

SUPPORTING MATERIAL

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ACSA Distinguished Professor 2022

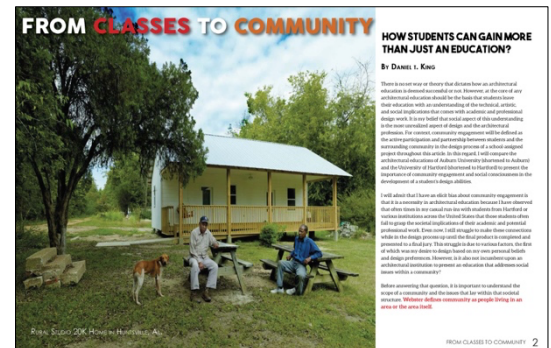
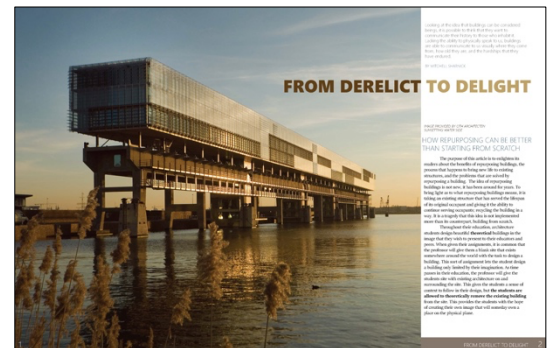
TEACHING and CONNECTIONS

My teaching is shaped through connections to other parts of my professional life: writing to communicate architectural ideas, scholarship in exploring the role of spirituality in the creation of architecture, collaboration with others in our design journeys, how the narrative and experiential power of cinema shapes our perception of architecture and in turn influences our experience of film. Here are examples of my approach to teaching through connections, engaging students, and inviting them to approach the study of architecture along a variety of paths.

“Writing About Architecture”

I developed a seminar course intended to help students (undergraduates and graduates) to express their architectural ideas through the written word. I first taught this course as an adjunct professor at Roger Williams University. Since then, I’ve offered the course to my students at Hartford (It has also been offered it as a workshop to practicing architects). **The goal of the course is to introduce architecture students to a way of thinking about and communicating about architecture that is usually not stressed in their education: the written word.** For many of us, our primary awareness of the built environment on a local and global scale is gained through architectural media.

Unfortunately, very few architecture students have a working understanding of the architectural press. My teaching seeks not only to introduce students to the mechanics and conventions of writing about architecture and the methods of communicating architectural ideas. **Most importantly, the course provides an opportunity for students to develop their own critical view of architecture.** No one can write with conviction unless he or she draws from an internal system of belief about what architecture is and what it means. A personal conviction or philosophy about architecture allows the writer to effectively communicate. A good writer communicates a specific architectural point of view whether writing about the design of a city or a single doorknob. It is the lens through which the writer views the world. **It is essential that the point of view developed by the student be a product of their own thoughts, experiences, convictions.** It must be something that they believe in, a part of the fabric of their own worldview that serves as a basis from which to critique the built environment. The course is structured as weekly assignments writing about architecture in a variety of ways, always supported by the student’s personal convictions. Several students over the years have published articles that were written in the course.



Samples of student-designed layouts of articles written and designed for my ‘Writing About Architecture’ course. For the term project students are required to write a 10-page article and lay it out as a journal article.

“Project Swap”

As an architectural educator I believe that there should be opportunities for students to experience in design studio a stronger connection to the realities of practice. I’ve also found that if you carefully pair students in group projects they teach each other—they end up learning not only about design but how to work together, developing interpersonal skills that they will find useful whatever their career, in architecture or not. The “Project Swap” is a variation on the “group project” approach.

A project of five to six weeks to design a cultural center takes on an entirely new dimension when I introduce a “reality check” from practice. At the midpoint of a six-week design for a Museum of Chinese in America is a “progress review” in which the single-student designers present their project, as a second student takes notes on reviewers’ comments and suggestions. At the end of the presentations the students are told that their projects will be completed by the student who has recorded their presentation notes. The notes they recorded are for them to consult, if they chose to. **What usually follows is general disbelief: “What? I don’t get to finish my project? I have to give my project to another student, and I will be finishing the design of another student’s project?”** Sure, I say, it happens in practice all the time: you’re working on a project team and you get reassigned to be completed by someone else. They might honor your design or take it in an entirely different direction.

Each student is instructed to keep a journal for the remainder of the project, recording what they are learning in the process, their thoughts on the nature of design authorship, their consultation (or not) with the original designer, how this experience might influence them as future architects, and comment on the pedagogical value of the project swap. Students reflect that, at first, their design decisions are cautious, then become more decisive. Some students consult the original designer on changes, but ultimately make design decisions not aligned with their “client.” In one studio, a student noted that the swap helped him to attain a deeper appreciation for other designers’ views, “...because iteration is essential to design.” Another student reported that his discussions with the original designer about how it might change became testy. When he went forward with the changes, he felt that he had finally taken authorship of the design. “It teaches an important lesson,” one student wrote, about not getting too attached to a design. **Another student remarked that the swap encouraged him to be more flexible about design--good ideas can come from anyone on a team.**

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ESSAYS

Project Swap: A Design Studio Experiment Tests Ideas of Authorship and Collaboration

10.21.2019

By Michael J. Crosbie

The design studio is the heart of architectural education. The “crown jewel” of the curriculum, it often consumes the most credits. In the two-year graduate architecture program where I teach at the University of Hartford, design studio courses account for 24 of the 64 credits, nearly 40% of the curriculum.

The design studio’s importance is a carryover from an earlier educational model: the atelier, where students would learn by working for a practicing architect, perhaps in a master’s studio. This past model is different from how most design studios actually operate in professional education today. The atelier setting exposed emerging architects to the full range of circumstances in the process of creating a building, not just the design phase. The studio’s current prominence in education derives from the profession’s mythic culture that architects are artists first, creative people of singular vision, who practice their art in a backdrop filled with mystery. Magic happens in the studio, and the architect is the chief magician. The studio’s centrality in architectural education also means that the students who perform best in this setting are seen as the stars of the architectural program, those who can potentially raise the stature of the school through their design work.

The ‘Project Swap’ is a way to explore concepts of authorship and design collaboration. This article on the project was featured on the Common Edge architectural criticism Website.

“Islamic Center and Mosque”

This project was developed with the goal of exposing design students to a building type they might have no experience with, designing for people they might need to better understand and learn about. Muslim students at Hartford are a growing presence, but most students are not familiar with the religion of Islam, its beliefs, the rituals of Islamic prayer, and the traditions of Islamic architecture. **The Islamic Center and Mosque project challenges my students to think about sacred space and place and how it compares to their own belief systems, or not.** The Islamic Center and Mosque is a religious building, but also includes spaces that are not expressly for worship: classrooms, meeting rooms, spaces to gather in community and share meals, a library and visitors center, and a residence for the Imam. It needs to respond to the tenets of the Islamic faith, but also be a place where non-Muslims can learn about the religion and the activities of this congregation. **An important stage of this project is research on the faith of Islam and Islamic architecture. For this reason, Muslim students become empowered to help their non-Muslim colleagues gain a better understanding of history and tradition.**

As a studio class we visit a local Islamic Center and attend a Friday prayer service with the goal of observing how the worship space is used and how it is reflective and symbolic of the congregation and the larger faith. Sites for this project have been in Hartford and in Montreal (which provides another layer of cultural variety). **The design has to respond to various functional requirements, but more importantly it must be symbolic. It should communicate the presence of Islam as a religious community in a place of many faiths.** The form of the building, its decoration (or lack thereof), and the choice of materials, colors, and details should express the Islamic Center’s role in the local community. For many students, this project challenges them to consider their own attitudes about, and postures toward, cultural and religious diversity. Over several years a number of student mosque projects have been recognized in international architecture design award programs.

CUA Walton Visiting Critic Studio

In 2015 I was invited by Catholic University in Washington, D.C. to be the Walton Visiting Critic and Professor in Residence for a studio oriented toward architectural spirituality and cultural diversity. For several years I’ve been researching and writing about changes in religion in the US and the impact of these changes on sacred space, how it is defined and designed, its new and emerging forms. My research has found that most of the changes in religious belief and practice are occurring in the Millennial age group—the very demographic of the graduate students in the Walton Studio I led.



Top, student Jan-Hendrik Höhnk’s design for The Islamic Centre of Greater Montreal. During site research the class met the Imam of the Islamic Center of Quebec about the city’s Islamic faith community. Above, students visit the Greater Hartford Islamic Center for Friday prayer to understand how the mosque functions. Above, design for a mosque of indigenous materials for a site in Senegal, a submission in an international competition by Hartford students Alvi Aliq and Eric Mendez.

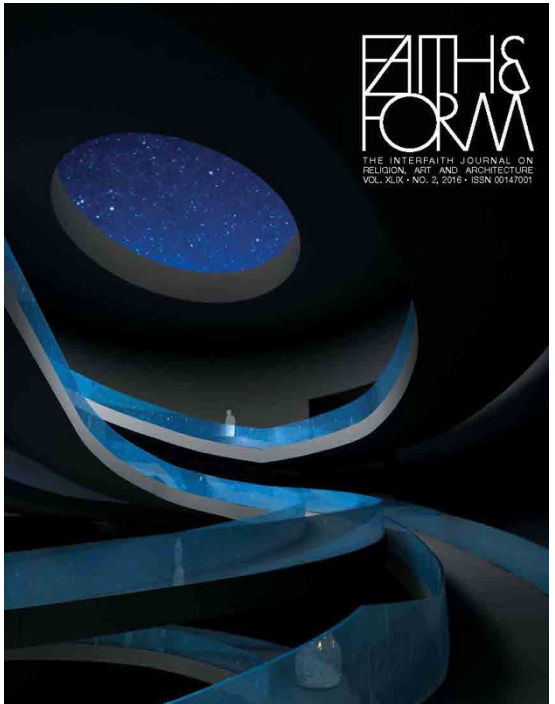
This presented a valuable opportunity to work with the students to analyze evolving changes in sacred space, what new kinds of sacred space designed for Millennials might be like. I asked the students to reflect upon their own experiences about organized religion, their own beliefs, and the “search” for a new kind of church they might engage. **The students revealed a willingness to greatly broaden the definition of what happens inside a house of worship, and why these activities were important to them.**

Students found opportunities to create a sacred place in such activities as performing music or making art; in moving their bodies through space in the medium of dance; in digitally connecting with people and events around the globe; in sharing with and caring for other human beings through the concept of “giving and receiving”; in creating a safe place for women who are victims of domestic violence; in landscape and nature serving as a setting for contemplation, reflection, and celebration; to provide support to those seeking to strengthen their bodies and spirits through nutrition and exercise. **Conventional ideas about houses of worship were sparse.**

The new house of worship’s program evolved from the students’ ideas about new kinds of sacred space. Their designs reflected some of the elements of contemporary ideas about spirituality, with a combination of places for the spirit, to share community, for outreach, for creation and performance, for gathering in worship and ritual, to share meals and fellowship (like pubs or coffeehouses). **When the students presented their projects there were a few debates between students and reviewers about what could or should be considered sacred and what shouldn’t.** It was at that point that I realized that this project to design a new house of worship had achieved a measure of success: to broaden, challenge, confront, and consider the fact that the definition of religious architecture is not static and unchanging, that every generation needs to ask and try to answer what it is. **This studio, the pedagogical approach, and the students’ work have been the subject of several lectures and articles.**

“Architecture in Film”

At the University of Hartford I developed a new course to raise the awareness and appreciation of architecture specifically among non-architecture students, using cinema and its connections with architecture. I’ve always loved film, as many architects do. **Film directors and architects operate in similar ways: they marshal the talents and expertise of large groups of people and bring them together to create an environment to be experienced.** In film, it is the *mise-en-scene*—what is in the frame; in architecture, it is the three-dimensional experience of space over time, places in which



Walton Visiting Critic Studio at Catholic University, 2015. The studio was an opportunity for the students and me to study and contemplate how contemporary sacred space is changing according to demographic shifts in belief, led by their own perceptions of how the ‘sacred’ should be defined. Above, final presentation review of students’ Ugochukwu Nnebue and Sina Mozyedi project, ‘Giving and Receiving,’ later featured on the cover of the Interfaith Journal Faith & Form, which documented the student work of the Walton Studio.

we act out our lives. **The experience of film can offer non-architecture student an engaging way to access architecture:** how do we (and what do we) experience the built environment, what does it mean, how is it symbolic, what impact can it have on us?

I collaborated with a colleague (film scholar Robert Lang) in the university's cinema program to create what has become a staple in Hartford's interdisciplinary course offerings. **"Architecture In Film" invites students to experience architecture as a character (as one of the film's actors) that might propel the film's narrative, symbolize ideas, or transport us to fictional worlds that we can only grasp through architecture.** For instance, it's difficult to convey the ideas of utopia or dystopia without employing strong architectural settings. Director Fritz Lang's 1927 film *Metropolis* makes tangible the utopia of those who conceive and rule the city, and the dystopia beneath the city's surface where workers toil to make it function. These become real places to the film viewer. Or, **how does gender govern one's movements in urban space? The film version of E.M. Forster's novel *A Room with a View* makes my students aware that men once occupied virtually any urban space they wished, while women were allowed to experience only certain city places while in the company of men.** How has access to urban space based on gender (or race) changed, or not?

Each of the course's 14 films is prefaced with discussions of issues based on assigned readings drawn from such insightful texts as Juhani Pallasmaa's *The Architecture of Image: Existential Space in Cinema* (2001). **The course focuses on the experiential aspects of architecture expressed through six key features: space/scale, style/ornament, light, sound, color, landscape. The human experience of architecture is open to any student, whether they study architecture or not.** In their weekly written critiques of each film, students comment on whether they've had similar experiences in the built environments of their own lives. The goal is to make connections between architecture in the film and examples from the built environment that students inhabit.

Architecture faculty typically don't spend much time with non-architecture students. But engaging a business major, a cinema student, an engineering major, or a future psychologist about the built environment (as experienced through film, and their own lives) reminds one that, ultimately, design is not benign—it shapes our memories and our dreams, architect or not.

Feedback provided through student course evaluations reveals that "Architecture in Film" has helped non-architecture students to cultivate a greater awareness of architecture, an appreciation for it, through the medium of film. Evaluations for the University



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ESSAYS

Teaching an Appreciation for Architecture Through Film

01.29.2020

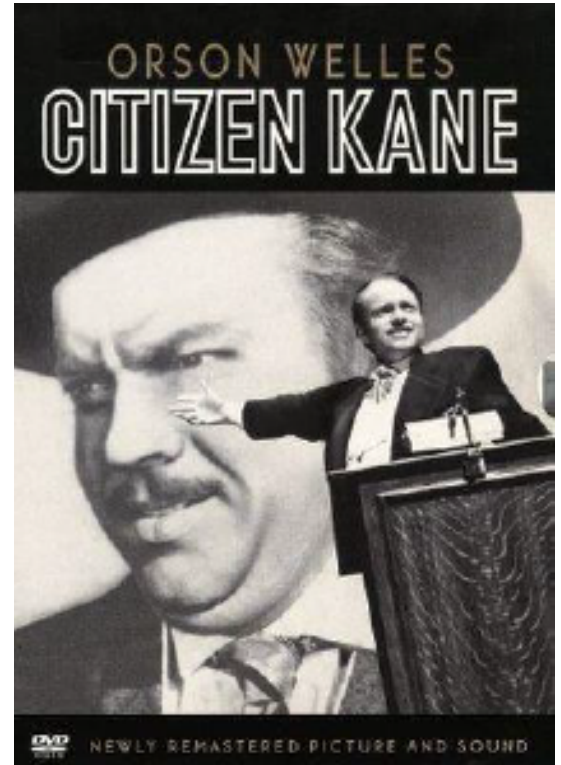
By Michael J. Crosbie

The field of architecture is not exactly a hot topic of study for most undergraduate students. The closest they might get to the subject is an art history survey course in which architecture is presented as a parade of styles across the millennia—just another form of visual expression.

A few years ago, I tried something different to raise the awareness of non-architecture students of architecture and its place in their world. The University of Hartford, where I am on the architecture faculty, invited ideas on new interdisciplinary elective courses, open to all undergrads, that would explore the relationship between two or more disciplines. I've always loved film, as many architects do. Partly it's because film directors and architects operate in similar ways, marshaling the talents and expertise of large groups of people to create an environment to be experienced. In film, it is the *mise en scene*, literally what is in the frame of the scene; in architecture, it is the three-dimensional experience of space over time, places in which we act out our lives. Might a cinematic experience offer non-architecture majors a way to access architecture in its most visceral ways? To ponder how we experience the

The 'Architecture in Film' course for non-architecture students presents 14 films in which architecture pays a key role. Students critique the films reflecting on their own experiences with architecture, such as the buildings they grew up in. The article in Common Edge increases awareness of the course outside of an academic audience.

Interdisciplinary Studies (UIS) courses are graded on a five-point scale ("5" being the highest). One evaluation survey question asks students if in the course they "integrated material from outside (for example, from real-world situations, life experiences) and inside (for example, course readings and lectures)." Over six semesters the average value of the course mean for responses to this question is 4.41, while the average mean for all UIS courses for responses to this question is 4.28. Among comments regarding the impact of the course on their understanding and awareness of architecture, **one student offered: "It allowed me to look at films and the world in a way I had never thought of before, as I am not an architecture student,"** while another wrote that the course "...expands student knowledge of historic films and ways to think about architecture."



LEADERSHIP and SERVICE

The importance of leadership and service is not only to contribute to the institution that supports you, but to ensure that leadership and service activities become role models for students. Here I present highlights from my leadership and service to the University and the profession, in the context of my own research and scholarship.

Chair, Associate Dean, and Program Director

I served as Chair of the University of Hartford Department of Architecture for nine years, from December 2006 to December 2015, and also as Graduate Program Director. I came to the Department at a precarious time, as the Master of Architecture degree was in NAAB candidacy status with one more visit to determine if candidacy would be retained (weaknesses in the program had been identified in NAAB visits before I arrived as Chair). The M. Arch degree program had been instituted at Hartford in 2003, as there was great interest in an architecture program (outside of Yale, the only other architecture school in the state) that would serve the employment needs of Connecticut's practitioners. **Working with a supportive Dean, we expanded the faculty, conducted curriculum reviews and adjustments to course content, and strengthened the Master's Thesis course, making it comprehensive.** The NAAB team made its final visit in November 2008 and the Master's program achieved initial accreditation (3 years). Continuing accreditation was achieved in 2011 (6 years), and subsequent NAAB accreditation terms have been granted.

One of my keenest goals as head of the Department was to expand in-house support for our students. I was instrumental in establishing a graduate student travel grant program under the generosity of Hartford architect Tai Soo Kim. We also instituted for our graduate students the David LaBau Memorial Scholarship, the Fred MaHaffey Memorial Scholarship (for LGBTQ students), and the Hartford Masters Scholarship. Focused on increasing travel-abroad opportunities for our students, I worked with the architecture Dean of Bahcesehir University in Istanbul to establish a travel abroad studies program. **To recognize the achievements of our students, I helped to establish a chapter of the Tau Sigma Delta honor awards society in the Department. We also founded a Department chapter of National Organization of Minority Architecture Students.** While Chair, we expanded what we offered our students, nearly doubling our studio facilities and achieving a state-of-the-art wood shop and fabrication lab (with assistance from the AIA/Connecticut Chapter, with which we've



Top, students present work that will become part of the exhibits for accreditation. Above, the 'Last Chance' Team Room in 2008, part of the Department's final effort to gain initial accreditation, which was successful.



The Department's first Tai Soo Kim Travel Fellowship recipient, Casey Nixon, traveled to the Caribbean to help build relief housing. Hartford architect Tai Soo Kim later established one of three Department scholarships.

built close ties). **A high-point in the history of our Department was to host the 2010 Northeast Regional Conference of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (for which I was co-chair).** The theme was the “Urban/Suburban Interface,” and we were honored that Leon Krier gave the keynote address.

Committees and Contributions to the University


The CV included in this award nomination package documents the numerous academic service committees at the Department, College, and University levels that I’ve served on over the years, including chairing several Search Committees, Graduate Council, Sabbatical Review Committee, Curriculum Committee, Academic Standings and Progress Committee. As a member of the architecture faculty I’ve presented several lectures in the Department lecture series on my research and scholarship, and in the University’s President’s College lecture series, which is geared toward continuing education. **Over the years I’ve had the opportunity to personally donate hundreds of architecture books to the University of Hartford’s Architecture Library, improving the resources available to our students and faculty.**

Connecticut Architecture Foundation

While Chair of the Department of Architecture I forged an alliance with the Connecticut Architecture Foundation, which is part of the AIA/Connecticut Chapter. **This alliance has been an incredibly fruitful collaboration between the Department and the Foundation to the benefit of our own students and others studying architecture in and outside the state.** The mission of the Connecticut Architecture Foundation (CAF) is to: “raise public awareness of, and expectations for, architecture and the built environment.” A huge part of the Foundation’s work is accomplished “by funding educational programs and opportunities, providing grants for research, and awarding scholarships to promising students pursuing an education in architecture. All funds come from donations and bequests from individuals and firms.” I was elected to the CAF Board of Directors in 2011 and continue to serve on the board. The CAF awards scholarships to architecture students studying at the two architecture schools in Connecticut (University of Hartford and Yale University), and to any Connecticut resident student studying architecture at any NAAB-accredited degree program in the US. Since CAF’s founding it has distributed more than \$500,000 in architecture student scholarships.




The first cohort of graduate students to study in Istanbul under a partnership that I established as Department Chair and Graduate Program Director with the Architecture Dean at Bahcesehir University in Istanbul.



CONNECTICUT ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION

Give back to the architectural community with a donation to the Connecticut Architecture Foundation

 CONNECTICUT ARCHITECTURE FOUNDATION

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2021 SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Charles DuBose Memorial Scholarship
Students who have completed two years in accredited undergraduate architectural programs or have been accepted into an accredited graduate program are eligible to apply for this scholarship. Connecticut residents are encouraged to apply. Preference will be given to students at the University of Pennsylvania, Georgia Institute of Technology, and the Fontainebleau summer program.

The Charles DuBose Scholarship Fund was established in 1986 by DuBose Associates, Inc. of Hartford, Connecticut in memory of Charles DuBose, FAIA. Ruth DuBose, Widow of Mr. Charles DuBose, has contributed substantially to the scholarship fund. Charles DuBose, Founder and Chairman of DuBose Architects Associates, Inc., was most noted for his design of Constitution Plaza in Hartford. It was acclaimed in the 1960's as one of the first urban developments to effectively separate pedestrian movement from vehicular traffic with a series of raised landscaped terraces.

Suzanne Sheng Memorial Scholarship
Students who have completed two years in accredited undergraduate architectural programs or have been accepted into an accredited graduate program are eligible to apply for this scholarship. Connecticut residents are encouraged to apply. Preference will be given to students at Cornell University.

CAF Scholarship
Students who have completed two years in accredited undergraduate architectural programs or have been accepted into an accredited graduate program are eligible to apply for this scholarship. Connecticut residents are encouraged to apply.

Scholarship awards have previously ranged between \$1,200 and \$5,000.

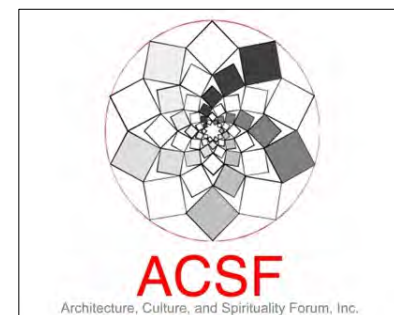
Deadline: April 20, 2021, 11:59pm

As a way to help raise scholarship funds for CAF and the University of Hartford architecture scholarships, as Department Chair I initiated a collaboration with CAF to establish a fund-raising event on our University campus that would be part of the Department's architecture lecture series. We collaborated to present the CAF Distinguished Leadership Award, given annually to "practitioner-couples" who then deliver an award lecture. Over the years we've hosted lectures by CAF Distinguished Leadership Award winners such as Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk; Mack Scogin and Merrill Elam; Patricia and John Patkau; Brigitte Shim and Howard Sutcliffe; Frances Halsband and Robert Kliment; Lise Ann Couture and Hani Rashid; William J. Stanley and Ivenue Love-Stanley; Elizabeth P. Gray and Alan Organschi. **Since 2012 the CAF/Hartford collaboration has raised more than \$100,000 for CAF and Department of Architecture scholarships, and the practitioner-couples serve as role models for our students.**

Over the past few years, I've also served as the CAF moderator for a number of CAF fund-raising lectures (particularly for those recently on-line) that have focused on issues of architectural education and celebrating what winners of CAF scholarships have achieved.

Architecture, Culture, and Spirituality Forum

Since its founding in 2007, I've been involved in the Architecture, Culture, and Spirituality Forum, a non-profit organization that aligns with my research and scholarship on contemporary and historic religious architecture and sacred space. The mission of ACSF is to: "...provide an international forum for scholarship, education, practice, and advocacy regarding the cultural and spiritual significance of the built environment." **Over the years ACSF has become part of my service to architectural education and practice.** I have served on the ACSF Board of Directors since 2016; was co-chair the ACSF 2019 Annual Symposium at Taliesin West; and have served for several years as a peer-reviewer for symposia paper submissions. I was instrumental in instituting the ACSF Award for Outstanding Achievement in 2017 and have since served as the Chair of the ACSF Award Jury, which reviews nominations for the award and selects the awardees. Past awardees have included Karsten Harries (2018), Juhani Pallasmaa (2019), David Leatherbarrow (2020), Brigitte Shim and Howard Sutcliffe (2020), and Alberto Pérez-Gómez (2021).



ACSF President Thomas Barrie and I present the 2019 ACSF Award for Outstanding Achievement to Juhani Pallasmaa at the ACSF 11 Symposium at Taliesin West.

Sharing Sacred Spaces

A relatively new area of my service is serving on the Board of Directors of Sharing Sacred Spaces, non-profit organization, which I joined in October 2020. Sharing Sacred Spaces describes its mission as follows: “We use the vehicles of architecture, education, dialogue, and hospitality to bring people together across the spectrum of difference into model communities of caring, trust, friendship, and action.” A substantial focus of the organization’s activities is to use the sacred spaces of various faith communities as a way to educate those outside the community about belief systems and how the religious building serves the faith community and its rituals. **This aligns with my scholarship and teaching interests in using sacred space as a way to broaden the awareness of my students about cultural traditions and differences.** Last January I was invited by Sharing Sacred Spaces to present a lecture on how contemporary religious space is changing according to demographic shifts in the US (the focus of my Walton Visiting Critic Studio at Catholic University in 2015).



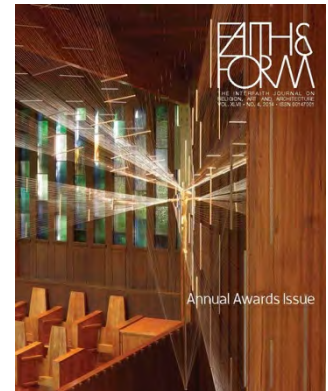
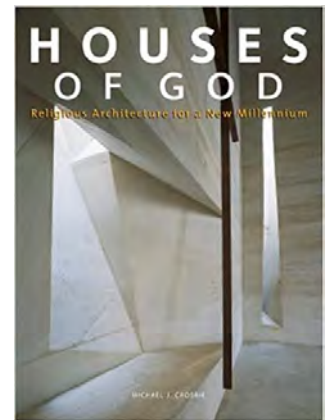
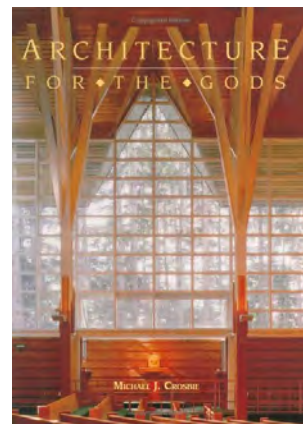
SCHOLARSHIP and OUTREACH

My CV includes a selection of articles, books, book chapters, peer-reviewed paper presentations, and invited lectures. To keep the CV to no more than 10 pages (according to the submission requirements) these items are from 2015 to the present only and cover **several areas of scholarly interest: the nature and design of sacred space, architectural education, modes of architectural practice. Here I discuss selected scholarship and outreach to bring the results of this research to a wider audience, including those outside academia.** I also include materials created for the next generation of architects.

Sacred Space and the Spiritual in Architecture

The design of sacred space, its phenomenology, and how contemporary religious architecture is changing has long been an area of interest. My first book on contemporary sacred architecture was published 1999, and subsequent volumes on this subject were published in 2003 and 2006. **As editor of the quarterly journal *Faith & Form: The Journal of Religious Art and Architecture*, published by the Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art, and Architecture, I discovered other scholars writing about sacred space and gave their work a forum.** Since 2000 I've also coordinated the Faith & Form International Design Awards Program to help recognized the best in religious architecture. Outside of sole-author books and journal publications, I've written scores of articles and book chapters on sacred space and religious architecture that have appeared in a variety of publishing venues. An imminent peer-reviewed chapter, "The Hermeneutics of Twenty-First Century Sacred Space" will be included in *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Space and Place* (Oxford University Press) forthcoming in 2022. Also next year, another peer-reviewed chapter I authored, "Modern Christian Architecture in North America 1900-2010," will appear in *The Cambridge History of Religious Architecture of the World* (Cambridge University Press).

I believe outreach to readers beyond academia is important, so I make efforts to write about religious architecture and sacred space in more public publishing venues. For example, the research I conducted and the design studio projects that were the result of the Walton Visiting Critic Studio at Catholic University were the subject of an article that was published in Religion News Service: <https://religionnews.com/2017/06/14/what-will-future-houses-of-worship-look-like/>. I've also written other general-interest articles for RNS on contemporary sacred space, its



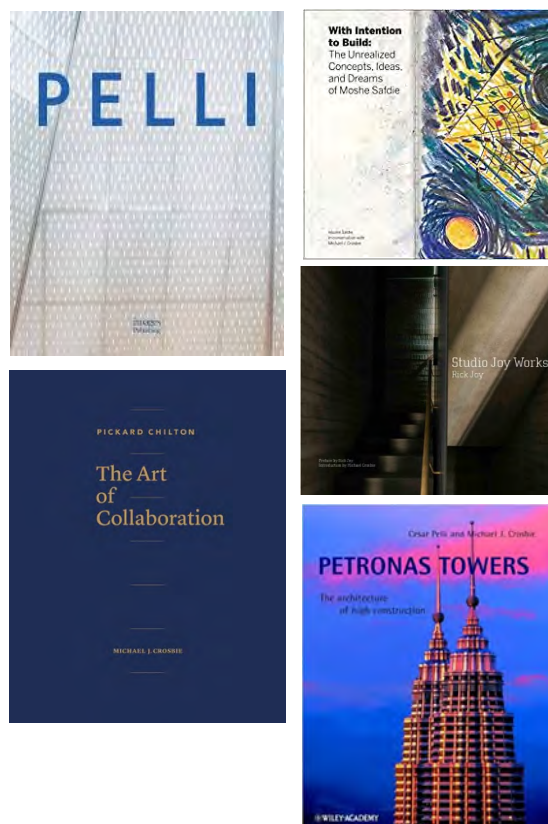
symbolism, and its importance, along with articles that have appeared in *ArchDaily*. **As an educator, what is particularly important to me is that these articles include the work of my students and bring their design work to a wider audience.**

Architectural Practice, Education, and Criticism

The mutually related topics of architectural education, practice, and criticism have generated a number of peer-reviewed papers, articles, and invited lectures. I am interested in how these realms are linked. There's a natural linkage in my own career, having practiced in architecture firms earlier in my career. I practiced for two reasons: To me it was important to practice and become a licensed architect as part of my role as an educator and as someone who writes architectural criticism. Also, different modes of architectural practice have been an interest since researching my doctoral dissertation in the early 1980s (which focused on ways for architects to practice residential design through collaboration with self-help and do-it-yourself home-builders) and was the topic of my first book, on design-build, in 1985.

During the course of my career as an architectural journalist and critic I've had the opportunity to write about how different architecture firms "design" their practices. Although this topic hasn't been given enough attention in architectural education in the past (I believe), more graduates are seeking alternative methods of practice. Books and articles that I've written on such architects such as Cesar Pelli, Moshe Safdie, Denise Scott Brown and Robert Venturi, Rick Joy, Mitchell Guirgola, and Centerbrook Architects have almost exclusively focused on how they practice, and how the design of their practice has an impact on the architecture they create. A new book, *The Art of Collaboration* (Images, 2021) focuses exclusively on the impact of human dynamics on architectural practice and the interpersonal relationships with clients, as studied through the lens of the international practice of Pickard Chilton. I underline the focus of this subject area in the Introduction to the book: **"The success or failure of the design and creation of a contemporary work of architecture depends upon something typically not discussed in architectural education, rarely considered in architectural criticism or theory, and frequently missing in most writing about architecture: human relationships."** In my own teaching, the importance of this element of practice has manifested itself in a preference for group design studio projects and the "Project Swap" that I outlined in the section on Teaching.

Because I've spent a good part of my career as an architectural journalist, writer, and critic, the topic of the written word has also



been a focus of my research and scholarship. The course I teach, "Writing About Architecture," is a product of my involvement in the field and my critiques of criticism. I wrote an important peer-reviewed chapter, "The Role of Editors as Critics" in *Architecture Beyond Criticism* (Routledge, 2015) (cover, right) edited by Wolfgang F.E. Preiser et al. I also authored an invited article, "Why Write?," (below, right) for the *Journal of Architectural Education* (Vol. 62, Issue 3, February 2009) that reflects on the role and the importance of the act of writing in architectural practice and teaching. **At several architecture schools in the US and abroad I've been invited to lecture on architectural criticism and what it can teach us about being critical about the design of the built environment**, whether or not you're a critic or even an architect.

Educating the Next Generation

I've been involved in the creation of many architecture books and I'm thankful for the opportunity through these publications to extend my teaching to the next generation. **Of the 75-plus books I've helped create, the five I've written for children about architecture (below) might be those of which I am most proud. I've always thought of these books as an effort to teach the next generation of students about architecture.** They were prompted by my own interest in making my own three kids aware of the built environment and the magic of architecture. When I found that books on architecture for children didn't exist (this was in the 1980s) I decided to write my own, in collaboration with architectural photographer and friend Steve Rosenthal. The results were four books for preschoolers: *Architecture Animals*, *Architecture Colors*, *Architecture Counts*, *Architecture Shapes* (Wiley). A fifth book for an older audience, *Arches to Zigzags: An Architectural ABC*, was just re-published by ORO Editions. **These children's books are some of my most important contributions as an architectural educator.**

