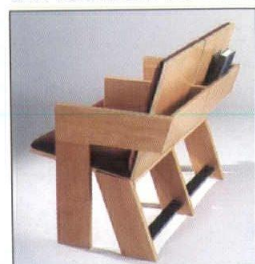
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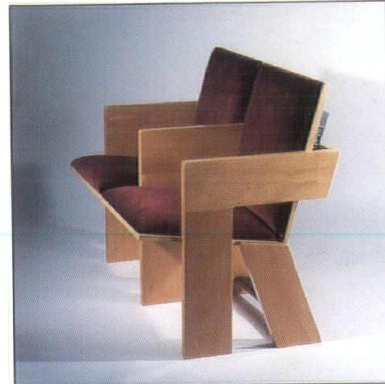


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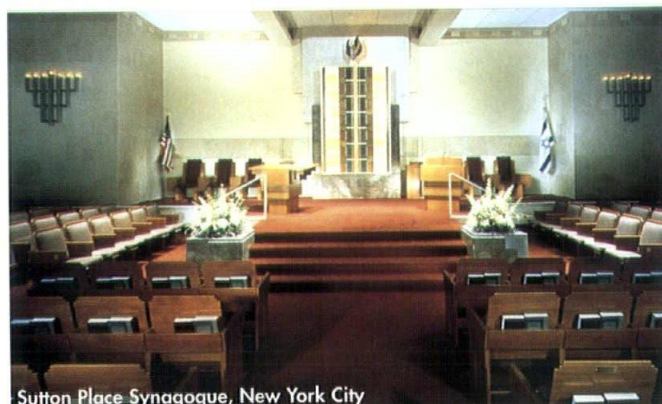
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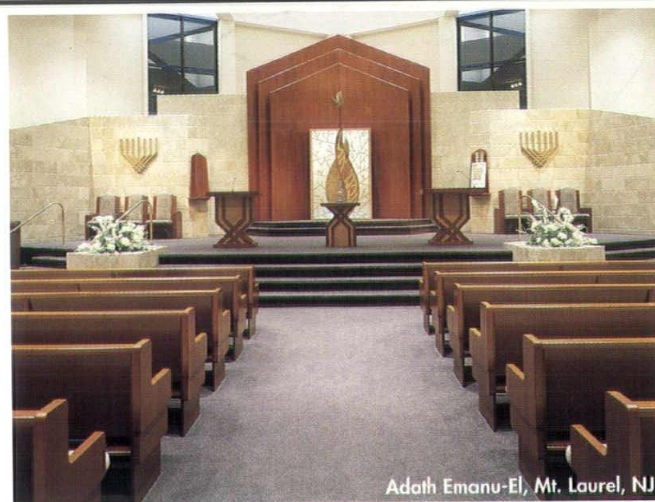
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