

MI'RAJ: Prishtina Central Mosque Competition

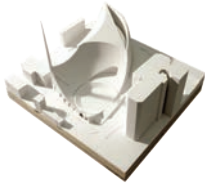
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Syracuse University

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MI'RAJ is the design of a mosque in Prishtina, Kosovo. 'MI'RAJ' is derived from one of two parts of the night ascension journey that the Islamic prophet Muhammad took in one night. It has been described as both a physical and spiritual journey. The proposal, MI'RAJ, is about a journey of ascension to prayer and the spatial experience that evolves. As the ascension to prayer begins, a sequence of events unfolds. As visitors approach the mosque from either end of the site, they encounter the beginning of their journey via a slow stair wrapping the south side of the building. That stair culminates in an open, round plaza where one can either wait, sit, and relax or proceed to the entry of the mosque. The plaza space is expansive with deep vistas and views of the city unfolding around them as they gaze out beyond the mosque. The plaza can be used for gathering, enjoying the weather, or just contemplating alone. There is a fountain in the middle to wash or cool off. The journey continues as one approaches the main entry one level up from the plaza with a slow ascension upwards to a deep overhang that pulls visitors in to a main lobby. From there, men and women separate. Men proceed on the main level, up a steady ramp to the prayer hall. The women wind their way up one or two flights of stairs to the women's balconies. The journey creates a sense of simultaneity; the architecture unravels itself above and below as everyone moves through towards the prayer hall. Both men and women experience the sequence of events and deep vistas simultaneously, straddling three levels, first through the ablution space that occupies the floor with a series of fountains to wash. Everyone emerges into the prayer hall through a series of fan-like arches. They arrive to find a multi-level space with light shining from far above their heads – indirect light slowly filtering through a shimmering dome hovering high in the space. Light trickles through and dances along the qibla wall to direct your eye and attention towards mecca. The grandeur of the space is where one can be suspended as a part of a larger divine whole. After one finishes their prayer, they proceed back through the ablution space, down the ramp or stair, and reemerge back to the community plaza to relax, hang out and enjoy the experience with friends and family. As a result of the Islamic community of Prishtina searching for a unifying symbol and identity that can bring together many disparate mosques scattered throughout the city, the proposal harnesses that need and brings together a sense of place and provides public space for the greater good of the community.



M I ' R A J

چارعمرلو و عارس إلا

Phatima Central Mosque Competition - 2015

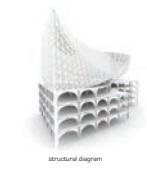
MIRAJ is one of two parts of the right ascension journey that the Islamic prophet Muhammad took in one night. It has been described as both a physical and spiritual journey. The proposal, MIRAJ, is about a journey of ascension to prayer and the spatial experience that ensues. As the ascension to prayer begins, a sequence of events unfolds. As visitors approach the mosque, they encounter the beginning of their journey via a slow stair wrapping the south side of the building. That stair culminates in an open, round place where one can either sit and wait or proceed to the entry.

The journey continues as one approaches the main entry with a slow ascension, opening to a slow stair and into the main lobby. From there, men and women separate with men proceeding up a gradual ramp to the prayer hall. The women wind up the stairs to the women's balconies. Both men and women experience the sequence of events simultaneously as they move from the alidation spaces to the prayer hall. Everyone enters the prayer hall through a series of fanlike arches. They arrive to find a multi-level space with light shining from above - indirect light slowly filtering through a shimmering dome hovering high in the space.

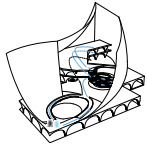
Light trickles through the dome and dances along the qibla wall to direct attention towards mecca. After prayer, everyone proceeds back through the alidation spaces, down the ramp or stair, and emerges back in the community plaza to relax, hang out and enjoy the experience.

The Islamic community of Philadelphia is searching for a unifying symbol that brings many isolated mosques throughout the city back together. The proposal harnesses that need and brings together a sense of place and provides public space for the greater good of the community.

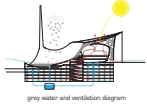
Design Firm: Aptum Architecture
Julia Lerman, Syracuse University
Rajeev Kishor, Syracuse University
Structural Engineer: Street Mus Networks, Syracuse University
Collaborators: Vito, Chang, Chang Chang, Andrew James, Andrew Paul, Bryan Schab



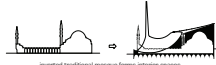
structural diagram



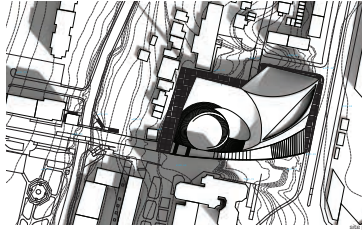
circulation diagram



grey water and ventilation diagram



inverted traditional mosque forms master spaces



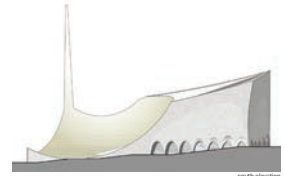
southwest corner of outdoor plaza and main entry to mosque



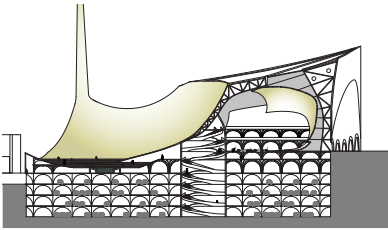
west elevation



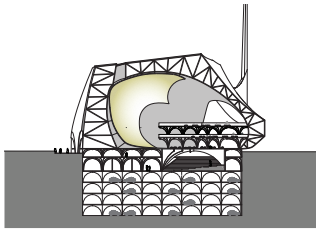
west elevation



south elevation



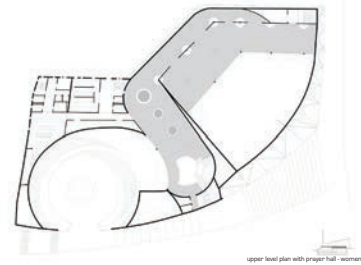
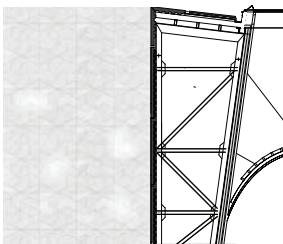
longitudinal section through outdoor plaza



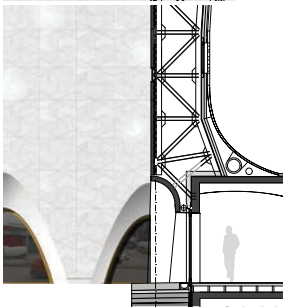
cross section through prayer hall



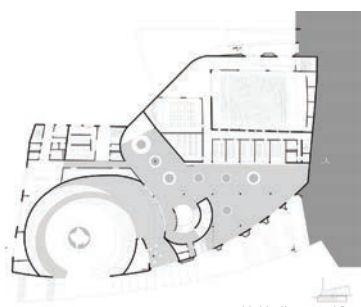
basement level - main circulation space



upper level plan with prayer hall - women



well section + elevation



main level plan with entry to prayer hall - men



prayer hall - men's level with women's balconies beyond



east elevation