

walton

STUDIO

Bermudez + Brown

Part 3: Design Parti / Schematic Design: Sanctuary for 2045 / 2070



CONTEXT

It is an afternoon in late November 2070. Yet another beautiful, sunny, and 80-degree Fall day. But today is very special. You are receiving the highly coveted Twenty-Five Year National AIA-Award for the Sanctuary you designed and built long ago. This award showcases the best building in the nation that *“has stood the test of time for 25-35 years and continues to set standards of excellence for its architectural design and significance.”* Its influence in culture, society, spirituality, ethics, architecture, and more are extraordinary.

You are not young anymore by the standards of 50 years ago even though nobody of that time could tell if they saw you today. You don't look one day older than 40, something common after medicine figured how to (for all practical purposes) stop aging. Many people have rejected this choice and therefore continue to age and die like in the past, but most have embraced this long dreamt opportunity.

SANCTUARY

Your office won the worldwide competition to design and build a new Sanctuary in Washington DC at a critical point in human civilization (early 2040s). The brief for the competition was short, provocative, and timely. The building was to provide refuge, protect, celebrate, and/or consecrate something that the world could not lose as humanity moved into a radical new phase in its unstoppable evolution. It had to be an architecture without precedent, and its program was open-ended. An anonymous donor funded the whole project. The location was also poignant: between Union Station and the Capitol.

Your proposal was selected out of thousands. You still can't believe it. When it was announced in 2042, there was much controversy, rallies against and in favor, threats, huge media attention, and more. The resistance and debate continued after construction had finished in June 2045. For a while, demonstrations ensued outside the Sanctuary, but they slowly began to thin out, and within five years of opening its doors to the public, the Sanctuary was one of the most important attractions of

Washington DC. Of course, the reasons for this resounding success are now evident, although few had foreseen it. Your Sanctuary truly did what the brief desperately called for. Not only did the new institution deliver visitors to life-transforming rituals and realizations so necessary to people in what was to come, but the architecture itself was, literally, unprecedented. In fact, many were brought to the place just to experience its presence. Not surprising, some think of your Sanctuary as the pantheon of the third millennium. What is most remarkable is that the Sanctuary works better and is even more necessary today in 2070 than 25 years ago!

There has been lots of speculation about the actual size of the Sanctuary. People are unsure. The official version is 30,000 sq.ft. However, many see uncontested indications that it's only about 15,000 sq.ft. of 'usable space' with a volume comparable to a building of half a million sq.ft. Some swear about the existence of hidden recesses in the interior that remain locked or inaccessible except to those that 'need' or 'deserve' them (or know how to get there), suggesting a 50,000+ sq.ft. building size. And since all media is shut off (inoperable) inside the Sanctuary, there is no way to really know. The organization running the Sanctuary has vowed silence about it. Legends about the Sanctuary often draw from this mind-boggling mystery. At the same time, everybody knows (or think they know) the most important space of the Sanctuary. Some illegal VR footings of such space have surfaced. Yet, those that had visited it say that the experience of the main space of the Sanctuary has nothing to do with such recordings. Witnesses say that the whole thing is ineffable: words, moving images, sounds, simulations, what-have-you cannot communicate its beauty, impact, presence ...

PROCESS

Here are the steps you took back in 2041 to create this incredible gift to humanity. These considerations were not done sequentially. Instead, you engaged all of them progressively, interactively, wisely.

- (1) The Nature of a Sanctuary. It is clear that you reviewed the discussions, lectures, readings, and posting you had done with Marshall Brown (who you had hired as your consultant for the competition). You undoubtedly familiarized yourself with the actual definition and nature of the architectural type "sanctuary."
- (2) Programmatic development. You did analyze critically the work done with Marshall and for the site analysis. You looked at the 'label' and 'idea' for your sanctuary vis-à-vis the storyline you had carefully put down. Did it work? or was it be better to reconsider such a name? You realized that what you call something was important. Only what you call by name will come. You decided to forget what you thought it should be and instead accepted what your work at that time wanted to be. Where in your building did the 'miracle' happen? What kind of activities was necessary for your Sanctuary to work? Who visited, and who ran it? How did anyone enter it? What was the bill-of-right that the Sanctuary advanced? Where did people cry in your building? You had to develop a full-fledged program based on a series of experiences, rituals, or processes humans and non-humans would carry on in your Sanctuary.
- (3) Experiential development. This was done at the intersection between program and form. You remember using storyboarding as your primary method.
- (4) Formal development. This is how you initiated your design process. You started from where you had left it with Marshall. I took many, many working models and hand drawings to get to the right design.
- (5) Contextual development. You paid attention to how the Sanctuary was shaped from without ... but never forgot the within. Urban (social, cultural) and natural (climate, light, cosmos) were carefully addressed.

- (6) Theoretical development: Why do you think your Sanctuary succeeded? What was it that proved utterly significant? What was your thesis, parti? How did it relate to your design process? What were your values, philosophy, logic, professing? Somehow, they remain viable 25 years after construction!
- (7) Transcending architecture: how is your building going beyond itself? If it didn't, then there would be no sanctuary.
- (8) What was/is the real "raison d'être" of your Sanctuary? In 75 words and two images.

KEYWORDS silence, Al, emotion, retreat, zeitgeist, God, urban love, दया, tribalism, yüce, soul, world-centrism, صلح , freedom, pilgrimage, democracy, open-mindedness, 共感, consciousness, meeting, 'other', idling, mantha, life, space, crime, innocence, science, אייביקייט , wisdom, secrecy, γυναικα, cosmo-centrism, respect, neiespējami, dictatorship, fasting, surveillance, belief, extension, война, chaos, love, agnosticism, immortality, vir, locura, care, religion, السريالية, time, prayer, hedonism, not-knowing, kamahéran, cyborg, trust, lumière, humility, hugtak, sperto ...



STARTS	Wednesday 30 September
PARTI	Friday 9 October (program, context, philosophy, massing, main spaces)
DESIGN	Friday 23 October & Monday 26 October
JURY	Friday 30 October & Monday 2 November (6 and 7 students)