

THE SACRED - Part 01

"More than ever before, the ethical and humane task of architecture and all art is to defend the authenticity and autonomy of human experience, and to reveal the existence of the transcendental realm, the domain of the sacred."

– Juhani Pallasmaa¹

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Introductions + Teams

1 Defining Water + Case Studies

Each team will use this assignment to gain an understanding of the fundamental qualities and sacredness of water through case study analysis. The questions below are to assist the exploration and critical analyses of water.

1.1 Sacredness + Symbolism of Water

Why is water sacred to the human experience? How is this addressed cross-culturally around the globe? What symbolism is attached to water?

1.2 Ritual-uses of Water

How is water used in ritual? Are there differences and/or commonalities among religious traditions?

1.3 Architectural-uses of Water

How do various religious traditions use water in their architectural configurations? What meaning is conveyed, if any? How do non-religious architectural projects celebrate water or use water to enhance the design?

1.4 Experiential Qualities of Water

What are the visual qualities of water? What are the various sounds of water? What is the oral sensation and taste of water? What are the tactile qualities of water?

¹ Pallasmaa, Juhani. "Light, Silence, and Spirituality in Architecture and Art." In *Transcending Architecture: Contemporary Views on Sacred Space*, edited by Julio Bermudez, 19-32. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2015.

2 Site + Context

This assignment will facilitate our comprehension of the site and its context. The questions below are to assist the exploration and critical analyses of site and context. Each team is to document their analysis on (4) 11x17 sheets of paper.

2.1 History, Significance, Spirit of Place

What is the historical significance of the site? What is the spirit of place for our site? What is the essence of the site? What qualities/features makes this place significant? How does the current installation celebrate these features?

2.2 Contextual Fabric

What is the contextual fabric of the site? What are the major and minor surroundings? What connective nodes provide access to the site? What is the vernacular materiality of adjacent buildings? What is the scale of the neighborhood? How can the site become a sacred destination?

3 Poem + Concept Model

This assignment is the heart and soul of the project. It must be presented in three key ways.

NOTE: You are architects/designers and this assignment is *not* a piece of architecture. It *is* a sculptural poetic concept to be created as a team collaboration. We will actually be designing the architectural expression in the assignment to come.

3.1 A model/visual sculptural exploration.

This can be any model media; foam core, cardboard, wood, stone, clay, mixed materials, painting, sketches, etc.

3.2 Narrative

A short 3-4 sentence narrative describing in “well edited English” your concept.

3.3 A short poem

The essence of your adjectives, the full body and aroma of your piece.

4 Architectural Projections

This assignment will engage the creative process of architectural design by envisioning the potentials of the site through quick conceptual models. Each team must create 15 unique study/parti models exploring issues of scale, materiality, form, proportion, massing, experience, etc.