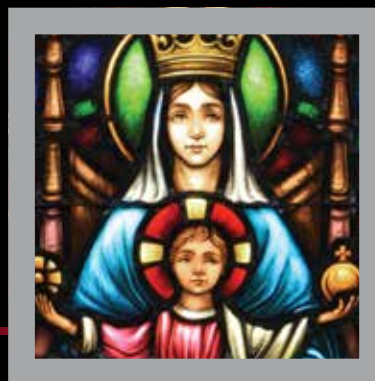
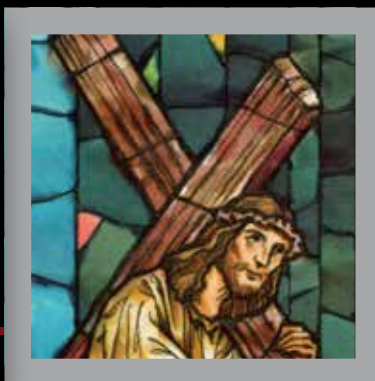
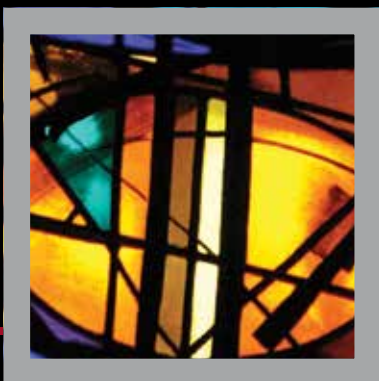
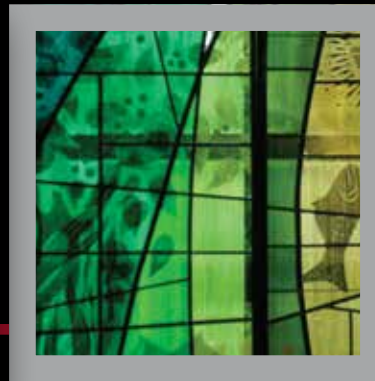
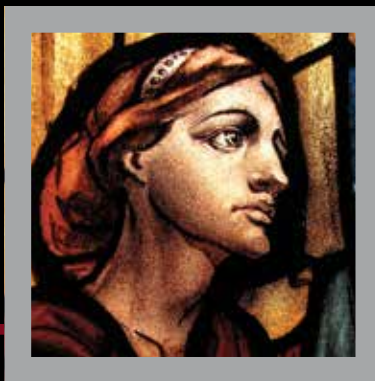
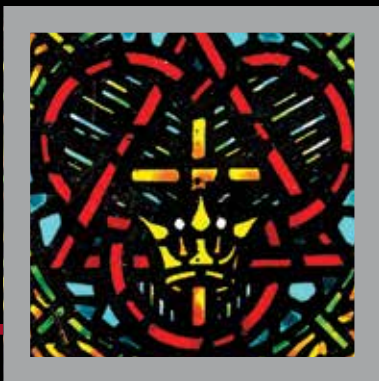




# FAITH & FORM

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Theme Issue:  
**Displacement, Safety, Security**



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NEXT ISSUE

A potpourri of articles on the best in religious art and architecture.

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Rendering of Santiago Calatrava's St. Nicholas National Shrine, now under construction. (article begins on page 23). Photo: Raimund Koch, used with permission of Santiago Calatrava, © Santiago Calatrava 2017, all rights reserved

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# NO PLACE TO HIDE

EDITOR'S PAGE ★ MICHAEL J. CROSBIE

THE NEWS IS NOT GOOD. Even before last November's elections, threats and attacks on synagogues, Jewish community centers, mosques, Islamic centers, and churches had been steadily increasing. Across the country, news reports recount anonymous bomb threats, hate-crime graffiti with swastikas, mosque burnings, and drive-by harassment (pig heads tossed into masjids and synagogues).

Mosque threats and attacks, which spiked over the past two years, show no sign of abating. Before and after the elections, acts targeting Islamic houses of worship escalated around the country. In October, an Arkansas mosque was defaced with graffiti. Six days after the election, a Kentucky Islamic Center was vandalized for the second time in less than a year. In November and December, a masjid in Washington State was reviled in two separate acts that police are investigating as hate crimes. January and February brought news of more attacks on mosques.


The Southern Poverty Law Center reported 100 "hate incidents" in the US within 10 days of the elections targeting Jews and their houses of worship. In the past few weeks, the media has carried images of toppled headstones in Jewish cemeteries in New York and Pennsylvania. As I

write this, a news story appears about a Seattle synagogue smeared with graffiti: "Holocaust is fake history."

Churches—often those that have declared themselves sanctuaries for refugees, immigrants, and undocumented aliens—have also been attacked. Meanwhile, Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama, has taken the unprecedented step of asking the state legislature to allow it to set up its own private police force.

Hate, anger, and religious intolerance are most often directed at the places where people gather as a faith community to worship and share fellowship. Synagogues, mosques, temples, churches, and community centers become the targets. But they are also places where resistance to these ugly acts can be publicly demonstrated. Shortly after the election, a lone bearded figure in a cowboy hat stood outside a mosque in Irving, Texas, holding up a sign: "You Belong." Days later, on his Facebook page, 53-year-old Justin Normand explained what caused him to make the sign and drive to the nearest masjid to stand witness: "This was about binding up the wounded. About showing compassion and empathy for the hurting and fearful among us. Or, in some Christian traditions, this was about washing my brother's feet. This was about my religion, not theirs."

There are other news reports. In late February, a man with the Twitter handle "The Muslim Marine" volunteered to stand guard in Chicago-area Jewish cemeteries. Then others who identified themselves as Muslims came forward around the country to protect synagogues, community centers, and cemeteries. A mosque in Bellevue, Washington, was completely gutted by fire in mid-January. An online fund quickly raised over a half-million dollars to replace it. Two weeks later in Texas, the Victoria Islamic Center was consumed in flames. Within days, an online fund to rebuild it raised nearly a million dollars from people all over the county.

How should we rebuild? Do we hunker down, fortify our temples, lock up our mosques, militarize our churches? In an interview with *Faith & Form* several years ago, theologian Harvey Cox suggested another possibility: along with sacred space, public space is where we can best witness the stranger who is also a believer, acting out ritual and engaging in fellowship. For Cox, shared public space plays a critical role in helping us to understand the stranger through proximity. In the civic realm, religious hatred directed at our houses of worship has no place to hide. 

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

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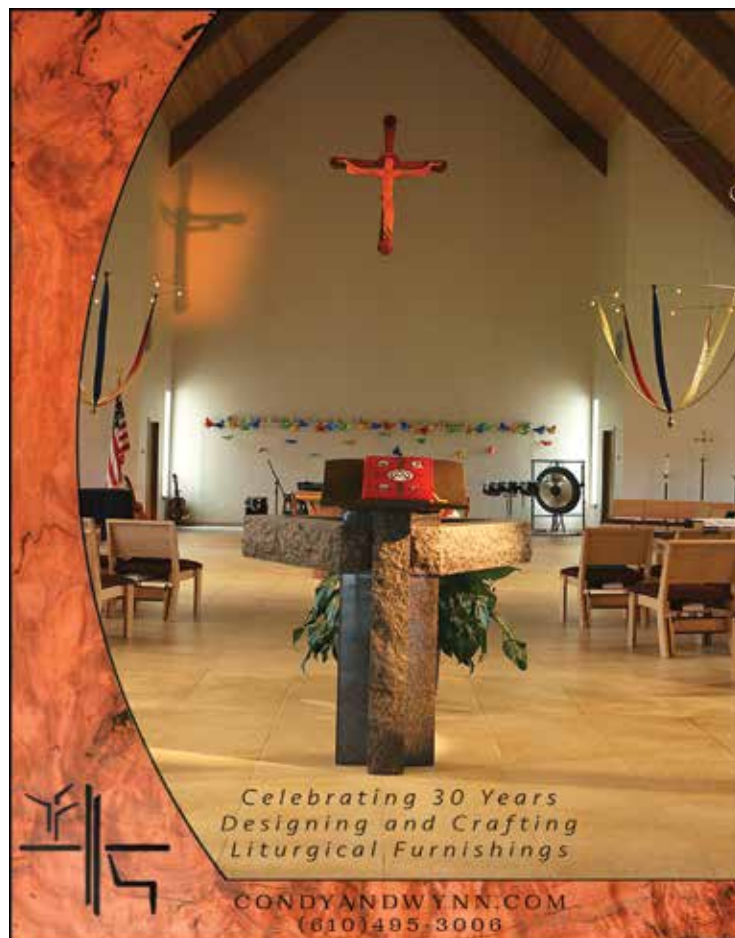
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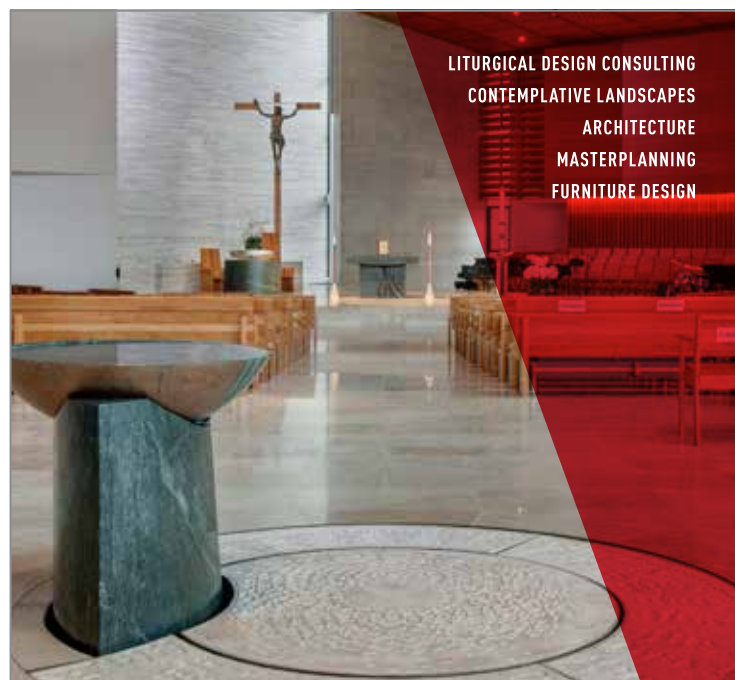
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# The Nature and Relevance of 'Sanctuary'

By Richard S. Vosko, Hon. AIA

A recent exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York called "Insecurities: Tracing Displacement and Shelter," focused on the tens of thousands of children, women, and men worldwide who, right now, are traveling precariously by land and sea searching for asylum and shelter. The show (images from which are shown on these two pages) described how artists and architects create temporary housing in settlement camps and elsewhere to accommodate these desperate and frightened wanderers.

There are about 11 million undocumented persons who live in the US and who are subject to deportation. Immigrants are those who leave their homeland to seek legal residency in another country. Refugees are those who leave their country because their lives are in danger; they seek asylum in another country, a process that can take years to complete.

The crisis surrounding people who live in limbo is exacerbated as nation states, in response to populist phobias, develop more nationalistic ideologies. Governments begin to establish laws to reduce the number of refugees entering the country and to block anyone coming from countries where terrorist cells are active. They also seek to deport anyone without proper documentation.

This issue of *Faith & Form* features stories and spaces that are physically safe in a period of history when more and more people are seeking refuge or require secure havens from racist or xenophobic hate crimes, or from religious discrimination such as anti-Semitism and Islamophobia.

Faith-based communities have traditionally responded to the urgent need to provide safe shelter for people living in danger, who are seeking asylum, and who dream of a chance to start a new life in a new country. These congregations are joined by other institutions and municipalities in offering sanctuary. Here is a brief but incomplete glimpse of some of these "sanctuary" movements.

THE AUTHOR IS A SACRED SPACE CONSULTANT AND A MEMBER OF THE FAITH & FORM EDITORIAL ADVISORY GROUP. HE IS A CATHOLIC PRIEST SERVING THE ST. VINCENT DE PAUL PARISH IN ALBANY, NEW YORK, WHICH PARTICIPATES IN FAMILY PROMISE OF THE CAPITAL REGION.



Photo: Jonathan Muzikar

*Installation view of Insecurities. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, October 1, 2016 – January 22, 2017. © 2016 The Museum of Modern Art.*



*Interior of a Better Shelter prototype in Kawergosk Refugee Camp, Erbil, Iraq. Better Shelter. 2015.*

## FAITH-BASED GROUPS

The Church World Service (CWS) was founded in 1946 as a cooperative of Christian denominations. With offices located throughout the US, CWS offers legal services to immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. The Rev. Noel Andersen, coordinator of CWS, writes that, "Sanctuary is powerful because it shows how people live out their faith by accompanying the most marginalized among us."

According to Spero News, the Clifton Mosque in Cincinnati has declared itself a "sanctuary" to shelter illegal aliens from arrest and deportation. Imam Ismaeel Chartier told Yahoo News: "It took us no time to decide that this was the ethical and moral thing to do."

## SANCTUARY CAMPUSES

Ever since the November 2016 elections in the US many universities and colleges have



declared themselves as “sanctuary campuses.” They have set various levels of regulations prohibiting campus security agents from cooperating with Immigration Customs Enforcement (ICE) and the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

Representative Andy Harris (R-MD) introduced a bill entitled the “Federal Immigration Law Compliance Act of 2016,” which would prohibit federal funding to any institution that does not cooperate with authorities requesting information or detainment of a person without documentation. Just how many state legislatures will vote for and enforce this bill, or more recent ones, remains to be seen. Although there are no official

statistics, the number of sanctuary campuses appears to be growing.

#### SANCTUARY CITIES AND COUNTIES

In defiance of the federal laws, civic communities such as Seattle, San Francisco, Chicago, and New York have already declared themselves safe havens for immigrants. The Immigrant Legal Resource Center (ILRC) has published “Local Options for Protecting Immigrants” — a collection of city and county strategies to protect immigrants from discrimination and deportation. The ILRC promotes sanctuary policies that “can make it clear that city agencies and departments, including local police, should not solicit information about immigration status.”

Even though threatened by a loss of federal financial assistance, mayors of large and small cities are standing pat. Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel has said that undocumented immigrants are safe in Chicago, that Chicago always will be a sanctuary city. New York State’s Attorney General Eric Schneiderman has issued legal guidelines on how local governments can put laws in place to limit participation in federal immigration enforcement activities. Mayor Kathy Sheehan of Albany, New York commented: “We are committed to being a sanctuary city, and these guidelines will assist in our effort to protect immigrants’ rights and develop relationships that enhance public safety in our city.”


#### DEFIANT CONGREGATIONS

Some states themselves have opposed the sanctuary movement. In 2010 the governor of Arizona signed into law the controversial immigration law S.B. 1070, which has been challenged by the US Department of Justice. It added penalties for trespassing as well as harboring and transporting illegal immigrants. These circumstances, however, have not deterred churches and synagogues from opening their doors to children and families migrating from Mexico and Central America.

Two notable congregations in that state are the Shadow Rock United Church of Christ (in Phoenix) and the Southside Presbyterian Church (in Tucson). Alison Harrington, the pastor of Southside, noted in an interview with Arizona’s KTAR News that about 450 churches of various denominations nationwide have offered to provide some form of sanctuary, including living space, financial assistance, or rides for schoolchildren.

#### ALTERNATIVE MOVEMENTS

Other advocacies have emerged to provide transitional living arrangements for homeless families. In Upstate New York, several communities are participating in a project known as Family Promise of the Capital Region. It is a consortium of diverse faith groups (Jewish and Christian) working with social agencies to provide shelter, food, and case management services. According to director Mary Giordano, staff and volunteers assist homeless families in securing employment, permanent housing and lasting independence.

People are suffering worldwide as they flee oppression and seek safety and shelter. Others fear for their lives because of their race or religion. In response, there has been a groundswell of congregations, clergy, and faith communities showing the way for secular institutions to provide sanctuary. 



*Sandbag Shelter. Nader Khalili, 1995. Courtesy of the California Institute of Earth Art and Architecture.*



*Nizip II, Container Camp. Tobias Hutzler, 2014. Courtesy of the artist.*





# SAFETY AND SECURITY

## What Every Faith Community Should Consider

By Michael J. Crosbie

Benny M. Burrell is a retired police officer and a crime prevention specialist based in Virginia. He consults in the realm of security and safety. Over the years he has completed extensive training in crime prevention and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. We asked Burrell to talk to *Faith & Form* about security and safety issues that every faith community with worship facilities, and their designers, should consider.

**Michael J. Crosbie:** What is your view on the threats to religious buildings today? Are they more vulnerable? Where do these threats come from?

**Benny M. Burrell:** Houses of worship are more vulnerable to attack today than ever before due to the rise of global terrorism. But it also affects those in small towns and communities, places where people might not be aware of the vulnerability. The threats are not just because of religious intolerance, but also, as we have seen in such cases as the attack on the Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston, South Carolina, due to unaddressed mental health issues, racial tensions, lack of cultural awareness, and a blatant disregard for humanity on the part of some.

**MJC:** What might be the most productive first steps to take to improve security, and safety awareness, in religious buildings? How should a congregation and clergy proceed?

**BMB:** The most productive way to raise awareness and security is to collaborate with local law enforcement professionals to complete a safety assessment of the buildings and grounds. After the initial assessment is done, the next step would be to determine the most relevant plan of action. The clergy and congregation

would participate in this process by becoming keenly aware of the safety and security needs for the place of worship and building those into the plan of action. They also need to go for safety and security training and guidance.

**MJC:** How might increased safety and security be balanced against the traditional architectural design of many sacred buildings?

**BMB:** The process of conducting an assessment will bring stakeholders together and demonstrate why it might be necessary to revisit a traditional or existing design to adjust to present-day best practices. Because of the increased security risks, the architectural design must be reviewed for necessary changes to benefit the congregation and its mission. Some architects might be more attuned to safety and security concerns than others. I know that in my own experience, engineers have been involved in training sessions and this allows them to see both sides of the content being examined. That's vital. Bringing in the architect's or the liturgical designer's perspective is productive for law enforcement professionals as well because it can give them a better idea why a house of worship might be designed in a particular way and why it's important. It helps to establish a balance between the two.

**MJC:** Tell us about the concept and practice of "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design."

**BMB:** There was a lot of research done in the 1970s regarding how the design of buildings actually affects how space can be controlled, how it can be surveilled, and how to accomplish "territorial reinforcement." The principles of CPTED involve the approach of architectural design through space management theory. Strategies address natural access control, natural surveillance, and territorial reinforcement. Access control could include guards, locks, and the character of the space. Monitoring might include police patrols, lighting, window placement, cameras. Territorial reinforcement requires strategies that might promote security awareness by the users of facilities, such as signs that say that the installation is alarmed or under surveillance.

**MJC:** Can you talk about the concept of "target hardening"? What are some examples?

**BMB:** "Target hardening" is merely developing a security-conscious philosophy to reduce or manage the risk of incidents or threats. An example might be to start with a doorknob with a key. You next might install a deadbolt lock on the door, and then a sign that says that the area is being videotaped—that is target hardening. Notifying people that the place is under surveillance, installing more lighting, better locks, eliminating massive landscape elements such as shrubs where people might hide, removing ladders from outside the building so they can't





*The aftermath of the attack on the Emanuel A.M.E. Church in Charleston, South Carolina.*

*Photo: Jalexartis on Flickr*

be used to break in, fencing in propane tanks with a locked gate to discourage someone from turning that into a target. These are all physical deterrents—they enhance security and safety—but there is a psychological message as well: this house of worship is protected, people are watching, don't attempt to breach security. Seeing these security measures also encourages people to feel safer in a house of worship.

**MJC:** What are some issues to consider regarding landscaping and grounds?

**BMB:** What we've determined to be the greatest issue is zoning ordinances, guidelines for architectural design, and landscaping ordinances. These components are often not considered as security factors that should be addressed. For example, the height of the lowest branch of a tree above the ground could aid security measures—you want it above 6 feet, so most people feel safe walking under it. Many houses of worship use shrubs to define their borders and soften the building, but if this landscaping isn't trimmed and becomes too high, it can be a place where someone might conceal themselves, especially near doors and windows. You need to think about the location and size of landscape elements. Also, paving should be carefully considered. A paving material that creates a noise when someone walks across it—such as gravel—might be a better safety choice because it alerts you to movement.

**MJC:** How can a security/safety consultant be helpful in the design of a new religious

building or the upgrading of an existing one? How can congregations and architects work with them?


**BMB:** Seeking the guidance of a security consultant is most helpful because safety/security measures can be quickly identified and addressed in the preliminary stages of design, which will save time and money by pinpointing issues. It would be best practice for architects to have safety consultants if not law enforcement professionals on their team of specialists, and to do site surveys before the design progresses. If you have an architect trained in CPTED, that's even better. Seeking guidance is most helpful early in the design process—making the right decisions early on. It's harder to change design decisions later in the process.

**MJC:** Besides making buildings and grounds more physically safe and secure, congregations and clergy also need to consider other measures, such as policy and procedures before, during, and after an incident. Can you give us an overview of these realms of preparedness?

**BMB:** It's highly recommended that policies and procedures be put in place so they can help people to respond before, during, and after an incident. The same proactive prevention and crisis response strategies that colleges, hospitals, and schools use are recommended and can serve as a model for sacred buildings. These policies should describe lockdown procedures, evaluation, and notification processes. This can be utilized as a guide to users and building

administrators to reducing further risk. This is not only for security and safety in the case of an incident such as an active shooter, but also before, during, and after natural threats such as fire, hurricanes, tornadoes, and earthquakes. You need to train the congregations and staff, even small groups, because many houses of worship have lean staffing.

**MJC:** What are some online resources that faith communities can consult in considering safety/security issues in sacred buildings?

**BMB:** The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has many programs that cover a range of topics, which you can find at [bit.ly/ff-homeland](http://bit.ly/ff-homeland). There is also program information available through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Center for Faith-based & Neighborhood Partnerships at [bit.ly/ff-fema](http://bit.ly/ff-fema). FEMA also provides many no-cost online training programs related to safety and security awareness. The American Crime Prevention Institute offers resources on its website at [bit.ly/ff-acpi](http://bit.ly/ff-acpi). The National Crime Prevention Council has a guide, "Faith Community and Criminal Justice Collaboration," available at [bit.ly/ff-ncpi](http://bit.ly/ff-ncpi). The American Red Cross has excellent information resources available at [bit.ly/ff-redcross](http://bit.ly/ff-redcross). And the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has a guide to Emergency Preparedness and Response available at [bit.ly/ff-cdc](http://bit.ly/ff-cdc). And don't overlook resources available from your own state and local police and fire departments. 



# Bracing for the Storm

*Members of St. Joseph's Church gather in front of the destroyed structure, amid which is the main altar, undamaged.*

hurricane water damage, and was in danger of renewed interior destruction due to a leaking roof. A church in Iowa City suffered total destruction from a direct hit by a tornado; a handful of parishioners survive the storm, seeking shelter in the basement. Another church in Rhode Island was condemned due to ongoing structural failure. Others too numerous to mention were threatened with existential crises due to the combination of age and deferred maintenance issues. Some church interiors change to address the needs of the elderly and disabled, while others are updated to deter sexual harassment and abuse.

## EMPHASIS ON SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety and security are prominent issues when we approach our design task. Increasingly, the emergency is a response to severe weather. Often an older building that has stood for a century or more is devastated by a storm that it was never designed to withstand. Codes, where they existed in the 1880s and '90s, permitted construction that managed well enough in prior decades, but can no longer resist increasingly violent wind and rainstorms today.

The functional purpose of building is to provide shelter from the elements of nature; much of the form of human shelter is based on that function. Design must anticipate seismic, human, and climate events that in the past would have been considered unlikely.

The devastating 1992 Hurricane Andrew in Florida resulted in a dramatically upgraded Florida building code in Miami and Dade counties and significantly stiffened regulations throughout the state. The state now requires Florida-engineered and approved products and procedures for all construction. Nationally, newer codes have been promulgated to improve fire safety, disabled access, air quality, energy efficiency, and worker safety. The trend toward tougher codes is appearing in other parts of the country that have not experienced recent disasters but may, through location or history, have the potential to do so in the future. In the past decade nearly every project we have designed has been influenced to varying degrees by anticipation of natural disaster.

One example of a church designed with a heightened awareness of natural disasters

*Blending restoration and safety in the design of worship spaces*

*By Ethan Anthony, AIA*

Over the past 15 years we have received several RFPs from church communities that have been the target of disaster both human-caused and natural. In many cases the congregation was faced with a crisis when their house of worship was either completely destroyed or damaged to the point

that it was in imminent danger of destruction.

In one case, a priest in Louisiana who had taken over a church rebuilt in a contemporary fashion after being totally destroyed by Hurricane Rita wanted to add gargoyles to its tower. In another, the interior of a historic Cram and Goodhue church was destroyed by

Photo: Steven Beaty





*St. Joseph's Church, built in 1894, in better days before the tornado, and in the aftermath of February 29, 2012.*

is the recently completed St. Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic Church in Ridgway, Illinois. Ridgway is located at the southern end of Illinois, an area close to the New Madrid fault (inactive since 1812, but recently under increased scrutiny by geologists), but better known as a target of frequent flooding of both the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. The most famous flood was in the winter of 1937 in the depths of the Great Depression the towns from Evansville, Indiana to St. Louis, Missouri were swamped, including Ridgway, miles away from both rivers.

More important in the design of the church was the tornado that plowed through nearby Harrisburg, Illinois, on February 29, 2012, taking the roof off a large apartment complex. Minutes later the twister struck at the first large structure it came upon in Ridgway: St. Joseph's Catholic Church, built in 1894.

The roof was lifted off of the church and slammed into the rectory next door, narrowly missing Father Steven Beatty on the second floor. Father Beatty crawled out of the wreckage of the rectory thinking others in the area would have been affected by the devastating blow from the tornado, but soon realized that the damage was not as severe elsewhere. When the damage to the church was assessed it was discovered that only the bells and the fine Carrera marble altar had survived.

Even before the twister struck, St. Joseph's had been subject to other forces that seemed determined to tear it apart. A 65 percent reduction in population in Gallatin County between 1960 to 2000 resulted in



Photo: Eihon Anthony

*Braced steel framing was used throughout the new church building to increase its wind and earthquake resistance.*

fewer parishioners, along with a nationwide reduction in the number of priests. The Belleville Diocese decided to build a brand new church on the St. Joseph site, named St. Kateri Tekakwitha (for the recently canonized Native American saint) The new church would consolidate four parishes in the area. Partner parishes St. Patrick in Pond Settlement, St. Joseph in Equality, and St. Mary in Shawneetown would serve as chapels for one weekly Mass.

Father Beatty (who became the new pastor of St. Kateri) and the building committee chose our firm as architect in fall 2013. They desired a church that would be as familiar to them as St. Joseph's but stronger and more tornado resistant, resilient. The plan would be cruciform, centered on the surviving Gothic marble altar as the centerpiece of the new church as it had been in St. Joseph's and a new cross that would hang over it. The nave was sized to accommodate 425, with stained glass windows from another church that had been closed in the diocese. There would be a gabled slate roof possibly reusing some of the slate salvaged from the wreckage of St. Josephs. The three salvaged bells would be re-installed in a new bell tower.

#### DESIGNING FOR DISASTER

An early design consideration related to resilience and security was to set our design parameters to avoid future natural disasters. The last great flood in Ridgway reached several feet above the grade around the future church. We instructed the surveyor to establish a benchmark for our first floor level of one foot above the 1937 flood. Analysis of sub-surface conditions at the building site revealed that the water table fluctuated between 10 and 18 feet below the surface. This meant that we had to plan for dewatering if the spring was wetter than normal. This was the case, and it was necessary to dewater for three months to lower the ground water sufficiently to begin construction of the foundations of the vault.



*The new church's chancel contains the St. Joseph's old altar, resurrected from the tornado disaster.*

Due to the high water table, buildings in Ridgway have traditionally been constructed on slabs, leaving residents with no shelter from an approaching tornado. Provision of a tornado shelter large enough to provide protection for the town residents was beyond the means of the church. Instead, we incorporated a large mechanical vault under the narthex of the church that could provide shelter without meeting the full requirements of an official public shelter. The vault's waterproof construction included placing dewatering pipes under the foundation leading to a sump, and placing a membrane under and around the concrete foundation before it was formed and poured. The interior of the vault is equipped with dual sump pumps powered on a large emergency generator, making the vault the safest place in

town to ride out a tornado. These and other emergency measures required the provision of a propane-gas-powered 50KW emergency generator, which is supplied from a 2,000-gallon underground tank, which would provide power for several days.

Being within 100 miles of the New Madrid Fault, the church's steel frame and masonry construction were designed accordingly. The frame included many large moment plates and extensive X-bracing is concealed within several interior walls. Because of the open interior there was little opportunity to introduce shear walls, so even interior walls have X-bracing that, in places, reduced the number and size of openings. The steel frame had so many welded connections it took three months to complete the welding. This and resistance to wind

loading and other requirements increased the cost of the steel frame significantly, but it was necessary to resist an earthquake such as is considered likely within the next 50 years on the fault line (there have been several Richter 2.5+ earthquakes since the church was completed).

All our churches, which often have high towers, are routinely fitted with lightning protection. Lightning rods or aerials are placed along the roof ridges and on the highest points of the tower, often pinnacles that rise above the balustrade or the point of the steeple rising above the roof of the tower.


Steel stud exterior walls are clad in 4-inch Wisconsin limestone veneer produced nearby, trimmed in cast stone produced by a national supplier. The roof is clad in slate-look Eco Star composition shingles produced from recycled tires. Such a roof can resist hailstorms--frequent accompaniments to violent rain and wind storms. The shingles are also highly resistant to uplift and wind, making it an ideal material for the area.

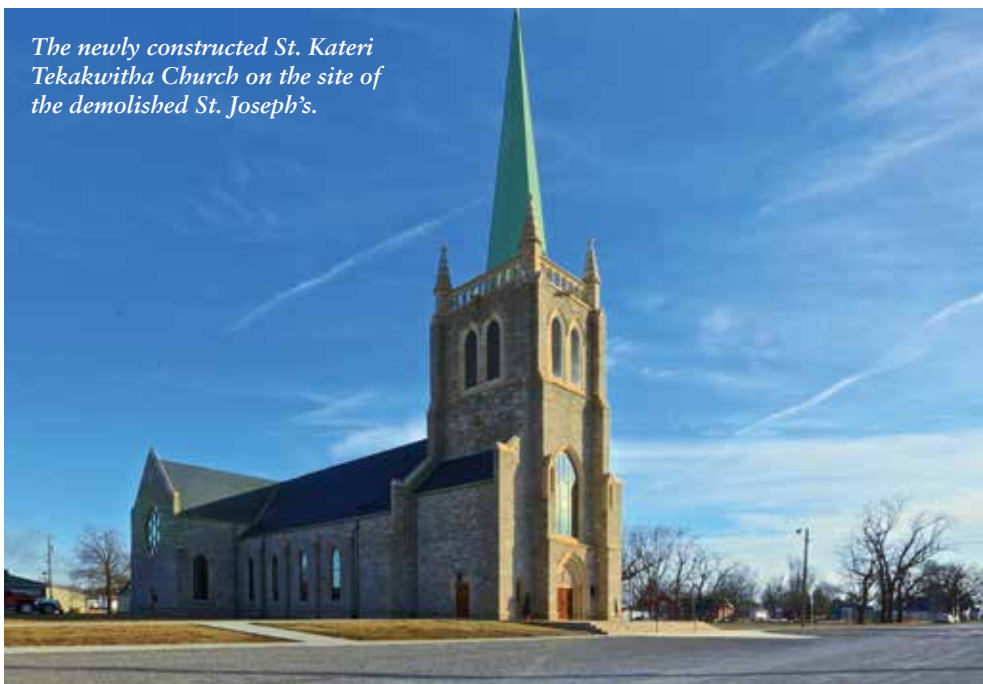
Windows are an aluminum frame system fitted with double-pane insulating glass units. An extra stop on the interior of the frame provides a mounting location for future stained glass panels. This serves two purposes: a permanent, energy-efficient exterior glazing that protects the stained glass panel from hail and wind storms, and also allows for art glass to be installed after construction.

Finally, exterior doors are constructed of a multi-layered system with true wood plank on the interior and exterior faces over a plywood interior core. In Florida, these doors have not been possible because each opening must be tested and certified by an engineer as meeting Florida wind codes. In practice this may be prohibitively expensive. The alternative is commercially available doors produced and tested to pass the Florida code.

#### BRACING FOR THE FUTURE

Storms have become more severe, floods are anticipated to be higher and longer in duration, and severe weather that will exceed the violence and strength of past storms must be planned for. These are circumstances for architects today; whether traditional or contemporary, our designs must respond to these environmental factors.

Tightening codes provides one response, but the architect can exceed the codes to make the building safer. A heightened awareness of the ways the designer's decisions can accommodate occupants either sheltering in place or escaping from danger should be uppermost in the architect's mind throughout the design process. 



*The newly constructed St. Kateri Tekakwitha Church on the site of the demolished St. Joseph's.*



# On the Case

## Solving the theft of art (some of it sacred) around the globe

By Shauna Lee Lange

THE UNITED STATES FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (FBI) formed a rapid deployment Art Crime Team in 2004, partly as a result of the National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad's looting problem. Coordinated through the FBI's Art Theft Program and located in Washington, D.C., special agents and the U.S. Department of Justice enforcers investigate and prosecute art theft within assigned geographic regions. In addition to response teams, the FBI maintains a computerized index and record of reported stolen art and cultural property valued over \$2,000, known as the National Stolen Art File (NSAF). People may file online reports at FBI Tips and Public Leads. And the FBI Art Theft News Page offers up-to-date notices and events.

It is estimated that art crime totals between \$4 and 6 billion dollars every year, although exact numbers are difficult to find. Much of the stolen work ends up in the US market as art and cultural property. Here, the problem usually centers on residential burglaries for and from

private collections. Thefts from houses of worship, museums, archaeological sites, and Native American burial grounds also occur. And although museums and places of worship are among common targets, they are high risk for would-be-thieves, even in countries with no organized art police.

According to Bonnie Magness-Gardiner, the Art Theft Program's manager, "There is specialized training involved for the Art Crime Team. We need to get them familiar with the periods of art, the vocabulary of art, art history, but more importantly with the business of art. Most often when we identify stolen art we identify it as it's coming back into the marketplace."

Cultural crimes include art thefts, art forgeries, archaeological thefts, and cultural property violations of which theft, fraud, looting, and trafficking stolen art across state and international lines are most common. However, critics of FBI recovery activities cite only a five percent success rate, where world recovery rates are only near ten percent. According to the FBI, Art Crime Team agents receive specialized training in art and culture property investigation and assist in art-related investigations worldwide in cooperation with foreign law enforcement officials and FBI legal attaché offices. Since its inception, the Art Crime Team has recovered nearly 15,000 times valued at more than \$165 million.

Interestingly, at the close of last year, just three out of ten of the FBI's top art crimes originated domestically (listed by date):

1. Theft of Renoir Oil Painting, Houston, Texas, 2011
2. Theft from Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, 2007
3. Theft from the Museu Chacara Do Céu, Rio De Janeiro, Brazil, 2006
4. Iraqi Looted and Stolen Artifacts, Iraq, 2003 (recovered)
5. Theft of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney Murals, West Hollywood, California, 2002
6. Van Gogh Museum Robbery, Amsterdam, Holland, 2002 (recovered)
7. Theft of Cezanne's "View of Auvers-sur-Oise," Oxford, England, 1999
8. Theft of the Davidoff-Morini Stradivarius, New York, New York, 1995 (recovered)
9. Theft from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, Massachusetts, 1990
10. Theft of Caravaggio's "Nativity with Saint Francis and Saint Lawrence," Palermo, Sicily, 1969

When any US art crime involves international regions, the U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) conducts its expanded mission for Cultural Property, Art and Antiquities Investigations. The U.S. Department of State Cultural Heritage Office protects and preserves ancient and historic monuments, objects, and archaeological sites. Internationally, INTERPOL's Database of Stolen Works of Art is the go-to resource since 1947, and the United Nations has global databases



*Caravaggio's 'Nativity with Saint Francis and Saint Lawrence,' was stolen in Palermo, Sicily, in 1969.*


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for national cultural heritage laws, sharing electronic resources and laws on crime, conventions for cultural property protection, and organizations for drugs and crime.

Art crimes and illicit trafficking of cultural property lead the news in emergency actions in Syria and Iraq for man-made disasters, and in Haiti and Italy for naturally occurring ones. Looting of art and cultural property during war and conflict continues to be a significant international problem. Art crime expands and strengthens in spite of difficulties in liquidating works, hiding works for unknown futures, or challenges with underground offerings.

Certain regions, including Europe, Latin America, Middle East, North and Sub-Saharan Africa, and South East Asia are particularly victim to art crime, likely due to the ease of undetected cross-border travel and the lack of integrated international statistics and sophisticated

recovery efforts. Types of preferred stolen objects vary from country to country. Paintings, sculptures, statues, and religious items are highly sought. Archaeological pieces, antiquarian books, antique furniture, coins, weapons and firearms, or ancient gold and silverware are also coveted. Worldwide, the most prevailing type of art crime is counterfeit and fraudulent works resulting from technological advancements.

In June 2017, the Association for Research into Crimes Against Art (ARCA) will hold its 8th Annual Interdisciplinary Art Crime Conference in Amelia, Italy. ARCA is a research and outreach organization working to promote the study and research of art crime and cultural heritage protection. The conference serves as a forum to explore the role of detection, crime prevention, and criminal justice responses to combat all forms of art crime and illicit trafficking in cultural property at both the international and domestic levels. 

#### RESOURCES

**Art Claim:** Art Recovery International stolen art registry ([artclaim.com](http://artclaim.com)).

**Art Loss Register:** London-based registry of lost or stolen artworks and owned possessions containing over 200,000 records ([artloss.com/en](http://artloss.com/en)).

**The Central Registry of Information on Looted Cultural Property 1933-1945:** [Lootedart.com](http://lootedart.com) registry includes two databases: (1) the Object Database of over 25,000 missing assets; and (2) the Information Database, that contains laws, policies, reports, archival records, and more from over 49 countries.

**Chasing Aphrodite:** By the authors of “Chasing Aphrodite: The Hunt for Looted Antiquities at the World’s Richest Museum,” this blog reports on various incidents of art theft, fraud, and looting ([chasingaphrodite.com](http://chasingaphrodite.com)).

**The Documentation Project:** The Project for the Documentation of Wartime Cultural Losses provides information on art and cultural property displaced during wartime with a focus on World War II (<http://docproj.loyola.edu/index.html>).

**Georgetown Law Library:** Small microfilm collection (Art Looting and Nazi Germany) of administrative documents related to the recovery of art and other cultural objects during and after World War II.

**Holocaust-Era Assets (NARA):** The US National Archives and Records Administration Holocaust-Era Assets ([archives.gov/research/holocaust](http://archives.gov/research/holocaust)).

**Illicit Cultural Property:** This blog provides regular updates on thefts, antiquities looting, and legal developments in the field ([illicit-culturalproperty.com](http://illicit-culturalproperty.com)).

**International Council of Museums:** Lists of objects particularly susceptible to theft and looting are known as ICOM Red Lists for various locations ([icom.museum](http://icom.museum)).

**Museum Security Network:** Covers news about art thefts, recoveries, and other news related to art crime ([museum-security.org/](http://museum-security.org/)).

**Object ID:** The international standard for describing cultural objects in order to facilitate their identification ([Interpol.int/crime-areas/works-of-art/object-id](http://Interpol.int/crime-areas/works-of-art/object-id)).

**Stolen Art Alert - IFAR Journal:** Each issue of the *IFAR Journal* includes a Stolen Art Alert. Published since 1977, the alert contains information on thefts reported by owners and insurance companies to the Art Loss Register, police, the FBI, Interpol, and other organizations ([ifar.org/publications-stolen-art-alert.php](http://ifar.org/publications-stolen-art-alert.php)).



# When they go, what is left?

Rejoining separated religious artworks and architecture.

By Gail Hook

Photographs by Paul Warchol



*The size and shape of a 13th-century chapel in Cyprus, from which the original frescos were looted, were replicated at the Byzantine Fresco Chapel in Houston.*

In July 2000, a 71-inch-by-47 inch painting depicting five vignettes of Adam and Eve's expulsion from the Garden of Eden, created by an unknown artist circa 1728, was removed from a church in San Juan Tepemazalco. The painting may have been used to convert indigenous Indians to Christianity. It was bought by the San Diego Museum of Art for \$45,000 from a private collector. In 2004, the museum discovered that the painting was stolen, but not until Mexico initiated judicial proceedings through the U.S. Justice Department in accordance with a treaty between the US and Mexico that allows Mexico to pursue the return of art from the colonial period, 1521 to 1821, through the court system.<sup>1</sup> Two years later the painting was returned to the Mexican Consulate in San Diego.<sup>2</sup> The museum was reimbursed by the seller. Skeptics have questioned whether the museum did due diligence in uncovering the true ownership of the painting. Whether they returned the paintings because of the treaty or out of international goodwill may never be known.

Some museums are not giving up their religious treasures so easily, evidenced by the seven-year struggle over the restitution of the

Guelph Treasure, a collection of 82 12th-century German ecclesiastical art pieces, many adorned with precious stones and made of gold, silver, and copper. They were bought by four Jewish art dealers in 1929 with the intention of reselling at a profit. They were forced to sell off piece-by-piece, six of them to the Cleveland Museum of Art, and eventually, under Nazi repression, sold the 42 final pieces to the Prussian state in 1935 at a 10 percent loss. They were forced to flee Germany. In 1998, the *Washington Conference Principles on Nazi-Confiscated Art* was agreed upon by all German museums. These guidelines require that any object sold by Jews for less than its fair value during the Nazi period (1933-1945) can be returned. Their heirs filed a restitution claim in 2008 against the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation, which oversees Berlin's art collections. On October 30, 2015, the Foundation filed a motion to dismiss.<sup>3</sup> The heirs had until the end of January, 2016, to file opposition.

## THE UNIQUENESS OF RELIGIOUS ART IN ITS SETTING

The Guelph artifacts were originally installed in a cathedral in Braunschweig. They are now displayed at the Museum of Decorative Arts in Berlin. Should they be returned to the cathedral, or are they safer in the museum? Will private owners protect them? Whether or

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*Seating allowed visitors to contemplate the frescos, which were later returned to Cyprus in 2012.*

not ownership is ultimately proven to be in the hands of the heirs, these questions should be addressed.

Religious architecture and its sacred artwork and relics are intended as a unified whole. While portable pieces and embedded artwork may be considered by some as mere adornments, pieces to be rotated, borrowed, bought, or sold (or stolen), they give the building its meaning as a religious space. They represent the faith and sacrifice of believers, and serve as reminders and teaching tools. On the other hand, are they at risk in a church? Are they better protected for posterity in a museum?

And is it not only religion but also culture and national pride that are at stake when art is removed and sold or hoarded? Does a

religious icon or wall painting have more relevant cultural value than a commodity like, for example, a Picasso painting? The question of where such artifacts, as well as stolen artwork and sculpture, will be the safest has to be weighed against the question of heritage and original ownership.

Then there is the question of the architecture. When the religious art is removed, is the building's intent and value diminished? Or does the building stand alone? In effect, what is left? It was the summer of 1974 when churches and their art were abandoned as Cypriots fled northern Cyprus before the invading Turkish army. Subsequently, looters removed two 800-year-old frescoes from a 13th-century chapel near the town of Lysi. The frescoes were

cut into 38 pieces in order to remove them from their place in the dome and apse. They made their way to Germany, and then through a Turkish dealer were sold to Dominique de Menil of Houston, Texas. De Menil did her research and traced the frescoes to Lysi. She bought the frescoes but made an amazing gesture via an agreement with the archbishop in Lysi to display the frescoes in Houston for 15 years and then return them to Cyprus. The frescoes were indeed displayed in a new \$4 million chapel designed by De Menil's son, the architect Francois De Menil, in their originally intended form of a dome and an apse. In 2012, they were returned to Cyprus, where they are displayed safely in the archbishop's museum 40 miles from Lysi.<sup>4</sup>

The Byzantine Fresco Chapel in Houston is a boxy, modern concrete building. When first built, a large space contained an abstracted framework of a Byzantine chapel, using the original chapel in Lysi as a model for the plan and size.<sup>5</sup> The walls and ceiling of the larger space were painted black, and the framework of the dome and apse was freestanding in the center to display the frescoes in their original format. A simple bench was positioned in front of it, vaguely suggesting the Rothko Chapel two blocks to the west. When the frescoes were returned to Cyprus the building sat empty, waiting like a bridesmaid for an appropriate partner.

One wonders what the museum curators were thinking when they failed to make replicas of the frescoes to fit the space when the originals were returned to Cyprus. Instead, a series of installations has been planned, beginning with "The Infinity Machine," designed by Canadian artists Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller. The sacred black space became a kaleidoscope of light reflected from a rotating mobile made up of more than 150 antique mirrors. Rather than a place of contemplation and worship, it was a place of flying reflections and shadows, made lively with digitally translated recordings of electromagnetic fields taken by NASA's Voyager I and II probes as they pass Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune.<sup>6</sup> Yet perhaps the chapel's original religious content is too powerful to ignore. The current exhibit is Francis Alÿs' "Fabiola Project," a display of hundreds of portraits of the fourth-century Roman ascetic, St. Fabiola.

#### **WILL THE REAL "NATIVITY" PLEASE STAND UP?**

And finally, if the marriage of religious art and architecture is that important, should a forever-lost work of art be replaced in its original setting by a faithful copy? In 1969,





*View up into the dome of the fresco chapel, which features the effigy of Christ.*

the Renaissance masterpiece, “Nativity with Saint Francis and Saint Lawrence,” painted by Caravaggio in 1609, was cut from its frame and stolen from an oratory in Palermo, Sicily, where it had hung for centuries. The fate of the painting that is still valued between \$20 million and \$40 million is not known, but many experts believe the Mafia was involved in the theft due to the testimony of a convicted mafia hitman. The crime is still considered by the FBI as one of the top ten art crimes (*see related article, page 13–Ed.*). On December 12, 2015, a replica of the lost painting was installed in the same spot once occupied by the original, above the altar in the Oratory of San Lorenzo in Palermo.


The Madrid- and Milan-based company, Factum Arte, created the replica using

advanced scanning technology to copy recently discovered photographs taken of the original painting in the 1950s. They also studied the brush strokes and paint density of three other Caravaggio paintings in the Church of San Luigi dei Francesi in Rome, thought to be painted at the same time as the “Nativity.” The finished painting is the same eight-feet-nine-and-a-half-inches-by-six-feet-six-inches as the original.<sup>7</sup>

The subject of Caravaggio’s “Nativity,” juxtaposed with the Crucifixion, birth and death, adds to its significance as a religious work of art. The oratory itself is significant as a surviving example from the Baroque revival period. It is a rectangular space with tall windows for daylight and the altar occupies the end wall of the room. And it is in the La Kalsa quarter,

where it stands as one of the few buildings amazingly saved from destruction during the “Sack of Palermo” in the 1950s-1980s that leveled large sections of the city in favor of modern high-rise construction. The oratory was recently restored and reopened.<sup>8</sup>

The painting depicts the birth of Christ in a stable, showing the people involved as human rather than divine. The architecture reflects the exuberance of faith and emotion surrounding the subject. The meaningfulness of both painting and architecture are amplified when married together. Surely this justifies the substitution of a replica for the original artwork.

Theft of religious art from its intended architectural setting can have multiple repercussions, but there can be multiple solutions for keeping them intact. Spiritual meaning, cultural identity, and national pride need not necessarily be sacrificed. 

#### NOTES

1. “Painting in San Diego Museum of Art may be stolen goods from Mexico,” at [bit.ly/ff-sdut](http://bit.ly/ff-sdut)
2. “Religious art returned to Mexico,” Aug. 24, 2006 at [bit.ly/ff-bbc](http://bit.ly/ff-bbc). Five vignettes from “California Museum gives up stolen painting” at [bit.ly/ff-washpo](http://bit.ly/ff-washpo)
3. “Why One Museum is Fiercely Fighting the Return of Nazi ‘Looted’ Artworks” (Oct. 30, 2015) at [bit.ly/ff-bloomberg](http://bit.ly/ff-bloomberg)
4. “800-year-old frescoes headed home to Cyprus,” at [bit.ly/ff-npr](http://bit.ly/ff-npr)
5. [bit.ly/ff-mavcor](http://bit.ly/ff-mavcor)
6. [bit.ly/ff-menil](http://bit.ly/ff-menil)
7. “Restitution of a lost beauty: Caravaggio ‘Nativity’ replica brought to Palermo” in *The Guardian*, Dec. 10, 2015 at [bit.ly/ff-guardian](http://bit.ly/ff-guardian) and “Painting stolen by the Mafia is resurrected” in *The Daily Mail.com*, Dec. 11, 2015 at [bit.ly/ff-dailymail](http://bit.ly/ff-dailymail) and *Factum Arte* article, [bit.ly/ff-factumarte](http://bit.ly/ff-factumarte) and “Stolen Caravaggio brought back to life” (Jan. 27, 2016) at [bit.ly/ff-skynews](http://bit.ly/ff-skynews)
8. “The Masterpiece that may never be seen again” (Dec. 21 2008) in [bit.ly/ff-guardian-2](http://bit.ly/ff-guardian-2)

# Learning from Aleppo

## ENDANGERED, DAMAGED, AND DESTROYED WORLD HERITAGE SITES

Text and illustrations by  
Terry Welker, FAIA

AS AN ARCHITECT IN THE MIDWEST, I AM easily horrified by the destruction of sacred sites far away from here in the Middle East. By now, the civil war in Syria and the City of Aleppo has crept into the American subconscious. But this war is not a simple two-sided skirmish. It's complicated by the number international proxies and the unrecognized jihadist state of the Islamic State of Iraq and Lavent (ISIL). ISIL and related terrorist organizations have been deliberately destroying and stealing cultural heritage since 2014 in Iraq, Syria and Libya, particularly religious historical buildings, many of them World Heritage sites. I'm left asking myself, "what can I possibly do to make sense of this and seek to make a difference?"

### BACKGROUND

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations that aims "to contribute to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and intercultural dialogue" through multiple activities. One of the significant ways it accomplishes this is through designating places of natural and manmade cultural significance as World Heritage Sites. Heritage sites are initially placed on a tentative list before a more exhaustive process of documentation required for inscription as a World Heritage Site.

Today, approximately 20 percent of the properties inscribed on the World Heritage List are considered religious or spiritual and constitute the largest thematic category. The idea of protecting heritage dates back to the Athens Charter of the First international Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments in 1931. The Venice

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*The Temple of Bel, Palmyra, Syria, before destruction.*



*Destruction of the Temple of Baalshamin, Palmyra, Syria.*

Charter of 1964 strengthened this and established the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), which advises UNESCO on World Heritage Sites. It wasn't until the 1972 UNESCO Convention that two separate movements to preserve cultural and natural sites merged. Important writing contributes to the movement substantially in 2003 at the ICCROM Forum on Living Religious Heritage: Conserving the Sacred. Finally, in 2008 ICOMOS adopted the Quebec Declaration on the Preservation of the Spirit of Place.

Paraphrasing the Declaration, ICOMOS calls on the world to address the following principles:

First, rethink the spirit of place. Intangible cultural heritage elements (memories, narratives, rituals, festivals, documents etc.) must be considered in conjunction with tangible

elements (sites, buildings, objects etc.) when considering all legislation, conservation, and restoration projects. Because spirit of place is complex, governments and stakeholders must call upon multidisciplinary research teams and traditional practitioners to better understand and preserve. Because spirit of place is continuously reconstructed, it can vary from culture to culture and a place can have several spirits and can be shared by different groups.

Second, we must identify the threats to spirit of place. Climatic change, mass tourism, armed conflict, and urban development are threats that need better understanding in order to establish preventative measures and sustainable solutions. Inhabitants and local authorities need awareness and preparation to deal with a changing world. Shared places are prone to conflict and need specific management plans and strategies for



multicultural societies, especially for the protection of minorities.

Third, the spirit of place must be safeguarded. Training, forums, and consultations by experts of different backgrounds are needed for the development of programs and legal policies, especially for intangible components. Modern digital technologies should be used to their full advantage to create multimedia inventories that integrate tangible and intangible elements of heritage and facilitate the diversity and constant renewal of documentation.

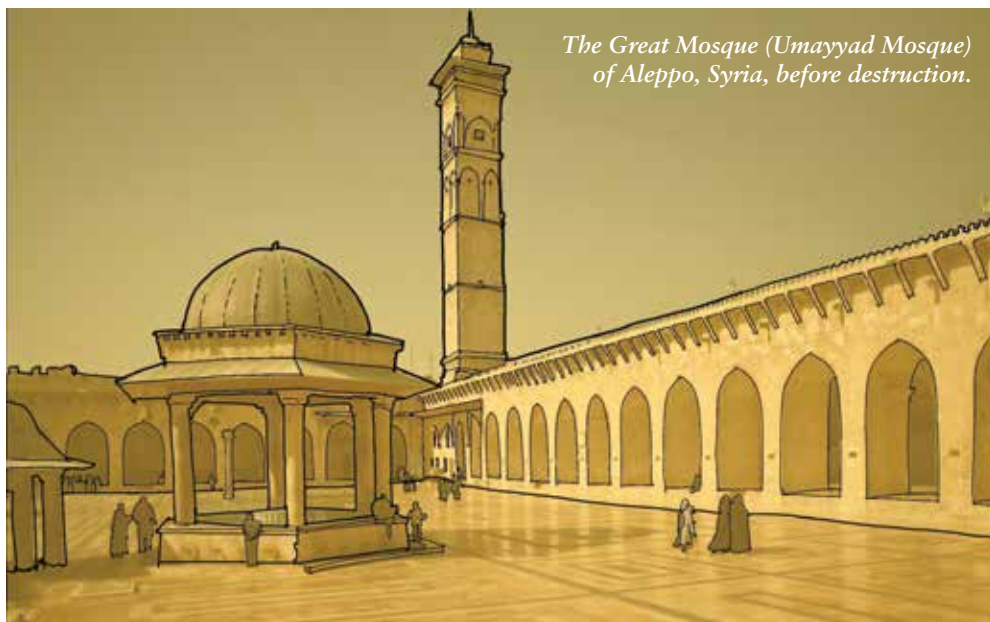
Finally, there is a duty to transmit the spirit of place. It takes people, interactive communication, and participation by concerned communities to safeguard, use, and enhance the spirit of place. Local communities are in the best position to understand the spirit of place and should use formal and non-formal means of transmission to safeguard the spirit of place but more importantly the sustainable and social development of the community. Intergenerational involvement and different cultural groups associated with a site are all necessary in policy-making and management of the spirit of place.

The role of stakeholders cannot be overstated. In 2010 in Kiev the United Nations and UNESCO conducted an international seminar on the role of religious communities in the management of World Heritage properties. Living religious and sacred sites especially require specific policies because of their spiritual nature. Stakeholders in need of sustainable cooperation include religious communities, traditional believers, indigenous peoples, governments, professionals, relevant experts, funding bodies, and others. The result was the Statement on the Protection of Religious Properties within the Framework of the World Heritage Convention.

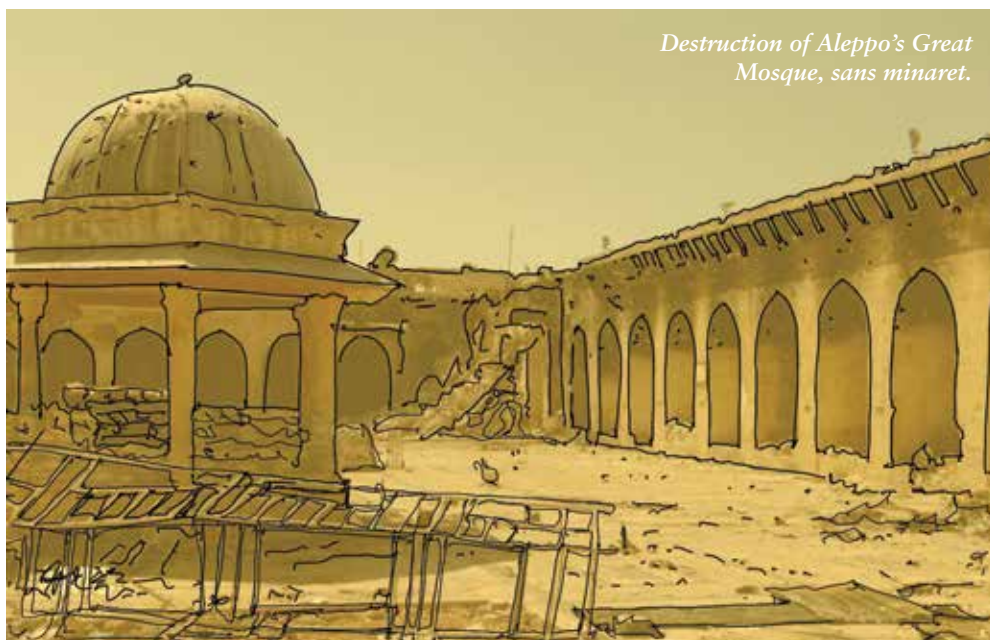
The World Heritage Committee and the Initiative on Heritage of Religious Interest continues its work through the World Heritage Centre headquartered in Paris. The most recent efforts are now aimed at integrating a number of guiding principles for PRI-SM (Properties of Religious Interest – Sustainable Management) into cultural policies at local, national, regional, and international levels. The first regional conference, held in early 2016 for parts of Europe, has begun to map out these guidelines to enhance the rapprochement of cultures to enable harmonious relations among peoples.

#### TERROR AND DESTRUCTION IN SYRIA AND IRAQ

The threat of destruction to monuments during armed conflict is not new. For thousands of



*The Great Mosque (Umayyad Mosque) of Aleppo, Syria, before destruction.*



*Destruction of Aleppo's Great Mosque, sans minaret.*

years “holy wars” included the eradication of religious sites as a way to “cleanse” the occupied territory and to terrorize and debase the occupied inhabitants through the destruction of their spiritual culture. More recently, Nazi plunder and destruction during World War II is well documented. At the end of the war the Third Reich had accumulated hundreds of thousands of cultural objects through the systematic looting of occupied territories. Hitler and Goering, dissatisfied with the current state of German art, attempted to sell nearly 16,000 paintings and sculptures, condemning modern art as an act of cultural purification. This became part of the propaganda machine and infamously burned almost a third of the collection. Poland in particular suffered from the policies of cultural genocide. Thousands of scholars and artists were killed. An estimated 43 percent of Polish cultural heritage was

stolen or destroyed, including 25 museums.

Thankfully, the Monuments, Fine Arts and Archives program (MMFA), also known as the “Monuments Men,” was created to locate, protect, restore, and provide restitution and repatriation of countless cultural objects on behalf of the Allied Forces as the war was coming to a close. This led to the 1956 international treaty we know today as Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict.

World War II was a “conventional war” with known countries, governments, borders, and allied forces. The situation in the Middle East today is far more complex. Three monotheist religions in a common land have an interwoven history fraught with centuries of war. Even though they are guided by religious texts that espouse peace and harmony, the Arab Spring of 2012 unleashed a torrent of persecution.

Among the actors arose an occupying force known as ISIS or ISIL or DAIISH or DAASH. This is a terrorist organization known for its destruction of cultural heritage sites, ethnic cleansing, and war crimes. Its origin goes back to 1999 with al-Queda and the Iraqi insurgency in 2003 and the invasion of Iraq by Western forces. They gained prominence in 2014 as an unrecognized state, a militant group claiming to lead a worldwide caliphate in the form of extreme fundamentalist Salafi Jihadism.

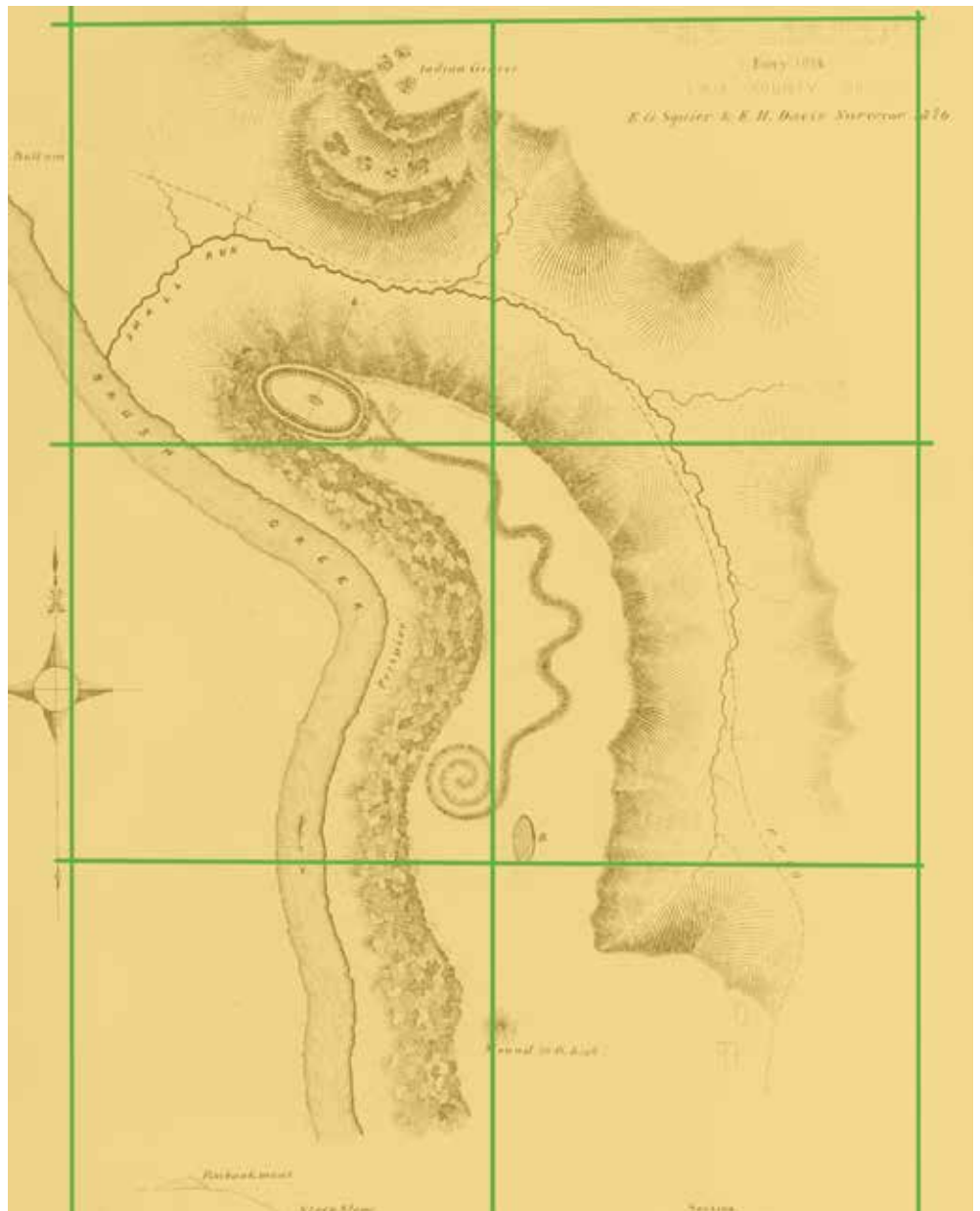
Casual observance might lead one to believe that the destruction of heritage sites and objects would be just mindless vandalism. However, there are ideological justifications ISIL makes because of its extreme adherence to Salafism, which places great importance on creating a monotheistic society and abolishing all idolatry and polytheism. The group's actions become easy to follow when they are understood as a command from Allah. The ancient Assyrian capitol of Nimrud was razed by bulldozers in early 2015 and later the Syrian city of Palmyra severely damaged as a direct result of this extremist initiative. The targets throughout the region are primarily religious and sacred.

Besides the ideological justification there are also some practical reasons for the terrorism. ISIL shocks the world with these destructions with extensive media coverage and effective use of social media. This creates a cultural genocide, wiping away all traces of previous cultures and civilization. A related strategy allows the looting and selling of antiquities on the black market to help finance the caliphate, despite a United Nations ban in the trade of artifacts.

#### DAMAGE REPORT: WHAT CULTURAL GENOCIDE LOOKS LIKE TODAY

UNESCO began to sound the alarms of cultural destruction and eradication in 2012 when World Heritage Sites such as the Ancient City of Aleppo, Great Mosque of Aleppo, and Citadel of Aleppo suffered heavy shelling in 2012 with the civil war. It only got worse until rebel forces were finally extricated in 2016. In June of 2013 UNESCO placed all six of Syria's World Heritage Sites on the list of endangered sites.

In 2014 as ISIL came into prominent power, reports and photographs documented the regular destruction of multiple Shiite mosques and shrines throughout Iraq. To name a few, in Mosul, a city in northern Iraq, ISIL targeted religious sites sacred to both Islam and Christianity. By February 2015 they had destroyed the 12<sup>th</sup>-century Khudr Mosque in central Mosul. In May 2015, the United



*Squire and Davis archeological record of the Great Serpent Mound.*

Nations General Assembly unanimously passed a resolution stating ISIL's destruction of cultural heritage may amount to a war crime and urging international measures to halt such acts to no avail. In July 2015 they used explosives to bring down the mosque and the tomb of the prophet Jonah. Churches were not spared, either. The 7<sup>th</sup>-century Green Church and the 4<sup>th</sup>-century Mar Behman Monastery were both destroyed.

ISIL had captured the city of Palmyra, Syria, a World Heritage Site, by May of 2015 and released a video of undamaged Roman colonnades, the Roman Theatre, and the Temple of Bel. By the end of August, it was all gone, including the 1<sup>st</sup>-century Temple of Baalshamin. This was confirmed by the UN by reviewing satellite imagery. By October seven ancient tower tombs and the Monumental Arch had been blown up. As ISIL was

retreating, they caused extensive damage by blowing up parts of the 13<sup>th</sup>-century Palmyra Castle.

According to the Syrian director of antiquities, restoration of sites such as the Temple of Bel, the Temple of Baalshamin, and the Monumental Arch will be attempted using the surviving remains and anastylosis, a reconstruction technique whereby a building or monument is restored using the original architectural elements to the greatest degree possible. The Venice Charter of 1964 details the rigorous scientific process for such projects.

Thankfully, there are some valuable resources to help out. After the Palmyra incidents in August 2015, the Institute for Digital Archaeology, a joint effort between Harvard University and Oxford University, announced plans to work with UNESCO to send 5,000 3-D cameras to partners in the Middle East.





*The Great Serpent Mound undulation seen during the annual winter solstice luminaire.*

The goal was to get these tools into the hands of these partners in advance of ISIL's militant advances in Iraq and Syria. Dubbed the "New Monuments Men" by *Newsweek*, volunteers were able to digitally record the ancient ruins. Months later all that remained were these 3-D digital records.

#### BRINGING LESSONS HOME

Back home in the Midwest, the subject of World Heritage Sites is ever present. We have only 21 World Heritage Sites in the US with very few of them cultural, and none in Ohio. In 2008 the Hopewell Ceremonial Earthworks was one of 11 sites in the country to be added to the World Heritage Tentative List by the Department of the Interior. It includes the Newark Earthworks, just east of Columbus, the Fort Ancient Earthworks in southeast Ohio, and five geometric complexes within the Hopewell Culture National Historic Park near Chillicothe. Another sacred ancient site on the list is the Serpent Mound in Adams County, also in southern Ohio. The Serpent Mound is estimated to have been created around 1066 while the Hopewell mounds predated it by nearly a thousand years.

When discussing ancient sites it is worth asking "what makes it sacred?" There are a number of factors. First, many earthworks, such as Mound City, served as a necropolis for cremations and burials. Second, they often were aligned with solar or lunar astronomical events that tie the order of the cosmos to important beliefs, activities, and rituals of ancient life. It's important to realize that ancient cultures did not segregate their lives into neat parcels the way we are accustomed to in contemporary Western culture. Their lives were a "compact mythical experience" that integrated religion, art, planting, harvesting, hunting, eating, family, community, life, and death. Much of life was sacred.

Archeological studies of Ohio's hilltop and geometric earthworks have been going on since the mid 1800s. Excavations of these Hopewell-era

sites have revealed a lot about the cultures that built them, yet the Great Serpent Mound has remained more mysterious. We know that there are astronomical alignments within the serpent's coils that coincide with the equinoxes and the solstices. Current visitors to the Serpent bring a wealth of interpretations to the site, especially at the summer solstice. Annually, the poetic experience is the winter equinox luminaire festival. Volunteers line the quarter-mile-long mound with candles, which are lit beginning with a single flame that gets passed from person to person after a ceremonial prayer.

The Hopewell Earthworks are poised to become the US's next UNESCO World Heritage Site, but the biggest concern at this nexus in time with UNESCO is whether the current political climate of the US will threaten their inscription. In 2012 UNESCO recognized Palestine as a member. This triggered a 20-year-old law passed by Congress that cut off dues and put us into the status of an "observer state." We are potentially on the cusp of this again because of international politics. Volunteers, local and state government agencies, and a host of academics and professionals have been working for years to bring these sacred places to the world stage and a much-needed protective status. There are a couple more final steps in the process but we need Congress and the new leadership of the Department of the Interior to stay the course and not dismiss the UN and UNESCO out of hand. Louisiana and Texas have already seen the benefits of successful UNESCO inscriptions in their states (Poverty Point and San Antonio's Missions). Many other states with nominated sites on the new, just-released Tentative List stand to suffer the consequences if their World Heritage nominations are not advanced. Unity Temple in Oak Park, Illinois, is perhaps the best-known sacred religious place as part of a collection of 11 Frank Lloyd Wright buildings spread across the country.

I think I'll write to my congressional leaders today. 

# Art for Refugees

By Shauna Lee Lange

New York-based Sara Green was an international professional dancer for over a decade. In 1999, when her change-of-career leanings coincided with the Balkan Yugoslavia crisis, she knew she wanted to help people. Her brother, a war correspondent and journalist, told Green that he kept seeing and hearing of children left to the unrelenting winter mountains. How could she be of help to them, she wondered. Green knew that to truly effect change, she would need additional communication skills, credentials, and an influential network beyond her education in art and history. This led to her earning an MBA in finance and economics from the Columbia University Graduate School of Business.

Green's seed idea, which continues to be supported by educators, was to develop an educational curriculum for internally displaced refugees. Her unique and cross-modal organization, known as Art for Refugees in Transition, helps elders transfer cultural traditions top down, and assists children in retaining knowledge from the bottom up. The program teaches refugees how to teach about cultural traditions, not what to teach, during a two-to-five-year incubation period with an end goal for self-sustainability.


Green is a healer and a builder. She seeks to restore individual self-worth, community self-identification, and intergenerational relationships through cultural exchange. Her work has taken the organization to Northern Thailand, Colombia, Egypt, and Jordan in partnership with hosting groups.

In 2007, Green attempted an "Art for Refugees" program in New Haven, Connecticut, and in Ithaca, New York, for resettled refugees, and found her efforts to reach disenfranchised populations in the US took on a very different post-emergency role. She says agencies are generally overwhelmed with meeting essential survival needs such as food, water, shelter, safety, and medical care. Art for Refugees in Transition's curriculum is often last on a long list of emergent acculturation and integration issues. Where she's considered art applications for indigenous peoples, she's encountered an established hierarchy incongruent with her model and traditions unwelcoming to outsiders.

Green believes that in working with refugees, either in the US or abroad, one must be vigilant about not becoming what she describes as

voyeurs or users. "To abuse the rights of refugees as a people is to abuse who they are," she says. "While we are seeking to protect their cultural tenants, we must not do so from 'The Great American' point of view. We must not look down on the most vulnerable. Our work should be for them, by them, to them, and with them. In this soul work, we must not make others our poster children."

*Painter Jason John's 'Don't Worry Ricder' seems to capture the sense of displacement and unease experienced by many refugees, this portrait suggesting a contemporary saint.*

Largely supported by charitable grants and philanthropic gifting, Green is now looking to marry Art for Refugees with larger refugee plans inherent in Mercy Corps, Red Cross, or like-minded NGO relief programs. She seeks openings for inclusion into a larger playbook with a wider reach. You can learn more about the program and contact Green at: [artforrefugees.org](http://artforrefugees.org). 



THE AUTHOR IS THE FOUNDER OF THE ART EVANGELIST ([THEARTEVANGELIST.COM](http://THEARTEVANGELIST.COM)), A FULL-SERVICE LITURGICAL ART ADVISORY SPECIALIZING IN ART INTEGRATION FOR SACRED SPACES AND PUBLIC PLACES.



# Protecting Sacred Space at the World Trade Center

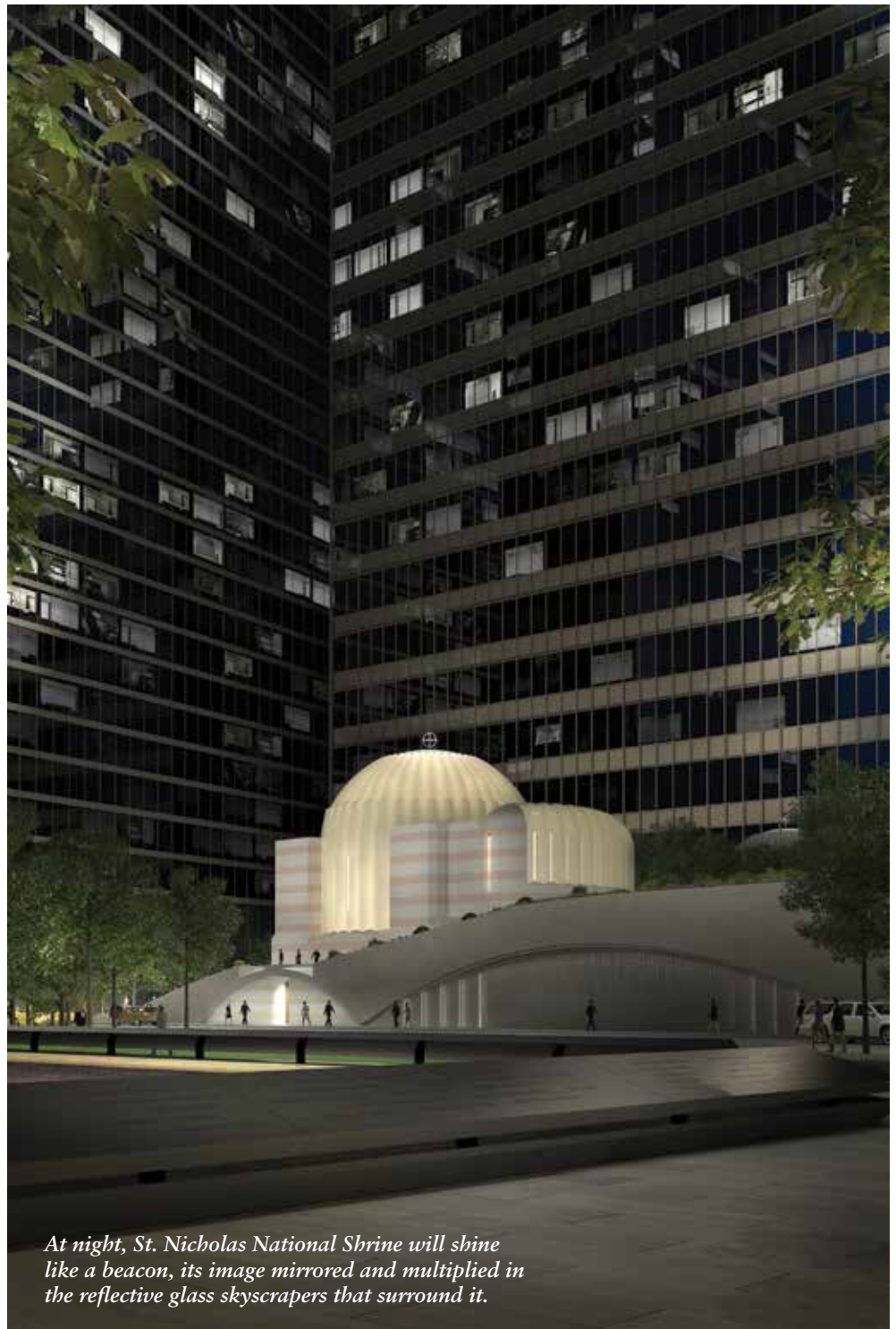
By Judith Dupré

QUESTIONS ABOUT SAFETY ARE RIFE AT THE World Trade Center in lower Manhattan because of the site's unique history and the sheer number of people there on any given day. To get inside the heads of garden-variety pickpockets and those with darker motives, the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, which owns the site, has integrated an array of security features. Some—sally ports, credentialing booths, street bollards—are visible, while others, delineated in classified documents, are known only to a few. To quantify these efforts in another way: from the 2015 operating budget of \$2.9 billion, about \$800 million will be spent on security. Patrick J. Foye, the Port's executive director, agrees that it is "a shockingly high number, but given the demands of the 9/11 world, not surprising."

Perhaps the best indication, however, of the extent of these precautions is the presence of St. Nicholas National Shrine, the diminutive Greek Orthodox church that is now under construction above the site's most dangerous spot, the subterranean Vehicle Security Center, where all entering vehicles are screened for explosives.

Moreover, St. Nicholas is the only religious structure at the Trade Center, now reconstructed after the original buildings were destroyed in the attack. When it's completed in 2018, the church will be open to the public seven days a week, a place for believers and nonbelievers alike. Greek Orthodox rites, which typically involve outdoor processions, will continue here, where the role and presence of religion has been deeply contested.

Clearly, for many reasons, the church is vulnerable. This does not trouble Father Alexander Karloutsos, Protopresbyter of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and also a Port Authority chaplain. "We believe in the resurrection, so to be concerned about location would be antithetical to our faith," he says. "Everybody knows the word xenophobia, a Greek word, which is fear of a stranger. Well, there's another Greek word, philoxenia, which is the love of the stranger. This church will be one of philoxenia, and people will always be able to come and be embraced, affirmed, and supported." In late 2016 a temporary Justinian cross was installed atop St. Nicholas's dome, the first overtly religious symbol at Ground Zero. Steven Plate, who directed World Trade Center construction for the Port Authority, reiterated that inclusivity, welcoming all denominations and creeds.



*At night, St. Nicholas National Shrine will shine like a beacon, its image mirrored and multiplied in the reflective glass skyscrapers that surround it.*

The church's privileged location relative to the overall site was decided after years of litigation. The original St. Nicholas was founded in 1916 at 155 Cedar Street in a row house that was once a tavern. The church, one of four Christian houses of worship near the Trade Center, was the only one destroyed on September 11, crushed when the South Tower fell. Because the Port Authority needed the

Cedar Street parcel and its air rights for the Vehicle Security Center, the parish agreed to move. However, years passed as the agency and the church negotiated where to locate

THE WRITER SERVES ON FAITH & FORM'S EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD AND IS THE AUTHOR OF *ONE WORLD TRADE CENTER: BIOGRAPHY OF THE BUILDING* (2016), FROM WHICH PORTIONS OF THIS ARTICLE WERE EXCERPTED.



*Aerial rendering of Liberty Park and St. Nicholas National Shrine from the north.*

the new sanctuary and how much the authority would contribute to its rebuilding. Finally, in 2011, the archdiocese swapped its Cedar Street site for the Liberty Street location, and agreed to a smaller church. The Port bore the expense of constructing the church's platform and foundations; the church paid for costs from the platform up. Santiago Calatrava won the competition to design the church in 2012. Construction began in 2014.

Wisely, Calatrava did not seek to compete with the Trade Center's other signature structures, including his own Transportation Hub, all of them virtuosic displays of technology. Instead, his design is distinguished by its simplicity. Calatrava mined the distant past for its forms and inspiration. The church—a circular domed building bracketed by four towers—combines elements of two landmark churches in Istanbul: the Hagia Sophia and the Church of St. Saviour in Chora (also known by its Turkish name, Kariye Camii), a cultural

treasure second only to the Hagia Sophia. Calatrava's design synthesizes the structural, historical, theological bases of these earlier churches and, appropriately at this location, melds Eastern and Western symbolism.

The structure is a double-wall construction. The exterior concrete walls are sheathed in glass panels that contain thin sheets of white Pentelic marble, quarried in Greece. At night, illuminated by LEDs, the marble becomes translucent and glows. During the day, the church appears to have been cut from solid stone. Just over 48 feet in diameter, the dome is scalloped with 40 ribs. It is supported by the corner towers, which also provide ventilation and house mechanical systems for the church and lower garage. Forty clerestory windows, echoing those at the Hagia Sophia, bring sunlight inside. Clear glass windows on the eastern and western sides invite in additional light. There are no windows on the south or north sides. The design encourages the act of

turning inward, rather than outward, for solace and strength.

The church fulfills two roles: It operates as a regular parish, conducting weekly services, as well as baptisms, weddings, and ordinations. Secondly, the Greek Orthodox Church of America has designated it a National Shrine, signaling its larger significance.

While St. Nicholas owns the church building, everything just outside that structure is a public park, which anyone, including the parish, can use. This is noteworthy in light of the importance of processions in Orthodox liturgy. On Good Friday, for instance, church members mourn the crucified Christ by carrying a flower-covered coffin through the streets. Again, Father Alex is not worried about how New Yorkers will respond to these displays, pointing out that free religious expression is a tenet of the American democracy.

St. Nicholas's hospitality will include and welcome the stranger. In fact, the parish





*Planters define the park's pathways and subtly direct pedestrian traffic. Their angular, fractal shapes are a nod to the fractured aesthetic of Daniel Libeskind's 2003 WTC master plan.*


is singularly proud that Greek Orthodoxy, a religious super-minority in the US, has been called to be the sole religious presence at the Trade Center. Mark Arey, who helped coordinate the competition to design the church, says, "It somehow seems appropriate to me that the path forward should go to a real minority in the culture. Let the minority build it, let the minority share with the majority, and show that there is a place for everybody in our culture."

The church sits on Liberty Park, an elevated precinct that stretches the length of the 16-acre site and overlooks the memorial plaza. Conceived as a colorful camouflage and green roof for the security garage beneath it, it had to accommodate both garage and church. The Downtown Streetscape Partnership (DSP, a joint venture of AECOM and Jacobs, Inc.), in collaboration with the Port Authority, designed the park. The design locates St. Nicholas on a stone base so that it appears to be built on

a plateau, reminiscent of how churches are sited on Mediterranean hillsides. Although Calatrava wanted to eliminate the park altogether so the church would sit on a flat plaza, the park designers agreed to a curved forecourt in front of the church. Another task was siting and disguising five aboveground ventilation shafts that service the lower garage; typically, such shafts are a security nightmare, since people can throw things into them. To make them feel intentional, DSP treated them as architectural features, and not something to hide with, say, landscaping. The two vents by the church are clad in matte glass that magnifies the greenery around it.

Meeting the stringent safety standards imposed on all Trade Center buildings increased construction costs considerably. Originally budgeted at \$25 million, the 200-seat sanctuary's final cost will be closer to \$44 million, funded by the Greek Orthodox Church of America and patrons from around

the globe. Additionally, St. Nicholas has established a dedicated security committee that will liaise with New York City and Port Authority police departments to develop specific safety parameters for the church before it opens.

All buildings on the site are continuously monitored from several angles by EarthCam webcams, which yield high-resolution images up to a gigapixel in size. A security measure, the webcams also allow client and contractor to observe jobsite activity and to visually document construction over time. Such footage stimulates fundraising as well, inspiring patrons and would-be patrons to track the church's progress. Both beacon and blessing, St. Nicholas anchors the World Trade Center, transmuting its sad past into future hope. Rising amid a vast commercial enterprise, it illuminates eternal, sometimes dissonant truths—us versus them, light versus darkness, wholeness versus brokenness—with forceful simplicity. 

# Sacred Architecture as Solace in an Uncertain World

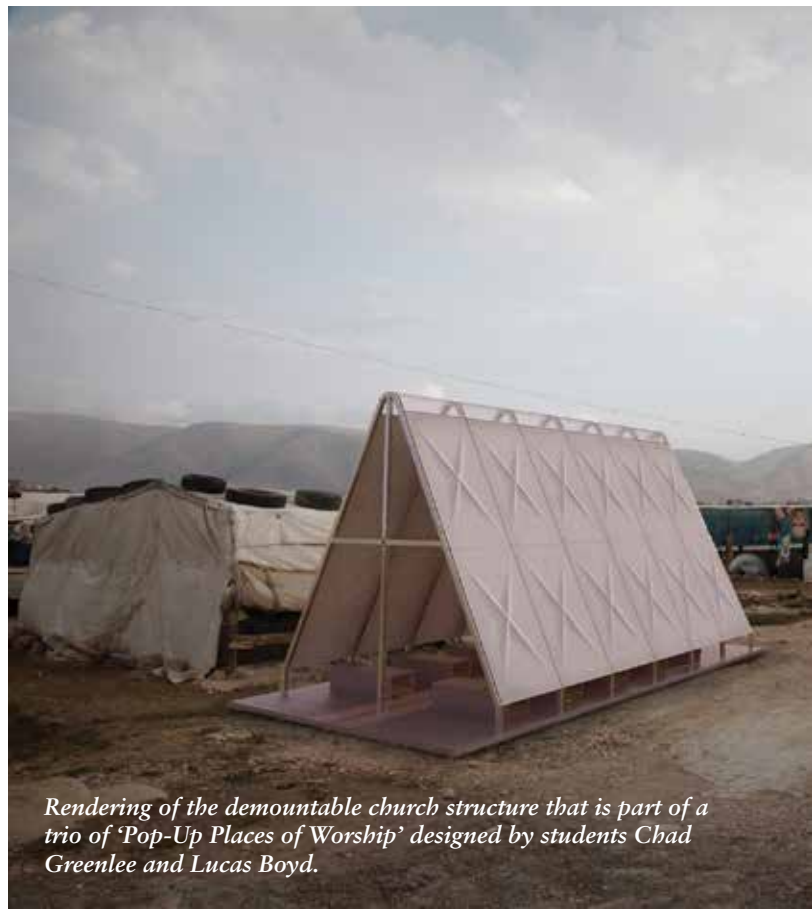
By Karla Britton

In the summer of 2016, the Chilean Pritzker Prize-winner Alejandro Aravena pressed architects to move beyond “business as usual” to address the relationship between architecture and humanitarian needs such as housing shortages, migration, and environmental disasters. Aravena claimed that universities are failing to train architects to address an imminent global housing crisis. Poverty, population growth, natural disasters, and war are combining to create demand for more than a billion homes. But architects are unable to overcome the challenges posed by politics, economics, and building codes to deliver viable solutions. “It would be great, with more than one million architects in the world,” speculated Aravena in an interview published by Dezeen, “that more solutions and more proposals try to address the issue.”<sup>1</sup>

The theme of displacement and migration has now become a focus for a number of studios and independent research projects in schools of architecture, in part as a means for rethinking a normative approach to cities and dwellings. Displacement may include the tangible impacts of climate change, refugee communities, and the flow of masses of peoples across the Middle East, Northern Africa, and Europe. Indeed, human displacement related to environmental hazards—droughts, floods, heat waves, wild fires, and rising tides—has drawn architects and planners into interdisciplinary discussions addressing global health. In addition, the focus has also included the more intangible challenges of psychological displacement. Global attention was brought to the Olympic Refugee Team which competed in the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio, and which was comprised of athletes displaced from the countries of Ethiopia, Syria, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Sudan. The design of the refugee flag, commissioned by the Refugee Nation—a bright orange banner marked with a horizontal black line, intended to evoke a life-jacket—symbolized the plights of those crossing the seas to asylum.

In this vein, “Pop-Up Places of Worship” was a recent research project at the Yale School of Architecture, carried out by second-year students Chad Greenlee and Lucas Boyd. The project (part of my seminar class, “Religion and Modern Architecture”) involved a deep reading in the context of displaced communities such as refugee camps of the typologies of the mosque, the chapel, and the synagogue, and a reassessment of the purpose of these typologies in current informal building settlements. The organizing premise of the project was that worship space should be treated as almost as fundamental to human existence as shelter itself. The project was also based on the belief that worship spaces have a real effect in the world, that communal gathering and ritual is still very much fully in evidence even in very informal settlements.

For Greenlee and Boyd, the religious space is a moment in which the rituals of disrupted and broken lives may in part “resume.” For them, places of worship may not necessarily define a basic need for human



*Rendering of the demountable church structure that is part of a trio of ‘Pop-Up Places of Worship’ designed by students Chad Greenlee and Lucas Boyd.*

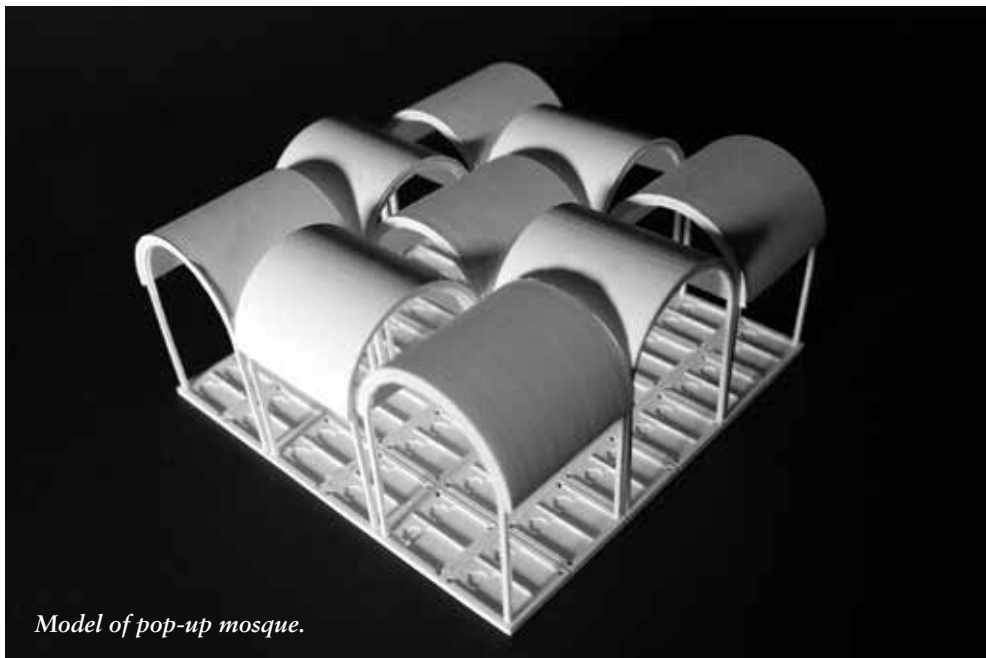
survival, yet these spaces do represent a fundamental aspect of many people’s lives to find and maintain places of meaning. In their words, the proposed worship spaces speak of the collective; to worship is “synonymous with being human.” While a small gesture, the pop-up religious space presents a provision for a right to worship even within the disturbed context of exodus; it represents an on-going commitment to the sense of community and to identifying and sustaining cultural traditions within the camp.<sup>2</sup>

In Greenlee and Boyd’s proposal, designs for churches, mosques, and synagogues can be rapidly assembled through a simple kit of building parts. Assuming a condition of highly limited resources, the idea of the pop-up is based on reduction, economy, and the notion of temporality. It challenges the idea that religious buildings need be monumental and permanent. In the words of Greenlee and Boyd, “the architecture of religion is inherently excessive.” What is necessary here is above all the symbolic or “iconographic.” They were guided by the question: “What are the critical formal pieces that connect a religious structure to a particular faith tradition? How many elements of a religious structure can be removed and still have the building retain its symbolic meaning?”

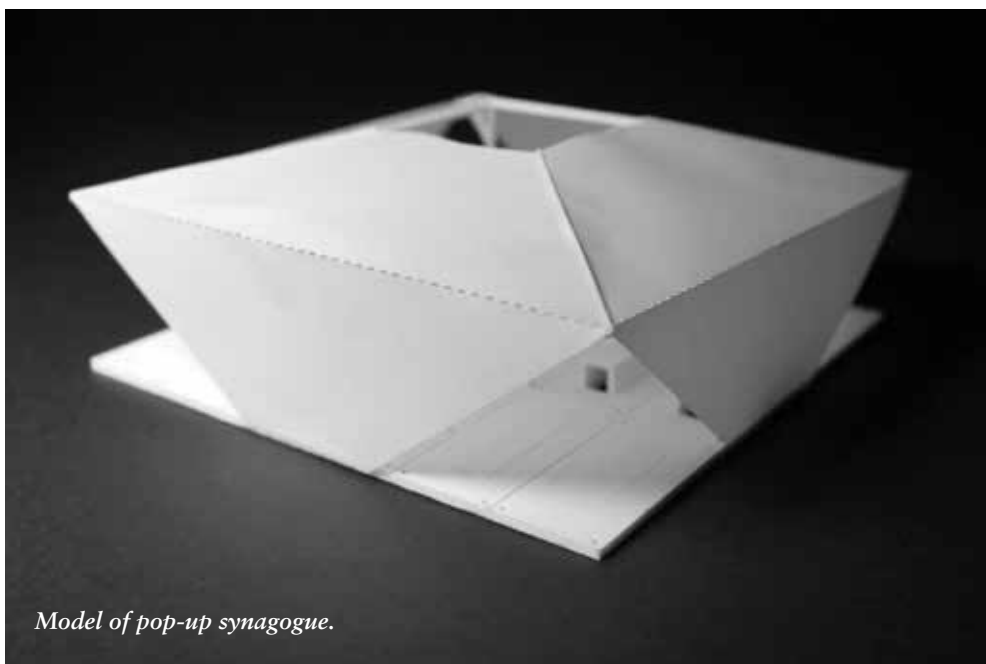
The project may be viewed within a variety of other proposals for transitory worship spaces and their relevance to humanitarian aid. The idea is most well known, for instance, through the Tokyo-based architect Shigeru Ban who is well recognized for his humanitarian work and cardboard-based structures. Ban, who won the Pritzker Prize in 2014, designed the Cardboard Cathedral in Christchurch, New Zealand as a temporary replacement for the city’s former Anglican cathedral, which was destroyed by the earthquake that struck the city in 2011. As Ban said in an interview in 2014, “When I was a student everyone was working for big developers to make big buildings. And now there are many students and younger architects who are asking to join my team, to open programs in disaster areas.”<sup>3</sup>

THE AUTHOR IS A LECTURER AT THE YALE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE. THE “POP-UP PLACES OF WORSHIP” PROJECT WAS PUBLISHED BY ARCHDAILY AND WON AN AWARD IN THE 2016 FAITH & FORM/IFRAA INTERNATIONAL AWARDS PROGRAM FOR RELIGIOUS ART AND ARCHITECTURE.





*Model of pop-up mosque.*



*Model of pop-up synagogue.*

Similarly, the key point of “Pop-Up Places of Worship” is symbolic of the needs of community, identity, and worship. It is as an experiment that asks us to think about religious structures as buildings that evoke through a rudimentary structure a sense of semi-stability. The chapel, in their scheme, resembles a basic gable roof tent with a cross-shaped support. Boyd and Greenlee’s design for a pop-up synagogue is composed of taut fabric walls over a square base with various entry points and an opening over the center, evocative of Moses’ tent of meeting in the desert. In their design for a pop-up mosque, they maintained a longitudinal axis oriented with the qibla. Based on a simple rectangular plan, Boyd and Greenlee arranged multiple modular bases for simple vaulted forms. Within a highly geometric design language, they have also adorned the floor surfaces with geometric designs.

The experience of worship, according to Greenlee and Boyd, has a universal dimension and is at the heart of what it means to be human. Multifaith centers have often been the most pragmatic solution when communities from different religious traditions require temporary spaces of worship. Yet, the importance of pluralism remained paramount in Greenlee and Boyd’s understanding of the role of culture within the temporary or informal settlement. As they explain, “the project rests on the idea

that mosques, synagogues, and chapels are identifiable precisely because they look different from one another.” Displacement forces architecture to re-address its own foundations, seeking to stake a re-examination of concepts of dwelling and a sense of place. Displacement asks for how the idea of the sacred might remain fixed in time and place and yet how it can also move from place to place. As a result, a key question emerges: How in a world shattered by so much displacement can reaffirmations of an inner constancy persist or be given metaphoric form?

The form of the refugee camp itself has also become a focus for study and action. As an informal settlement, it draws the curiosity and talents of young architects seeking to improve the living conditions of migrants or displaced

peoples. In a fundamental sense, the camp is an unrealized form of urbanism. In many ways, it is a placeless world, which therefore provides a ready laboratory for the rethinking of issues of the informal and formal; the transitory and the permanent; and the human necessity to define adaptability and places of identity, ritual, and tradition. The camp also represents confinement – months of waiting, years or whole lifecycles often spent in transit or living on the fringes of cities. It thereby represents both the physical and moral wounds of its inhabitants.

The Kakuma Refugee Camp, for example, which was originally established in 1991 in the semi-arid desert of Kenya and meant to house 8,000 refugees from Sudan, is now the largest refugee settlement in the world with 190,000



*Children in the Kakuma Refugee Camp make blocks for construction from local materials as part of Chi Zhang's work in the camp.*

inhabitants from eight countries. It has become the focus for the research of a Yale College student, Chi Zhang, involving her in months of living in the camp, recording oral histories with the refugees she encounters, and documenting their music and gatherings for worship. Based on her research, she has designed a proposed community center. In Chi's experience, Kakuma pushes into new realms not addressed by the official guidelines presented in the 600-page UNHCR Handbook for Emergencies. Chi's work instead emphasizes a more nuanced

reading of a refugee camp and its often quasi-permanence. Her work focuses on how crucial it is for architects to address the long-term impact living in the camp has on its inhabitants. Her focus is to have a real effect in the world of the camp; architecture as not something distant but fully instrumental in the lives of the Kakuma "citizens."

As the French anthropologist Michel Agier reminds us, refugee camps and their inhabitants are emblematic of a human condition that is shaped and fixed on the margins of the


world—one of its most tenacious foundations being our own ignorance of it.<sup>4</sup> While political and geopolitical studies reveal the games of power and territory that fuel and provoke the massive transfers of populations, the camps reveal another dimension: the existential context that all inhabitants of this strange "country" share through the experience of exodus of a new kind of wandering life. The camp embodies the tangible consequences of the destruction of land, houses, and towns ravaged by war, as well as the broken trajectories of lives. As Agier

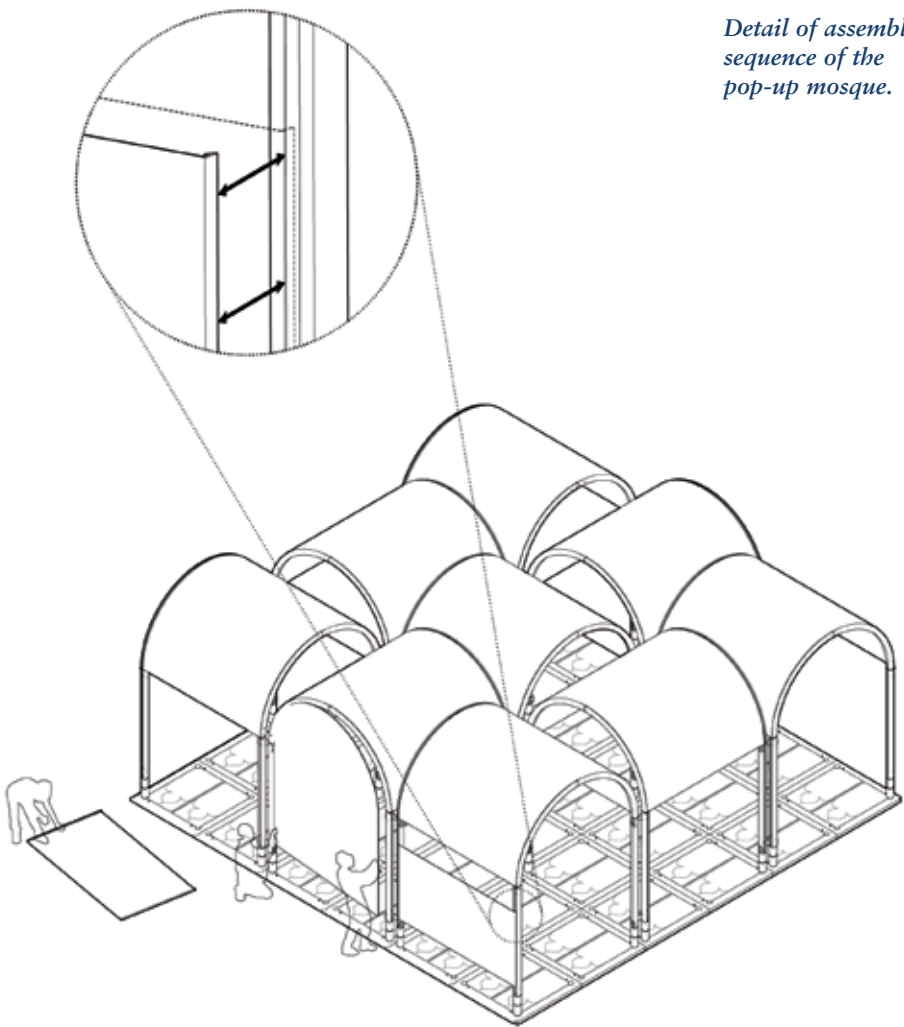




Photo: Chi Zhang

writes, “By grasping human identity at the sites of its denial, we inquire more directly into its foundations: this is the revolt of life in contact with death; it is what they call in Colombia a peace built in the midst of war, a home that is imagined throughout the exodus.”<sup>5</sup>

The projects described here, where students of architecture have taken up the challenge to imagine what spiritual spaces and community shelter might look like even in the midst of radical human displacement, aim at this very task of grasping human identity within its most transient experiences. 



*Detail of assembly sequence of the pop-up mosque.*

#### NOTES

1. See Interview with Anna Winston, January 13, 2016 (accessed 2/1/17) <https://www.dezeen.com/2016/01/13/alejandro-aravena-interview-pritzker-prize-laureate-2016-social-incremental-housing-chilean-architect/>
2. First developed as a research project in Karla Britton’s “Religion and Modern Architecture” seminar at the Yale School of Architecture (2016), the project was later published by ArchDaily <http://www.archdaily.com/789047/yale-students-propose-a-series-of-pop-up-religious-buildings-to-sustain-culture-in-refugee-camps> (accessed 2/1/17)
3. <https://www.dezeen.com/2014/04/12/architectural-culture-is-moving-in-two-directions-says-shigeru-ban-interview-milan-2014/>
4. See Mark Agier, *On the Margins of the World*, first published in French as *Aux Bords du Monde, Les Réfugiés* (Editions Flammarion, 2005), English edition (2008).
5. Ibid. p. 5.

# A Sanctuary for Interdependence

By Michael J. Crosbie • Photographs by Robert Benson

What is the role of religion today in a world torn by strife? In many instances young people now see organized religion as a problem, not a solution—a force in the world that divides people, that is intolerant, that builds walls around ideological camps that are at war with each other. Many are alarmed at how some around the world have appropriated religious organizations to use as weapons against others who do not share their beliefs, or to achieve their own worldly, selfish ends.

Today, people around the world, especially young people on college campuses, are reacting against the perceived intolerance of organized religion. Surveys from such respected research organizations as Pew, Gallup, and Trinity College all show a precipitous drop in the percentage of young people who are members of an organized religion. Yet, the number is growing of those who describe themselves as spiritual but not religious. They are looking for avenues to spirituality that value dialogue, understanding, empathy, and authenticity. Young people want to make a difference in a shrinking world, where individuals of different nationalities, cultures, and faith traditions live amid one another. Theirs is a global generation. For the first time in the history of the world we cannot choose to ignore “the other.” We must find ways to live together, to help each other, to pursue our own spirituality while respecting that of others, even those who might choose not to believe. As Pope Francis recently reflected: “We live in societies of different cultures and religions, but we are brothers and sisters.”

The recently complete Snyder Sanctuary at Lynn University in Boca Raton, Florida, is an architectural answer to facilitate this spiritual search, to help people of all backgrounds find common ground, and to inspire them. It was designed by Newman Architects (based in New Haven, Connecticut) to provide a


space for sharing, a place for those from different faith traditions, values, and cultures to meet and engage in dialogue, and to nurture the university community. The sanctuary is a spiritually uplifting space that fills one with awe. It inspires prayer, meditation, contemplation, transcendence, celebration, independence, and (perhaps, most importantly) interdependence.

The design of the sanctuary is itself a meditation on how architecture can bring people together, in community, instead of driving them apart. This pristine, white space with its polished concrete floor and natural light is defined by seven tall walls that spiral around a center point, reinforcing the idea of “centeredness,” of balance, of repose. The concrete walls create a chamber permeated by channels of light—direct and luminous—that trail through the space and across the planes that contain it throughout the day. These channels of light are admitted through slivers of space between the walls. At night, the channels transmit the illumined interior, visible from across the campus and an adjacent thoroughfare, a beacon that cannot help but communicate hope. For millennia, within the world’s spiritual architecture light has represented the presence of the deity, or has exemplified truth itself.

The walls both literally and symbolically lean upon each other, providing a web of support among the ensemble of planes. These concrete planes were lifted into place; the sanctuary construction embodies the value of uplift, of elevation. The metaphor is profound: we all need to help support each other (particularly in times of weakness or doubt). Here, the architecture exhibits a certain tenderness, inviting us to see “the other” as a potential ally—a brother or sister. Sometimes we are strong enough to take another’s burden, other times we seek the reinforcement of our fellow human beings. Within the bearing of one upon the other, we find the human spirit at its most powerful.

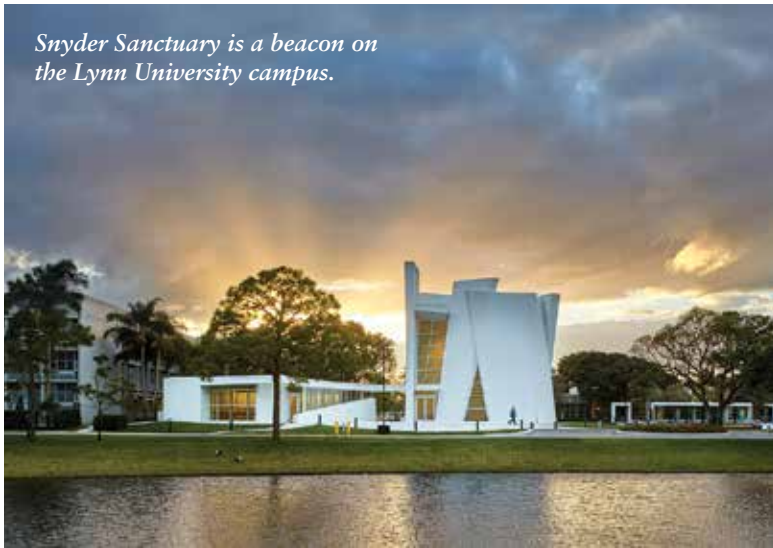
The geometry of the spiral implied by the sanctuary’s interior also touches something very deep and timeless. The spiral is the path of harmonious growth. In fact, certain proportional systems in art and architecture actually follow those found within the structure of the natural world, such as the interior of the Chambered Nautilus, or the pattern of how the seeds on the face of a sunflower grow. The very geometry of the spiral is found in interstellar space as well as at the atomic level. Snyder’s spiral geometry connects it to a great web of being, found throughout our universe. Yet, Snyder Sanctuary does not contain traditional religious symbols. It relies instead on light, color, planes, and space to inspire and to create an aura of the spiritual.

The Ying to the sanctuary’s Yang is a labyrinth inscribed in the ground right next to it. Labyrinth patterns are found in cultures all over the world, including those prehistoric. They can symbolize growth, the seasons, and the human journey through time and space. Many of the world’s religions have used the labyrinth as a form of prayer, a meditative amble, where one can journey alone or with others, during the walk coming close to each other at times and then moving far apart. The labyrinth is a geometrical allegory for the path through life, but it is not a maze (as life at times appears to be). Walking the labyrinth is a walk of faith, following a path through what might appear to be aimless treading, trusting that, with faith, you will arrive at the center.

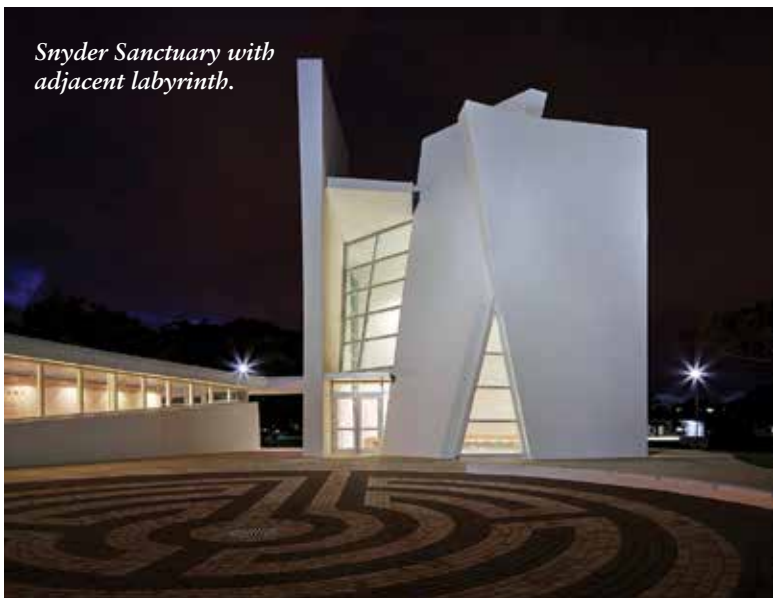
Through light, space, materials, and geometry, the design of Snyder Sanctuary recalls some of the timeless architectural qualities that have marked sacred places around the world for thousands of years. It is a new sacred space, a spiritual place for a new generation, yet it touches deep chords across the history of architecture that have long resonated in those special spots on earth that people have created to express the eternal hope in our shared humanity, and the spirit that connects us all. 

NEWMAN ARCHITECTS RECENTLY PUBLISHED A BOOK ON THE CREATION OF SNYDER SANCTUARY, WHICH IT IS OFFERING AT NO CHARGE. CONTACT PETER NEWMAN (PNEWMAN@NEWMANARCHITECTS.COM) OR NICHOLAS VITTORIO (NVITTORIO@NEWMANARCHITECTS.COM) FOR MORE INFORMATION.





*Snyder Sanctuary is a beacon on the Lynn University campus.*



*Snyder Sanctuary with adjacent labyrinth.*



Ground Floor Plan



*Interior is radiant with light admitted through voids between its seven tilt-up concrete walls.*



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## “THE PIERLESS BRIDGE”

**H**ow should we protect and, in the event of disruption, help communities recreate “sacred space”? The question itself provokes more questions, including unintended consequences. Set aside the goal of an impregnable sanctuary and think about the sacred itself. If we begin with the assumption that certain places are worth preserving because they have value to the community (the approach of historic preservation) then the process of identifying what creates that value influences the choice of preservation strategy. The characteristics of the sacred and how significance is discerned are what needs our protection – everything else is secondary.

What are we protecting the sacred from? This issue considers external attacks and calamities, but look further. Serious threats include deterioration through neglect, abandonment due to a shrinking congregation, or sacrilege beyond recovery. Sacred places are dynamic in time but not necessarily in form; the sacred inside may be suspended in time but the physical form can change with cultural developments. The mosque-cathedral of Cordoba, Spain manifests an ever-changing palimpsest of relations between Muslims, Christians, and Jews.


Can the sacred be harmed beyond recognition? Is there a threat by the increasing number of Americans, unaffiliated with any organized religion, who accept the existence of the sacred yet resist perceived barriers in the form of designated buildings and bloated bureaucracies created by organized religion? If we view religion as a socio-cultural construct embracing ideas such as Mircea Eliade’s concept of continual re-enactment of the cosmogony in order to “live in the sacred” as one way to transcend subjective experience, can we accept a redefinition of how and where that transcendence can occur: a forest clearing, a dome of stars above, symphonic bliss, or (as in Hmong culture) epileptic

THE LAST WORD \* SUSETTE H.H.C. NAYLOR, AIA

seizures as portals to the sacred? As Eudora Welty once wrote: “As soon as a man stopped wandering and stood still and looked around him, he found a god in that place.”

Nomadic groups and wanderers/seekers of the “truth” and their diverse strategies to connect to the sacred are viable examples to explore for both displaced communities and the increasing number of “nomads” (work-induced or voluntary) who might use virtual reality to connect to the sacred in “the cloud.”

In an historic church we were working on, a stained glass window was vandalized. An intense discussion followed about an appropriate response. The decision was not to add a protective exterior shield; instead, the vestry members wished to act within the tenets of how they understood their connection with the sacred. They would not erect barriers, but instead trust in their God and transmit his Word in this way (similar to the recent entreaty by Pope Francis to physically and metaphorically reinstate the “open doors” policy in churches).

Should we approach protection of the sacred as if it were a fruit--gene modification, picked unripe, bred selectively for transport, etc.--to the point of obliterating its essence? Buildings, spaces, rituals, interpretations, guides, and rules to live by can be thought of as aids to facilitate our individual connections to the sacred and to our community. They provide reinforcement through beauty, inspiration, comfort and awe, repetition and habit, the creation of community coherence and support, and perhaps (like “Third Places”) have a better chance of continued existence because the community that supports them values them. 

THE AUTHOR IS A PRINCIPAL IN THOMPSON NAYLOR ARCHITECTS IN SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA.

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