

SACRED ARCHITECTURE

ARPL 617 -- Theory of Sacred Space and Cultural Studies -- Fall 2015

Visiting Professor Thomas Barrie

Course Description

This course provides lectures, readings, and discussions to critically examine and analyze historically significant and contemporary examples of religious architecture. The course is structured according to the world's principle faiths and presented comparatively and holistically, including explications of scriptural and historical contexts. It focuses on the communicative and ritual functions and cultural significance of sacred architecture, including its environmental and sociopolitical contexts, and doctrinal and liturgical influences. There will be a particular emphasis on reconsiderations of the diverse roles sacred architecture has, and continues to, play, including emerging models and the cultural forces that are influencing them. Contemporary theoretical methodologies will be introduced and applied as a means establish relevancy to contemporary issues and architectural design.

Each week has a particular focus, which is addressed by reading, lectures, student presentations and discussion. Students prepare critical summaries of readings and lead discussions based on them and their research. Students will learn critical thinking and analytical methodologies and apply comprehensive and concise research and writing skills. They will engage in research throughout the semester, culminating in a final presentation and paper.

The course will be coordinated with the Walton Studio, but open to non-studio students.

Completion Requirements

- Leading and/or informed participation in class discussions
- Weekly reading and critical summaries
- One research paper

Thomas Barrie, AIA is a Professor of Architecture at North Carolina State University where he served as School Director from 2002 – 2007. Professor Barrie's scholarship on the symbolism, ritual use and cultural significance of architecture has brought him to sacred places around the world, and he has published and lectured extensively in his subject area. He is an award-winning architect and the author of *The Sacred In-Between: The Mediating Roles of Architecture* (Routledge, 2010), and *Spiritual Path, Sacred Place: Myth Ritual and Meaning in Architecture* (Shambhala, 1996), and is co-editor of the forthcoming *Architecture, Culture and Spirituality* (Barrie, Bermudez, Tabb, Ashegate, 2015).

