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2006 Awards Issue





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SETRE Chapel in Kobe, Japan, by Ryuichi Ashizawa Architects & Associates, one of the 18 award-winning projects profiled in this issue. Photograph by Kaori Ichikawa Architecture Photo Studio

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Special Theme Issue: Listening for God: The Aural Worship Experience

The aural worship experience, aided through acoustical design, sacred music, singing, preaching, and vocal prayer shapes our religious experience in houses of worship. This issue will examine the importance of the aural worship experience in its various forms, and the importance of acoustical design.

IS IT ALL IN YOUR HEAD?




EDITOR'S PAGE ★ MICHAEL J. CROSBIE

This past fall, members of the Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art, and Architecture (IFRAA) gathered in La Jolla, California, to consider the role of neuroscience in forming belief and, by extension, our experience of sacred art and architecture. (A similar theme was explored at IFRAA's conference in New York City in 2004.) Also during the West Coast conference, winners of the 2005 and 2006 design awards programs were fêted, and awards certificates bestowed.

Watching people's brains work (and being assured that, indeed, something is going on up there) is simultaneously fascinating and humbling. In his keynote address, "Where We Believe What We Believe," neuroscientist Andrew Newberg showed us *where* we believe—in flashes of light in the folds of our brains, visible on scans of the organ at work. Later in the conference, the Reverend Patrick Russell (a neuroscientist and a Lutheran minister) showed how perception (and belief) are molded by the way our brains are wired. Our knowledge of how the brain operates continues to grow, but the instrument is so complex we've only begun to understand it. For the layperson Newberg and Russell provided an instructive view of what science knows about the brain; but at this point we barely know why we know what we know.

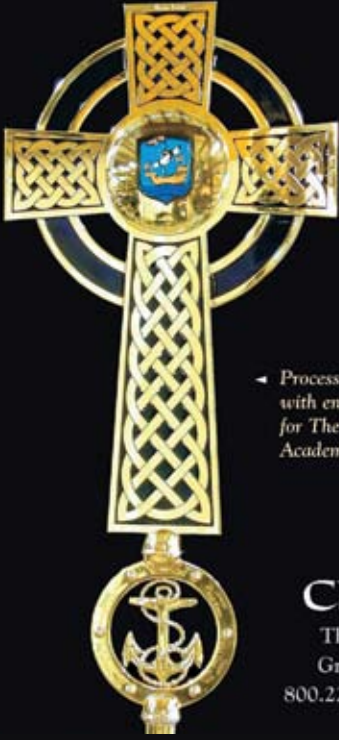
Why is this knowledge important for architects and artists? Norman Koonce, former head of the American Institute of Architects, laid it out clearly. To best serve the clergy, congregations, and others for whom we create worship environments, we need to build on a foundation of science. Koonce talked about his work with such scientists as Fred Gage and Jonas Salk on the effect the built environment has on religious experience. The "sacred" spaces visited during the conference were Louis Kahn's Salk Institute, Mission San Diego de Alcalá (California's oldest church), and Charles Moore's Church of the Nativity in Fairbanks Ranch. Understanding how manipulation of the built environment can make people comfortable or uneasy, can extend our lives, make our existence richer, or create places that invite religious experiences—this knowledge should be the bedrock of design. We can rely on our education, hunches, intuition, and experience, but neuroscience provides proof. It's a tool that can show the architect and the artist the consequences of design—verifiable results that can be repeated. Do we want to light up that part of the brain that indicates a meditative state? Neuroscience can help us do it.

Does this mean that, ultimately, we are the ones creating religious experience? Is it the architect or the artist making God appear? (Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain!) Is it all in your head? Yes and no. The power of religious architecture and art resides in its capacity to transport us—physically, intellectually, emotionally—to where we can commune with God. We don't need great architecture or art to meet God; that happens every day in the most mundane places. But art and architecture can open a floodgate through which religious experience can flow. Creating such places can also be a form of prayer, one of the many ways in which we converse with and praise God. The IFRAA conference demonstrated that you can combine science and the sacred without diminishing one or the other. It further revealed the innate gifts we have for finding God inside us. 

MICHAEL J. CROSBIE IS THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF *FAITH & FORM* AND CAN BE REACHED BY EMAIL AT MCROSBIE@FAITHANDFORM.COM

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THE 2006 RELIGIOUS ART & ARCHITECTURE AWARDS

BY MICHAEL J. CROSBIE



The 2006 Religious Art and Architecture Awards Jury, left to right: Sharif Senbel, architect; Laurie Gross, artist; James Graham, architect; Susan Pendleton Jones, clergy; Rod Stephens, liturgical designer (jury chair).

The 2006 awards jury, which chose the projects presented in this issue, was vocal in its reaction to the 197 submissions in architecture and the arts. New this year was the inclusion of work by architects from around the world. Previously the awards program was open only to architects based in North America.


The international projects made a distinct impression on the jurors. One juror described them as “exceptional;” others noted that making the awards program international should raise the caliber of all submissions. The design of worship environments abroad, particularly in Europe, Asia, and the United Kingdom, was more adventurous and thought-provoking than the work they were used to seeing in North America. One juror pointed out that building abroad is not as regulated as it is in the States. He believes that fewer restrictions abroad allow designers to be more inventive.

This observation led to a larger discussion about how design is viewed in North America. One juror speculated that architects of religious buildings on this side of the Atlantic and the Pacific were generally less experimental (compared to their counterparts on the other side of the globe) and their clients were more architecturally conservative. Jurors noted that American clients for religious buildings seem to place far less emphasis on design than do clergy and congregations abroad. “The value of design is just not perceived here,” observed one juror, which results in lower fees for architects or their elimination altogether from the process of creating a religious building. Several jurors remarked that in North America the design process is usually “short-changed,” reflecting the strong influence of “consumer and popular culture and values,” especially in the U.S. One juror noted that the design of many worship

environments in America today is driven by the “commercial shopping” mentality that colors everything in the culture, and that congregations want religious buildings to be “the least challenging possible, to please everyone.” No doubt the mission of many faith communities to attract new members by offering them comfortable, non-threatening environments accounts for such bland religious architecture and art.

The work of liturgical artists drew comment from several jury members, who believed that artists should “review their own work and submit those projects that stretch them the most,” meaning work that has been challenging to the artist and to the client. Many artists, they asserted, fall into being “repetitive and redundant;” the artist’s oeuvre should reflect a maturation of vision. “Artists need to push themselves,” said one juror.

The jurors also discussed whether the awards program should admit only art work commissioned for a particular environment; any piece of art created for a religious purpose can now be submitted. Jurors felt that the strength of religious art rests on its dialogue with the place for which it is created and that work should be judged within its spiritual context. “The challenge to the artist is working with a community with many voices, and distilling that into the art,” one juror observed, adding that the work should be displayed and judged within the spiritual space that it is created for.

Are the jurors’ observations about American religious architecture fair? Should the awards program restrict art submissions to commissioned work? Send your thoughts to mcrosbie@faithandform.com or to our mailing address (found under my name in the staff box on page 3). *Faith & Form* wants to hear what you think. 

MICHAEL J. CROSBIE IS EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF *FAITH & FORM* AND WAS AN OBSERVER OF THE AWARDS JURY PROCESS.

2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE NEW FACILITIES

Pope John XXIII Church and
Pastoral Center
Seriato, Italy

AWARD

Honor

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CIVIL ENGINEER

P&P Consulting Engineers

ARTIST

Giuliano Vangi

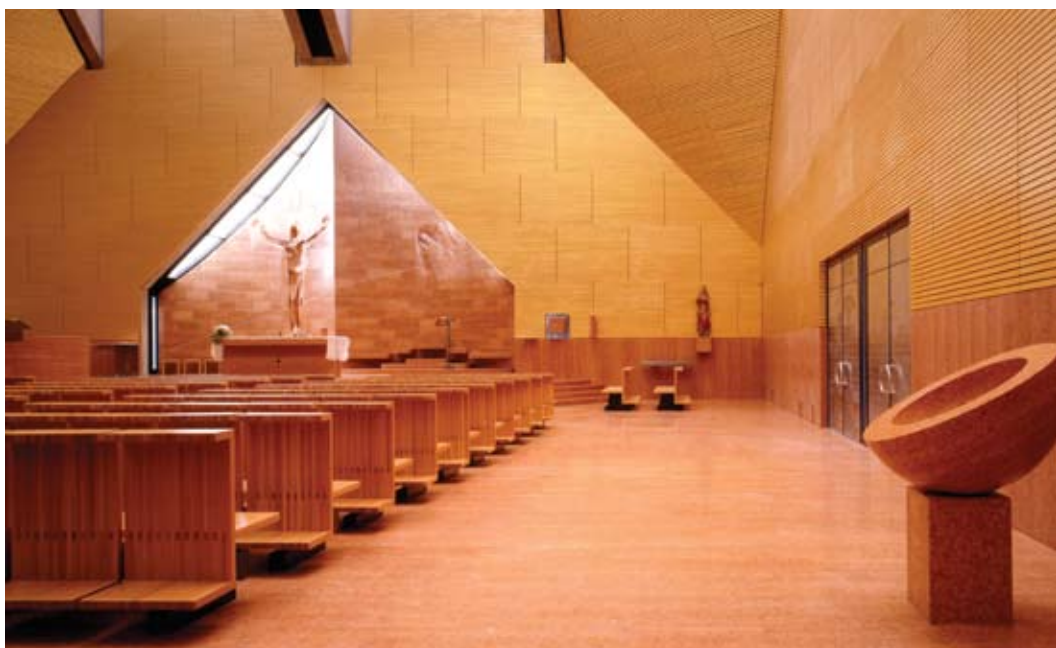
PHOTOGRAPHY

Enrico Cano



Seriato is a little town located south of the city of Bergamo in Northern Italy. The site of the new church dedicated to Pope John XXIII is next to the 18th-century church of San Alessandro Martyr in the Paderno area. Residences and single-family houses built in recent years characterize the surroundings and borderlines of the road connecting Seriato to Bergamo. In the planning of the new building, the old church defines the northwest limit of a rectangle facing the new church; on the southeast side a long, single-story building houses the priest quarters and a few other rooms ending towards the countryside with an oratory and catechism classrooms on the first floor.


The square-plan church constitutes the center of the whole project with a side length of 25 meters and a height of 23 meters. The structure is of reinforced concrete; the façades are clad in split natural Verona stone slabs, while the interior walls are covered with panels of gilded wood (similar to the technique of gilded frames). The interior space offers itself as a single volume shaped by the lateral wall. Light flows in from four roof skylights. Polished Verona stone is used in the interior as a continuity of the flooring that shapes the plinth of the walls and the liturgy furniture (altar, pulpit, chair). A stone-clad twin apse completes the



church space and displays a sculptural work – a crucifixion scene within the cladding – by the Italian artist Giuliano Vangi.

JURY COMMENTS

This is one of the best examples of modern church architecture that members of the jury have ever seen. The interior and exterior are

remarkably integrated: the color and form help marry the two. The texture of the stone exterior fits well with the context of old masonry buildings. The finishes of the interior help express its form. The interrelationship of color and materials, use of light, and union of inside and outside all work to make this a powerful sacred building within its ancient village context. 

2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE NEW FACILITIES

Friends Meetinghouse
San Antonio, Texas

AWARD

Honor

ARCHITECT

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Steve G. Persyn, PE

CIVIL ENGINEER

Pape Dawson

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Bender Wells Clark

CONTRACTOR

Phase I: Denton Homes
Phase II: Breda Construction

PHOTOGRAPHY

Chris Cooper




Unlike most Christian faiths, the religious Society of Friends does not have an organized hierarchical structure or a formal liturgy. This meetinghouse falls within the un-programmed tradition, which is based on silence. Friends gather in “expectant waiting” for divine leadings; they strive to be quiet in body, mind, and spirit. The goal was to create a design that would embody this principle. The site is located on a busy intersection just north of downtown San Antonio surrounded by apartment buildings and a commercial strip mall. To achieve the goal of silence, the building needed to be detached from the noise of its immediate context. All of the spaces are depressed into the gently sloping site and the meeting space is oriented to the back of the site and surrounded by trees. Parishioners walk up a winding path to a gate in a thick masonry wall, which opens onto a courtyard surrounded by porches.

The design was inspired by the early meetinghouses, which were very functional, simple spaces for meetings for Friends and community groups. A gambrel roof structure encloses the 34-foot-square meeting space. The room,

with its exposed wood trusses, is flooded with natural light. The walls and ceiling are finished using wood slats with 1½-inch gaps between, with acoustical panels behind them. The east wall is entirely glass and frames the trees and landscape behind, further contributing to the tranquil atmosphere. Windows on the south and north, nestled beneath deep overhangs, take advantage of the predominant breezes and allow for cross ventilation.

JURY COMMENTS

The function of this project is to establish an island of quiet in a busy neighborhood to stimulate a sense of community – a space preserved for solitude and reflection. The elegant simplicity of the materials echoes the simplicity of Quaker faith. The design reflects the region’s vernacular sense of architectural space, and materials such as the stone wall recall local building traditions. The detailing is exceptional, achieving harmony with an economy of means – consideration is given to the placement of every board. The design addresses what is most needed, and nothing more – the essence of Quaker spirituality. 

2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE - NEW FACILITIES

SETRE Chapel

Kobe, Japan

AWARD

Honor

ARCHITECT

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LIGHTING CONSULTANT

Koizumi Lighting Technology Corporation;

Keiichi Mitsuzawa, Yojiro Habata

PHOTOGRAPHY

Kaori Ichikawa Architecture Photo Studio




Located on a dramatic site along Kobe's Seto Inland Sea coast, this small chapel has a fantastic view of both Akashi Bridge and Awajishima. The design goal was to unite the beauty of these spectacular surroundings with the architecture and make them one and the same. This chapel has no religious icons to mark occasions but rather uses the natural phenomena of the site to imbue the space with a sense of the sacred and the wonder of nature.

The chapel rises slightly towards the sky from ground level so that it is more connected with sea and sky rather than just the ground plane. The raised volume is supported and connected with grade through translucent glass walls which contain all service rooms. The exterior concrete façade is a mottled paint finish, which gives the impression of clouds and further joins the structure with its surroundings.

In order to focus the visitor's view on the sea and sky vista, the western elevation is fully glazed. The interior floors, walls, and ceiling are all highly reflective white surfaces that catch the natural light. Moreover, the volume's slope adds to the room's reflectivity. The quality of light within the space is intimately linked with the exterior environment, and changes throughout the day before climaxing with the spectacular sunsets.

JURY COMMENTS

This is an exciting, dynamic, bold project. There is a strong relationship between the outside to the inside. It makes poetic use of the landscape and seascape, bringing a sense of wonder inside the chapel space. The use of the bridge as an element inside the space is wonderful. The shimmer of the polished flooring material joins the interior with the water outside, while the movement of the sun and the clouds dramatically changes the interior throughout the course of the day. 

2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE

NEW FACILITIES

Divinity School Addition,
Duke University
Durham, North Carolina

AWARD

Honor

ARCHITECT

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Joseph R. Loring & Associates

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Lappas + Havener

CONTRACTOR

Skanska USA Building

PHOTOGRAPHY


Bryan Becker Photography

The newest Divinity School addition is located in the lower court below the University Chapel and the “New Divinity” wing (built in 1970). The addition faces the Memorial Garden and the side of the University Chapel, completing the cloister formed by the chapel and the open loggia that links the chapel to the original Divinity School building. The new multi-story addition contains approximately 45,500 gross square feet.

Beyond the Memorial Wall the site falls off steeply from an elevation of 398 feet to 372 feet. The design takes advantage of this slope in topography by locating a new chapel and three terraced floors between “New Divinity” and the Memorial Wall. They are connected by a linear stair and corridor which steps down the hill, tying the spaces together and linking the top and bottom visually and functionally.

The new chapel is located on the mid-level between the entrance from the Memorial Garden and the entrance from the parking to the north. The refectory, also located at the mid-level opposite the chapel, serves as a social area for the chapel. The preferred seating plan for the new chapel is a central “gathering” as opposed to a more linear “spectator” type plan. While the classroom wing is more modern and in brick, the new arcade, stair, and chapel are Collegiate Gothic and constructed of stone matching the University Chapel in style, material, and detail. This creates a unified ensemble at the top and side of the hill.

JURY COMMENTS

This project reveals a genuine commitment to add something of value to the existing architectural language, almost to the point where it is difficult to tell the old from the new. It is an intelligent, updated interpretation of Duke's architectural tradition. Such an achievement is not easy, and here it is done carefully, yet with a certain lightness. The interior of the new chapel is designed for flexibility, which helps with multifunction use and also in teaching modes of worship. 



2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE NEW FACILITIES

Parish Center Podersdorf
Podersdorf, Austria

AWARD

Honor

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Bruno Klomfar
Margherita Spiluttini




The old church on Seestrasse remains the symbol of the city center. The addition of a space for Sunday mass, a hall, forecourts and outdoor spaces, parish hall and parish community center creates a complex sequence of (internal and external) spaces.

Access routes of equal importance lead from Seestrasse and from the parking lot at the rear. The sequence of the approaches serves to prepare for the liturgical celebrations, to create socialising areas for the congregation before and after mass, as well as to access events held in the parish hall or the parish community center. The main orientation of the space used for mass is turned at right angles to the entrance route.

The visitor coming along a path of stone slabs placed in a continuous area of grass (both approaches are given the same significance) arrives at open, atrium-like forecourts. These forecourts, the entrance hall, and entrance are placed between the room used for mass and the parish hall. These atria are followed and completed along the direction of the central approach by a glazed hall, also situated between the mass space and the parish hall. This, the central element of three threshold areas, is terminated above by an almost weightless ceiling that diffuses light.

The facade is an artwork that puts in words what the topics "family - sacred family" mean to the members of the parish community. These aspects are presented for public discussion. The content of this text produces the building's external form.

JURY COMMENTS

This new building defers to the centuries-old church in inventive ways. The transparency of the parish center allows the historic church to assert itself, while providing gracious accommodation on the site for fellowship. The text on the glass not only helps to define the parish center's form, but also proclaims the history and beliefs of the congregation to the community at large in an inventive example of outreach. The chapel inside the center is plain yet ethereal. 



2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



On a five-acre site in north San Diego County, a village of buildings and courtyards rests at the base of a slope much as a hill town with its central plazas and sanctuary. In this warm climate, inspiration also came from California's historic haciendas with their courtyards and vine-covered arbors, while adding Jerusalem stone and biblical landscape. Trellises and gardens weave through classrooms, sanctuary, and administrative buildings. Biblical olive and acacia trees connect with California oaks on the hill above, and sycamores and grasses in the lagoon below. Seven gates into the village reflect the seven gates to the old city of Jerusalem.


The 32,000-square-foot complex responds to site and climate with classrooms having south exposure and valley views. The entry lobby is the outdoor courtyard, with school offices, administration, library, gift shop, adult and youth lounges all clustered around. As the town square, it is used for dancing and festivals.

Passageways radiating from the central court connect school and playground on one side and sanctuary and social hall and future chapel

on the other. In the richness of spaces, there is simplicity in circulation and directness, which is very visitor friendly.

Curved shapes carry into the sanctuary embracing the space and, with natural light, help the design to be emotionally driven as well as functional. Concentric seating provides a sense of family and intimacy for both large and small groups.

JURY COMMENTS

The strength of the plan embraces the environment, creating a sense of a village. The plan's strong masonry spine gives it order, resulting in a wonderful place for community and a place where children can play safely. The plan has a strong resolution, expressed by its pervasive masonry wall (which also suggests the building traditions of this part of the North America). The jury had reservations about the execution of the interior, which does not appear to be as well resolved as the exterior plan. 

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE NEW FACILITIES

Temple Solel
Cardiff-by-the-Sea, California

AWARD Merit

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INTERIOR DESIGNER

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KITCHEN DESIGNER

Laschober & Sovich

RELIGIOUS ARTIST

Laurie Gross Studio

PHOTOGRAPHY

Wayne Thom Studio

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RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE NEW FACILITIES

The Raphael Kirche
Pforzheim, Germany

AWARD

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Bernhard Friese Architekturfotographie




On a very close and narrow infill site in the center of Pforzheim, the aim of the design of this new church (with community facilities) was to create a place to reach the “space between” (in the words of priest Norbert Schaaf): quiet and awakening, authentic, and an inspiration for the spiritual possibilities of man.

The building occupies the entire site, except for a small courtyard in back, which delivers light to the interior spaces. The ground floor contains the entrance and a split-level hall with community space and coffee bar. The worship space on the next level up has two slender gaps between the raw concrete walls to admit light into the church's heart. Raw and natural materials create a quiet, intimate character--a balanced “light sculpture” enabling visitors to find in this slightly asymmetrical space their own middle and balance. This space projects two meters over the street. Covered with Corten panels, its surface is warm and brown. Below it, the glazed entrance guides one to the hall with stairs like an auditory to the street – a stairway as narthex leading to the worship space.

The top level includes a bright meeting room with a sunny roof terrace. A smaller room – used for confession – is small and intimate, with a modest view against a bright wall that delivers southern light to into the worship space. A cloakroom, restrooms, and storage are found in the basement, along with a crypt with its own wall-washing light admitted through a small crevice.

JURY COMMENTS

A fine example of a worship space that relates to its storefront context, yet it produces a subdued sense of light and space. This is an urban solution to sacred space, with parking right at the front door. The space for gathering in worship is very contemplative in terms of its use of materials and the play of light, which is a critical component of the design. 

2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD

RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE RENOVATION

San Fernando Cathedral Renovation and
Cathedral Centre
San Antonio, Texas

AWARD

Honor

ARCHITECT

Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Lindeke Architects
278 East 7th Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-224-4831 / 651-228-0264 fax
www.rttlarchitects.com

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Ed Durand, AIA; Leon Wang;
Lee Tollefson, FAIA; Martin Thompson, AIA;
Justin Tollefson, AIA; George Rafferty, FAIA;
Rob Rafferty

ASSOCIATE ARCHITECT

Fisher Heck Architects
Lewis Fisher, AIA; Jim Heck, AIA;
Annie Sauser, AIA; Jim Kissler, AIA

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

WSG, Inc.

MEP ENGINEER

Lizcano Consulting Engineers

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Rialto Studio, Inc.

LIGHTING CONSULTANT

Schuler & Shook, Inc.

LITURGICAL CONSULTANT

Fr. Richard Vosko, Ph.D., Hon AIA

CIVIL ENGINEER

Pape Dawson Engineers, Inc.

ACOUSTICAL CONSULTANT

Robert Mahoney & Associates

PHOTOGRAPHY

Chris Cooper


Constructed in 1731 (with later additions) San Fernando Cathedral suffered from moisture problems within the stone structure. Poorly functioning facilities had brought the parish to the point of chaos. The cathedral structure underwent a complete restoration to create flexible worship and a museum space. Improved sight lines, dual lighting arrangements for worship and museum settings, new audio systems, and complete replacement of all mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems were carefully integrated into the cathedral. The entire exterior and interior of the structure was preserved through restoration and replacement.

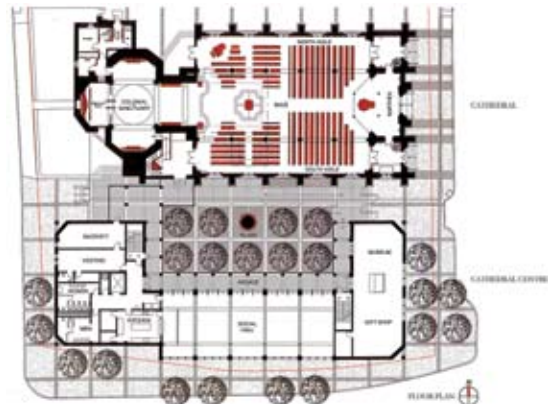


The altar and predella were brought forward with surrounding seating to express the strong sense of community within the parish. Religious artwork was rearranged to create a more harmonious artistic composition. Original ceilings were recreated and stained-glass windows were restored. Three new, gilded-wood retablos were crafted by Mexican artisans to define areas of special devotion for Mary and for the tabernacle.

The new Cathedral Centre was built to complete the project requirements. Its outdoor gathering plaza has the cathedral as its focal point. This space serves as a visitor center, a place for special events, a place for liturgical gathering, and a place for community. The building contains sacristy, dining hall, gift store, tour center, limited office and meeting areas, television broadcast facilities, public restrooms, and a private upper level veranda for guests. The Cathedral Centre removes the stress of these functions from the cathedral to help ensure its long-range preservation.

JURY COMMENTS

In renovating any religious building there must be a commitment to restoring the most valuable and timeless elements while adapting it to serve a contemporary worship community. San Fernando Cathedral shows how it should be done. The altar table is now central to the space and the worship experience, giving it more prominence. The liturgical appointments are very successfully designed to honor the cathedral and its history. The new addition defines a new space for community gatherings. 



2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD



RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE RESTORATION

Central Synagogue
New York, New York

AWARD

Honor

ARCHITECT

H³ Hardy Collaboration Architecture
902 Broadway
New York, NY 10010
212-677-6030
www.h3hc.com
Hugh Hardy, FAIA (principal-in-charge);
Nina Freedman (project architect)

CONTRACTOR

E.J. Sciamie Construction Company

CONSERVATION CONSULTANT

DPK&A

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

LZA Technology

MEP ENGINEER

Lev Zetlin Associates


PHOTOGRAPHY

Peter Aaron / Esto Photographics

Central Synagogue, constructed in 1872, is the oldest building in continuous use as a synagogue in New York City. Remarkable for its Moorish design and ornate interior, it is both a New York City Landmark and a National Historic Landmark. Restoration of the 25,000-square-foot building began after a fire had substantially destroyed it in 1998. The result both preserves the synagogue's historic character and allows it to serve contemporary needs.

After analyzing bits of debris (including paint chips, plaster pieces, and slivers of glass) the intricate, geometric, multi-colored stencil patterns of the interior were recreated in the sanctuary. The 12 double-story stained-glass windows, clerestory windows, ornate rose window, and stained-glass lay-lights were fully restored. On the exterior, ornamental details that had been missing for decades were recreated, the gable roof's black-and-red slate geometric pattern was restored, and the crenellations along the twin minaret towers were accented with gold leaf. Great care was taken to insure that new elements respected the synagogue's historic character. For example, a section of moveable pews was fabricated in a style evocative of the original's detailed millwork. The main entrance stair was lowered to create an entryway that more effectively accepts the flow of congregants. Below ground, a space previously used as a basement classroom was transformed into a multi-purpose space to accommodate public functions.

JURY COMMENTS

This project represents a major commitment to this significant historical site. The restoration after a devastating fire is elaborate yet sensitive, rich in color and detail, returning this important religious landmark to its former glory. The updated lighting transforms the space and helps to reveal the detailing. Careful attention to the building's historic fabric and its function as a worship space is abundantly evident. This project sets a high standard for restoring religious art and architecture. 



2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD

The St. Thomas More Chapel is an important part of the University of St. Thomas Minneapolis campus. While the chapel shares in the Gothic vernacular character of the university buildings, it also has its own contemporary expression.

The bronze crucifix portrays Christ with his hands slightly extended to the assembly, his eyes open. His death is his resurrection. A laurel victory wreath, in the form of a mandorla, surrounds the body and reoccurs at the entrance and inside the main portals.

The crucifix hovers above the granite altar, which is placed axially with the lectern, chair, and tabernacle at the corners. A text from the

Prologue of John is incised in the floor. This Greek text represents the language St. Thomas promoted for its ability to speak of universal truths. The altar text is complemented by John 14:9 on the holy water font at the chapel's entrance.

The chapel's 283 art-glass panels are suspended in the 28-foot-high space. Silver stain on slump-molded glass creates warm golden tones. This is one of the largest installations of this kind in the world. The color pattern radiates from the center behind the crucifix and fades as it moves outward and upward. The design concept for the windows originated from photographic plates exposed in an experiment in 1936 with the splitting of the atom. This experiment represents as much the edge of a new world as Thomas' description of utopia.

The chapel's walls are Mankato stone in several finishes: sawn, honed, and rusticated. The floors and furnishings are Canadian Kenoran sage granite.

LITURGICAL / INTERIOR DESIGN

St. Thomas More Chapel
University of St. Thomas School of Law
Minneapolis, Minnesota

AWARD

Honor

ARTIST

Alexander Tylevich, Tylevich Studio, Inc.
1937 Highland Parkway
St. Paul, MN 55116
651-690-4117 / 651-699-0297 fax

ARCHITECT

OPUS A&E

LITURGICAL DESIGNER

Fr. James Notebaart

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Hadi Sajadi, Clark Engineering
OPUS A&E

BRONZE FABRICATOR

Casting Creations, Inc.


GLASS FABRICATOR

Derix Glasstudios

PHOTOGRAPHY

Steven Bergerson

JURY COMMENTS

This is a strong liturgical space that supports worship through the masterful use of materials and color. The curved shape of the space encourages communal worship, while the art glass helps to unify the space. The colored light seems to emanate from the central crucifix, which in turn creates a zone of holiness. This is a wonderful fusion of art and architecture. 




2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD

The Jewish Chapel is part of a larger facility intended to promote and enhance the moral development of midshipmen at the academy. The chapel entry sequence and worship space itself have a number of architectural features that do not rely on religious icons or images. The goal was to allow anyone to feel welcome and inspired without being overwhelmed by the tradition of a specific religion.

A double helix motif used throughout was created to embody the idea of the many becoming one. The helix is crafted in stone mosaic in the dome interior, a floor medalion in the atrium, and finally in a niche surrounding the ark in the sanctuary. A massive hand-carved stone wall inspired by the walls of Jerusalem is the focal point of the space. The Jerusalem stone floor pattern and simple wood pews radiate out from the ark to promote inclusiveness. The floor appears to ascend toward the ark, as the main aisle is tapered and inset with mosaics using forced perspective to create the illusion of an incline. Above, light-filtering scrims, made of woven

stainless steel wire, are suspended with nautical rigging. The scrims frame the view up to an aluminium-leaf ceiling which, by its lightness and reflectivity, appears to recede. The contrast of the weight and old world character of the stone floor and wall are intended to contrast with the lightness and modern character of the scrims and ceiling, as if the space is deconstructing itself.

JURY COMMENTS

The strength of the design of this Jewish chapel at the U.S. Naval Academy is derived from the plethora of elements working in concert and expressed in every detail. The light and the form create an envelope of worship. The texture of the walls and the forms are very harmonious. The successful use of a very limited color palette, with various shades of white, is masterful. There is an excellent balance of wood and steel, lightness and strength, while the floor pattern supports the larger space. Light diffused through sail-like elements casts a gentle glow throughout. 

LITURGICAL / INTERIOR DESIGN

Jewish Chapel at the
Commodore Uriah P. Levy Center
U.S. Naval Academy
Annapolis, Maryland

AWARD

Honor

ARCHITECT

Boggs & Partners Architects
410 Severn Avenue, Suite 406
Annapolis, Maryland 21403
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Bonnie K. Johnson;
Anthony DiCamillo;
Maria Lorena Lehman;
Robert Holzbach; Michelle Senneca

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Cagley & Associates

MEP ENGINEER

GHT, Ltd.

CIVIL ENGINEER

Greenhorne & O'Mara

LITURGICAL CONSULTANTS

Levin Brown, Rabbi Aaron Landes

GENERAL CONTRACTORS

Whiting-Turner Contracting Co.
Shaw-Beneco

DONOR/FUNDRAISING ORGANIZATION

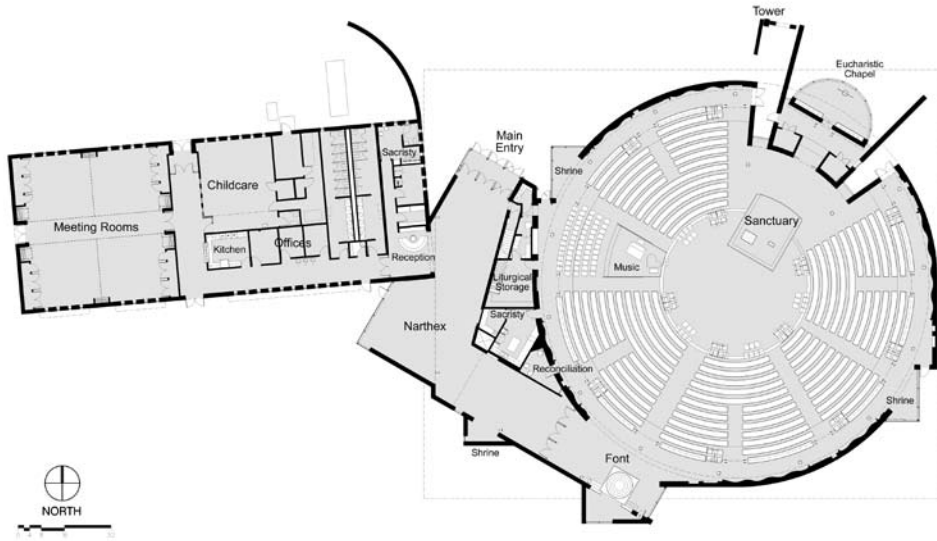
Friends of the Jewish Chapel

PHOTOGRAPHY

Alan Karchmer



2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD




Set within native prairie grass landscaping, the angled forms of Holy Spirit Catholic Church offer presence to the larger community. The primary design challenge was to imbue the 1,400-seat worship space with intimacy for a parish bonded from humble beginnings.

The familiar form of a gabled roof welcomes visitors to this "House for the Church," yet under its shelter a circular plan unites worshippers. From this intersection, subtle complexity of form and detailing heightens the surprise of the building's experience. Through a sequence of turns, the path from the parking lot leads

past landscape views and a day-lit immersion font into the new sacred space whose structural columns gather community within a circle of candles. Into the central spatial void, the sanctuary platform enters: locus of celebration. Materials are natural-timber ceiling, cedar rain-screen, black iron, stainless steel, and a cross of reclaimed timber beams. Primitive Stations of the Cross in the ambulatory floor depict a rough road, advancing with the pilgrim to Easter waters. Deeper in the space, a tabernacle set in non-reflective glass seems to float before the curving glass walls of this chapel.

Committed to resource efficiency, lighting is accomplished through indirect, linear fluorescent fixtures and energy-efficient focal lighting, which complement the central roof monitor that bathes the interior in natural light. Landscaping minimizes storm-water run-off and the need for irrigation.

JURY COMMENTS

This project's strengths are in its central plan and in its detailing. There is an interesting integration of steel with wood, which complement each other. The liturgical orientation of the space is very strong and clearly expressed. The jury felt that the reservation chapel was not as well resolved. The entry procession route is very appropriate, and flows naturally through the church. 

LITURGICAL / INTERIOR DESIGN

Holy Spirit Catholic Community Church
Naperville, Illinois

AWARD

Merit

DESIGNER

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Adrian, MI 49221
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Rita Schiltz, OP

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LIGHTING DESIGNER

Gary Steffy Lighting Design;
Gary R. Steffy, Gary J. Woodall

METALWORKER

John Wittersheim

STAINED GLASS ARTIST

Ellen Mandelbaum

CONTRACTOR

Henry Bros. Co.

STRUCTURAL CONSULTANT

Larson Engineering of Illinois

ACOUSTICAL CONSULTANT

Yerges Acoustics

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Applied Ecological Services, Inc.

PHOTOGRAPHY

HNK Architectural Photography, Inc.



2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AWARD




The program for the Eisenstadt Cathedral renovation included a redesigned worship space, a new building for the sacristy, and reorganization of the surrounding piazza and gardens.

The incorporation of a path that leads to the building assists the old cathedral in once again becoming the formative sacral building of the city. A warm atmosphere was created on the inside that allows the spatial quality of the old building to again be sensed. The surfaces and materials used harmonize with the cathedral's façade. The sandstone-colored concrete used on the forecourt connects visually with the church floor of stone slabs inside.

The special nature of the liturgical zone is underscored by a large carpet that was designed by Gilbert Bretterbauer. The textile floor surface continues the warm spectrum of colors of the windows and visually connects the main nave with the altar zone that was outfitted with altar furniture designed by Brigitte Kowanz.

JURY COMMENTS

This project's use of color and carpeting to visually define and create a worship space is inventive. This is an example of how one very strong element can amalgamate an interior, both old and new elements. The carpet design enables the liturgical action in this sacred space as one travels through it. It supports the Eucharist as a kinetic experience. The use of wood in the sacristy is simple and elegant. 



LITURGICAL / INTERIOR DESIGN

Cathedral in Eisenstadt
Eisenstadt, Austria

AWARD

Merit

ARCHITECT

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Susanna Wagner,
Andreas Lichtblau,
Denise Riesenberger,
Christiane Mück,
Pascale Neuens

ARTISTS

Gilbert Bretterbauer (carpet);
Brigitte Kowanz (liturgical furniture)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Bruno Klomfar

2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ART AWARD



RELIGIOUS ARTS - VISUAL ARTS

"Living Hope of the
Resurrection"
Luther Theological
Seminary
St. Paul, Minnesota

AWARD
Honor

ARTIST

Jeff Barber
39500 County 8
Boulevard
Goodhue, MN 55027
507-824-2647
www.jeffbarber.net


PHOTOGRAPHY

Jeff Barber

"Living Hope of the Resurrection" is a nine-foot-tall cast bronze sculpture located in the "Garden of the Resurrection" on the campus of the Luther Theological Seminary. The sculpture expresses both Christ crucified and Christ risen. The crucifixion is recognizable in the form of the corpus, yet the body is broken – figuratively cross-sectioned. The form opens to reveal an outline symbolic of the open tomb of Easter. One is drawn through the openness of the resurrection back to the passion of Good Friday. The arms and hands

separate, adding the ascending/descending presence of the spirit.

JURY COMMENTS

This interesting sculpture unites the crucifixion with the resurrection, depicting a sense of movement from one reality to another. It is very embracing, and the sculpture's play of textures and its beautifully crafted materials makes its expression very strong. This static object bursts forth with energy, filling its courtyard setting with hope and renewal. 

2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ART AWARD




St. Mary Magdalene was the first witness to Christ's resurrection. In John Collier's sculpture she is seen hurrying to the tomb with spices. But the spice jars are unopened; there is no need for them. Christ has risen from the dead, and she sees that the stone has been rolled away.

Installed at St. Joseph's Chapel, one of four Collier sculptures comprising the Catholic Memorial at Ground Zero, and located adjacent to the World Trade Center site in New York, the memorial and this figure of St. Mary Magdalene in particular were designed not just to mourn

the dead of 9/11 but to honor those who took part in the recovery effort and to project faith in the Lord from that recovery into the future. Mary Magdalene inspires that faith as first witness, and she embodies the theme of the memorial: resurrection.

In the Catholic Memorial, St. Mary Magdalene honors those who served: the airline employees and passengers who perished and the thousands of volunteers who offered their time and talents in the recovery effort following the fall of the twin towers. The sculpture is in bronze, approximately five feet in height.

JURY COMMENTS

This statue, part of the Catholic Memorial at Ground Zero in New York, expresses movement quite convincingly. There is the appropriate expression of surprise on Mary Magdalene's face, as she first sees the risen Christ. This work helps to support a growing understanding of who she was and her role as a faithful disciple. The texture of the work itself is simple and expressive. It is a very powerful piece, and it provides a sense of peace and hope amid memories of violence and hopelessness. 

RELIGIOUS ARTS

VISUAL ARTS

"St. Mary Magdalene"
St. Joseph's Chapel
New York, New York

AWARD

Honor

ARTIST

John Collier
Hillstream, LLC
52 Gilbert Street
South Salem, NY 10590
914-533-5550
www.hillstream.com

LITURGICAL DESIGN CONSULTANT

Larry Hoy, Renovata Studios

PHOTOGRAPHY

John Collier

2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ART AWARD

RELIGIOUS ARTS VISUAL ARTS

Blessed Trinity Catholic Church Window
Frankenmuth, Michigan

AWARD Honor

ARTIST
Elizabeth Devereaux Architectural Glass
2468 Ivy Street
Chico, CA 95928
530-342-2074
530-342-2048 fax
www.devglas.com

ARCHITECT
Wigen Tincknell Meyer & Associates, Inc.;
Dave Tagget, AIA

LITURGICAL CONSULTANT
Barbara Day


PHOTOGRAPHY
Elizabeth Devereaux

The sanctuary window design for Blessed Trinity Catholic Church depicts a form that is rooted to the earth, as it extends and reaches toward the spirit and those who come to worship in this faith community. The lower left side of the window has a glow of light that halos the adjacent cross. This gives a visual testimony to the holiness of Jesus' selfless act on the cross.

Mouth-blown glass from Fremont Antique Glass was made specifically to match the artist's design. By using "flashed" glass with its layers of color, the artist was able to achieve the varied shading and the perception of depth. Much of the glass, chosen to diffuse the light, was painted and kiln fired to create the delicate watercolor effect. In addition,

the details of kiln-fired leaf imprints make reference to the rooted form, as the prismatic light of handmade bevels support the design's movement. With the artist's tools of glass, reflection, and color the sacred message for this Catholic parish is conveyed – of roots deeply planted in the earth while reaching for the light of the spirit.

JURY COMMENTS

This piece is successful in forging a relationship between the cross and the corpus in a creative way, fulfilling the Catholic requirement that both be displayed together. The use of color and light, and the suggestion of movement are very successful. The abstract tie between corpus and cross is subtle yet very moving and expressive. 



2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ART AWARD




The St. Thomas More Chapel at the University of St. Thomas School of Law is unique in its choice of saints. Thomas More was a complex man, both for his times and for today. He was Chancellor of England under King Henry VIII, a lawyer, and a judge, engaged in commercial law. He was a family man and an orthodox Roman Catholic, a man who valued virtue above station, and inclusion above prejudice. Thomas More embraces a wider world than law and doctrine, to synthesize God's relationship to us.

The 15-foot-tall set of bronze doors and surround, the major portal into the chapel, portray St. Thomas More immediately before his death on July 6, 1535. He recites Psalm 50, asking God for mercy and the cre-

ation of a new heart. He turns toward his executioner and they face each other. As the doors open, the two separate. More's final words were: "I die the King's good servant, but God's first."

JURY COMMENTS

The design of these bronze doors into a chapel is recognition of the significance of the portal and the threshold as critical elements in the worship experience. The celebration of the threshold and the portal marks the transition between the profane and the sacred. The effigy of St. Thomas More is present in the piece, but it does not dominate. The iconography is very well crafted, and sensitively expressed on both door leaves. 

RELIGIOUS ARTS - VISUAL ARTS

Bronze Doors
St. Thomas More Chapel
University of St. Thomas School of Law
Minneapolis, Minnesota

AWARD

Honor

ARTIST

Alexander Tylevich
Tylevich Studio, Inc.
1937 Highland Parkway
St. Paul, MN 55116
651-690-4117 / 651-699-0297 fax

ARCHITECT

OPUS A&E

LITURGICAL DESIGNER

Fr. James Notebaart

STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Hadi Sajadi

FABRICATOR

Casting Creations, Inc.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Steven Bergerson

2006 FAITH & FORM RELIGIOUS ART AWARD



RELIGIOUS ARTS CEREMONIAL OBJECTS

Chuppah
Jewish Chapel at the
Commodore Uriah P. Levy Center
U.S. Naval Academy
Annapolis, Maryland

AWARD Honor

ARCHITECT
Boggs & Partners Architects
410 Severn Avenue, Suite 406
Annapolis, Maryland 21403
410-268-3797 / 301-858-8421 fax
www.boggspartners.com
Bonnie K. Johnson; Joseph A. Boggs, FAIA

FABRICATOR
Virginia Metals

CONTRACTOR
Shaw-Beneco


PHOTOGRAPHY
Alan Karchmer

The chuppah is designed as a special element for wedding ceremonies at the Jewish Chapel at the Commodore Uriah P. Levy Center. Although the chuppah is a specifically Jewish requirement, it was designed without relying on specific religious icons or imagery, as was the rest of the chapel. The goal was to allow any entrant to the chapel to feel welcomed and inspired without being overwhelmed by the tradition of any specific religion.

The chuppah is handcrafted of white powder-coated aluminium. It fits into and embeds in the stone floor on the bimah. The chuppah, in the ceremony of Nissuin, symbolizes the couple setting up house together. The chuppah provides four cross points, so that a tallit (a Jewish prayer shawl) could be stretched over the couple and rabbi, as is done in most traditions. The addition of the tallit is optional, as the double helix form provides a cover, or roof.

The chuppah form is based on a double helix, which is a pattern used throughout the chapel facility as a symbol of inclusiveness. The pattern is used in the exterior pavilion as a mosaic dome, in the atrium outside of the chapel as a mosaic floor and in the niche behind the ark in a mosaic wall. Architecturally this pattern is designed to represent the focus of energy from all sources, circling and entwining together, thereby strengthening the whole.

JURY COMMENTS

This ceremonial object in the Jewish Chapel at the U.S. Naval Academy is well integrated with the space and its architecture. Although temporary, it is just as suitable to the chapel's interior as its permanent elements. The lightness of the chuppah is appropriate and well done, preserving the strong presence of the ark behind it. Many military academy chapels are popular venues for weddings, and the jury applauds the thoroughness of the design of this beautiful chuppah. 



FROM BROWN AND GRAY TO GREEN AND YELLOW

BY HELLE SCHARLING-TODD

Editor's Note: Artist Helle Scharling-Todd of Ventura, California was asked to decorate the interiors of two Danish churches to reinvigorate the spaces and, by extension, the congregations. You can see more photos of these projects on Faith & Form's website at www.faithandform.com. Her account of the projects, and how she approached them, follows.

In Denmark the Church, as everywhere else, is being challenged to update its appearance. Although church attendance is at a low 5 percent, the renewal of many small village churches throughout the country is being accomplished with positive results. I was commissioned to renew the Uhre and Hogager Churches, in Jutland, Denmark, to transform their gray and brown interiors into modern, inspiring places of worship. (continued on next page.)



View from the back of the Hogager Church




Detail of existing pews painted vibrant yellow and green.

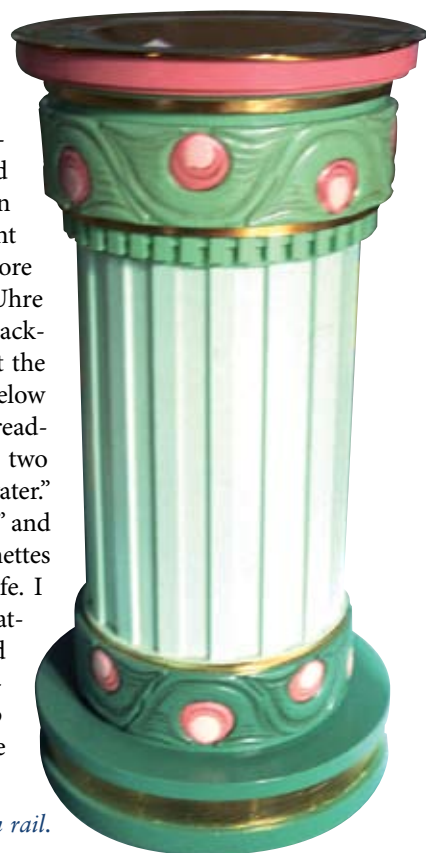


New arched window in Uhre Church depicts a cross wrapped in green that evolves into yellow, red, and blue.

At the Uhre Church, the first move was to bring in light by installing a stained-glass window in the end wall; next, to combine the glass colors with the interior, such as benches, pulpit, baptismal font, window sills, organ, and doors. I decided to use green as the dominant color, to represent a re-greening of Christianity. The church council and architect agreed, signaling a decisive change. The benches should be like a spring garden, green with yellow cushions and backs, and a light bluish cold touch. This color combination is repeated with small changes; the door, however, is rose red to break with so much green and to give a warm lift when you are leaving the room. The semicircle by the altar, which is a communion bench, has a yellow cushion, like a radiating diadem, tying the colors together. To give depth a dark green carpet runs from the door to the altar. These colors are repeated in the window, which is abstract: A cross is twirled in green at the base, which develops into yellow, red, and blue above the cross arm. The idea of maturing, changing colors and “passing the bar” (the cross arm) symbolizes Christ’s life. Today the church is a place of celebration of life, attendance is up, and it is a popular place for weddings.

At Hogager Church, not far from Uhre Church, I decided on yellow as the dominant color. The benches are two shades of yellow, with an orange salmon-colored cushion. The ends of the benches are turquoise, leading up to the royal blue carpet to the altar, interrupted by an orange ring: the communion bench. The windowsills are light yellow to pick up the color from the benches and spread it through the room. The ceil-

ing is various shades of blue, intensifying towards the altar with yellow beams, echoing the blue carpet. The pulpit has a concentration of orange, blue, and turquoise. The door and the organ pick up these colors, as a pendant to the window. The window is more figurative than the window at Uhre Church, with the cross as the background form: Christ is placed at the center in a yellow, orange ring. Below him seeds spill out like atoms, spreading the gospel. In the cross arm two hands appear in the twirling “water.” One hand symbolizes “Why me?” and the other “I accept.” Vertical vignettes illustrate scenes from Christ’s life. I wanted the colors to be invigorating and to radiate the enlightened positive nature of Christ’s message. Church attendance is up and people are happy with the new interior. 



Uhre Church's font at the foot of the communion rail.



View from the altar of the newly decorated Uhre Church interior.



Entry door to Uhre Church gives a taste of colors inside.



Vestment designs inspired by the colorful Hogager Church interior.



Pulpit is lifted with diverse, contrasting colors.



Our Lady of Angels Cathedral
Los Angeles, CA

Leo A. Daly, Architect
Jose Rafael Moneo,
Architect

Bells by...



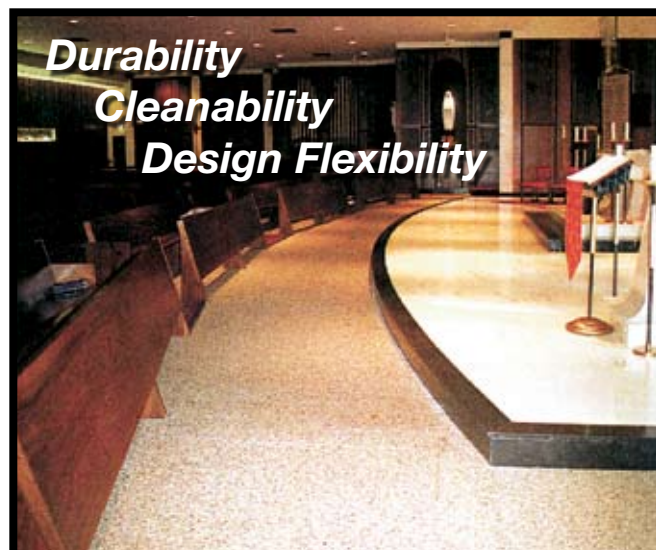
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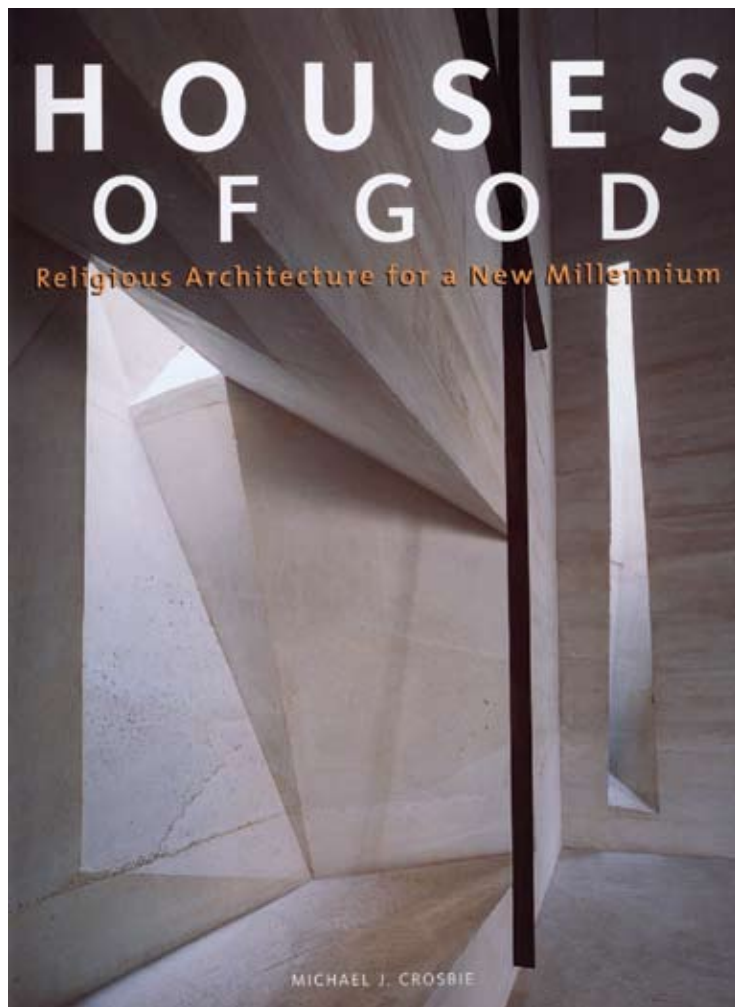
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NOTES & COMMENTS

NOW'S THE TIME TO LIST!

This last issue of the year signals the time to renew your listing in *Faith & Form's* Artist and Architect Directory listing service (pages 30-34 of this issue). The new listing form and information on the Artist and Architect Directory can be found at: http://www.faithandform.com/ff_mag4.php. If you've never listed your services in the Directory, now's the time to take advantage of this excellent exposure in *Faith & Form*.



BOOK REVIEW: HOUSES OF GOD, RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE FOR A NEW MILLENNIUM

The new century has seen a remarkable revival of religious sentiment worldwide. While some of it has gone to fanatical extremes, much of the renewed interest in religion has led to a flourishing of community and creativity, evident in the wide array of religious buildings in *Houses of God* (Images, \$65), the third major book on sacred architecture by Michael J. Crosbie, editor of *Faith & Form*.

Ranging from Japanese temples to Austrian churches, from low-budget retrofits to major new complexes, from structures in inner cities to rural hamlets, the buildings in the book embody the diverse nature of this religious revival. Some of the architecture here adheres to traditional forms and styles, mainly as renovations of and additions to existing buildings, although even here, the mark of modern liturgy is evident in the simplification of their interiors.

Most of the structures, however, have a cleanly contemporary character, reflecting a new self-assurance within many religious congregations. As people now turn to churches, synagogues, and temples to find the

community they often lack in the increasingly anonymous environments of our cities and suburbs, the needs that they and their families have differ from those of generations past. Sacred space must now also serve as social space, service space, and secure space, as pastors, priests, and rabbis offer advice and solace on a wide range of human needs and concerns.

This finds its architectural expression in the openness and optimism of so many of the modern structures shown here, all of them beautifully photographed on nicely laid-out pages. The extent to which many of these buildings offer their congregations a full spectrum of services is also evident in the sometimes-extensive community and educational wings attached to the main worship spaces, documented in the book's many floor plans. Like the buildings it covers, the book's writing is also accessible and informative. Capsule descriptions of each structure highlight its most important features, while the introduction considers the various ways in which we now define sacred places, all conveyed in an active and engaging voice.

All in all, *Houses of God* provides an excellent cross-section of some of the best religious architecture that the new century has produced in both the U.S. and abroad. A useful compendium for an architect's bookshelf, this volume also offers congregations a range of ideas for what they might want in future buildings. Think of it as an extremely handsome, well-illustrated plan book of heavenly homes.

—Thomas Fisher

Thomas Fisher is the Dean of the College of Design at the University of Minnesota and serves on the advisory board of *Faith & Form*.

Quote of Note

*"People don't come to church for preachments,
of course, but to daydream about God."*

— Kurt Vonnegut

FLOATING WEDDING CHAPEL




As part of the trend to offbeat weddings, a floating wedding chapel—believed to be the first of its kind in the U.S.—is now moored in St. Petersburg, Florida. The 60-foot-long chapel, designed by naval architect Daniel Avoures of St. Petersburg, is built on a 50-ton, twin-hull barge, with a marine plywood superstructure covered with fiberglass and vinyl siding. "Weddings on Water" (weddingsonwater.com) rents the chapel with a complete wedding package including organ music, electric candelabra, a white uniformed captain, and video coverage. The chapel can accommodate up to 120 guests.

MULTIFAITH CENTER FOR USC

The University of Southern California in Los Angeles has announced plans to build a \$20 million multifaith center that will bring students and community members of different faiths into one building. Slated to be approximately 27,000 square feet, the design of the multifaith center is the focus of a USC architecture class. The university is currently raising funds for the project.

SEND YOUR NEWS TO *Faith & Form*

The editors of *Faith & Form* want to bring its readers the latest news of those involved in the fields of religion, art, and architecture. Send press releases and materials to the attention of Michael J. Crosbie, Editor, *Faith & Form*, c/o Steven Winter Associates, 50 Washington Street, Norwalk, CT 06854; fax: 203-852-0741; email: mcrosbie@faithandform.com. 

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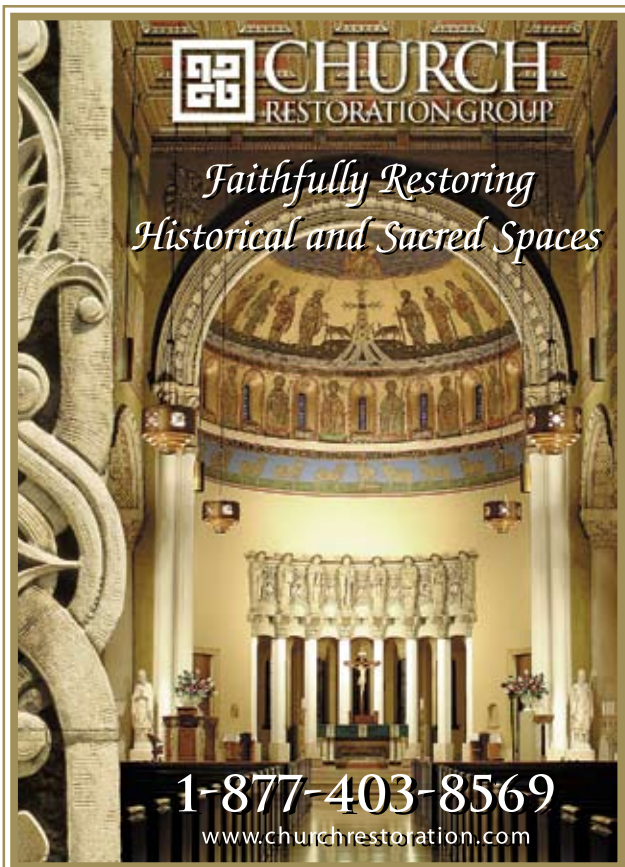
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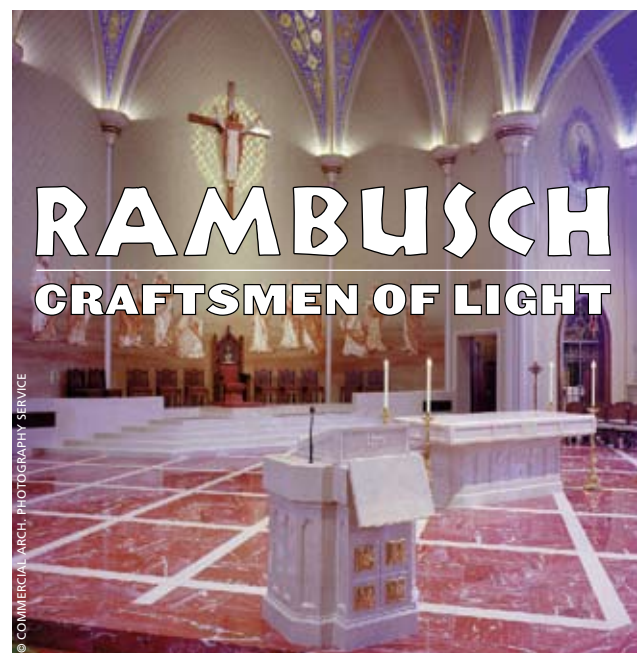
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THEY NEED TO BE HEARD

JUST ONE MORE THING... * BETTY H. MEYER

I think all of us today are so concerned about the world's problems that we sometimes give up hope for solutions. We vote, but we seldom ask, "What else can I do?" Are we part of the problem in the search for hope? What can architects, artists, and people of religious faith do – small as it may be – to contribute to positive future change?


Who will be the leaders of tomorrow? Naturally, they will be the young people of today. How can we be sure that they will be ethical and dedicated to the common good? Many of them find our institutions, especially religious institutions, boring and unrelated to their lives. Perhaps they remember their parents saying, "Shhh, behave yourself, stop talking and be quiet. We're in church." How do we communicate rationally and emotionally with young people? Should not all voices be heard?

Religious educators tell us that it is *direct* experience that builds character. Many adults do not understand this, believing that children and young people are not old enough to think and decide for themselves. They tell them that when they are old enough, "we will certainly ask for your opinion." But if young people have not had direct involvement in their houses of worship, they will miss opportunities to grow and mature. How many building committees have you seen where a young person was a part of the committee, where young people were not only members but were encouraged to express their opinions on any and all subjects?

Artists, architects, and people of faith have an unusual opportunity to help congregations realize they are making a mistake in the way they are educating tomorrow's leaders. I want to suggest a few ways that may help congregations understand the problem and foster broader communication.

After you have been chosen for a project and are discussing how to proceed, ask that a child and a young person be included. Tell them how and why their contributions to a discussion will be enlightening to those who are older. Their words may, in fact, be prophetic of the future; they might even turn the tide of membership loss that is so prevalent today.

I suspect that inviting the committee to go with you to study the differences in the art or architecture of different faiths will help. I can promise that young people will be interested in how worship environments are designed and created. Remember how you used to build with blocks? Today, it's Legos. Old and young alike seem to have the urge to build. Discussing it together will open the door to closer relationships.

All of this may be an infinitesimal step toward solving the world's problems, but the path to every solution has a beginning. Our young people represent a new beginning because they see through eyes uninhibited (or not colored) by prejudice. Perhaps these young eyes can see a new perspective or remind us of an old one that we have forgotten. 

BETTY H. MEYER IS EDITOR EMERITUS OF *FAITH & FORM* AND CAN BE REACHED BY EMAIL AT BMeyer@FAITHANDFORM.COM

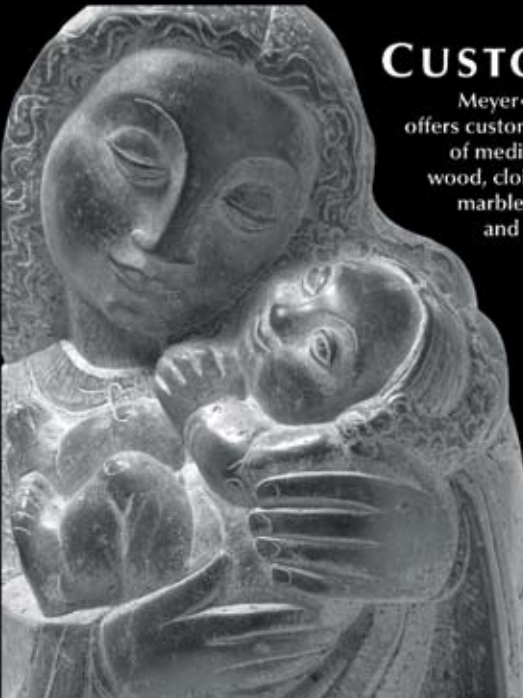
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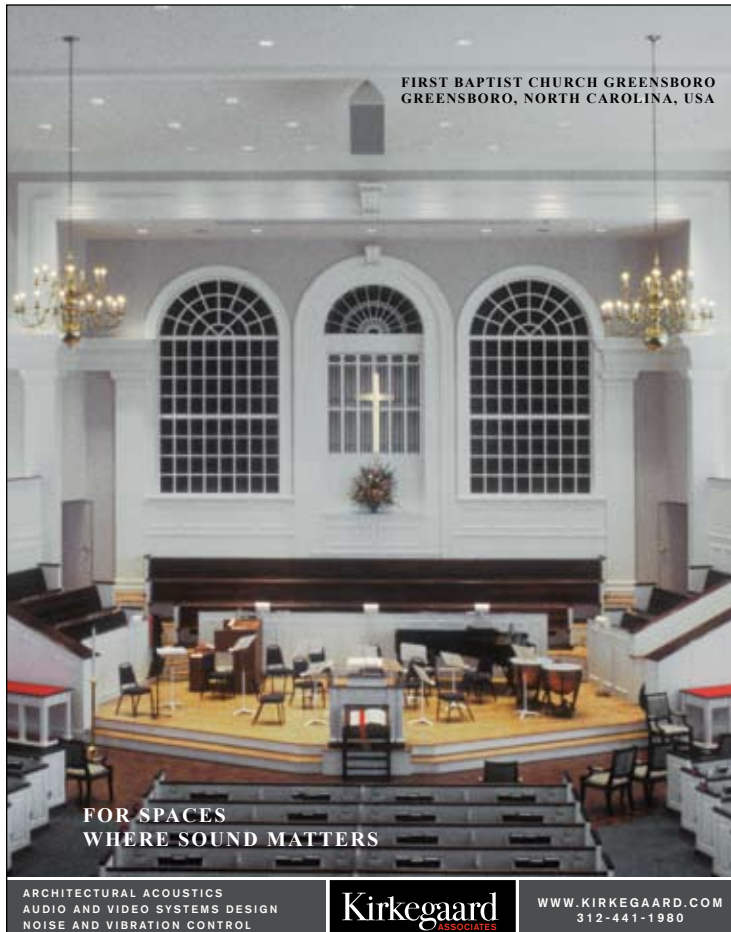
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