

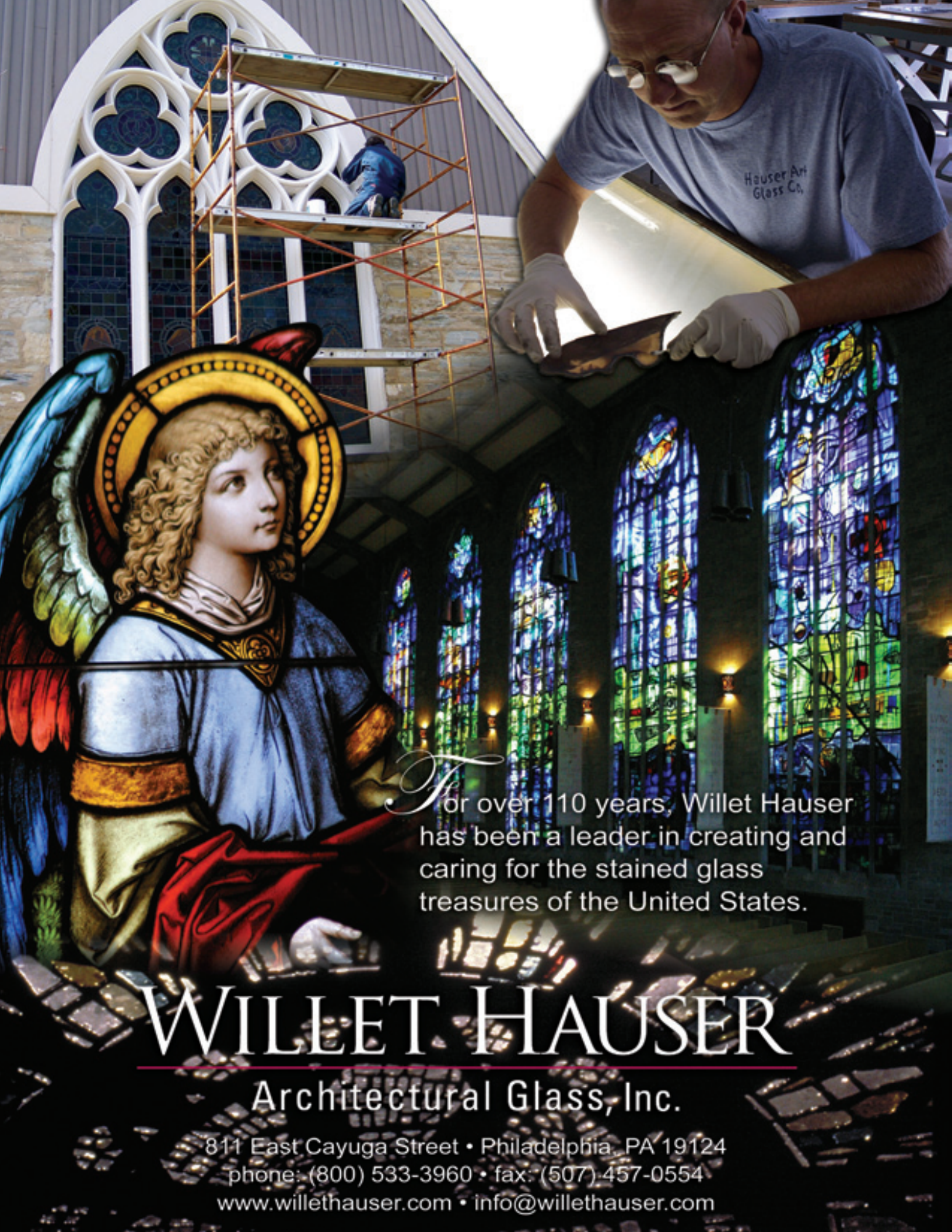
# FAITH & FORM

THE INTERFAITH JOURNAL ON  
RELIGION, ART AND ARCHITECTURE  
VOL. XLIII • NO. 4, 2010 • ISSN 00147001

Annual Awards Issue







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Manuscript Submission: The editor is pleased to review manuscripts for possible publication. Any subject material relevant to religious art and architecture is welcome. Good visual material is emphasized. Articles may be submitted on disk along with hard copy or emailed to: mcrosbie@faithandform.com. Manuscripts, disks and photos will not be returned unless specifically requested and a return envelope with sufficient postage is included.

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Photo: Gabe Davis, 207mm.com

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"Mary Overshadowed," a panel from "Magnificat: La Vita di Maria" by artist Bruce Herman, one of 15 winning projects in the 2010 International Faith & Form/IFRAA Religious Art and Architecture Awards program, which starts on page 7.

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**NEXT ISSUE:**  
Education Issue:  
Materials of the  
Spiritual





## KEEP IT LOCAL

EDITOR'S PAGE ★ MICHAEL J. CROSBIE

**R**ecent studies document the ongoing decline of organized, mainline religious groups, while the number of people who describe themselves as spiritual but not necessarily religious continues to grow. This is not good news for hierarchical denominations, especially

those that need to hold onto congregants and their checkbooks to keep the doors open. The news of the Crystal Cathedral in Garden Grove, California, filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection is one of the latest pieces of evidence that large religious organizations are in trouble.


Liturgical design consultant Richard Vosko, in a presentation at the Fall Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art, and Architecture (IFRAA) meeting in Minneapolis, spoke about the qualities of religious communities that are growing. First of all, they're wired: members stay connected through social media such as Facebook and Twitter. OK, even the Pope has a Facebook page. But he's not using it to stay in touch with congregants. Some religious communities are using social media as forums to keep up with fellow congregants, clergy, and the organization's ongoing life. These forums are also un-hierarchical—another big difference.

Growing congregations are conveniently located. They help shape the community around them and are connected to life in the neighborhood. They provide outreach through such services as soup kitchens, crisis intervention, and activities geared for small groups within a larger congregation. There is a life to these congregations that everyone—young and old—contributes to. This challenges the stereotype that religion is

just for those in God's waiting room. Growing congregations also engage in the arts—music, visual arts, theater—connecting to local artists.

Growing congregations, according to Vosko, provide “Third Places”—social hubs between home and work. Coffee shops and cafes have long served this function, but a faith community can also be a social place after work or on a weekend afternoon, not necessarily to pray and worship but to just stay connected to each other. Strong congregations also remember. They have a living history in the lives and contributions of members of the congregation, which they commemorate. They celebrate tradition and history, but are not necessarily bound by it; they're willing to build on their past.

After Vosko's presentation it occurred to me that what he described was not a new kind of vibrant life for a religious community, but actually a very old one. It's activated by connections at the local and personal level—by the kind of relationships that years ago depended on strong neighborhoods, extended families, and a certain “tribe” identity. This is the opposite of large, impersonal, religious institutions, which are now shrinking.

What might this mean for architects and artists? Realize community-life-building possibilities. Suggest creating a “Third Place” if a building committee hasn't considered it. Accentuate arts that connect with the congregation, the neighborhood, and local history and traditions. Create places that are accessible to make sure everyone has equal access. Celebrate the “spiritual” over the “religious,” the personal over the institutional. 

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*Artists' Rendering*



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## ***The** 2010 Faith & Form/IFRAA Religious Art & Architecture Award*

*The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Springfield, Illinois was originally built in 1927 and inspired by the design of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. First, a rendering, then an onsite decorative sample was executed to illustrate the proposed colors, glazes, gilding and trompe l'oeil patterns, as well as, the restored scagliola columns.*

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# The 2010 Religious Art & Architecture Awards

By Michael J. Crosbie



Photo: Nell Redmond


*The 2010 Religious Art and Architecture Awards Jury, left to right: Chas Fagan (artist); Mark Joseph Costello (liturgical designer); Cindy Evans Voorhees (clergy); Roberto Chiotti (architect); Trey Trahan (architect and jury chair).*

This past summer, when our five jurors gathered to review and deliberate over the submissions to the Faith & Form/IFRAA International Awards Program for Religious Art and Architecture, it wasn't clear what the impact of the economy might be. One possibility was that the number of entrants would be lower, and that appeared to be the case. Typically there are about 200 submissions in all categories. This year's 168 entrants marked a 15 percent decline in submissions; the categories with the biggest dips in submissions were the visual arts. Fewer submissions may have been a product of fewer projects reaching completion, or more submitters deciding to sit this year out to save on the entry fees. Projects can be submitted within five years of completion, so if not this year, the logic might have run, maybe next, when things are a bit more secure financially.

One building type the jurors missed seeing more of was the megachurch. Given the role that megachurches play in contemporary worship, the jury encouraged more designers of such buildings to submit their projects. Of those submitted, the strongest ones made no bones of the fact that they were metal boxes; their designers found artful ways to express this fact. What advice did the jurors offer for future submitters to the awards program? Show artwork in its context—within the worship environment—and how it works in the space. Submit more projects to the Sacred Landscape category: the jurors are aware

that much work is being done in this realm, but the number of submissions was not strong.

What gave the juror members pause? Two issues stood out. Several jurors remarked that in the projects submitted, a lack of attention seemed to have been paid to communal gathering in worship spaces. One juror commented on the clear demarcation between the liturgical actors and the assembly; the spatial gulf between the two appeared to have widened. Jurors also detected a general lack of coordination between interior architecture and the liturgical arts—"The art looked like something that had been added at the last minute," one juror remarked. Much of the art appeared to be mass produced, pulled from catalogues, and not commissioned for the worship environment. "There seems to be a growing loss of arts in the church," a juror observed, which is a reversal of the role that religious organizations have played for thousands of years in inspiring and employing the arts. Other jurors opined that art used as an instrument of education in religious environments seemed weak.

The best projects, in the view of the jury, maintained a remarkable consistency throughout—from building exteriors, interiors, and furnishings, to the landscape. The strongest projects in the arts were created for specific environments, art and architecture working hand in hand. 



## Gwathmey Siegel & Associates Architects, LLC

Bryant University Interfaith Center » Smithfield, Rhode Island



The 11,000-square-foot Bryant University Interfaith Center is located on a prominent site and provides a place of worship, reflection and gathering for the institution and its visitors.

Visitors enter the building through a portico adjacent to a reflecting pool and arrive in the main lobby and pre-function space. Both of the chapels are classic rotunda forms. The larger main chapel seats approximately 250 people, with the smaller reflection chapel seating 40. While most of the building's exterior is clad in limestone, the center's exterior walls are clad in brick, helping to articulate the spaces.

The main chapel is 30 feet tall, its circular form extending above the building's 16-foot-high roofline. The wood paneled seating space opens onto a rectangular sanctuary with a raised wood platform with a backdrop of a ceiling-to-floor water wall. Its large, curved entry pocket doors open onto the foyer, allowing the center to accommodate larger crowds for special holy day services and other occasions.

Throughout the facility, there is a contrast of curvilinear, rectangular, and square forms. A square monitor roof tops the larger rotunda, with curved windows on each of its four sides, bringing light into

the space. An open porch to one side of the main chapel extends onto a terrace, creating a quiet outdoor campus room.

### Jury Comments

*The building has a very strong entry, both formally and architecturally. The chapel spaces are successful in achieving their intent of connecting to the sacred without the need for explicit religious elements. The use of the circle and square forms elegantly juxtaposed and proportioned along with the simple yet creative ways of introducing natural light and views to the outdoor room and gardens beyond is extremely well considered and executed.*





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## Hanrahan Meyers Architects LLP

Infinity Chapel » New York, New York



Infinity Chapel for the Tenth Church of Christ, Scientist features a 4,000-square-foot cubic sanctuary transformed by slivers of natural light and traces of complex curves. Within Infinity Chapel fragments of sacred geometries: squares, golden section rectangles, and spheres of light, surround worshippers. Three curving walls - south, north, and west - suggest the presence of spheres and an infinite surface: a Klein bottle or Mobius strip. A cubic space defines the chapel seating area. The stage is a golden section rectangle. Natural light penetrates the glass wall behind the stage, giving a view of the new Green Garden / Outdoor Chapel. Above the stage, a curved wall punctured by squares and lines brings shaped light into the chapel.

The 3,500-square-foot Christian Science reading room faces the street as an open, relaxed space for study and conversation. The façade has floor-to-ceiling glass, with large pieces of free-form ash floating in the windows. This is a radical departure from Christian Science reading rooms that tend to be enclosed and less open to public view. Infinity Chapel, separated by floor-to-ceiling glass from the reading room, is also visible, as is the new Green Garden behind the chapel stage.

In the basement the Sunday school and boardroom capture borrowed natural light from variously shaped (two linear, and three square) "light wells": wood-clad concrete "boxes" that project through the first floor, and into the basement below.

### Jury Comments

*This incredibly spare yet geometrically rich space is infinite in its appeal. There is an elegant restraint in the detailing, which supports the larger design theme of volumetric expression. The forms speak for themselves. There is excellent penetration of light, and it is inventively rendered between spaces and levels. The connections between the chapel and the reading room, and to the spaces on the lower level are expertly handled.*







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## Graham & Hyde Architects, Inc.

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception » Springfield, Illinois



Completed in 1928, the cathedral has continuously served as the principal church of this diocese, but was beginning to show its age. The interior was modeled after the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome. Ornamental plasterwork and coffered ceilings were in need of major refurbishment.

Interior restoration focused on areas of liturgical renewal and decorative improvements. On the exterior, areas of concern were roof leakage, tuck-pointing, deferred maintenance, and opening up the site.

The location of the building made expansion of the narthex impossible. A larger atrium/gathering space to extend hospitality was added. This new multi-purpose

space was placed between the cathedral and the school in a location formerly occupied by a convent. The 3,500-square-foot atrium, located on the same level as the cathedral, is connected to a ground level plaza by ramps. The atrium links the largest parking area directly with the nave of the church via a new entry at the back. Clad with Mankato Stone, the atrium is unified architecturally with the original buildings. A side entrance leads to a transverse aisle, which meets the main aisle of the cathedral at a new baptismal font.

The site was reorganized to make the buildings more welcoming through larger gathering areas and increased accessibility. The porch of the front portico was

extended to each side to make it more prominent. Ramps were added to the north and south sides of the entrance for accessibility.

### Jury Comments

*The expert restoration of this cathedral is matched by the sensitive additions that make the building more accessible, easier to navigate, and welcome to all. For example, the design of the new baptismal font is extremely sensitive to the existing architecture, and its placement ties directly into access from the new atrium. It incorporates detailed carving that echoes the décor of the original building, making the new font appear that it has always been there.*

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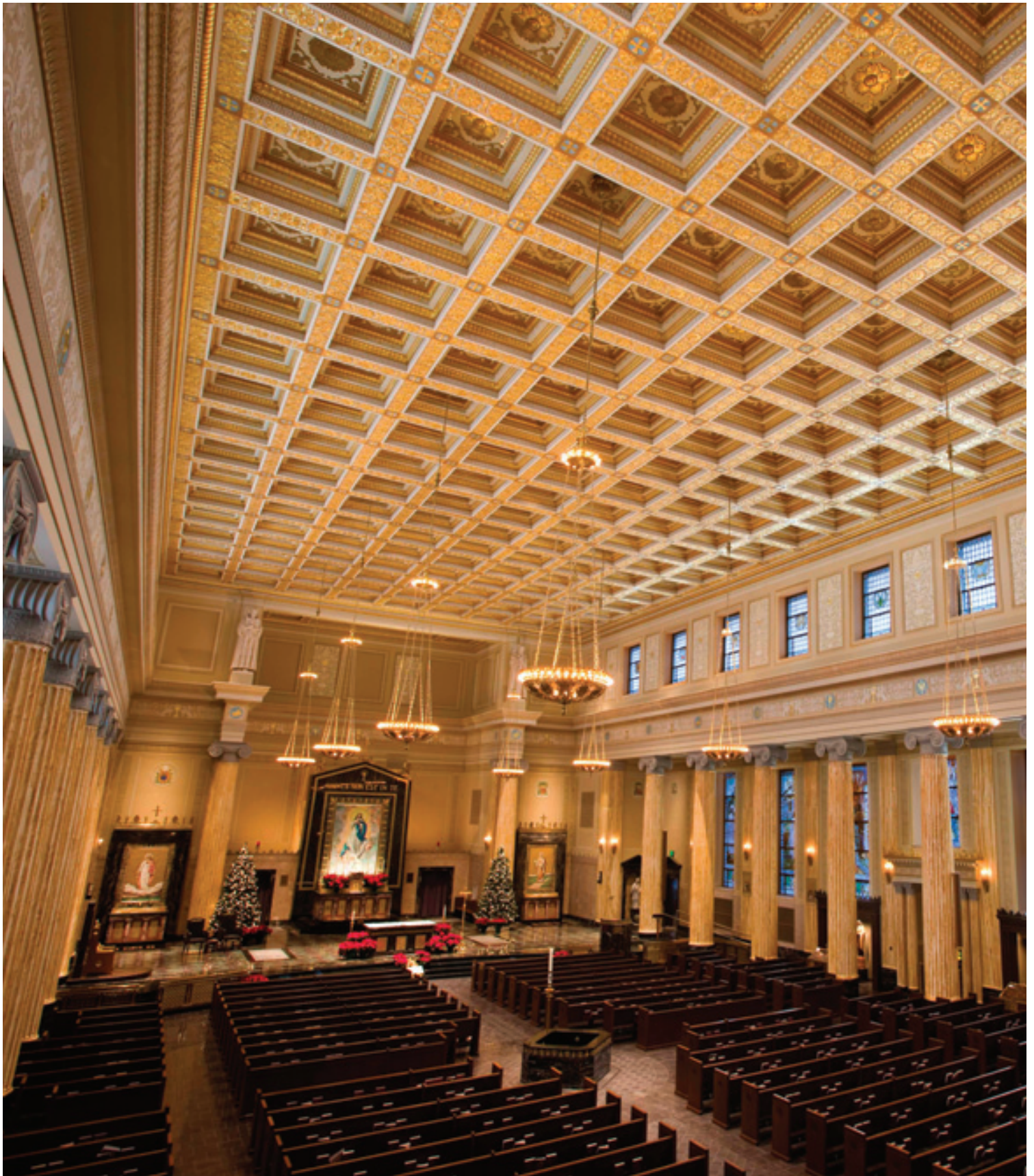






## Conrad Schmitt Studios, Inc.

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception » Springfield, Illinois







The 1928 Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception features a coffered ceiling, fluted scagliola columns, low relief floral panels, and abundant imagery of the gryphon (the church was built by Bishop James A. Griffin).

The cathedral had been cleaned and painted only one time in the late 1950s. Deteriorated decoration was coated with dirt and candle soot. The columns had yellowed and large seams opened down each side. The goal was to restore the tired interior while enhancing the splendor of its original inspiration.

First, renderings were developed to illustrate the proposed colors and patterns.

Next, an onsite sample displayed the colors, glazes, gilding, tromp l'oeil patterns, and restored scagliola columns. Two coats of varnish were removed from each column and loose scagliola was rejoined to the column hearts. Detergents were used to clean the ceiling, flat walls, and decorative plaster. Eighteen colored tones now enliven the cathedral's walls, ceilings, and architectural elements. Glazing and over 9,000 square feet of 23-karat gold leaf applied to the relief panel, frieze, ceiling, and ornamentation create depth and dimension.

Installed in the ceiling coffers and specially fitted to accommodate down lights, the stenciled canvas panels unfold

an elegant motif. Acoustical panels were strategically placed, then installed before applying the canvas panels. The 190 canvas panels with a nine-layer stencil of leaf, paints and lacquers, create a three-dimensional rosette.

### Jury Comments

*The restoration of this cathedral interior is a tremendous undertaking. The result reveals the expertise and sensitivity of all the designers, technicians, craftspeople, painters, gilders, and other artisans who collectively brought this interior back to its original splendor. The new and restored surfaces and finishes seem to reflect God's immanence.*

#### Restoration Artist

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#### Lighting Consultant

**Randy Burkett Lighting Design**

#### Acoustical Consultant

**Threshold Acoustics, LLC**

#### Photographer

**Terry Farmer Photography, Inc.**



## HGA Architects and Engineers

Lakewood Cemetery Garden Mausoleum » Minneapolis, Minnesota



This 24,000-square-foot, two-level mausoleum takes its design cues from Lakewood itself, a lawn plan cemetery inspired in part by Père-Lachaise in Paris. Dedicated in 1871, the 250-acre cemetery is characterized by open, sweeping lawns with a deciduous tree canopy, curving roadways, picturesque lake, limited vertical monuments, and distinctive public structures.

Oriented on a north-south axis, the mausoleum is intimately scaled on the north-facing street façade, its massing minimized to highlight the healing qualities of nature. Horizontal bands of split-faced gray granite tie the structure to the earth. A curving, white mosaic-tile marble entry

embraces visitors as they pass through decorative bronze doors.

Along the south façade on the garden level, the mausoleum unfolds within three cubic crypt pods nestled into the slope, recalling Lakewood's family mausoleums and traditional subterranean architecture.

The interior is a series of spatial experiences in which light and materials emphasize the progression from our earthly lives to one of contemplation and remembrance. Visitors move from the public street level to the spiritually focused private spaces housing the crypts, niches and Committal room on the lower garden level. Clerestory windows casting light from above a central staircase guide visi-

tors as they descend to the burial rooms.

The material palette (granite, marble, wood) and architectural features (mosaics, bronze artwork, stained glass) connect with Lakewood's other buildings, including the historic neo-byzantine Lakewood Chapel.

### Jury Comments

*This elegant project respects and honors the deceased by creating a sacred landscape at the same time. The design carefully considers the way to bring light into the spaces. It is a very quiet environment, fitting of the reflective moment. Light and space are so beautifully balanced and restrained. The jury hopes this award helps this project to see the light of day.*

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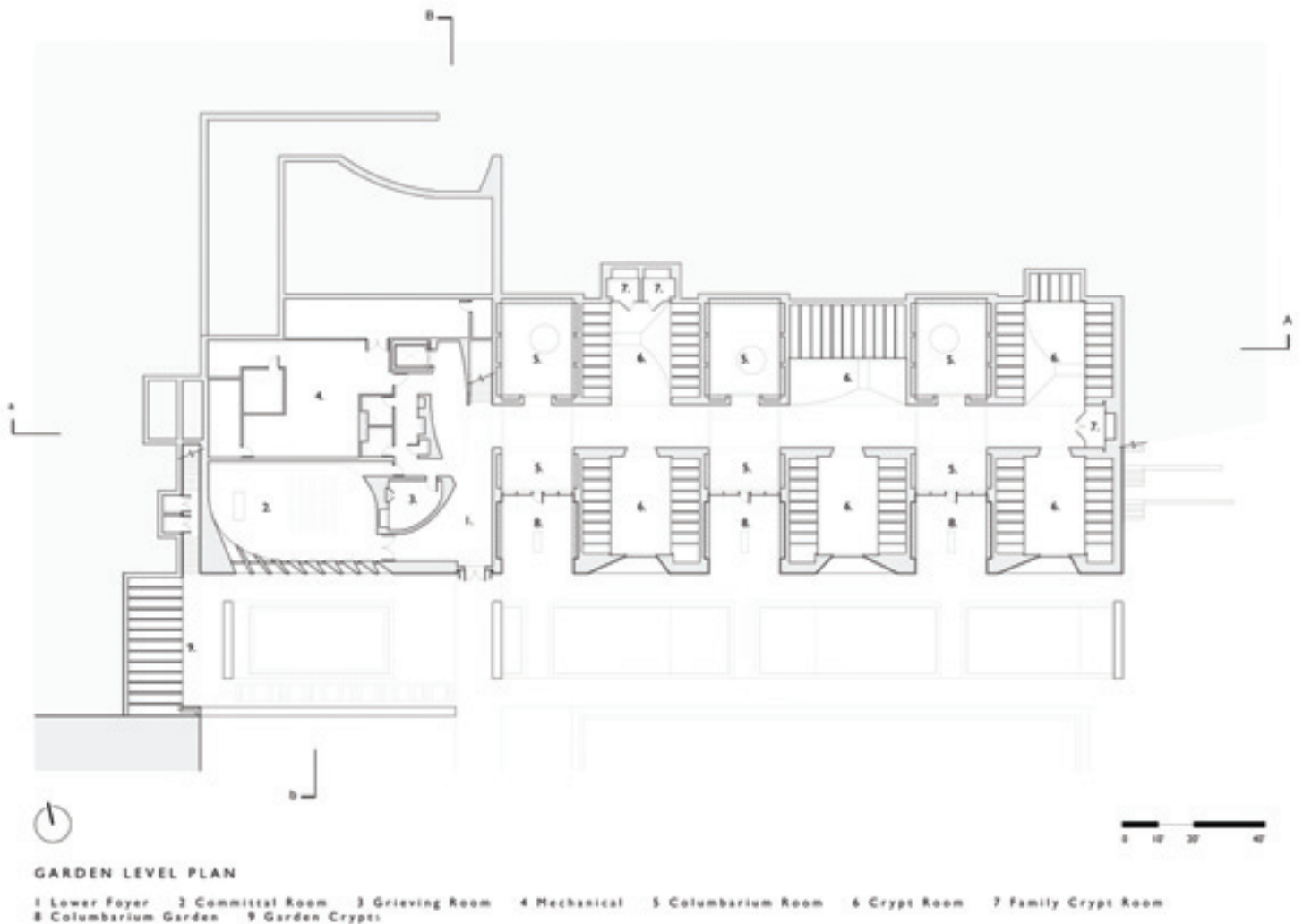
Jay Lane; Robert Johnson Miller (Project Team)

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## Butler Rogers Baskett

### Johnson Chapel Renovation » New York, New York

The renovated Johnson Chapel has become the spiritual heart of this 300-year-old school. The 1,000-square-foot chapel supports a variety of activities, including regular services, memorials, religion classes, and speakers from various religious traditions.

The design approach was one of subtraction, refinement, and integration. Natural light is introduced by a light slot along the north wall, reflecting diffuse sunlight deep into the space. This wall becomes an ever-changing canvas throughout the day as a cool indirect morning light transforms to cast Mediterranean shadows at noon and later emanates a warm afternoon glow. This light slot is mirrored on the floor with a bed

of river rock and a gently bubbling stone fountain, which lend texture, shadow, sound, and detail to the crisp white backdrop. The ceiling plane floats, disengaged from perimeter walls, and is lit indirectly, creating a cloud-like effect. The design reinforces this effect by keeping the surface unencumbered by light fixtures, access panels, diffusers, and other systems. The cloud is punctured by a large light cone that gathers light and spills it around the altar table.

A displacement ventilation system introduces conditioned air at low velocity through the bed of river rock, filling the occupied portion of the room as water fills a bathtub. The warm “used” air is extracted via the reveal at the edge of

the ceiling cloud, resulting in a healthy, efficient, and extremely quiet system with no visual access to diffusers or grilles.

#### Jury Comments

*A beautiful example of well-thought-out minimalist design achieving greatness. Each carefully selected element is executed in a way that amplifies its power to connect us with the sacred. The use of natural light sources that are unseen but have striking impacts on the space, the clever use of displacement ventilation completely hidden in the white river-stone mirroring the light wall, the simple Noguchi-inspired water feature, all contribute to creating a calming, elegant, and contemplative space to connect with the spirit.*



#### Architect

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#### Structural Engineer

##### Hage Engineering

#### Lighting Consultant

##### Hilman DiBernardo Leiter Castelli

#### Metal Fabricator

##### Mine Metal Art

#### Millworker

##### Midhattan Woodworking Corp.

#### Photographer

##### Woodruff/Brown Architectural Photography







## Bruce Herman

“Magnificat: La Vita di Maria” » Monastery San Paolo » Orvieto, Italy

“Magnificat: La Vita di Maria” comprises two large altarpieces (each 11 feet by 12 feet) created by the artist for a restored 16th-century Benedictine chapel in Monastery San Paolo, Orvieto, Italy (2005-2008). Materials include wood panels, gold/silver leaf, traditional gesso, and oil paint. The chapel is used for worship, concerts, and public lectures and is an active part of the educational program of the client, Gordon College. The iconography refers allusively to the life of the Virgin Mary and her complex relationship with Jesus Christ from Nativity to Crucifixion. Though traditional techniques were employed, the imagery is rendered in a contemporary idiom, combining expressionistic elements with naturalistic figuration. The client for this work has toured these panels on exhibition at three venues in the United States as well as employing them in liturgical and public ceremony in Italy. This is a semi-permanent installation with the second tour beginning in Autumn 2011.

### Jury Comments

*Created for the space—a restored chapel—these panels echo the architectural spaces of the room. There is an uninhibited use of media and a sense of freedom in the painting technique. Warm golds and silvers are skillfully employed as underpainting, and cool blues are effectively used to create depth. The classically inspired figures create new worlds in the space, and help to make it sacred.*

#### Artist

**Bruce Herman**

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**John Skillen, Director**

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#### Patrons

**Walter and Darlene Hansen**

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**Gabe Davis, 207mm.com**









## Kevin deFreitas Architects, AIA

St. Bartholomew's Chapel » Valley Center, California



Located in picturesque back country, the very small historic St. Bartholomew's Chapel was destroyed by a wildfire that ravaged the Rincon Indian reservation in late 2007. Only the original adobe bell tower survived, which would become the anchor element in the redesign planning. The fire presented a "blank slate" opportunity to expand and update the facility.

The new design was conceived to reverently knit together "past" and comfortable traditions, while acknowledging and offering something relevant to current and future generations. Native American as well as Catholic/Christian symbols and metaphors were referenced in every design element. The client requested that the redesigned project incorporate a

thoughtful complement of green materials, efficient technologies, and sustainable strategies. The chapel is pursuing LEED Gold certification.

The Chapel utilizes a significant amount of site harvested building materials; the signature element being the massive rammed earth walls that flank the sanctuary. Symbolically important, these beautifully textured and organic walls are literally molded from 120 tons of sacred reservation soil. Other earthy materials such as the three-ton boulder that was crafted into the baptismal font and slabs of wood hewn from a Coastal Live Oak physically connect this congregation to the beauty of their natural surroundings, the significance of their ancestral home, and most importantly to the Spirit of God.

### Jury Comments

*Congratulations to the congregation for using a catastrophe to invite a contemporary expression for their worship environment. Architectural elements such as the rammed earth walls incorporating local reservation soil tangibly and symbolically ground the new sacred space within its sacred earth context, while manifesting the client's desires to incorporate sustainable design strategies.*



### Architect

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### Pews and Interior Furniture

**Wood & Iron Factory**

### Landscape Architect

**LandLAB – Neil Hadley**

### Rammed Earth and Masonry

**New Dimensions Masonry**

### Audio Visual Consultant

**Anderson Audio + Visual**

### Photographer

**David Harrison @ Harrison Photographic**

## Frank Harmon Architect PA

Circular Congregational Church » Sunday School Addition » Charleston, South Carolina

*Architect*

**Frank Harmon Architect PA**

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*MEP Engineer*

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*Landscape Architect*

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*General Contractor*

**Robert Schneider**

**NBM Construction Co, Inc.**

*Photographer*

**Richard Leo Johnson**



The need for a new Sunday School building at the Circular Congregationalist Church in Charleston – the oldest church in the city (1681) -- arose as membership grew by 150 percent and Sunday school enrollment doubled. The church asked for the most sustainable, 21st-century Sunday School addition possible, with the smallest possible footprint. Along with respecting and complementing the beauty of the historic church grounds in the heart of the city, the congregation's Environmental Mission Group was committed to "finding ways to have as little impact on the earth as possible."

The 3,000-square-foot addition includes a vegetated roof to absorb and filter rainfall, to insulate the building better than standard insulation, and to provide aesthetic appeal; quiet geothermal heating and cooling to save 30-60 percent on monthly energy costs; and a rainwater collection cistern for landscape irrigation.

The project also called for renovating the existing Lance Hall (1856), and making both structures fully accessible for the first time in the church's long history. The bathrooms, stair, and elevator form a thick "wall of rooms" on the south property line. The L-shaped configuration creates a peaceful meditation garden and Children's Courtyard. A broad, covered porch overlooks the garden and serves as an open-air hallway.

### Jury Comments

*A beautifully envisioned contemporary infill project that is completely respectful of its heritage context in the way it connects. It is an exquisite formal solution that achieves programmatic and functional needs with minimal footprint effectively extending the utility and impact of the addition well beyond its perimeter. The green roof is a delightful surprise and respite.*



## Jova/Daniels/Busby

### Besser Holocaust Memorial Garden » Atlanta, Georgia



The Besser Holocaust Memorial Garden is the gift of a survivor in memory of his family and all who perished in the Holocaust. The program called for a monument to educate both young and old.

Sited at the nexus of athletic fields at the Marcus Jewish Community Center, the Memorial has been placed in an area of cultural, educational, and athletic activity. It is designed to remind all that out of the depth of misery new life can emerge.

The garden features a series of outdoor rooms telling a story of life, degradation, memorial, and rebirth. Hedges and walls of Jerusalem stone define the “rooms.” At entry, visitors experience a sense of solitude conducive to contemplation while the vitality of surrounding activity is a testament to survival.

Each room is strategically arranged to tell the story of the Holocaust in sculpture and narrative. The entry features a statue of the donor's mother, protectively gathering two children in her arms, and describes her sacrifice, which enabled others in her family to live. From this point, each room depicts different aspects of the Holocaust.

The memorial is constructed of symbolic materials: Jerusalem stone, bronze, and steel represent permanence and tradition. Sculpture and narrative describe dark history while the green setting defines and sets the space apart. A place of remembrance and renewal emerges.

#### Jury Comments

*This is a beautifully unfolding sequence of spaces that incorporates all elements of both the private and collective narrative that was the Holocaust. Each room is powerful in the sculptural elements and supporting architecture used to deliver its focused message and the liminal voids between help to shift our orientation to re-center and embrace the next chapter.*

#### Architect

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#### Civil Engineer

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#### MEP Engineer

##### BAA Mechanical Engineers

#### Electrical Engineer

##### Jeffers Engineering Associates

#### Structural Engineer

##### Barry R. Barsh & Associates, Inc.

#### Landscape Architect

##### Ecos Environmental Design, Inc.

#### General Contractor

##### Gay Construction Company

#### Sculptors

Dee Clements (figurative),  
George Beasley (torches)

#### Graphic Designer

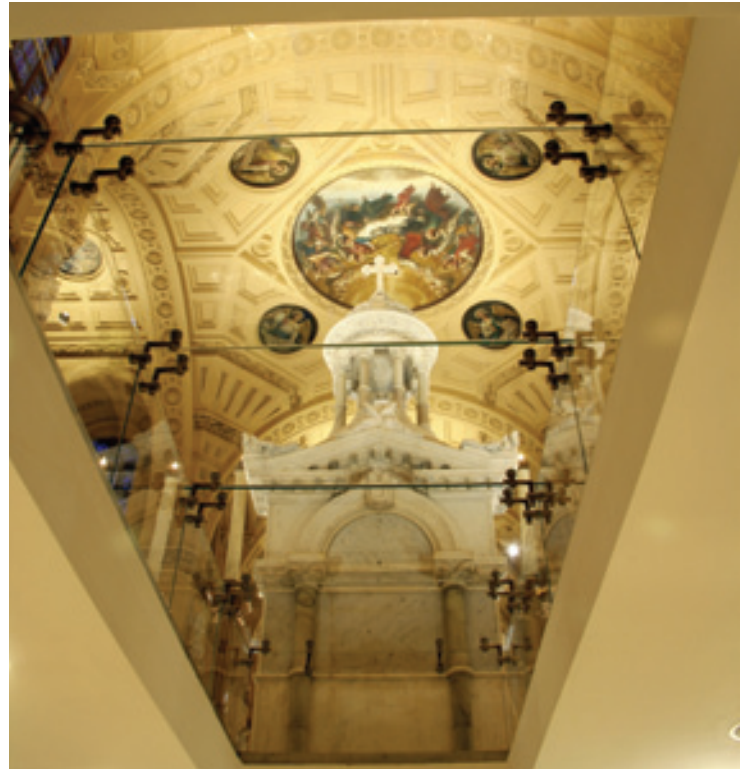
##### John T. Grogan Design, Inc.

#### Photographer

##### Kieran Reynolds Photography

## Thomas A. Fenniman Architect

The Church of St. Francis Xavier » New York, New York



The Church of St. Francis Xavier was built in 1882. The client's priorities were to preserve, restore, and update the environment of the church to accommodate the modern parish. The preservation and restoration encompassed all surfaces: plaster, marble, murals, woodwork, metal, and stained glass.

The client's renovation objectives were to address accessibility, comfort, and experience. The renovation included one cohesive sanctuary level with ADA-compliant ramps installed on either side to enable less-mobile parishioners to participate in services. Spacing between the pews was increased and space among them was made for wheelchairs. A new heating and cooling system was installed. The 20-ton

marble reredos was moved forward 12 feet to make room for a new sacristy. Two of the original confessionals, no longer in use, were reconfigured to display the once-scattered devotional statues. In improving the inadequate and outdated lighting, a new energy-efficient system was installed with theatrical presets to highlight the architecture and liturgical experience. Included in the new lighting package were pendant lights custom-made to replicate the original lights that had once hung above the pews.

To fit within the historic context, new glass elements were sandblasted with a pattern traced from the original stained glass windows. Existing motifs found throughout the church were incorporated into the new mosaics and woodwork.

New stone was selected from vintage domestic and Italian quarries to match the existing stone.

### Jury Comments

*This is a colossal restoration, an incredible undertaking. It is ambitious yet respectful. Every detail has been lavished with attention. The creation of the new sacristy was innovative and fits with the historic fabric of this amazing structure and establishes a connection with the lower level. The design of the sacristy's glass panel system shows a great deal of sensitivity. Coherent connections between the new and old are found throughout the project.*

#### Architect

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**Old Structures Engineering, PC**

#### Archdiocesan Building Commission

**Kevin Shaughnessy**

#### Owner's Representative

**WG Project Management**

#### General Contractor

**McGovern & Co., LLC**

#### Painting, Mural Conservation, and Stonework

**Evergreene Architectural Arts**

#### Stained Glass and Window Restoration

**Femenella & Associates, The Gil Studio**

#### Millworker

**53 Restorations**

#### Organ Restoration and Fabrication

**Peragallo Pipe Organ Co.**

#### Photographer

**DHS Images**



## Studio B Architects

Christ Episcopal Church » Aspen, Colorado



Nicknamed the “Quonset Hut,” for its unique barrel-shaped nave, the original Christ Episcopal Church was constructed in Aspen’s Historic West End in 1962. After numerous alterations and minor additions the congregation sought to unify and update the aging, inefficient, and dark sanctuary and to expand supporting space.

The building is separated into two volumes: the original barrel and the new expansion. The two are joined by a glass connector that doubles as the building’s main circulation spine. The hospitality hall, chapel, and central corridor can be combined by opening sliding partitions. The addition provides space for a commercial kitchen, new sacristy, music room,

storage, and administrative offices. Windows provide views of the surrounding gardens and mountain landscape; skylights wash the interior with plenty of natural light.

The original sanctuary consisted of dark-stained arched glu-laminated wood beams, exposed wood decking and limited natural light that entered through the north-facing altar stained glass window and a yellowed plastic ridge skylight. The effect was heavy, imposing, dark, and dreary. The renovation extends the barrel-vault 12 feet to accommodate an expanded chapel, a new pipe organ, and additional seating in the nave. A glass wall separates a new front entrance and entry lobby from the sanctuary allowing for acoustical privacy and thermal comfort that did not previously exist.

### Jury Comments

*The new addition and renovation honors the original design. A marriage of old and new respects the tradition of post-war modernism. It is an unusual form to be saved, and it is environmentally responsible to reuse an older building. The increased daylight is a remarkable feat to accomplish within the confines of the site. The addition mediates well with the vault of the building. The design reinforces the church’s identity in the community.*

### Architect

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### General Contractor

#### WH Baker

### Lighting and Acoustical Consultants

#### DL Adams

### Structural Engineer

#### James Romeo, PE

### Landscape Architect

#### Elements

### Photographer

#### Raul J. Garcia, Derek Skalko

## Hanrahan Meyers Architects LLP

### Won Dharma Center » Claverack, New York

Won Dharma Center is a 20,000-square-foot spiritual retreat for the Won Buddhists, organized around life balance and nature. Located on 550 acres with views west to the Hudson River and Catskill Mountains, the Center houses three residential structures (spiral buildings based on grass-roofed Korean houses organized around central voids); and an administration building and meditation hall (a rectangular void with a lightweight wood frame). Buildings orient west and south to maximize views and light. The Won Buddhist symbol is an open circle: void without absence, and infinite return. The buildings organize around the dual concepts of the void and the spiral.

The goal is a carbon-neutral complex, with geothermal wells for heating and cooling. A solar panel array will provide electricity. Buildings will use foam insulation and central bio-mass heater. Water from roof run-off and recycled grey water will be used for plant irrigation.

The architects designed the master plan and all buildings for a 550-acre site that includes roads, walking paths, parking, and services, and a 375-acre permanent nature sanctuary. Construction is scheduled to be complete April 2011.

#### Jury Comments

*The project translates a precedent—the Korean house—with sheer simplicity leading to increasing complexity. The rooflines, which echo the notion of a void and circle, are captivating. The design shows a real sensitivity to the simple geometry, and the interplay between negative and positive spaces. The terraces promise to be great outdoor spaces. The relationship between the structures seems to be significant. The stick-built techtonics connect well with Buddhist temple construction traditions.*

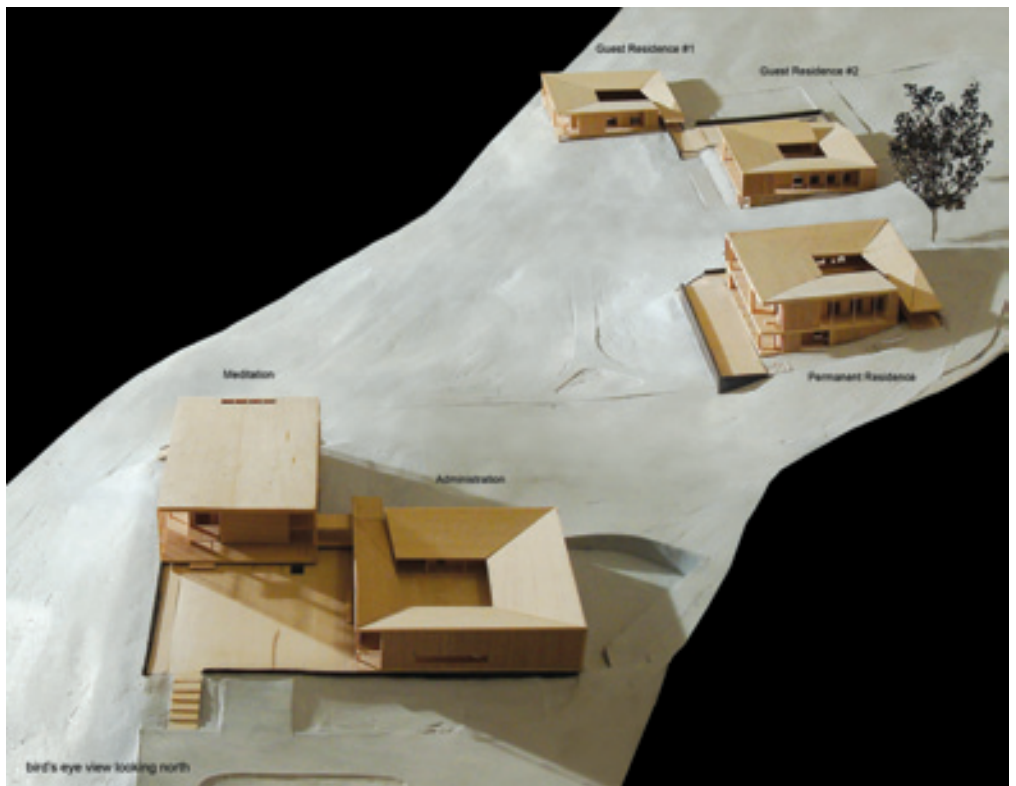
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**Light and Space Associates**

#### MEP Engineer

**CS Arch, P.C.**

#### Structural Engineer

**Wayman C. Wing Consulting Engineers**

#### Kitchen Design

**Wes Design**

#### Geo-Tech Engineer

**Dente Engineering**

#### Landscape Designer

**Seo An Landscape**

#### Interior Designer

**Myonggi Sul Design**



## Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Lindeke Architects

St. Bartholomew Book Ambry » Wayzata, Minnesota



This project creates a place of display for the Book of Gospels that will encourage the Veneration of the Word.

Within the spirit of a Jewish Torah reserved in the Ark, the Book of Gospels for this Catholic Church is equally and respectfully reserved within a custom-designed and handcrafted repository. Set within a darkly accented wall recess, the bronze and stone repository is positioned on a side axis with the font and near the entry into the worship space. The Book is thus encouraged to become a formal part of entry processions.

The repository case is clad in bronze and lined with stone. Central to the display are two extended bronze arms presenting the Word of God to the community and allowing the Book to float within the case. The Book is highlighted with two discrete LED fixtures for focus, and it is enclosed with two bronze sculpted screen doors articulated by two backlit cornrows to remind us that God's word is food for our souls. Doors, hinges, case, screen, and bronze base are all skillfully handcrafted and meticulously assembled. The screen cornrows are sculpted, cast in bronze, and set into their bronze frame.

### Jury Comments

*A devotional repository for the Gospel is a unique concept worthy of consideration. Its placement opposite the font at the entrance to the worship space, and its beautifully crafted execution create a powerful repository for the "Word of God" that feeds us, elevating its already symbolic significance.*



Architect  
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**Fr. James Notebaart**

Sculptor  
**Alexander Tylevich**

Craftsperson and Fabricator  
**St. Paul Decorating and Fabricating**

Contractor/Installer  
**McGough Construction**

Photographer  
**Leon Wang**

## Alexander Tylevich » Tylevich Studio Inc.

“Madonna and Child” » Stella Maris Chapel, Saint John’s Abbey » Collegeville, Minnesota

The romantic and picturesque Stella Maris Chapel (meaning “Star of the Sea”), constructed in 1915 (replacing an earlier chapel from 1872, which burnt down), is an important part of the Saint John’s Abbey—a community of Catholic Benedictine men that is architecturally distinguished by a number of structures designed by the modernist Bauhaus architect Marcel Breuer. The chapel had been a site of devotion for the monks but, over the years, it suffered from neglect, vandalism, and misuse. It underwent renovations in 1943 and in 1989, but remained not so much a place of pilgrimage, but just a destination for a walk. The recent comprehensive renovation by architect Ed Sovik restores the site as a spiritual and intimate jewel on the lake. The architect’s suggestion for a statue of a pregnant Mary was accepted despite, or perhaps because, of its rarity in art history.

The humble, four-and-a-half-foot-tall bronze sculpture is the chapel’s centerpiece. The bronze figure is one of great restraint, quietness, and dignity. The pregnant Madonna represents the Advent spirit of the expectant mother soon to give birth to the one who is the Word made flesh and dwelling among us.

### Jury Comments

*The sculpture captures with simplicity and elegance the sacred moment of Mary realizing whom she is carrying in her womb. The patina finish appears graduated in color to become lighter from bottom to top, so that one’s eyes focus on the Madonna’s face. This depiction of the Mother of Christ is glorious in its fecundity. Barefoot, she is full and ready to give birth. She is captured in a pondering moment, but she is ready.*

Artist

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Architect

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Stained Glass Artist

**Dieterich Spahn**

Calligrapher

**Janey Westin**

Photographer

**Michael Becker**







Beatrice Baker's 'Sacred Space for Atheists'



Duncan Stroik's Chapel of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity

*Editor's Note: The past few issues of Faith & Form have sparked an outpouring of reactions regarding the role of traditional architecture, traditional religious arts, and liturgical appropriateness in religious buildings. We present them here for (we hope) continued debate.*

#### 'DELUSIONS OF PROPHETIC IMPORTANCE'

Based on the 2009 Faith & Form/IFRAA Awards jury's comments (*Faith & Form*, Vol. 42, No. 4, 2009, p. 7) I have strong reservations about participating in future awards programs. The unhidden disdain for traditionally minded approaches to sacred architecture leads me to think that it is a waste of time and resources for me to continue to enter. The comments from the jury are very telling. "Why are we so afraid?" one juror asked, rhetorically. "Why do we keep resorting to old forms? Why are we not venturing into the future?"

For a century now church architects and liturgical experts have been encouraging new architectural forms, new modes of worship, flexible and transient arrangements, while systematically rejecting the traditional architectural forms by which people do understand the cultural memory of "church." These points are made as if objectively good and important and necessary, with the rhetoric that anyone who does not want them is shackled in the past, with an unhealthy longing or nostalgia for some bygone era, or out of fear, or an unwillingness to embrace our contemporaneity, etc.

This jury assumed *a priori* in a conservative era of doctrine, flexibility is suspect because it invites a certain "liturgical free-styling" in the face of orthodoxy. Such a caricature is to show the jury to be completely unsympathetic to the notion that the church building is intended to serve the liturgy in a received tradition (I speak only as a Catholic here, I cannot imagine that most mainline Protestants or evangelicals today would even think of this as a conservative era of doctrine or be concerned about "liturgical free-styling in the face of orthodoxy.").

The jury failed to appreciate that architecture is a service industry and that the architect is properly in service to the liturgical needs and the iconographic traditions of the religion, not properly as a "visionary" intent on changing these into whatever he or she wants them to be. Sacred architecture is not about the architect's ego or an idiosyncratic vision of how one thinks a community should worship or what a building should look like. Obviously any architect will always design a building that is some sort of personal expression of what he or she

considers the needs of the client to be. However, to presume some Archimedean vantage to decide what a congregation should be doing architecturally or liturgically or symbolically in order to "keep worship environments relevant" is to endanger one's professional and sacred duties in the design of churches.

The jury seemed to presume that "experimentation" and "open-endedness in today's worship environments" should even be design values for the parish client or the architect. It is highly irresponsible to imply that architects are remiss in their professional duties if one does not design for "new possibilities in worship environments" or with the value of impermanence, invention, flexibility, etc., in the name of "sustainability." Architects are not called to be "visionaries in the realm of sacred art and architecture" in any sense beyond envisioning places that speak to the community gathered to worship God within the broad architectural and sacramental tradition of the particular denomination. I would suggest that architects who arrogate to themselves such delusions of prophetic importance seem more likely to do a disservice to the clients whom they are called to serve. I am regularly called upon to fix mistakes made in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s when churches were gutted or rearranged because some architect or liturgist thought they had a better idea.

In my estimation, the fact that my clients today want beautiful, meaningful, symbolic, reverent, hierarchical, orderly, formal, and identifiable church buildings -- all aspects of which the jury have summarily dismissed -- shows the severe limitation of the past century of liturgico-architectural experimentation. I suggest that the rejection of sacramental signification in the 20th century seems to have rendered architects incapable of producing a persuasive approach to sacred architecture. All the rhetoric of progress and modernity and the value of experimentation and innovation and the "architect as visionary" has failed to produce a meaningful architecture that serves the Church. Yet the jury still insisted that such is the way forward...just like their grandfathers did.

The past 15 years have witnessed a sea change in the way congregations, pastors, and building committees are approaching sacred architecture and architecture, and the way architects, artists, and liturgists are again recovering a rich tradition of form and meaning, beauty and sacramental presentation. The jury rejected such work out of hand and dismissed the serious work of architects who are serving tradition-



Photo: Matt Wargo for Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates, Inc.

Venturi, Scott Brown and Associates' Episcopal Academy chapel



Photo: New York Focus

Ave Maria Oratory by Cannon Design

# Tradition, or What?

ally minded parishes. For me this suggests that I and a whole set of other architects – those who work in traditional forms, with a different understanding of the nature and meaning of the liturgy, and in what artistic and architectural expressions best support that vision – have no place in the discussion.

—Steven Schloeder

*The writer is an architect with Liturgical Environs PC, based in Phoenix, Arizona.  
[The composition of the awards jury changes each year. –Ed.]*

## ‘ARCHITECTURAL HERESY’

Beatrice Baker’s winning design in a sacred space for atheists competition (Socio Design Foundation) shown in *Faith & Form* (Vol. 43, No. 1, 2010, p. 34) is a stark reminder that religious space appropriated for communal worship or for contemplative meditation calls for radical simplicity. The elimination of distracting elements such as decorative motifs, sculpture, paintings and sanctuary furniture allows for experiencing an emptiness of space which reveals itself as harbinger for a nameless presence, a phenomenological presence beyond naming, beyond limitations of understanding, and perhaps more importantly beyond specificities of doctrinal definition. In this sense, in the sense of nameless presence, both believer and non-believer become grounded in incarnational reality by way of forms arising from Nature. Baker speaks of her design, which “engages in a soothing surrender to the way things are,” and further, “the user, through architectural experience of these energies in nature, is in turn empowered to be their own center.” Herein is the intent of contemplation, of prayer and attentiveness.

Recently, John Paulson, the minimalist British architect has designed the first monastery in the Czech Republic since the fall of Communism. The monks of Novy Dvur commissioned Paulson after seeing his work for Calvin Klein’s flagship store in Manhattan. This secular connection with Baker’s atheist chapel suggests aesthetic similarities and intended spiritual resonance arising from spatial emptiness. Another chapel similar to Baker’s chapel is in the Camaldolese monastery at Big Sur, California. Under lit, its arena space has ascending rings of steps for sitting. The altar is centrally positioned with no other element present.

North American Puritanism has never affected the onslaught of immigrant Gothic and baroque churches filled with devotional oddities. In Italy, a few bishops have courageously removed extended baroque trappings disguising and distorting original Romanesque

and earlier structures. In Puglia a series of neighboring churches have been restored to their original Norman identities. More recently the cathedral in Cefalu, Sicily, has been rehabilitated to its Norman dimensions and purity of form and now stands in the satisfying glow of unadorned stone.

In sharp contrast to these considerations is the chapel on the St. Thomas College campus elaborately presented by George C. Knight in “Style As Substance” (Vol. 43, No. 2, 2010, p. 6). This chapel replica of Renaissance opulence housed behind a colonial baroque façade is in keeping with the 16th-century Counter Reformation stand of the Roman Church against the encroaching modern world. This chapel, whose dimensions fill the quota of being a cathedral and whose “style as substance” stands in defense against an increasing universal secularism, also stands against the teaching of the Church in the Vatican II documents, which call the faithful to encounter and engage the world. Its architectural design clearly abandons any intention of rapprochement with contemporary culture. It bears the signature of papal defiance engraved on baroque facades throughout Rome. No less a prohibitive wall of separation is evidenced in its interior where the sanctuary ground for clerics is gated in separation from the worshipping community.

Since the Middle Ages when the “miracle” of transubstantiation established the consecrated Host the devotional center of worship space, the displacement of focal centrality of the altar of sacrifice has developed proportionately. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the first subject to be examined by the Council fathers, did not arise in a vacuum. For decades before Pope John XXIII convened the Council, a liturgical renewal was happening throughout Northern Europe and in the United States. Virgil Michael, OSB; Gerald Ellard, SJ; H.A. Reinhold; Martin Hellriegel; and Godfrey Diekmann are a few of the many inspired by Pope Pius XII’s great encyclical on the liturgy, “Mediator Dei,” who provided the ground work for the Council fathers’ deliberation on the renewal of the Sacred Liturgy.

The architectural heresy of this chapel lies in its implicit denial—not to say ignorance—of Eucharistic theology, which calls for the unadulterated and visible centrality of the sacrificial altar. By placing the tabernacle axially behind the faux Vatican baldachin, architect Duncan Stroik embraces devotional priorities over and against the essence of Eucharistic theology represented by the sacrificial altar.



## DESIGN



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These are not considerations relative to liturgical conservatives or progressives. This is not a question of tradition. Precisely what tradition? Certainly not the Gospel tradition. When one fails to understand the theology of the Eucharistic Liturgy, chapels such as the one on the Aquinas campus are the result.

The evangelical challenge of our time is to take the Gospel into the world, to show it with no apology, with no adornment, and to make visible the language of its reality, of its truth and goodness and beauty.

John XXIII, in his beloved aged body, youthfully turned our minds and hearts, our intelligence and hospitality, towards the world—not yesterday's world, not even the imagined world of tomorrow. He invited us with faith in the Holy Spirit, who is always doing "a new thing" to turn toward the world in which we live and in that encounter to discover how together we might labor for "aggiornamento," the prophetic promise of a new age.

Lest it be interpreted that I favor the sterility of Calvinist Puritanism over Catholic ecclesial architecture, let me add that I uphold the sanity of preserving important works of mosaic, sculptural and fresco art while in the process of restoring worship spaces into places of radical simplicity where sacred presence is palpably experienced. Sadly, North American Catholic hierarchy shows little if any interest in this task of purifying our worship spaces. The elimination of vulgar ecclesiastical debris calls for a program of concerted education on the part of both clergy and laity. Only when we suffer down-sizing creatively and pragmatically will essential simplicity be gained as the proper environment for prayer, pure and unadulterated.

—John Giuliani

*The author is an artist and a Benedictine monk who founded The Grange in Redding, Connecticut.*

### "NO ONE IS A SPECTATOR"

A recent issue of *Faith & Form* (Vol. 43, No. 2, 2010, pp. 6-17) features articles dealing with two Roman Catholic church building projects. Although they are dissimilar in context, style, and ownership, both stories prompted at least one question for me. Understanding that we are shaped by what we shape, why exactly did the owners request these particular architectural styles and liturgical layouts?

Since we live in an age when it is possible to break down tissues that hold cells together, to build the cells up again, to reproduce body parts, it does not surprise us that in the world of contemporary building technologies it is possible to reproduce any form from the past.

Further, as Walter Benjamin once wrote, "In principle a work of art has always been reproducible. Man-made artifacts could always be imitated by men. Replicas were made by pupils in practice of their craft, by masters for diffusing their works, and, finally, by third parties in the pursuit of gain." (*The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, 1936)

It is understandable, therefore, that some congregations and building designers will want to emulate and reproduce an architectural or artistic style for their churches once popular in another age or another culture. No matter what the reason is, they have a right to do so. Further, in the case of Roman Catholic places of worship, one specific style of architecture or art has never been legislated. However, choosing a time-specific building type is different from designing a place to house the worship of the community in its own time. To get at the reasons for choosing one liturgical layout over another, there is a string of theologically related questions that may be germane to Roman Catholicism and applicable to other liturgical traditions. One such question is: How does the local congregation respond to the universal invitation to participate fully in the life of the Church, including the way it worships?

When the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council called its members to more active and conscious participation in the liturgy it was inviting them to more than just singing and praying together during Mass. The deeper dimension of the call was to fully embrace and engage in the *paschal event* — code words for the birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and return of Jesus Christ. As baptized members of the Church, congregants and parishioners are called to share responsibilities with their clergy in the areas of education, social service, governance, and worship. The liturgy, which is not a private event, embodies this level of participation. Simply put, no one is a spectator in the life of the Church. How does a church building express this theology? Are these buildings metaphors for the local congregation and, in the case of Catholicism, how do they reflect the cultural ideals of a universal Church? These questions have different answers.

In those parishes where all members participate fully in the daily affairs of the Church mentioned above, the liturgy would be carried out collaboratively by clergy and laity alike, according to different ministries and offices. In this case the layout of the worship environment would be an inclusive one. No one part of the church would be considered more significant than another. The shape and design of the church building would draw everyone into the

liturgical event employing intimate sight lines, proper proportions and scale, aesthetic appeal, good acoustics, barrier-free accessibility, and abundant light.

On the other hand, in those places where the members of the congregation are not treated as active participants in the overall life of the Church they could be detached even during the liturgy. In this sense the ritual is thought to be the work of the clergy. This could be a reason for spatially compartmentalizing the laity and elevating the clergy above all others in the room. Historically, the hierarchical nature of the Church was not always dependent on staging the ritual action at one end of the room reserved for clergy. In the most traditional settings the table would be more in the midst of the worshipers gathered as members of the one body.

The architectural plan for any church today, therefore, begins with the identity of the client portrayed by the whole congregation and not solely the pastor or patron. Places of worship with long naves where many worshipers are distant from the liturgical action, where the clergy preside from a chancel or sanctuary reserved for them, are remnants from a late-3rd- and early-4th-century culture. It was an era when, as the active roles of the faithful were waning, the clericalization of the Church was gaining momentum. The earliest traditions predate the imperial mannerisms of the Church where the clergy ranked above the other members. That cultural understanding of the Catholic Church no longer exists.

Space here does not permit a fuller treatment of what seems to me to be an even more provocative question. The first two examples in the magazine were of Roman Catholic churches but a third article in the same issue (pp. 18-21) featured a chapel at an Episcopalian school with a very different form compared to the others. It is a contemporary (of its own time) building that has a very inclusive seating pattern. Why was this plan chosen? Was it shaped by the vision of the leadership, the culture of the school community, or both? The evidence that some Catholic congregations favor a more hierarchical seating plan and a stylized building type is not overwhelming. There are some 20,000 parishes in the U.S., all worshipping in diverse places. What is going on in other Christian denominations? Is a larger trend emerging in the religious life of America that deserves attention?

As I look at the two Catholic church projects featured in the issue I wonder: was there any informed discussion with the whole church community about how the design and layout of these churches will shape the worship

of each community in its own time and the future? Subsequently, how will these buildings shape the active and conscious participation of the congregation in the affairs of the church and the public square?

—Richard Vosko, Hon. AIA

*The writer is a liturgical design consultant, a Catholic priest, and the current Chair of the Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art, and Architecture.*

#### ‘NOT OF OUR TIME’

In his description of the Chapel of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity (Vol. 43, No. 2., 2010, p. 6), George Knight refers to criteria, such as familiar symbolic patterns, formal relationships, and functional organization. He then proceeds to use these criteria to support this traditional church design. As I read his words some questions came to mind. What are the formal relationships that this building embodies? What functional organization is enhanced in this arrangement? What symbolic patterns are being left out?

As I see it, the organization of the space and relationship between its parts supports an outdated ecclesiology and denies the Church’s renewed sense of who we are. There is no awareness that the building should speak of who we are and what we do there. I am reminded of Spiro Kostof’s excellent book *Settings and Rituals*, which illustrates the principle that the rites should dictate the space in which they are celebrated. This principle is one that guides all building design. As an example, where is the baptismal font to signify entering into relationship with the community?

If this represents a trend (backwards) in worship space design, it seems to be at odds with the statement from the Vatican II Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy: “The Church has not adopted any particular style of art as her very own; she has admitted fashions from every period according to the natural talents and circumstances of peoples, and the needs of the various rites.” (#123) Thomas Merton commented, “One of the biggest problems for an architect in our time is that for 150 years we have been building churches as if a church could not belong to our time. A church has to look as if it were left over from some other age. I think that such an assumption is based on an implicit confession of atheism - as if God did not belong to all ages and as if religion were really only a pleasant, necessary social formality, preserved from past times in order to give our society an air of respectability.” (*Environment and Art Letter*, Vol.13, #9)

—Joanne López Kepes

*The author is an artist and liturgical design consultant based in Kettering, Ohio.*


#### ‘COMPLETELY DISTRESSED’

In reading a recent issue of *Faith & Form* (Vol. 43, No. 2, 2010), I wonder as to whether there are any progressive, community setting, and liturgically relevant, sustainable worship spaces to review today. I was completely distressed by the examples lauded in this issue. The Thomas Aquinas College Chapel is a quasi-historical reproduction undeserving of being noted as a worthy worship environment of today. It could be designated a worthy museum example and visited and used as such only.

The Ave Maria Oratory is a slap in the face of sustainability and care of the earth theology as well as good worship and liturgical environment design. It projects a notable denial of any sense of a community gathered in worship and a liturgical experience out of the Dark Ages. The Aspen Episcopal Church mirrors all the poor worship environment qualities of the Oratory example only with an added very depressing proportion of scale.

The Episcopal reflects at best the age of the Akron Methodist plan of yesteryear. Sometimes called the fan shape arrangement, it curtails a full awareness of the community self and resists ultimate proximity to the liturgical action, again a very dated example. There is also the obvious uncontrolled or studied entry of light into the space.

The synagogue is the saving example in the issue and is given token coverage. It does show a good congregational sequence of gathering and reflect a community gathered for worship. Congratulations for this example.

Just because a church is new or big does not make it a viable example of today’s best thinking in worship environment design. I hope this is considered in your selections of the future. 

—C. Crawford Murphy

*The writer is a church architect and liturgical environment consultant based in Asheville, North Carolina.*

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#### Quote of Note

*“The Gothic cathedral is a blossoming in stone subdued by the insatiable demand of harmony in man.”*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

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# NOTES & COMMENTS

## SYMPOSIUM ON CATHOLIC CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

On April 30 and May 1, 2010, The Catholic University of America and The University of Notre Dame collaborated to present the symposium "A Living Presence: Extending and Transforming the Tradition of Catholic Sacred Architecture" at the CUA School of Architecture and Planning. It was organized by the Partnership for Catholic Sacred Architecture, inspired by Pope Benedict XVI's call for organic growth in development within the Church, to create an interdisciplinary discussion about Catholic church architecture in terms of continuity with the past and future development. Artists, musicians, academics, architects, philosophers, theologians, liturgical consultants, and members of the clergy and religious life participated, presenting divergent views on tradition and modernity. The event included workshops on fundraising, design, and construction.

The intention of the symposium, which attracted 125 attendees and included 50 presentations, was to create a fruitful dialogue between proponents of a stronger connection to tradition and those who favor an approach focused on contemporary culture, recognizing that each approach contains elements of the other and that each can learn from and inform the other. The goal was and remains the development of contemporary church architecture that corresponds to modern culture while retaining connection to the continuous life of the Church across the ages. Without discounting the importance of community and full and active participation by the faithful, the Partnership unabashedly proposes that beauty, architecture that expresses the glory and majesty of God, a sense of reverence appropriate to the setting for the Holy Mass, and a hierarchy appropriate to the life of the Church, as well as a sense of connection with the continuous history of the church, deserve

a serious hearing in discussions about the design of sacred space for the Catholic Church.

In his keynote address, Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia proposed that: "Sacred Scripture testifies that the role and mission of architects and artists arise from the very nature of the plan of God," that "The Second Vatican Council and the teaching of Pope Benedict XVI affirm that the work of architecture and art takes place in and through dialogue with the Church," and that "The mission of the architect and artist, which is based in sacred scripture and conducted in dialogue with the Church, authentically develops only along the path of true beauty." He added: "Beauty changes us...It disposes us to the transformation of God. Everything related to the Eucharist should be truly beautiful."

A panel discussion featured Denis McNamara, Assistant Director at The Liturgical Institute; architect Duncan Stroik of Notre Dame; and Craig Hartman, Design Partner at Skidmore Owings and Merrill and designer in charge of the recently completed Oakland Cathedral of Christ the Light. McNamara noted that "...a church building allows us to see heaven with our eyes...Art and architecture can allow us to perceive otherwise invisible spiritual realities," while Stroik proposed that "Architecture is not about producing copies, but of producing children. [Architects should] learn from the examples of the past." Hartman explained the process of designing and building a modern cathedral, and shared his design process and the exploration of light as a symbol of Christ. (Videos of conference presentations are available at: <http://bit.ly/bnS2Vz>.)

Openness to tradition, which was purposeful on the part of the Partnership, this year attracted a larger group of "traditionalists" than of "modernists." Traditionalists in contemporary architectural dialogue are generally ostracized and tend in reaction to be a group somewhat on the defensive. The symposium gave them a voice, especially through presenters such as Stroik and Thomas Gordon Smith, which the Partnership feels is much needed in an ethos which has lost touch with much of what is good in traditional architecture. However, the Partnership also welcomed the voices of several more modernist architects and academics (such as Luigi Bartolomei) who expressed vigorous resistance to the re-emergence of traditional architecture in sacred design and who presented their own design visions, which was more correlated to the design emphases of most contemporary architectural academies and journals. It was encouraging that in both the presentations and the design competition entries, there were a significant number of symposium participants such as Steven Schloeder, who were engaged in the challenge of defining a path that both engages the tradition and makes something new, that not only extends what came before but transforms it with full cognizance of the challenges and opportunities of contemporary culture.

Plans are being laid now for the next Symposium in 2012. The Partnership hopes this event will strengthen the development of a path building upon what is good in diverse approaches.

—Michael Patrick

*The author chaired the symposium, is a visiting lecturer at CUA, and a partner in Patrick and Anderson Partners in Architecture.*

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## NEW THOUGHT POSSIBILITIES

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


**D**o you enjoy the sound of color? The Connecticut painter Estella Lascher, whose work has received numerous awards, speaks of every *color* as having a *sound* of its own. For Lascher, each color has its own texture, tone, shape, and rhythm; groups of colors repeat and can be heard in much the same way that phrases in a musical performance can be experienced. There is a certain amount of "feeling the keyboard" (as one might in playing a piano) in fitting mosaic-like patterns of color into a visual piece that rings with vibrancy and purpose.

The thought of color as sound at first jars my mind and takes me beyond my comfort zone; I am baffled and confused. Then, it becomes kind of a fun thought to have. Finally, I see that color and sound as sensory experiences share the ability to take us to the same aesthetic place.

Another artist, Ed Hicks, whose works are found in numerous corporate offices in both the US and Europe, is also gaining much recognition. He works on the assumption that what is left out of a painting is as important as what is put into it. Open-ended land-

scapes provide just enough information to evoke a sense of place, yet allow the viewer to fill in the specifics. Hicks works exclusively in oils because this medium allows him to create depth and atmosphere. "Color and texture make a painting move, make it snap, give it that power I am after in every piece I do," he says. The presence of texture, color, and open space all contribute to the finished work.

Experienced architects understand the value of open space and that it is often better to suggest rather than rigidly define elements within a design. Open space also lends focus to the element it surrounds.

Thinking in new ways is what artists, architects, and spiritual seekers are known for. Our infinite combination of thought and creative expression is what keeps the human experience fresh and interesting. So the next time you have a crazy new thought, go with it and see where it takes you. You may be pleasantly surprised! 

BETTY H. MEYER IS EDITOR EMERITUS OF *FAITH & FORM* AND CAN BE REACHED BY EMAIL AT [BMeyer@FAITHANDFORM.COM](mailto:BMeyer@FAITHANDFORM.COM)

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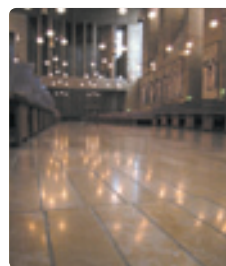
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