

Air Force Village Chapel: Light // Surface // Experience

The addition of a chapel to the Air Force Village allows for the signature building and social heart to introduce a hierarchy and order to the campus as a whole. Sited to extend the primary vehicular entry to the site through the new building, its position and configuration establish an axis linking the forecourt, through the sanctuary, and visually extend it out and across the lake. Once within the site, or approaching en route, the lattice signs of colored glass panels serve as an orienting beacon and an aesthetic landmark. The location of the chapel serves as an extension of the existing campus, demarcating the edge of the multi-unit buildings and the single family field of dwellings. The chapel is clad in a continuous standing seam metal roofing. Durable, affordable and simple in material and visual articulation, the chapel derives its presence from its faceted form. The simple metal box, figured through the conditions and interior spaces, allows for standardized structure and cladding to produce a dynamic form. The singularity of the main volume is broken down through simple modifications to respond to the functions, light conditions, and spatial effects of the interior. Three rectangular wood paneled boxes pull out of the main volume to define the multi-faith worship center [off the narthex], the blessed sacristy [axially located off the altar] and the linked Catholic and Protestant Sacristies [extending off the altar in the other direction]. The simplicity of their forms foil the complexity of the main sanctuary space. Sited on the edge within the designated zone of extension, the chapel develops both an interior and exterior presence. The entry court becomes a plinth. Flanked by two earth berms that settle the edges and bound the entry as an outdoor room. The bell tower anchors the horizontal plaza and produces a fractal glass projection surface that reflects like stained glass across the surface of the outdoor sanctuary. A shallow reflecting pool edges the forecourt and connects the bell tower back to the chapel. Chain lift out of the ground to an operable grid to allow for flexible seat post positioning, variable sized audiences, and to accommodate intermittently located accessible positions. A large doorway [entry portal axially located off the forecourt] draws the visitor into the narthex. Upon entry you are confronted with a simple white plaster orthogonal lining. A triangulated suspended plywood ceiling draws the eye upward and establishes the ceiling as the organizational figure. Bending and draping to define the space respond to the local-level programmatic functions: mediate aesthetic, mechanical, and fire safety practicalities and compositionally defines the light; the roof is the primary figure of the space. The ceiling bows down at its greatest point of intensity to separate the narthex from the nave. The dip houses a staircase that leads up to the projection booth. The main sanctuary has undulating elements that acoustically respond to the audience and extends with the natural daylight over the altar. The choir sits as a wind frame anchoring the back the sanctuary and creating a massive glass ocula overlooking the lake. COMMUNITY VALLEY: This design proposal adds to the community value of the Air Force Village by engaging the entire campus through a series of axes. The major axis of the building connects at the threshold of the primary vehicular entry running through the site, across the newly formed forecourt, through the axis of the chapel, and out the large scalar choir window to the lake beyond. Within the chapel [linked to the existing building through a glass and plant wall connection that extends the axis of the existing floor plan] there are a series of axes that establish relationships between the major spaces of the complex allowing occupants to understand the hierarchy and structure of the chapel. Beyond these axes, the spaces themselves are separated in such a way that each element can be understood as a separate but complete entity. This allows for large and small gatherings to take place simultaneously. The chapel tower serves as a symbol for the Air Force Village community. Its visibility would allow each person to feel an attachment to the chapel and village. The spaces are organized in such a way to provide a strong sense of community through the use of materials, light, landscape, view and enclosure.

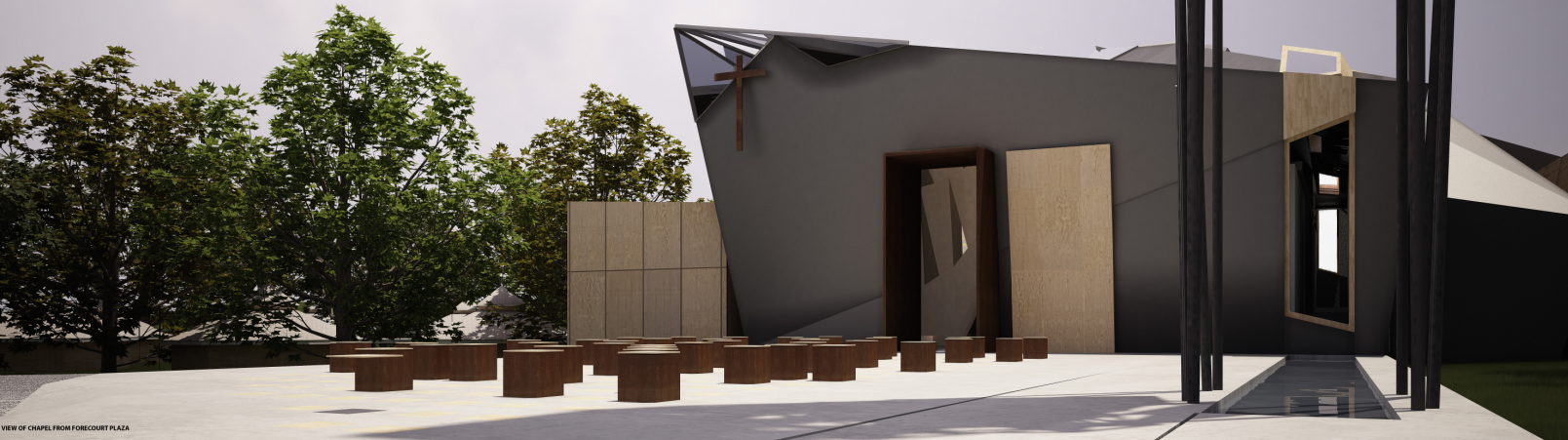


VIEW OF SANCTUARY FROM THE NARTHEX - axis visually continues through large frame window of choir 1500 ft makes visual room nestled in roof design to the right

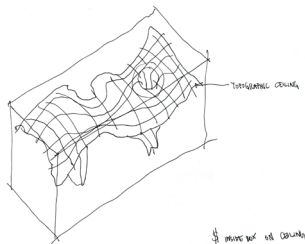
VIEW OF SANCTUARY FROM ALTAR - undulating plywood ceiling with recessed for light (natural and artificial); floor containing bubble pull-up seating; chrome ventilation figures

NIGHT VIEW OF CHAPEL FROM LAKE - close-up of the glass facade and the light reflecting off the water

SACRISTY - with hidden storage and bubble pull-up seating



VIEW OF CHAPEL FROM FORECOURT PLAZA



PROJECT

AIR FORCE CHAPEL

TYPE

COMPETITION

LOCATION

SAN ANTONIO, TX

DATE

2010

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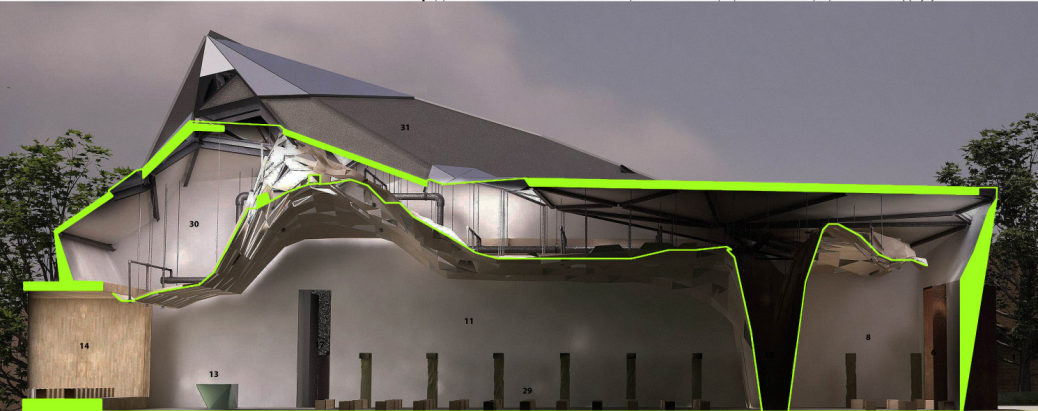
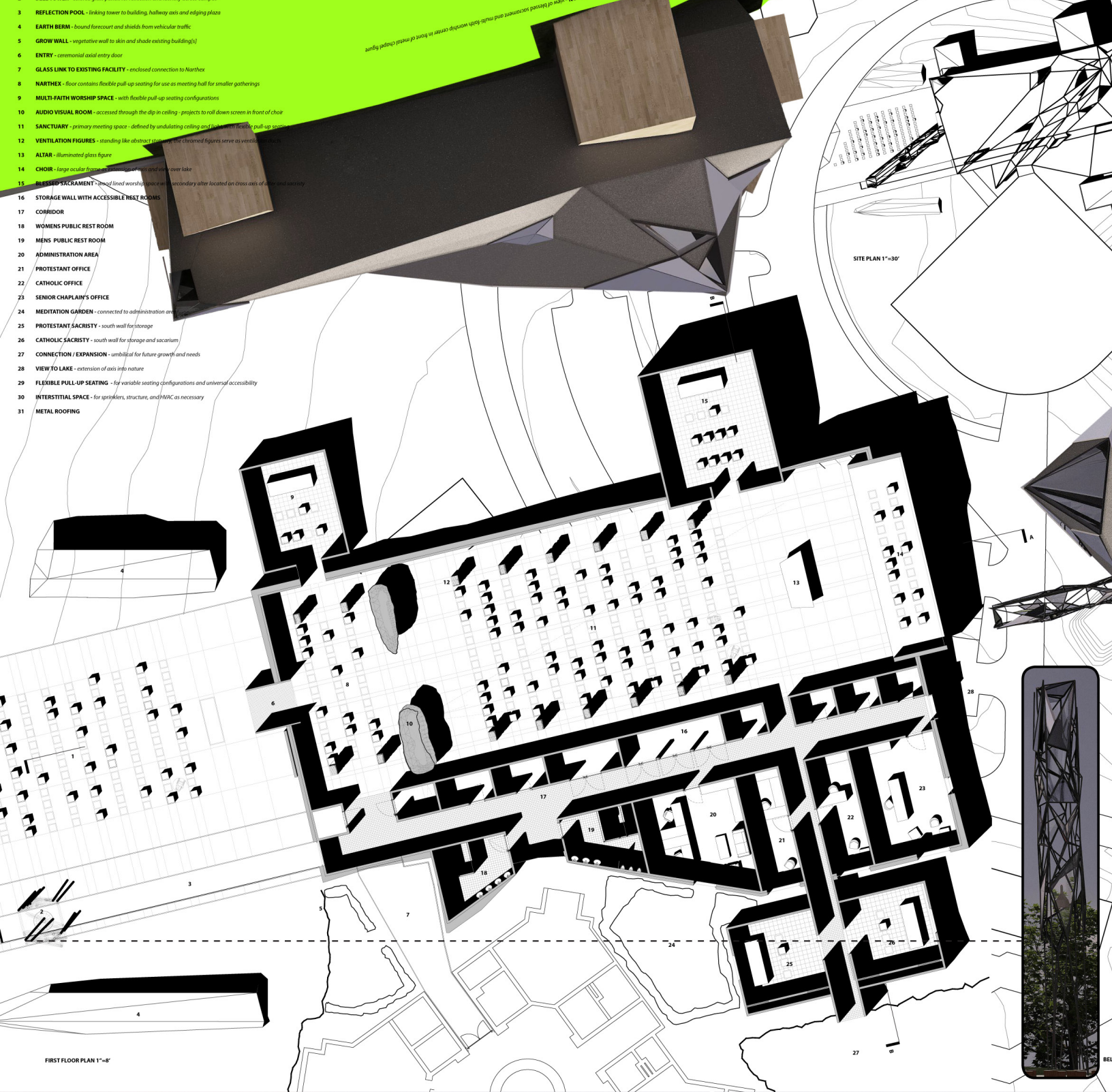


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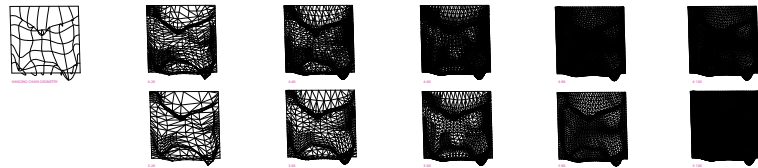
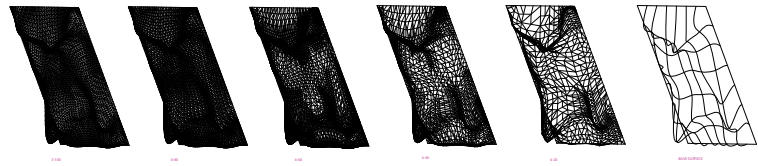
- 3 REFLECTION POOL - linking tower to building, hallway axis and edging plaza
- 4 EARTH BERM - bound forecourt and shields from vehicular traffic
- 5 GROW WALL - vegetative wall to skin and shade existing building(s)
- 6 ENTRY - ceremonial axial entry door
- 7 GLASS LINK TO EXISTING FACILITY - enclosed connection to Northex
- 8 NARTHEX - floor contains flexible pull-up seating for use as meeting hall for smaller gatherings
- 9 MULTI-FAITH WORSHIP SPACE - with flexible pull-up seating configurations
- 10 AUDIO VISUAL ROOM - accessed through the dip in ceiling - projects to roll down screen in front of choir
- 11 SANCTUARY - primary meeting space - defined by undulating ceiling and light from flexible pull-up seating
- 12 VENTILATION FIGURES - standing like abstract statuary, the chimneys serve as vertical ventilation
- 13 ALTAR - illuminated glass figure
- 14 CHOIR - large ocular frame in sanctuary walls and view over lake
- 15 BLESSED SACRAMENT - small lined worship space as secondary altar located on cross axis of sanctuary
- 16 STORAGE WALL WITH ACCESSIBLE REST ROOMS
- 17 CORRIDOR
- 18 WOMENS PUBLIC REST ROOM
- 19 MENS PUBLIC REST ROOM
- 20 ADMINISTRATION AREA
- 21 PROTESTANT OFFICE
- 22 CATHOLIC OFFICE
- 23 SENIOR CHAPLAIN'S OFFICE
- 24 MEDITATION GARDEN - connected to administration area
- 25 PROTESTANT SACRISTY - south wall for storage
- 26 CATHOLIC SACRISTY - south wall for storage and sacarium
- 27 CONNECTION / EXPANSION - umbilical for future growth and needs
- 28 VIEW TO LAKE - extension of axis into nature
- 29 FLEXIBLE PULL-UP SEATING - for variable seating configurations and universal accessibility
- 30 INTERSTITIAL SPACE - for sprinklers, structure, and HVAC as necessary
- 31 METAL ROOFING



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CEILING PANELS DENSITY CONFIGURATIONS



Upon entry one is confronted with a simple white plaster orthogonal lining. A triangulated suspended plywood ceiling draws the eye upward and establishes the ceiling as the organizational figure. Bending and draping to define the space; respond to the localized programmatic functions; mediate acoustical, mechanical, and fire safety practicalities; and compositionally define the light: the roof is the primary figuration of the space. The ceiling bows down at its greatest point of intensity to separate the narthex from the nave. The dip houses a staircase that leads up to the projection booth. The main sanctuary has undulating elements that acoustically respond to the audience and crescendo with the natural skylight over the altar. The choir sits as a wood frame anchoring the back on the sanctuary and creating a massive glass oculus overlooking the lake.

**COMMUNITY VALUE:** This design proposal adds to the community value of the Air Force Village by engaging the entire campus through a series of axes. The major axis of the building commences at the threshold of the primary vehicular entry running through the site, across the newly formed forecourt, through the axis of the chapel, and out the large ocular choir window to the lake beyond. Within the chapel [linked to the existing building through a glass and plant wall connection that extends the axis of the existing floor plan] there are a series of axes that establish relationships between the major spaces of the complex allowing occupants to understand the hierarchy and structure of the chapel. Beyond these axes, the spaces themselves are separated in such a way that each element can be understood as a separate but complete entity. This allows for large and small gatherings to take place simultaneously. The chapel tower serves as a symbol for the Air Force Village community. Its visibility would allow each person to feel an attachment to the chapel and village. The spaces are organized in such a way to provide a strong sense of community through the use of materials, light, landscape, view and enclosure.