

# 2017 International Awards Program for Religious Art & Architecture

Volume 50, Issue 4 :: Michael J. Crosbie, Ph.D., FAIA



A total of 27 projects representing the best in religious art and architecture were selected from a field of approximately 120 submissions. This year saw nine submissions in the category of “Adaptive Re-Use/Re-Purpose,” which was instituted two years ago to recognize the growing trend in sacred architecture to adapt existing facilities, or to transform secular buildings into religious facilities. Members of the jury remarked on how this category seems to be yielding some of the best work they’ve seen. Pointing out the continuing shrinkage of mainline Protestant congregations, jurors speculated that churches are more focused on getting the most out of their existing spaces, in some cases changing the function of these spaces to serve new, more community-oriented needs.

In fact, the jurors detected a strong expression of community-based sacred space—not only for worship and ritual, but also for serving the needs of the surrounding community through outreach. This often manifests itself in less “formal” spaces, as the jury described them, facilities with spiritual spaces were intertwined with more secular uses. Congregations are thinking harder about smaller, adaptive urban spaces. As one juror described it, “There seems to be more emphasis on what the role of the community is, and the sharing of liturgical space, and that is a breath of fresh air.”

A related aspect of many of the award-winning projects is their creativity in solving complex problems with not a wealth of means, often due to the fact that budgets are tight. Several of the projects “took nothing and made it into something,” several jurors explained. Many of these projects documented meager construction costs with an air of pride. Jury members were also impressed with simplicity in design, which they interpreted as part of a growing social value of voluntary simplicity in lifestyle—de-cluttering consumer-oriented lives. This was seen in many of the international submissions, which seem to be growing in number each year. These international projects are almost exclusively designed with a modernist sensibility at a variety of scales. The range of submissions that explored a traditional design idiom seemed narrower, although one is represented among the winners in this issue.



*The 2017 Faith & Form/IFRAA Religious Art and Architecture Awards Jury, left to right: Fr. Gilbert Sunghera, SJ (liturgical design consultant); David Roccosalva (artist and jury chair); Carolyn Peterson (architect); Rev. W. Joseph Mann (clergy); Thomas Barrie (architect).*

Calcagnini Contemplative Center / Dynerman Architects - Bluemont, VA, US  
 RLJ Chapel / Ricaro Yslas Gamez Arquitectos - San Juan Cosalá, Jalisco  
 Vajrasana Buddhist Retreat Centre / Walters & Cohen Architects - Bury Saint Edmunds, UK  
 Stella Maris Chapel / Alejandro Beautell Arquitecto - Tenerife, Canarias Island, Spain  
**Garden Chapel Pavilion / archimania - Memphis, TN, USA**  
 Liberty United Methodist Church / Dake Wells Architecture - Liberty, MO, USA  
 New Faith Baptist Church Worship Center / Harding Partners - Matteson, IL, USA  
 Tegami-Dokoro / Shoji Oshio + UA architects - Funabashi, Chiba, Japan  
 Amir Shakib Arslan Mosque / L.E.FT Architects - Moukhtara, Lebanon  
 Bellevue First Congregational Church / atelierjones llc - Bellevue, WA, USA  
 Congregation Kehilath Jeshurun Synagogue Chapel / FXFOWLE - New York, NY, USA  
**Redeemer Presbyterian / archimania - Memphis, TN, USA**  
 SGI New England Buddhist Center / Touloukian Touloukian Inc - Brookline, MA, USA  
 Redemption Arcadia / DeBartolo Architects - Phoenix, AZ, USA  
 Westport Presbyterian Church / BNIM - Kansas City, MO, USA  
 Congregation Beit Simchat Torah / Architecture Research Office - New York, NY, USA  
 The Sheridan Center Chapel / Jackson & Ryan Architects - Houston, TX, USA  
 Chai Spice Box / Ellen Hunt - Chicago, IL, USA  
 Duke University Chapel Woodwork Restoration / Century Guild - Durham, NC, USA  
 'Pieta' / Salvatore LaRosa  
 Eid Prayer Ground / Allies and Morrison - Doha, Qatar  
 Cathedral Campus / Strada Architecture LLC - Wheeling, WA, USA  
 Cathedral of Our Lady of the Assumption / Moto Designshop - Port-au-Prince  
 Funeral Home / Edyta Paula Konstantynowicz - Biolystok, Poland  
 Sacred Space of a Modern Man / Joanna Wierzbicka - Warsaw, Poland  
 The Mhuysqa Offering / Travis Price Architects with The Catholic University of America - Tenjo, Columbia