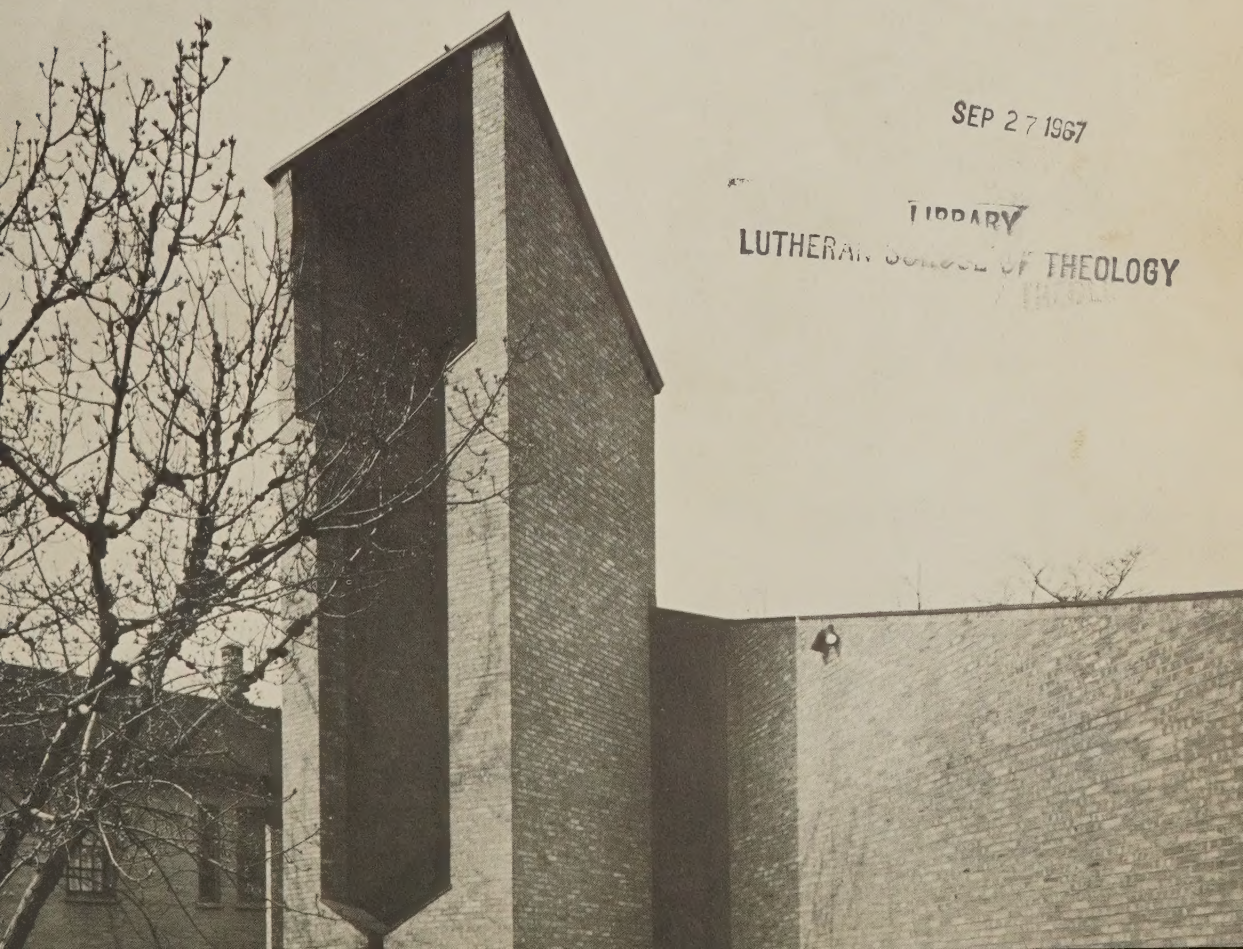


# FAITH & FORM

OF THE GUILD FOR RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE AFFILIATE OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS VOL. 1, SPECIAL ISSUE



SEP 27 1967

TIDDARY

LUTHERAN SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY



*Faith and Form*, journal of The Guild for Religious Architecture, represents the collaborative efforts of architects, clergy, artists, craftsmen—of all faiths—to develop a forum wherein the inter-relationships of theology, architecture and art as a total expression in religious architecture can be shown.

*Faith and Form*, in this first issue and in all future issues, will aspire to excellence in editorial material, presenting some of the most provocative and exciting visions which exist among thoughtful designers and critics today. It is hoped that critical reviews of contemporary art and architecture will inspire a dialogue between readers and author that will, in fact, explore all viewpoints. In addition to reviews and critiques, artists and technicians will explain their concern with the relationship of their individual contribution to the total concept.

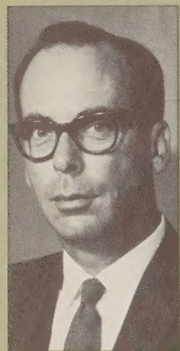
The Guild for Religious Architecture has thus accepted the responsibility to be the medium of exchange between all of the related professions to encourage this collective effort at the highest level.

Other than this special issue, which coincides with the International Congress on Religion, Architecture and the Visual Arts, *Faith and Form* will be published quarterly, starting January 1968.

The staff of *Faith and Form* is made up of members of the Guild, practicing architects, artists, craft members and clergy who are dedicating their time and energies without compensation. The staff believes that this journal can contribute to the greater understanding necessary to produce religious architecture that has integrity and purpose.

We wish to express our appreciation of the invaluable assistance given us by members of the AIA Journal staff, and those others whose counsel and support have encouraged our effort.

Benjamin P. Elliott, AIA  
Publisher & Business Manager



The first issue of *Faith and Form* comes to the architectural profession during significant times. The theological implications of new forms for churches and temples are of interest to an ever-widening number of practicing architects, educators and students.

It should be of interest to all AIA members that the Guild for Religious Architecture has now been an affiliate of the Institute for nearly two years. During this time membership has expanded steadily. It is interesting to note that included in the list of new members are well-known architects whose reputation was made in some area of secular design. Some have won honor awards for the sole church which they have designed.

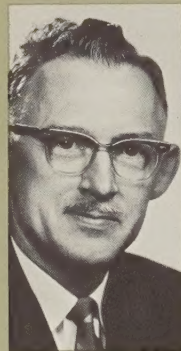
It becomes increasingly evident that the design of religious buildings has an interest for a large proportion of our profession. It is true, of course, that some say, "I never want to design another church under the control of a building committee." Others say, "We can't make any money on churches." Fortunately for the public, there are thousands of architects who are interested and willing to take on the painstaking responsibilities.

*Faith and Form* will attempt to crystalize the implications of a meaningful architecture for the needs of today's society. Hopefully, it will stimulate an active and continuing dialogue between architects about architecture. If it does only this, it will have been worth the effort by those who have produced it. It may well do much more.

It is the intention of the editorial board that the articles will be fresh, provocative and enlightening. Readers will be urged to comment, if not argue. Such a dialogue is sorely needed in the architectural profession. What *Faith and Form* is able to stimulate might well produce a climate of exchange that will affect many areas of concern.

The officers and staff of The American Institute of Architects extend their hearty best wishes for the future of *Faith and Form*. For while architecture builds on the past, it is the future with which we are concerned.

Robert L. Durham, FAIA  
President, The American Institute of Architects



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## THE GRA— ITS PROGRAM AND PURPOSES

Since its inception in 1940, The Guild for Religious Architecture has championed the cause of good design in religious architecture and its allied arts. In the intervening twenty-seven years the Guild has grown from a small, parochial organization (the Church Architectural Guild of America) to a broadly based interfaith guild, affiliated with The American Institute of Architects.

The Guild is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is primarily educational. Its membership—composed of architects, religious leaders, artists and craftsmen—is hopeful that through study and continuing dialogue, a more worthy architecture in the service of the religious communities can be developed.

The Guild program is designed to further this purpose. A national conference is scheduled each year in cooperation with religious organizations. Program themes and speakers reflect significant contemporary concerns. An architectural design competition brings before the professional and lay participants examples of new religious structures throughout the country. The award-winning designs then become part of the Guild's traveling exhibits which are shown without charge—except for transportation—to any interested group. Regional conferences are also planned, usually in joint sponsorship with local AIA chapters. The participation of representatives of the three major faiths is encouraged, in the hope that a joint sharing of problems and needs may provide hopeful solutions.

The Guild also maintains in its national headquarters in Washington, D.C. a slide library on contemporary religious architecture, possibly one of the most comprehensive in this country. The collection is made available on either a rental or purchase basis, and catalogues will be sent upon request.

*Faith and Form* represents a further effort by The Guild for Religious Architecture to provide increased understanding and heightened awareness of the potential of good design in religious art and architecture.

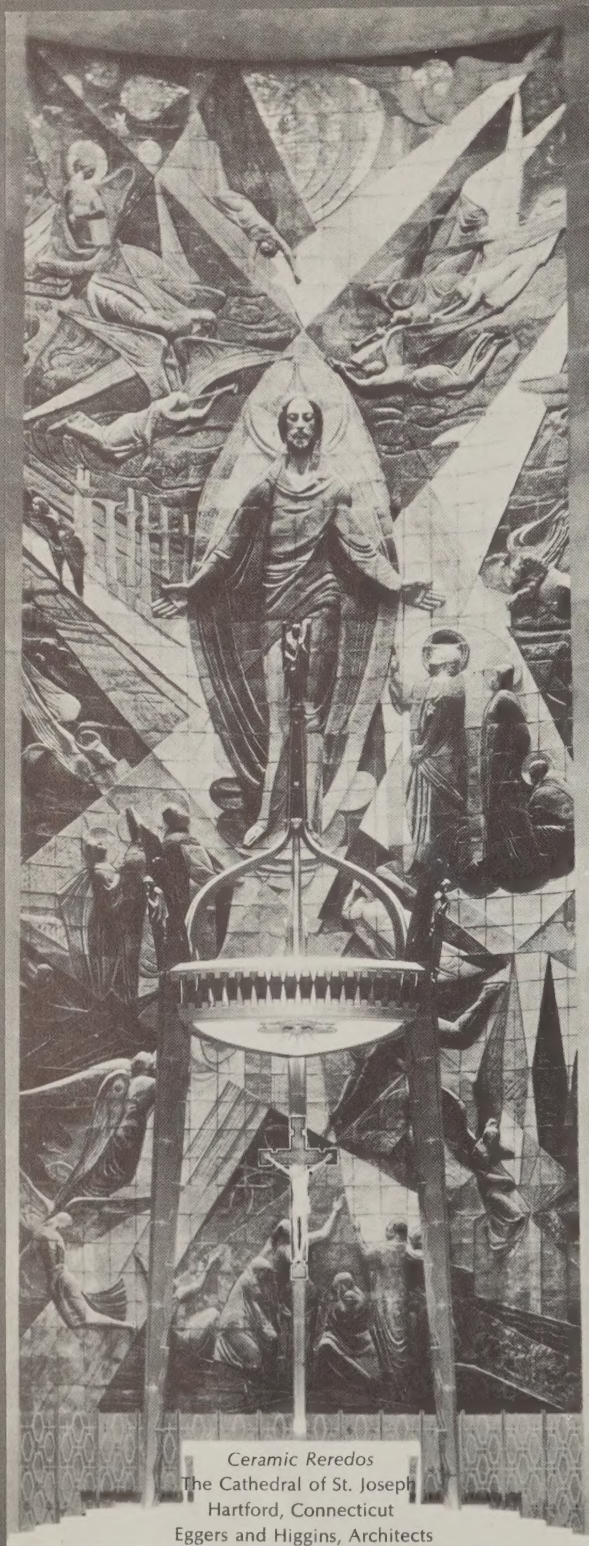
The Guild seeks to include in its membership all those concerned with providing worthy gathering places for those who worship.

Dorothy S. Adler  
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 Phone: 202-296-2997

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## 1, Special Issue

Published quarterly by  
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Second-class postage paid at Washington, D. C.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

AN INNER CITY MISSION CHURCH ..... 6

WHAT IS RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE? ..... 8

THE ARCHITECT AS ORGAN MAKER ..... 14

THE ESSENCE OF DESIGNING A SYNAGOGUE ... 16

THE 1967 INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ..... 20

CRISIS IN CHURCH MUSIC? ..... 30

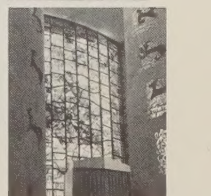
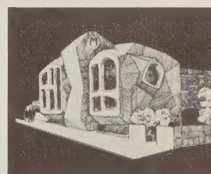
## EDITORIAL COMMENT

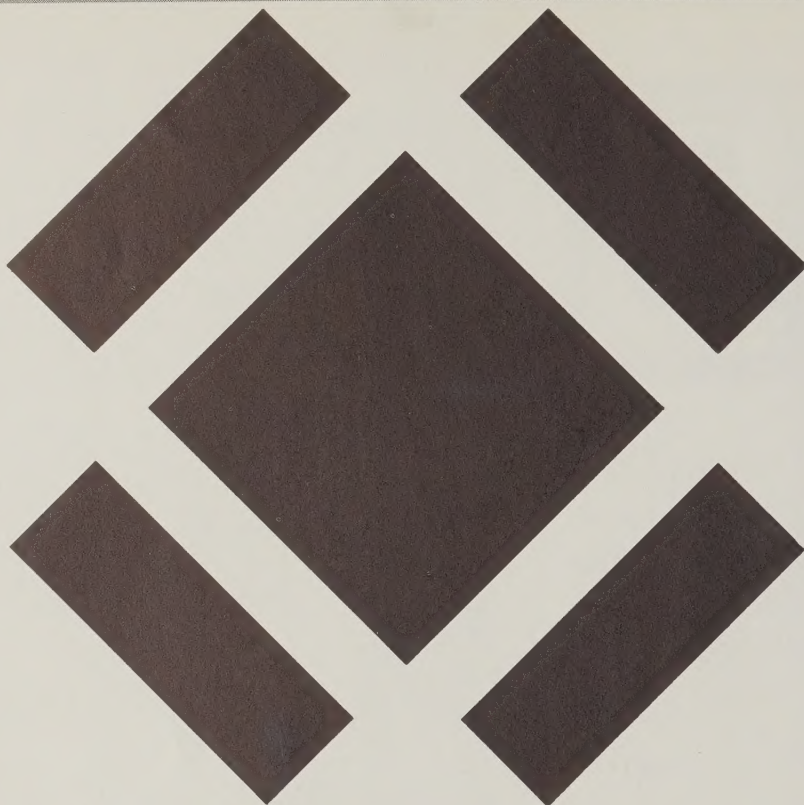
Chapel for Temple Israel, Miami, Fla. .... 10

Washington Cathedral Sculpture ..... 12

Temple Beth Zion Window, Buffalo, N.Y. .... 28

FAITH &  
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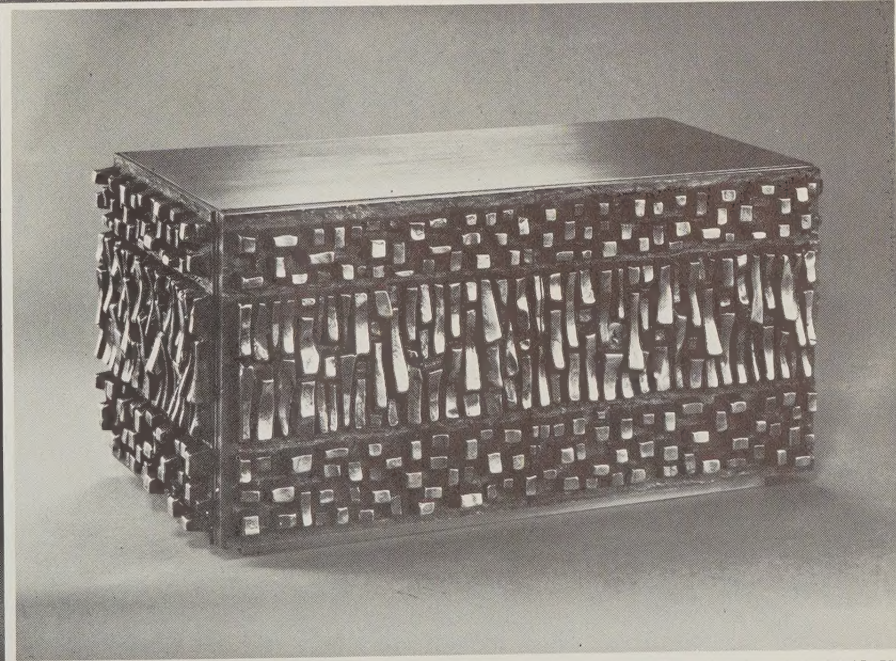
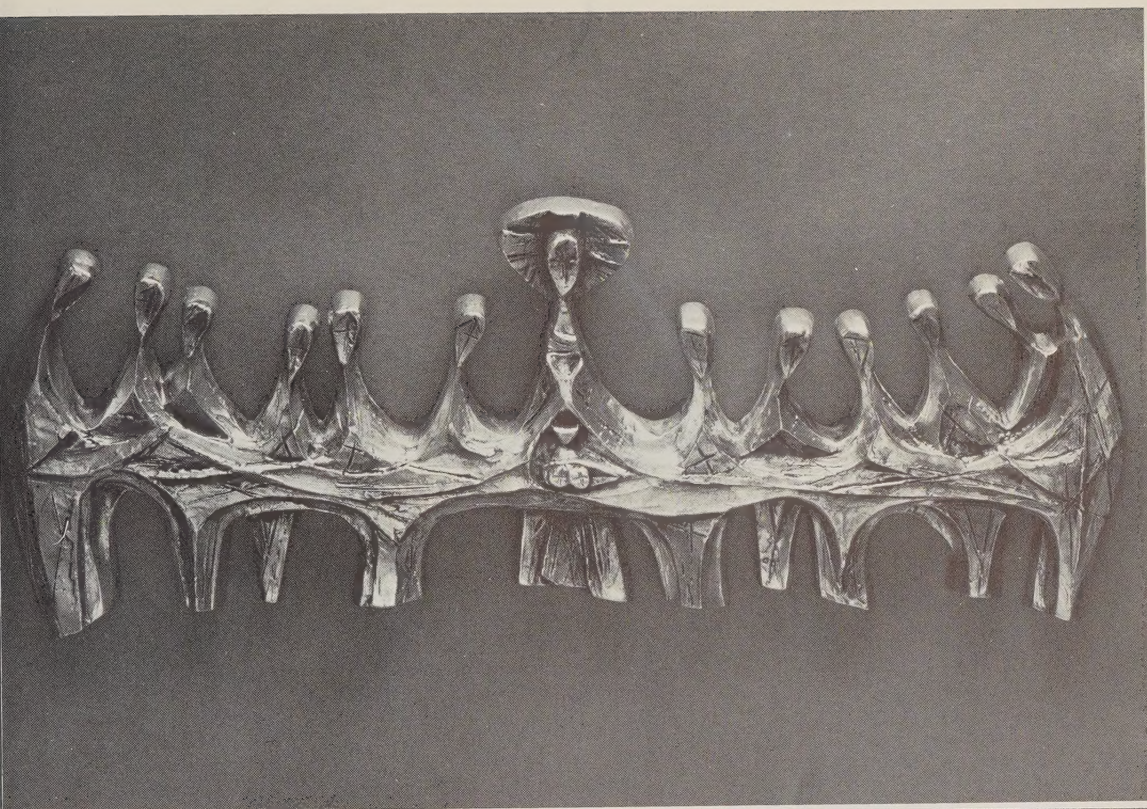
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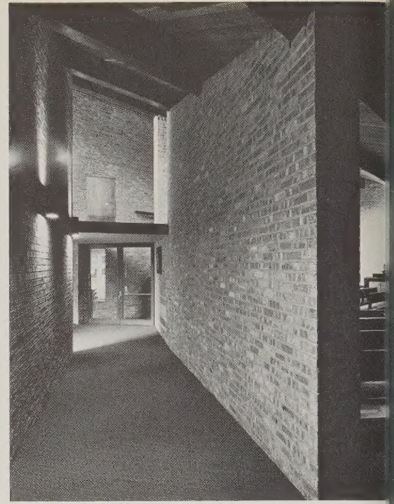


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# AN INNER CITY MISSION CHURCH





|                  |                                                         |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>PROJECT</b>   | Emmanuel Presbyterian Church                            |
| <b>LOCATION</b>  | Chicago, Illinois                                       |
| <b>ARCHITECT</b> | Edward D. Dart, FAIA, Loeb, Schlossmann, Bennett & Dart |

Emmanuel Presbyterian Church is located about two miles southwest of the Chicago Loop in an area which, the photograph shows, is old, dense, and not very prepossessing. It is mostly a residential area, and in recent years has become multiracial. The area presents the problems which in general those of the inner city church. And the attempt to meet these problems has generated both the program and the architecture. Worship is conducted both in English and Spanish in response to the needs of the neighborhood. A lively and varied weekday program of services is undertaken, and the entire level of the building is planned principally around this. Neither program nor building represents the Christian institution as magisterial, important or prestigious, but sees rather as a servant of people. The materials and finishes are those of the poor, not the wealthy. The size

of the project—both in terms of its enclosed space and in terms of the extent of the site—is moderate or less. Despite this kind of accommodation to the circumstances which surround the church, however, there are qualities of the community to which it does not submit. It is the architecture of the poor, but it is not dull or squalid. In a prosaic environment it is poetic. It is neither pretty nor sweet; it represents rather a kind of vigor and vitality. It has the directness of vernacular architecture, but also includes subtleties which are the characteristics of sophistication. Its discipline has no hint of classic or serene geometry, but derives rather from the sequences of human activity and experience which it is meant to shelter.

All these qualities seem to commend it as an image of the Christian

community at work in the inner city.

The building, unlike those around it, does not fill the envelope of its property lines. It provides on the street side a visual oasis of grass, and on the alley side some parking space for staff. Unfortunately, a fence—the gate of which is locked in off hours—provides a barrier at the sidewalk line. Probably the grass would not last without it, and possibly grass,

*Continued on page 19*





# WHAT IS RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE?

I remember Douglas Haskell once telling a story about when as a recent college graduate he visited Unity Temple in Oak Park with Frank Lloyd Wright. Ingenuously Mr. Wright asked him his opinion of the nearly finished building, and Haskell responded something to the effect that he didn't think it was the architecture of religion but a fine example of the religion of architecture. The subtleties of this comment can lead one to reflect on the association of the words "religious" and "architecture"; these pages are an attempt to verbalize some of these reflections, and examine in what sense the words might fit most fruitfully together.

It is generally taken for granted that buildings intended to shelter worshipping people are religious architecture, and in a casual way this is a satisfactory assumption. But as Professor Josept Sittler once said, it is no more logical to call a church building religious architecture because it encloses religious people than to call a monk's trousers religious pants. The fact that a congregation owns a barn doesn't make the barn religious architecture. The fact that a congregation uses a theater for worship, as some do, doesn't make it religious architecture. And if a synagogue or church is turned into a museum, as some have been, the change in use doesn't make the building suddenly profane architecture. The fact that a designer has pious intentions and is eager to serve religious enterprises can hardly make his work religious either. It is not ownership, nor use, nor the designer's intent which qualifies architecture as religious.

The only justification for the use of the term "religious architecture" at all, perhaps, is a quality in the architecture itself which makes it a reflection, an expression, an echo, an evocation, a communicator of the religious understanding or vision. And it seems likely that if we wish to establish the possibility that architecture can indeed possess such qualities, we shall have to do so by examining the word "religious." It seems to me to be fruitful to discuss it under four categories.

The first of these has to do with what is true or real. The religious person is committed to the unmasking of reality, to the shedding of illusions, to the peeling away of formalisms, conventions, the unessential trappings

of life, the habits of thought and patterns of action which conceal rather than reveal what is true and real. It is true that the impression given to the uninitiated by much of the ritual ceremony characteristic of religion may be the opposite, it may seem to be a cloak for reality. And perhaps often is, or becomes such a cloak. But to initiate its intent is to provide a form in which reality can be communicated. And there is no question that the great figures in the history of religion have had a passion for what they considered to be the true and the real. This passion, together with their sense that truth is not adequately realized in the cerebral systems of the philosophers, but is revealed through non-rational means as well, provides the distinction between religionist and philosopher who is also committed to the search for truth.

The commitment to truth can also be a commitment of architecture. Architecture like other fields of human enterprise tends to be encrusted with conventions, presumptions, masks and artificialities. And some of the notable buildings of the past, like the Cistercian monastery and the Puritan meeting houses and many of the modern monuments have been distinguished because they exhibit such a serious concern for the form, the right, the unaffected and the real.

Indeed it may be that the quality which more than any other links together the architectural leaders of this century is their common insistence that the superficial or artificial is intolerable, and their assertion that the language of architecture to what is true and real is of paramount importance.

And it is certainly true that the so-called "vernacular architecture" of the barns, sheds, warehouses, grain elevators, and industrial buildings, attract us to a very high degree because these buildings seem to be closer to reality than most architecture of a more sophisticated sort. We respond to them because they have a sort of childlike directness; they are forthright and honest, without cleverness or artifice; their forms derive from materials, structure and purpose without any obvious intent to impress, to startle or excite. We find in them the visual equivalent of the honest man and they move us and please us because of it. In this respect these buildings can reasonably be called religious architecture, and they put



EDWARD A. SÖVIK, FAIA  
Senior Partner,  
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Architecture



me almost all of the churches and temples that have been built recently. If, then, one of the qualities of religion is a commitment to the real, the true, religious architecture ought to be a commitment to the light and the true. Obviously this does not mean that it should be unsophisticated or naive, as some vernacular architecture is. But it must be unflinchingly forthright, ingenuous and unaffected. Imitations of historical styles, the use of imitation materials, the falsifying of structure, the incursion of buildings with archaic and meaningless symbols, all these common devices are really profanities rather than religious forms. Even the pretentiousness which establishes religious institutions on dominating sites in our towns and cities, asserting them a relevance and importance which they do not really have in our society may be a sort of prevarication. There is a sense in which the word integrity can be used in connection with the issues I have cited; the word commonly used in relation to the straightforward and the honest. But it has a more elemental meaning, namely, the quality of wholeness or unity. And this sense of unity is rather of the categories of religion which has a bearing on architecture. Religion is focussed on the ultimate concern, which is able to give life wholeness and coherence—or integrity. It is the commitment, even religions which are theologically remote, to the conviction that the universe and its parts are held together; that there is an order which can supplant meaning to our lives and all that bounds them; that there is a design which wraps past, present, and future into one package, which makes sense of both inert and lively, motion and space and solid, reason and feel-

ing. One of the usable definitions of architecture is that architecture is a position between man and the world, and can therefore construct or illuminate a unity between the two. Such a definition implies that in an architect arranges spaces and things in an orderly manner, the architecture does not stand as an isolated thing, but is somehow part of a general order. Architecture developed in such a concept is an expression of the faith that the universe does indeed have integrity, and in the degree to which the architecture succeeds in constructing or illuminating unity between man and the uni-

verse, it is a witness to a vision which is fundamentally religious. It may reasonably be called religious architecture.

The resources out of which an architect attempts to provide this sort of order are immensely complex and varied, obvious and subtle. On the one hand are the factors of the physical world with which he must deal—the nature of the site, the influences of wind, light, heat and sound. The qualities of materials and their interactions, the forces of gravity, the systems and limits of engineering mathematics. On the other hand are the varied factors of human culture and behavior, the sense of time and history, the understanding of human needs both at the physical level and at the various levels of human consciousness, the responses of humans as individuals and as a society.

This sort of variety demands of architects a sort of comprehensive, liberal and wide-ranging knowledge and understanding which are rarely met. It is the reason, I suppose, that whereas poets and musicians often accomplish distinguished work while they are very young men, architects become professionally mature much later. And it is clear that architecture which expresses the kind of integrity which can be described as religious cannot be accomplished by half-educated, over-specialized, narrow-minded people. The only hope for success is in designers who have broad vision and understanding, whose attitudes and minds are open, curious, visionary, idealistic, and who will work long and hard at the problem.

Another category of the religious life has to do with the ethical or moral commitments of the life of faith. The immense importance of the ethical in the religious vision can scarcely be exaggerated. And though the codes of conduct vary greatly between primitive religions and the Hebrew-Christian traditions, because the codes are erected on different concepts of the nature of the good, nevertheless religion is the spring which nourishes the devotion to what is just and right. We are constrained by religion to recognize the obligation to goodness, and the validity of a religion is considered to depend on the kind of ethics it brings. In the west the concern for the general welfare, the standards of unselfishness, the ideal of love for people are the ethical norms.

If architecture is to be called religious it seems reasonable to expect that it should be an expression of this aspect of religion, and I think it can be. Perhaps one might generalize by saying that religious architecture does not assert power and mastery over people, but rather acts as a servant to them, that it is charismatic rather than demanding, that it fulfills, illuminates, instructs, honors and dignifies people.

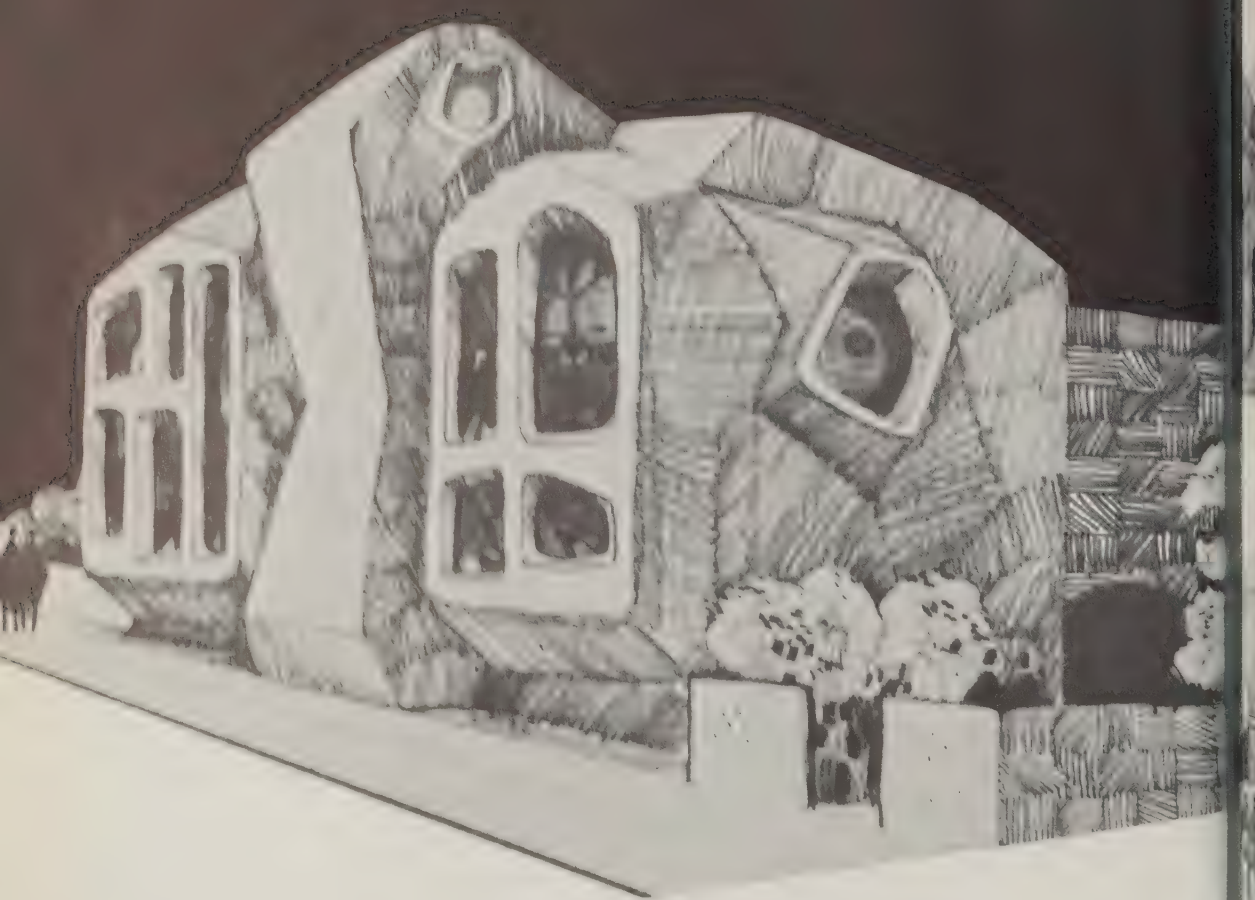
Not all architecture does this. If one were to look for the worst examples of the opposite I suppose one might point to the great pyramids. But there are many so-called religious buildings in western history which fail badly too, because they are pompous, self-assertive, and unkind. They seek to dominate instead of to serve. And we have become so used to this conception of building that we have sought eagerly to make our churches and temples "impressive" and "imposing."

Our century has brought to us a body of explicit knowledge of the psychological factors which influence human reactions and the development of skills in exploiting these factors. The advertising industry has carried the development of these skills to a high competence. The oriental "brain-washers" whom we resent so bitterly because they seem to us to invade the personality and manipulate people in a thoroughly immoral way have carried the skills even further. But architects also in the last generation have ventured into the field. Their efforts may seem mild and their objectives honorable, couched in their intent to evoke a "mood of worship" in the churches and temples; but there is something ominous about the dimmer-controlled lighting, the dramatic lights and shadows and the search for ways to demand attention. The suspicion lurks that almost all of our architecture aims not simply to serve but to manipulate people.

A good deal of attention has been given by theologians and others in recent years to what are called interpersonal relationships in an effort to explore those aspects of human relations which make it possible for people to live in genuine contact with their fellows rather than as masses of lonely individuals. This is obviously a moral issue also, dealing as it does with human interaction. A distinction has been pointed out between those truly good situations

*Continued on page 22*

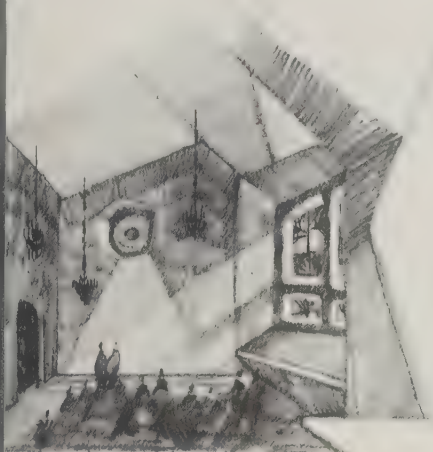






APEL FOR TEMPLE  
EL, MIAMI, FLA  
igned By  
heth Treister,  
GRA

heth Treister, AIA, GRA, of Miami has embarked  
he design of a new chapel for Temple Israel  
iami, sketches of which are reproduced  
. The venture is a bold one obviously, and  
ld attract a good deal of attention. It surely  
nt also to raise some questions about what it  
at makes a space appropriate to the religious  
t. Some of the implications of this project seem  
e that strange and powerful forms are a key,  
that dramatized color and light support  
hip, and that the excitement of the exotic is  
opriate. Some practical questions are raised by  
hes also, and it will be instructive to see them  
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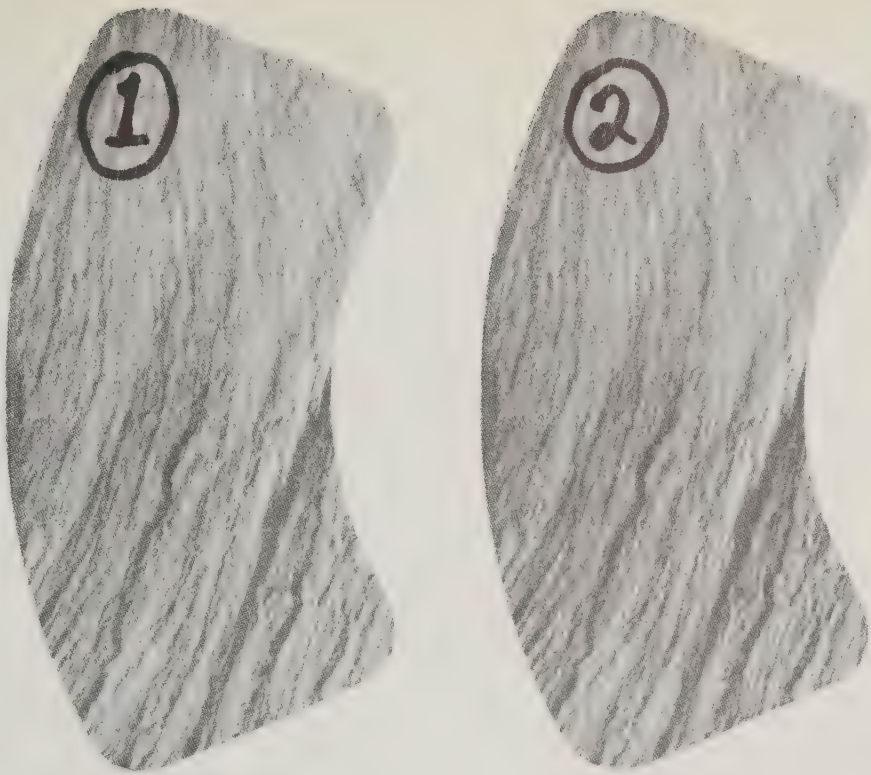
Richard T. Feller (Clerk of the Works, Washington Cathedral) reports that in developing the iconography and design for the reredos sculpture of the War Memorial Chapel of the Washington Cathedral issues of esthetic and symbolic tension were encountered. Dean Sayre, considering that as death in military action is

tragic and brutal, worshippers should realize that death precedes resurrection and life. Whether a sculpture in modern and harsh materials could relate to other more delicate art work and to the sumptuous gothic building was a second issue.

In the end, after several years of study and work and some disagreements, the matters were resolved by the installation recently of the head of Christ here illustrated. The work was done by Steven Sykes of London.

It is a combination of brass, aluminum, copper and polyester resin. The iconographic conception suggests a merger of the crown of thorns, and perhaps barbed wire, transcended by the halo. It seems likely that, as in ancient cathedral where the concepts and technique of successive generations combine generate vitality, this introduction of severity and modernity into a monument of serene historicism will give the total a liveliness not otherwise present.





## Which is Larger ① or ② ?

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Builders of  
Gloucester, Mass.*

AXIOM: PLACEMENT is the most important of the factors which determine the effectiveness of an organ. That is to say, the way in which the pipes of an organ are arranged among themselves and then situated within a building has largely to do with the way the organ will ultimately sound. Or as a physicist might say, "In both designing an organ and placing it in a building, the *geometry* must be given greater weight than any other factor."

It is not possible to prove the truth of this axiom here; indeed the truth of it emerges only out of long and often bitter experience in which one has attempted to disregard it. Ask an organophile what makes a good organ and he will probably mention choice of stops, scaling and voicing of the pipes, acoustical reverberation period of the building, etc. etc. Or perhaps he will even mention placement (or geometry if he is a physicist), but he is not likely to put it at the top of the list as I have. Despite that, let us begin here by *assuming* that our Placement Axiom is in fact axiomatic, and then let us see what conditional conclusions can be deduced from it.

CONCLUSION I. The architect of the building has *primary control* over the organ builder's chances for providing a fine instrument. He sets an upper limit to the quality of the organ, as it were, for he provides the building and the site for the organ in the first place. Now it is common to hear church musicians inveigh against the architect of such and such a building for making it "dead" acoustically, perhaps by permitting wall to wall carpet or by using acoustic (actually *anacoustic*) plaster or tile, so that reverberation time is cut to minimum. Indeed, this is a grievous crime, which architects and church committees too often commit against music's estate; yet by our Placement Axiom it is not as grievous as sinking the organ pipes in that lateral abyss known as the organ chamber (much as if they were part of the plumbing or heating), or putting them on random display out in the open.

CONCLUSION II. From Conclusion I and the Placement Axiom, it follows that organs will be good only if architects make a serious attempt to understand what an organ really is and how it works. In a sense, *architects are actually organ builders*, and I hope they will not cringe when I say that they have been making a rather bad job of their organ building in the past century or so. I do not really mean to pretend here that the parlous state in which the church organ presently finds itself can be laid at the church architect's door—he after all has only provided in the long run what ministers, congregations, organists and organ builders have thought pleasing—but architects, by their disregard of what organs might be, i.e., by lack of imagination vis-a-vis the organ, have certainly helped the instrument's downfall. To put it more constructively, were architects suddenly to take an intelligent interest in the organ, there would unquestionably be a striking change in the usefulness and the quality of the instrument. The current rise of the electronic organ-substitute is partly the work of architects who in the first place helped the pipe organ to take on the nature of musical air-conditioning equipment, and who, now that the chambers required for such equipment are so expensive, have turned to the electronic "organ" for space saving reasons.

CONCLUSION III. If architects are indeed organ builders, it then follows that they have always been organ builders, and that they are in part responsible for the way in which the organ has evolved. In other words, they are in part responsible for its original glory as well as its recent downfall. This statement requires an historical explanation:

The organ, to the Romans a secular instrument, found haven in the medieval monasteries and emerged from the middle ages as *the* church instrument. Why? I think it was primarily because of the type of building which medieval church architects provided. These were lofty buildings made largely of stone; acoustically they were very live—long reverberation time—which meant that any sound made within was sustained for several seconds by the building. (Hence the concept of the building itself as a musical instrument.) Percussive sounds, or sounds of short duration fare poorly in such buildings. Sustained tones, however, such as the notes of an organ, are received sympathetically; the initial note is simply added to by the sustaining property of the building, and the effect after holding the note for two or three seconds is as if the tone were emanating from every corner of the room, which indeed it is. This effect, known in acoustics as diffusion, in which the listener is surrounded by his sound sources, is extremely pleasing to the ear and is aesthetically apposite to the visual effect of these lofty buildings.

Since a reverberant building reinforces a weak sustained note in such a way as to make it seem pervasive, and since it reinforces only the harmonic content of a coarse sound, the early organs, whether feeble or coarse or both, produced a singularly happy result in the environment provided by the medieval church architect. Within this environment, during the three

*Continued on page 26*



# THE ESSENCE OF DESIGNING A SYNAGOGUE



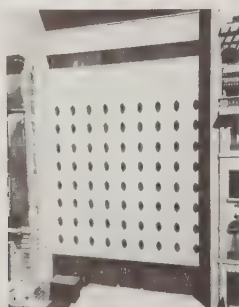
Shaarey Zedek in Detroit



PERCIVAL  
GOODMAN, FAIA  
Professor of  
Architecture,  
Columbia  
University,  
New York, N.Y.



Reform Temple Beth El in Providence



Orthodox Fifth Avenue Synagogue in New York

The artist in his moment of revelation, with eye fixed on the viewfinder of his sensibility, channelled on the object, sees it sharp and clear divorced from the superfluity of its surroundings, unique alone. The reality of his art consists in the transition of this image.

In nature there is no object existing in itself; it is a series of relations. The artist operates by exclusion; nature includes all. Man is not an island but the work of art is.

Art lies in the inspired selection of possible alternates. In architecture there are only a finite number of alternates but their permutations and combinations are for all practical purposes infinite. Good sense and experience pick the alternates usable for the task in hand. To select, correlate and combine possible alternates is not enough for fine art; it must be fused and the instant of fusion is the act of creation.

The practical art of building is based on a limited number of alternates required by simple utility. The art of architecture consists in using these limited alternatives to derive forms and spaces existing not only to serve an immediate need but continuing to exist when utility no longer requires them. The art of building is then mortal, that of architecture immortal.

Architecture, unlike the other fine arts, is by its very nature programmatic; there is a resident function in a building, a civic building, a religious building. These are functions which have nothing to do with beauty, aesthetics or expression; to keep the rain off, to keep the cold out; to have the structure continually winning a battle against gravitational pull; to aid in the carrying out of specific activities, and so on. All of this calls for a knowledge of materials and techniques, for using them, sizes and shapes of things, the spaces between things and the movement of activity within the spaces formed by the shapes.

The architecture of our time has based itself on the dynamics of movement between the spaces, modifying the spaces to fit the rhythm of the movement. "Form," as Louis Sullivan said, "should follow function."

Like every structure the essence of synagogue design lies in correct understanding and interpretation of the movement within. Such movements have a surface simplicity in comparison, say, to those which take place in the manufacture of computers; they are not technological, not susceptible to scientific analysis. To design the prayer hall of a synagogue does require a knowledge of construction, of acoustics, of heating, ventilating and so on, for the pray-

It technically is an auditorium. What makes it a synagogue are not these things, nor the addition of ark or menorah.

It is easier to describe what a synagogue is not than what it is. Martin Buber said: "Other Gods are dependent on a house, an altar, sacrificial worship, a cause without these things they have no existence, their whole nature consisting only of what the creatures give them; whereas the living God is not dependent on such things since He is." And Solomon himself said after building the Temple: "Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house I have built."

To speak of a "Jewish style in synagogue architecture" makes no more sense than to speak of a Roman Catholic style in church architecture. Yet, a Roman Catholic church can appear what it is and a synagogue can appear what it is.

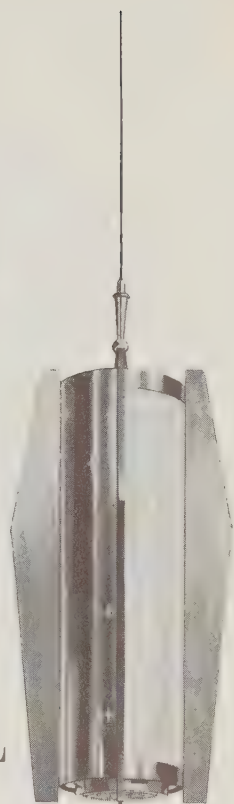
In the case of the synagogue, what I seek is the negation of the negation. I cannot design to do honor to God; this is a vanity, suitable for the Athenian. The affirmation lies in the effort to make a place in which people can gather together as near to face as can be, to learn the tradition and its interpretation so things can be understood as they are and as they could be, to improve themselves by striving to learn the meanings of certain words: peace, justice, love, mercy."

The physical form of the structure varies; there is an effort to build of the best materials of its kind and the Levitical sacrifice requires that the best of the work be offered. There is an effort to make an atmosphere of sober joy as befits a celebration of the Creator: the air pure, the color gay rather than somber.

The shape of the space derives from the services themselves, from the environment in which the building is set and from my interpretation of the congregational aspiration. In one case, as in the Orthodox Fifth Avenue Synagogue in New York, there is a balconied room seating 400, the beam in the center. In another, Conservative Shaarey Zedek in Detroit, a great angled room seating 3,500 and reaching 90 feet high to its peaked roof. A third, the Sholem and Trellised ceiling of the Reform Temple Beth El in Providence, seating 1,800.

Each in its way is an effort to capture some little part of life's abundant imagination; each strives for the accolade, "How lovely are thy tabernacles"; each tries to "Sing unto the Lord a new song."

That I don't succeed is not for lack of trying. ■



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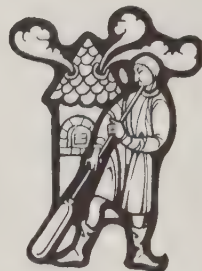
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## INNER CITY MISSION CHURCH

from P. 7

h supplies a visual relief but not able space, is not really an appropriate surface in the urban situation. Something more in the character New York's new "vest-pocket" might be a more ideal (though expensive) spatial relief.

the path to the pews in the church direct (a pattern which is characteristic of Dart's more recent churches), and involves the people in moving through a variety of transitional episodes, steps and platforms, side, switchback turns, a ramp, sequences of light and dark, closed and open spaces. Along the way one passes a pair of glass doors which open on the baptismal font and allow a glimpse of the chancel and worship space beyond the screen.

There is a particular virtue in this device; it associates the font with the entrance, and yet at the same time places it where the rite of baptism is performed before the whole congregation. Despite the small size of the space (it has pews for only 125) the floor is sloped toward the chancel. Full advantage was taken of the slope by omitting steps



completely between the people and the foci of activity. So the continuity between people and action is very good.

One might categorize the church as a fan-shaped plan, but one should note immediately an important characteristic which distinguishes it from the typical fan geometry. The irregularity of the lines and planes is such that there is no single controlling focus, and a form which is often static and rigid has in this case a sort of loose fluidity and freedom, which tends to keep the building from dominating the action of the people and their leaders.

Natural light enters the space, perhaps a little frugally, from openings which are so situated or so shielded as to avoid glare and at the same time to imply continuities between the external world and the interior.

All in all this project can be described as one in which one is not impressed with ingenuity or cleverness, but in which there is evidence of great skill. It is a building without pretension, but there is nobility and dignity which derive from forthrightness, consistency and restraint. There are some radical and extreme divergencies from the patterns which are considered conventional, and yet the total seems cohesive and rational to a degree that the novelties generally seem to justify themselves effortlessly.

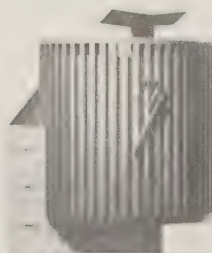
The three pastors who involve themselves not only in the internal matters of the bilingual congregation, but very actively in community problems are enthusiastic about the quality of the architecture. As time passes the church is becoming a focus for a variety of community action programs, and the response of the neighborhood to both the program and the building is very encouraging to them. ■



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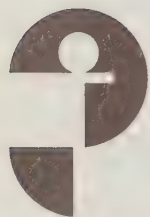
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# The 1967 International Congress on Religion, Architecture, and the Visual Arts

THE REV. S. T. RITENOUR

Director, Commission on  
Church Building and Architecture  
National Council of Churches of  
Christ in the U.S.A.



The relevancy and interdependence of all of life's expression through faith and form are the keys to understanding of the First International Congress on Religion, Architecture and the Visual Arts. This Congress will be held at the New York Hilton Hotel, New York City, August 27 through September 1, 1967 with four full-day sessions at Expo '67 and McGill University on September 2-4.

Sponsorship and participation are interfaith in character, intercultural in scope and international in outreach.

Sponsors include societies of architects, artists and engineers as well as various organizations representing Catholic, Protestant and Jewish faiths. There are six groups within the United States and twenty additional sponsors from the following countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, England, France, Germany, Greece, Haiti, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Peru, Spain, Uruguay. Thus, a total of thirty-six organizations from nineteen different nations.

One of the reasons for the world-wide interest in the Congress is that most religious institutions are deeply involved in the process of change which affects all societies. The forces which have brought change are complex and varied, among them being the mobility of populations, the urbanization of our culture and the cybernetic revolution. Relevancy to a modern world has become a critical consideration for organized religion, and the overriding question has become one of determining how religious institutions can minister effectively to the kind of world we live in.

As religious institutions change, so should the content and the spirit of its art and architecture. However, the temporary changes within organized religion have often been obscure and characterized by uncertainty and indecision. This indecision and uncertainty can, and often does lead to bizarre and nihilistic expressions in religious art and architecture, thus denying the very truths which religious institutions are called to proclaim. A critical examination of contemporary religious architecture and art will disclose how serious this problem has become.

There cannot be satisfactory architecture and art unless purpose and mission for today's religious institutions are clarified and communicated to artists and architects. They have become sensitized to the needs and beliefs of the people to whom they would serve. To do this, it is important to examine the relationship between man, as the creature of God, and the expression of his creatureliness through the media of art and architecture. The architect and the artist cannot remain on the sidelines, but must join the clergy and laity in seeking a renewed understanding of the role that art and architecture can play.

In order to meet this very complex challenge and fulfill its purposes, the Congress will:

1. Examine the forces changing contemporary life in religious institutions;
2. Describe the relationships among religion, architecture and the visual arts;
3. Assess the role of architecture in expressing the religious needs of contemporary man;
4. Prove the historical relationship between man and expression through art and architecture;
5. Study critically the performance of art and architecture in the service of religious groups;
6. Consider the future needs of the community of believers; and

suggest architectural and artistic responses that will be required to meet those needs.

se purposes must be examined by peoples of all ages, nationalities and callings, in a spirit of creative freedom and imaginative leadership. Distinguished leaders from the Seminar as well as the Plenary sessions representing many disciplines from many countries will be present. For example, there will be editors of art and architecture as well as Liturgical and theological publications, architects and engineers, psychologists and sociologists, planners and scientists, technologists and theologians.

Special Exhibits at the Congress will include:

An architectural exhibit of 75 buildings of excellence from all over the world—built since World War II with secular juxtaposed to the religious.

Poster Mary Corita's May-Day project, "Survival with Faith."

At the following: The Jewish Museum, the Museums of Contemporary Crafts, of Modern Art, and of Early American Folk Arts.

8 Educational exhibits showing products and materials, equipment and furnishings, art and stained glass as well as an interfaith presentation on religious program building counsel.

At the adjourned session in Montreal on September 10 there will be a special program of an international exchange sponsored by the Interfaith Research Center of

Religious Architecture. Papers will be presented by leaders from Austria, Germany, Israel, Italy, Morocco and Switzerland.

It is not intended that the Congress will develop prescriptions; it will clarify issues and establish a means of communication among concerned persons. This will mean a re-examination of existing standards and goals by organizations and individuals. It should stimulate participants to gain new ideas, raise new questions and find some approach to new answers.

The following periodicals and books are recommended for those who would participate in the Congress or wish to follow up recommendations that may proceed from it. We seek "informed open-mindedness."

**Progressive Architecture**, December 1966—Editorial feature "Toward the Third Millennium."

**Motive Magazine**, March-April, 1967—Special double issue on "Technology and Culture." \$1.00.

**Environment for Man—The Next Fifty Years**—edited by William R. Ewald (Bloomington and London—Indiana University Press 1967), A Midland Book MB-102, \$2.95.

**Who Designs America?—The American Civilization Program**, edited by Laurence B. Holland (New York Anchor Books, 1966—A 523)—\$1.45.

**The Secular City Debate**, edited by Daniel Callahan (New York, Macmillan), \$1.45. NP 08425.

**The Search For Meaning in Modern Art**, by Alfred Neumeier—Prentice-Hall, Inc. (Spectrum Books s-99) \$1.95. ■

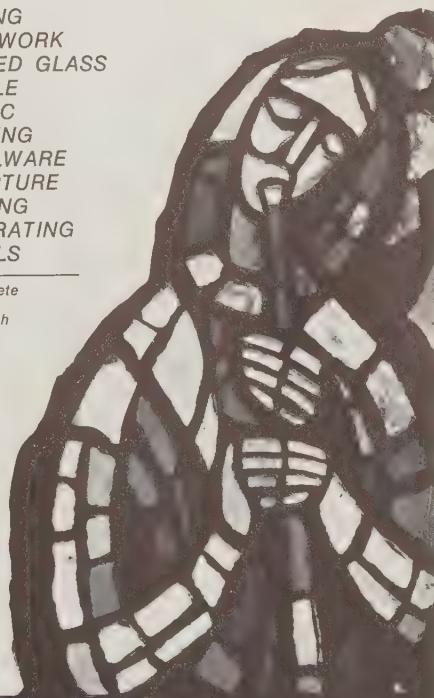


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where people accomplish a gracious, free and self-denying dialogue with others and the incomplete and sometimes false and destructive instances where a meeting of persons is simply a self-protective and self-aggrandizing confrontation.

This aspect of the ethical also has its reflection in architecture. Architecture can set a stage for one or the other. More than that, architecture can itself deal with persons in terms of confrontation or in terms of dialogue. Architecture can exist as a sort of autonomous work of art which confronts or surrounds a person without really meeting him. Or it can be the sort of environment which says in effect, "Come with me and we will live together," and which engages a person in a sort of continuous and fruitful dialogue. Such architecture always seems incomplete until it is occupied. We find it sometimes in homes, but the best example I know of a general type in which this characteristic is present is in the Japanese teahouse. I should think

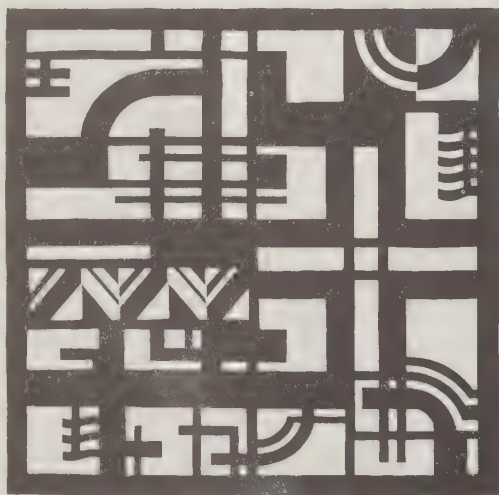
that such buildings are more genuinely religious, because they are more genuinely humane, than most shrines, temples and churches.

The search for truth, reality and coherence, which I have explored as the first two categories of the religious may be thought of as a concern of philosophy as well as a concern of religion. The category of ethics is the concern of a special branch of philosophy and also of religion. But at its core, religion is not philosophy or ethics, even though it is inseparably concerned with these areas of thought and action. Religion is not concerned simply with the true and the good. It has its unique frame of reference which is different from these categories and is exclusively the province of religion. That province is what is called the "holy."

Rudolph Otto, the theologian whose examination of this subject is considered to be the most fruitful, defined the awareness of the holy as the recognition of what he called the "mysterium tremendum." Religion in these terms deals with the consciousness of the profound mystery within which human life exists, the sense of

the ineffable quality of this mystery, its awesome and majestic transcendence, and its inescapable fascination and immediacy. Here is the point at which the religious vision separates itself from philosophy or ethical culture. It is a category which is not subject to rational celebration or critical analysis, and yet is perceived convincingly.

It has been suggested by E. V. Rieu and Dixon that the message of the Book of Job must be understood in these terms. You will recall that after the dialogues between Job and his friends the relation between God and Job was still uncertain. There was still no satisfactory solution, theologically, to the problem of his suffering. And when God began to speak to him he did not provide him with a rational explanation of his plight. What he did was to confront Job with the mystery, the awesome, fascinating, magnificent and touching account of God's work in nature. Job's perception became clear, and although his questions were not answered, his relation to God was established. The sense of the holy, which had been withering blossomed again and



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ted, as it says, "in dust and  
Theology and morality were  
ufficient to meet the issues of  
istence, but the recognition of  
mysterium tremendum" was able  
cover for him the equilibrium  
ought.

the holy is, thus, the fulcrum  
igion, one should expect that  
ere is such a thing as religious  
ecture it ought somehow to be  
expression of this aspect of reli-  
If the relationship cannot be  
it is possible that we have no  
to speak of "religious" archi-  
e at all. But how does one deal  
a mystery like the holy, in the  
age of architecture?

cannot be done, I think, by sup-  
g that the architecture of the  
terium tremendum" is the same  
e architecture of the mysterious.  
od many architects all through  
y have confused the two, and  
apparently supposed that reli-  
architecture is obtained by the  
of devices like indirect light, dim  
s, exaggerated perspective vistas,  
cally shaped spaces, strange mas-  
s and effects that range from the  
d to the merely unfamiliar. Per-  
most people are tempted to  
ot artifices and effects which ex-  
the mysterious as a satisfactory  
ession of the real mystery. But  
ately we recognize that the dif-  
ice is too great. The mysterious,  
a detective story, has a resolu-  
its apparent mystery can be ex-  
d, and the strange sooner or later  
mes the familiar. But the holy  
ways holy and its mystery grows  
ve learn to know it more fully.  
All the gimmicks, the impressive  
clever architectural tricks do not  
y. They have nothing to do with  
ness.

or can we deal with the "mys-  
m tremendum" by concerning  
elves with the expression of mys-  
m. The mystical experience, in  
h a person has a direct and un-  
iated meeting with the divine,  
been associated with most reli-  
s, and a great many of the cultic  
dings of history seem to have  
o designed to suggest that this  
of encounter is the norm. The  
t obvious examples are the late  
ieval cathedrals, which imply in  
dim and lofty vaults and forest  
verticals that there a person may  
be able to commune directly with  
e. Perhaps whenever architecture  
hasizes the individual this is the

intent. And many recent churches,  
with their exaggerated quietness, car-  
peted floors, dimmed lights, and rail-  
road-train seating imply that when  
people gather for worship they come  
not to be together but to be alone  
with God.

This is a sort of heresy. The norm  
of religious celebration is not mys-  
ticism, but a common worship, using  
the media of sensible symbols. The  
holy can be known not only through  
the exceptional and personal episode  
of mystical experience, but through  
objective things and events in which  
all people can participate. The "mys-  
terium tremendum" is accessible to  
ordinary consciousness. For we can  
be brought to wonder and awe when  
we reflect on those things which, like  
the beat of the heart and the rhythm  
of breath, are most familiar to us, as  
well as when we consider the im-  
mensity of the rolling universe.

So neither the mysterious nor the  
mystical are satisfactory images of  
the holy.

But there is, I think, an analogy for  
the holy among the enterprises in  
which men engage, and this is the  
work of the artist.

The holy, as we have explored it,  
has to do with the sense of the "mys-  
terium tremendum," the awesome,  
ineffable, powerful transcendent,  
which is at the same time inescap-  
able, fascinating, immediate, imma-  
nent. It can be perceived but not  
comprehended. It cannot be ana-  
lyzed, rationalized or synthesized. It  
exists; we encounter it directly, and  
when we do perceive it we are af-  
fected by it, not in a rational process,  
but on contact, as Job was.

Our experience of the holy is not  
an experience like that, for instance,  
of reading statistics. A body of sta-  
tistics on whatever subject may call  
our reasoning powers into play, and  
as we consider the data we may  
change our minds, attitudes, and  
course of action because of the evi-  
dence. On the other hand, if we re-  
flect on the mystery of so intimate  
and common a thing as our con-  
sciousness, our experience is cate-  
gorically different. Our serious ques-  
tions are not answered; the horizons  
of origin, meaning, destiny merely  
recede; but we are led to wonder  
and awe, over and over again. We are  
compelled without rational grounds,  
for instance, to esteem life as valu-  
able by its very presence. This is the  
nature of the experience of the holy.

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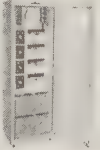
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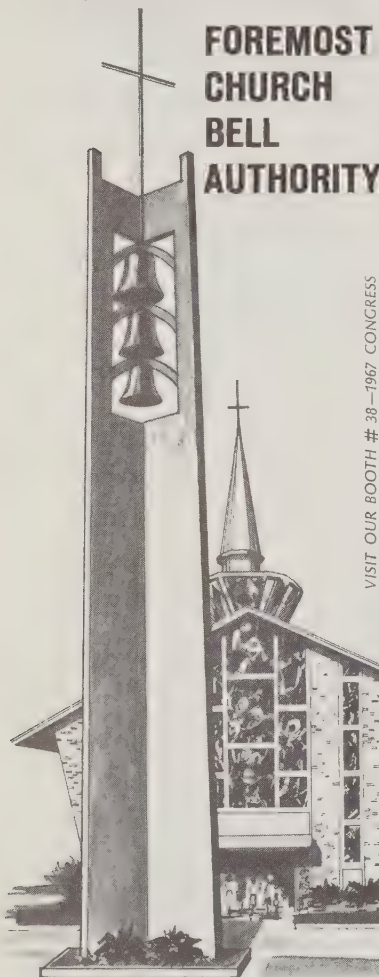
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The remarkable thing about works of art is that we apprehend them as we apprehend the "mysterium tremendum," we know them as we know the holy, and we are affected by them at obscure and profound levels as we are moved by the holy.

The communicative or expressive method of art has been called "presentational," in contrast to the rational progressions of other symbolic systems like mathematics or prose writing. Art does not dissect a problem in a logical fashion and by analysis convince one of the truth; art convinces or fails to convince simply by being. It cannot be synthesized, formulated or systematized. It is a mystery, but not necessarily mysterious. It generates a sort of awe, and this awe does not depend on its strangeness or magnificence. It is fascinating but we should not call it art if we could expose its mystery like that of a crossword puzzle. And as with the holy, the work of art moves us and affects our attitudes, judgments and enthusiasms at levels which are too obscure for understanding.

If these things are true, it seems reasonable to say that the work of art is the best analogy of the holy available to us, and that if there is such a thing as religious architecture it can only be architecture which has merit as art. It is a notable thing that history and general intuition provide substance for this position. There has been and generally is a sense that the holy and the beautiful belong together.

I believe I have come far enough now to say that religious architecture is architecture which (1) deals with real things in a real way without artificialities and affectations and shuns illusions, deceits and dissimulations; (2) is coherent in itself and establishes a coherence between man and the universe; (3) is an agent of goodness by being a servant and companion of men rather than a master; and (4) serves as an image of the holy by being a work of art.

There are a number of implications and observations which seem to me to be worth noting as a conclusion.

One is that the qualities of architecture which relate it to religion, if what I have said so far is correct, are qualities which are found and can appear in architecture for whatever purpose. They are not the exclusive property of architecture for cultic pur-

poses, nor should they be. There are a vast number of churches and temples which, measured by the criteria I have noted, are really profane. And there are numbers of secular buildings which must be regarded as religious architecture of high quality.

Although this sort of conclusion may be surprising and even disturbing to those who have been used to thinking of religious architecture as a building type, it should not really be troublesome. For at a time when theologians are talking about a secular religion, and when religious bodies are eagerly asserting that religious values must be applied to every category of life if they are to be valid, this position is perfectly consistent.

Another problem which may deserve some comment relates to the close association implied between what is religious or holy, and what is beautiful. I have said that only architecture which is a fine work of art appropriately called religious. One might conclude that the beautiful and the holy are the same, but I should carefully avoid this. The beautiful is an image of the holy. It is, I think, the only possible way humans have of giving expression to the idea of the holy. But it is not to be confused with the holy.

That the danger of such confusion exists is not to be denied. Mauriac has suggested of Proust that the concept of beauty became his religion; and surely this is a constant possibility among people who are sensitive to the beautiful and deal constantly with it, particularly if they do not wish to recognize the existence of the holy. To those who are oriented to the holy, the beautiful thing is to be valued not because it is the holy, but because it has an unique capability for being an image of the holy.

We may be brought easily to wonder whether every work of art is an image of the holy. And I should think that this is so—that for religious people all beautiful things should have a peculiar grace, for they can turn the consciousness toward the "mysterium tremendum." This, rather than pedagogical or propagandistic uses of art, is the reason why religious people should treasure works of art.

Another observation which I should like to make is that these pages have been concerned with relating architecture and religion generally. I have not been intending to imply that there are no differences among religions

these differences may not be re-  
 ed in architectural form. But I  
 k that those qualities which re-  
 ns hold in common are funda-  
 tal matters which must engage  
 architect most earnestly, and  
 e are the matters with which  
 e pages have been concerned. If  
 were to carry this sort of study  
 ard in an attempt to deal with  
 t might be called Christian archi-  
 ture or Hebrew architecture one  
 ld, I believe, discover that al-  
 gh some important things remain,  
 most important things have al-  
 y been said. And one would soon  
 oneself examining not the faith,  
 the cultic practices and the ico-  
 naphy. The rather successful trans-  
 ation of the Church of Santa So-  
 into a mosque by changes in  
 ture and iconography suggest that  
 is true.

Another point which I should like  
 mphasize in this conclusion is this  
 at if the reasoning in these pages  
 s to a position where there seems  
 e no fundamental distinction  
 between the architecture of re-  
 us institutions and architecture  
 ecular purposes, I am quite will-  
 to take that position. But this  
 not mean that churches and  
 oles should be mundane, prosaic,  
 any way profane. What it does  
 n is that non-cultic architecture  
 share, and sometimes does, with  
 best of cultic architecture real re-  
 us character.

we proceed on this basis we  
 indeed find ourselves building  
 ches and temples which have  
 ontinuity in character with the  
 t serious and thoughtful buildings  
 h are built for so-called secular  
 oses. There will not be a church  
 emple style, and there should not  
 e. We will not worry about whether  
 urch "looks like a church"; but  
 fact is, of course, that a good cul-  
 uilding will always be in some re-  
 ts an unique building simply be-  
 e a good architect will respond to  
 particular demands of the cultic  
 t, which is an unique sort of  
 t. The forms which appropriately  
 er this event will in some ways  
 an unique reflection of its par-  
 arities.

inally, I have implied that the  
 er for the cultic event need not  
 arge, nor opulent, nor awesome  
 e sense that it overwhelms one,  
 have suggested that the kind of  
 es which are most appropriate for

the profoundest sort of human en-  
 ounter are also appropriate for the  
 encounter with the divine.

One may wonder whether this does  
 not ignore that aspect of the religious  
 awareness which sees the divine as  
 transcendent—as the completely  
 "other." This I do not wish to do.  
 What this examination of the problem  
 seems to me to reveal is that the  
 traditional devices and artifices which  
 are accepted as images of the divine  
 (extreme verticality, dim lighting, axi-  
 ality, opulence, and so on) are illegiti-  
 mate. Religious architecture does not  
 depend on these specific architectural  
 idioms; it depends on those qualities  
 of religion I have discussed no mat-  
 ter in what idiom they appear. It is  
 through these characteristics that the  
 transcendent "otherness" is witnessed  
 to, evoked and honored.

When the Lord confronted Job with  
 the account of his handiwork, which  
 so effectively demonstrated his "other-  
 ness," he spoke of two types of  
 things. On the one hand he reminded  
 Job of the mystery of ordinary things  
 —rain, frost, time, growth, and the  
 cycles of nature—the wonders of  
 ordinary experience. He then spoke,  
 at greater length, about the strange  
 and terrifying things, concluding with  
 the description of the awesome levi-  
 athan. One might speculate that had  
 the book been written in our century,  
 the apostrophe would have been  
 quite different. For the terrors of our  
 time are man made. The horror that  
 lives with us is not a beast but the  
 bomb.

And if we are to be met with the  
 otherness of God in our architecture,  
 it is, I should think, not the images of  
 fearsome and exotic power that will  
 be convincing. Those who seek to  
 be moved to the adoration of the  
 "other" when they enter a church or  
 temple often look for a fabulous levi-  
 athan. But I believe the more con-  
 vincing images of the "other" appear  
 in the evidences of divine ubiquity,  
 and above all in the glimpses of the  
 absolute, which are the visions and  
 commitments of the wisest and best  
 and most skillful men.

It is not so difficult to make some-  
 thing large or strange. But to be hon-  
 est and good, to see things as a whole,  
 and to devise a beautiful thing—it is  
 then that a person stretches the hori-  
 zons of humanity, and is it not when  
 this is done that the mystery of the  
 truly "other" gleams in our con-  
 sciousness?



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# THE ARCHITECT AS ORGAN MAKER

centuries from 1400 to 1700, organ culture grew in complexity and elegance until, by the early part of the 18th century, a pinnacle was reached. If we cannot exactly relate the decline of the instrument in the last two hundred years to the decline of reverberation-time in church buildings—it is more correct to relate both to other historical parameters—we can certainly remark that organs do sound uninspiring in dead churches, and goodness knows we have an adequacy of these at present.

I have just said that the organ grew up in live buildings and I have implied that in consequence a live building is almost essential to the tonal health of the organ enclosed within it. All true, but what has this to do with our Placement Axiom? To explain, I must continue our history:

The earliest and simplest music widely used in the medieval church building was plain chant, a purely melodic form of vocal music. Plain chant too could not have developed without the live building, for it is the overlaying of each new tone upon the reverberating "tail" of the tones just previously sung that makes plain chant effective. For pure melody,

placement of the musicians would not have been critical; however, as soon as more complicated music of two separate contrapuntal parts was essayed, musicians must have realized that the *linear*, or *horizontal*, ideas they wished to express ended up in confusion unless they chose carefully the vantage point for their singing. Thus arose recognition of the importance of source-placement in the live building, for complex music requires that the listener be able to understand its "consonants" (transients) as well as its "vowels," whether produced by voices or by musical instruments.

The simplest rule to remember is this: If a building is live, and if you really want the listener to hear the consonants in music, or in speech for that matter, it is necessary to provide him with strong direct sound from the source so as to overcome the "vowel predominance" of the reverberating building. This implies first that you establish the entire source of sound in the building so that it is plainly *visible* to the listener ("line-of-sight transmission") since sound, like light, travels a straight path. Second, you can reinforce the direct sound by placing behind the source a close-

fitting reflecting shell, like a lily shell—indeed, the classical organ was a kind of wooden band shell. Sound which the source emits toward the shell is bounced back toward the listener almost immediately; thus the explosive consonant "t" is reiterated, the "t" which the listener hears coming directly from the source is followed almost immediately by the "t" reflected off the shell, and the listener the two sounds coalesce into a single consonant, the sound reinforcing the other. Of course, if the shell is placed a large distance behind the source, then the reflected "t" is late in reaching the listener and he hears the two "t"s separately, the reflection then being heard as an *echo* of the direct sound and therefore a hindrance to the listener's understanding.

A third measure taken for the control of the consonants in music—and this is of particular concern to architects—is to place the source of sound where the walls and ceiling of the room, like the close fitting shell mentioned, will give off early reflections which coalesce with the direct sound. The medieval organ was almost always placed with its back against a wall, which in addition

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wooden shell (case) provided reflections for the intensification of the direct sound. A favorite site for the organ came to be the west gallery; this usually placed the organ as close as possible to both the ceiling and the walls of the tunnel-like west gallery, all of which gave off early reflections of each consonant emitted by the organ. In a long, reverberant space, dealing with a lofty west gallery where it is sometimes astonishing to find the clarity with which the organ speaks, even when conversation between individuals randomly situated at floor level is impossible due to the loss of speech. Clearly, the medieval architects who gave us vaulting clerestories and galleries in stone also gave us, directly, plain chant and the motet, the mass and the chorale, the prelude and fugue, for so much is the result of good architecture that it can be the cultural making of the people who serve. These timeless works of musical art, in their proper architectural setting, with strict attention to the rules for good source placement, are breathtakingly beautiful even to the well-assaulted ears, and inspire us to attempt to recapture their sound for use in our modern churches. For a hundred reasons, many of them good, our churches have greatly from the medieval, hence arises the question, how best to compromise and still retain some degree of the original tonal effect? Therefore, as I have implied, emphasis has been concentrated on the reverberation time of the medieval church. The heart of many a musician has broken when, often only for lack of height, new buildings have turned up with less than the 'seconds' reverberation, today regarded as the absolute minimum for church music, though meager compared to the four-to-eight seconds of the medieval church. Yet it is my experience that the medieval musician's solution to his own clarity problem in a live environment, namely good placement, can be of great help in a dead environment. Thus we have reached our conclusion:

CONCLUSION IV. By the Placement Axiom, we can have hope for the probable success of a good organ in an acoustically undistinguished building since there is nearly always the possibility of placing the organ well; indeed, poor placement results only when the building is conceived without paying any real attention to the needs of organ and choir. ■



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A recently completed synagogue, Temple Beth Zion at Buffalo, New York, is distinguished aside from its other virtues, by a venturesome collaboration of architect, engineer, designer and stained glass studio. A very large bema window, as shown in the illustration, was planned by Max Abramowitz FAIA, the architect (of Harrison and Abramowitz). Ben Shahn was the designer.

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## CRISIS IN CHURCH MUSIC?

*Proceedings of a meeting on church music conducted by The Liturgical Conference and the Church Music Association.*

*Edited by Virginia Sloyan.*

*Washington, D.C.:*

*The Liturgical Conference,*

*1967. Pp. 128.*

*Paper. \$2.95*

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### Reviewed By:

THE REV. ROBERT W. HOVDA, *Editor,*

*The Liturgical Conference,*

*Washington, D.C.*

Why review a book on church music for *Faith and Form*? I can think at once of two compelling reasons, although there are doubtless many others. For one thing, architects who accept the challenge of designing and defining a space for worship thereby accept responsibility for acquiring some knowledge of the action to take place in that space.

This responsibility alone is justification for urging the employment of a liturgical consultant, with some expertise in the tradition of public worship and contemporary trends, to work closely with the architect from the very first stages of the project. For an architect's responsibility exceeds the capacity of any one man, excepting the extraordinary combination of theologian-architect.

His knowledge of the worship act must include awareness of the various functions and tasks of different members and groups in the worshipping community—the various ministries, including those of the cantor, choir and organist. Acoustics are part of the problem, but so is the relation of the choir to the rest of the congregation, the placing of the organ console, the placing of the cantor or song leader, provision for the use of other instruments, etc.

Another reason for recommending a series of essays on church music questions is the obvious fact that architects and musicians face a number of common problems in their efforts to serve Christian liturgy. Many passages in this book will lose none of their cogency if the word "architect" is substituted for the word "musician," or "architecture" for "music."

This is particularly true of Archabbot Rembert Weakland's essay, "Music and Liturgy in Evolution," the first of the twelve papers which make up this volume. For example, when he says: "We cannot go backwards in time to find an art-music that will satisfy the liturgical demands of today." Or when he writes: "... looking to any of these (past) periods for a musical solution, even in preserving the masterpieces of those ages, ends in a cul-de-sac, even if we try fruitlessly to abstract from the bad theological opinions on the liturgy that gave birth to the music."

You will find other points of view represented in these papers are the proceedings of a conference which brought to the discussion table different positions evident in the current state of worship reform among Catholics of the Roman rite. Frederick McManus and Godfrey Diekmann lay the ground

k, the former analyzing conciliar teaching: rather than suggest that the holiness of music can be determined *a priori* or from intrinsic qualities the constitution prefers to make the relationship in the liturgical celebration the determining factor (Again, we can make the substitution.)

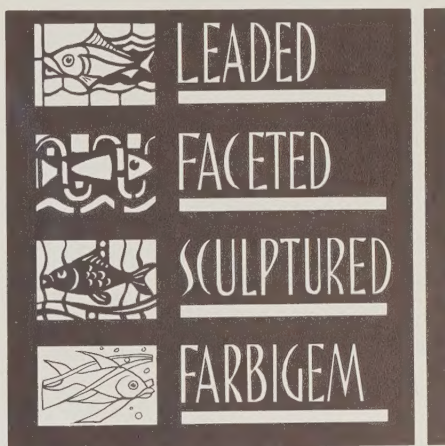
Wiekmann discusses the theology of liturgy, throwing considerable light on our evolution from an almost exclusively objectivist notion of worship to the implication that the grander or more magnificent the performance or building, the more God is glorified to a more subjective, personalist and communitarian notion. So that it is now the people who stumble, what they are doing and experiencing, what happens to them, that is of primary importance. Representatives of "right," "center," and "left" positions have their say. And Barry Ulanov says some things about economy of design and about aesthetic integrity which should interest architects no less than musicians, though he does seem to get hung up on that "Greek aesthetic system," against the effects of which Weakland warns us earlier in the book.

All of the papers remind us that these are exciting times for the community of brothers—and for all who would serve that community. These are times of great freedom, rich creativity, initiatives which do not try to make mistakes but which dare the possibility of mistakes. These are times of emancipation, not from tradition, but from enslavement to the past . . . even the treasures of the past.

Weakland's outstanding contribution contains a quote from theologian Johann Metz which should be inscribed on the walls of every church and every church musician: "It would be moreover wise to think that in the Christ-Event the future is already behind us, as if the future of history after Christ only plays itself out, but does not realize itself. On the contrary, the Christ-Event intensifies our orientation toward the not-yet realized future. The proclamation of the resurrection of Jesus, which can never be separated from the message of the crucifixion, is essentially a proclamation of the future which initiates the Christian mission. This mission achieves its future insofar as the Christian church and innovates the world toward the future of which is definitely promised to us in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The New Testament is therefore centered on hope—a creative expectancy—as the very essence of Christian existence." ■

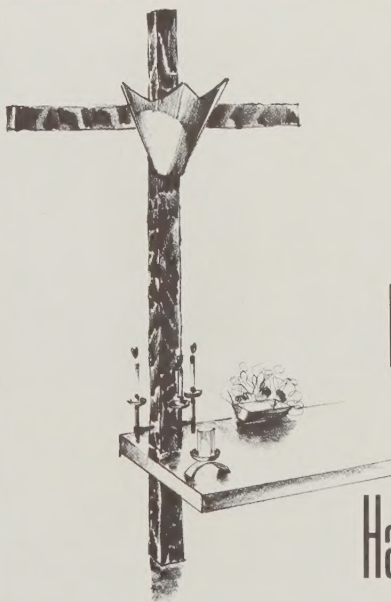
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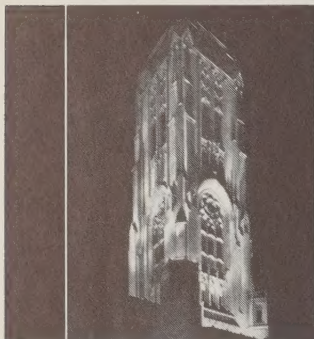
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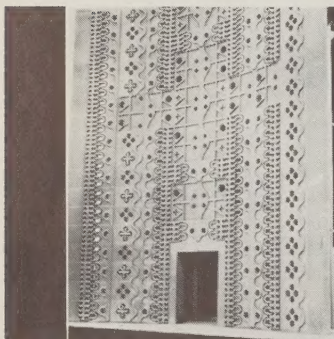
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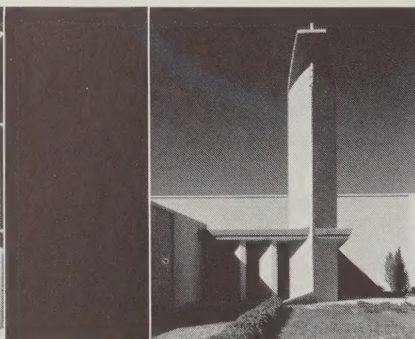
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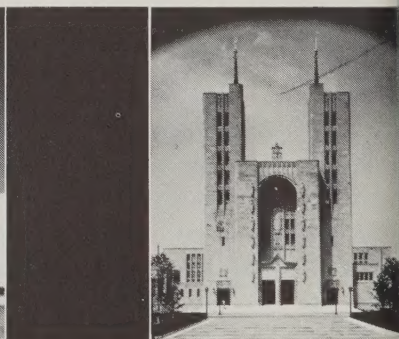
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519 N. Howard St.  
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- 67** N L CORPORATION  
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- 68** BENZIGER BROTHERS, INC.  
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# LIST OF ADVERTISERS

FAITH &  
FORM

|                                                                  | Page |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Buckingham-Virginia Slate Corp. ....                             | 13   |
| Carter-Miot Engineering Co. ....                                 | 25   |
| Concordia Publishing House — Krupnick & Associates, Inc. ....    | 31   |
| DuKane Corporation — Connor-Sager Associates, Inc. ....          | 11   |
| T. C. Esser Company ....                                         | 22   |
| Guild Hall Studios ....                                          | 5    |
| International Institute of Liturgical Art, Inc. ....             | 2    |
| Jonynas & Shepherd Art Studio, Inc. ....                         | 29   |
| Matthews Brothers Company — L. W. Ramsey Advertising Agency .... | 32   |
| N L CORPORATION — Belden/Frenz/Lehman Inc. ....                  | 17   |
| Page Church Furniture Co. ....                                   | 19   |
| Studios of George L. Payne — Thomas F. Clark Advertising ....    | 22   |
| Redwoods Monastery ....                                          | 19   |
| Sauder Manufacturing Co. — Kenneth Orwig Co. ....                | 26   |
| Saville Organ Corp. — James Bolt — Advertising ....              | 27   |
| Schulmerich Carillons, Inc. — Petrik & Stephenson, Inc. ....     | 24   |
| Robert Sowers — Parke Studios ....                               | 21   |
| Turney Wood Products, Inc. ....                                  | 4    |
| I. T. Verdin Company — Flottman Co., Inc. ....                   | 23   |
| Wicks Organ Company ....                                         | 18   |
| Willet Studios ....                                              | 31   |
| Winterich's — Carpenter, Lamb & Herrick, Inc. ....               | 21   |
| J. Wippell & Co., Ltd. ....                                      | 18   |

**Faith and Form** wishes to express its appreciation to the above-listed advertisers whose support has made this first issue possible.