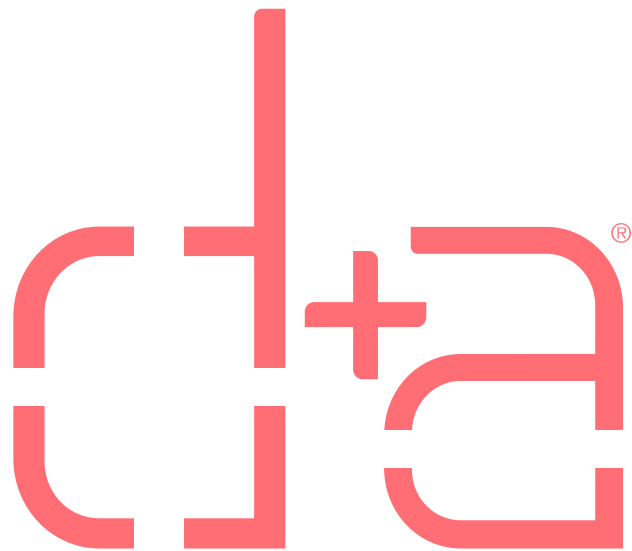


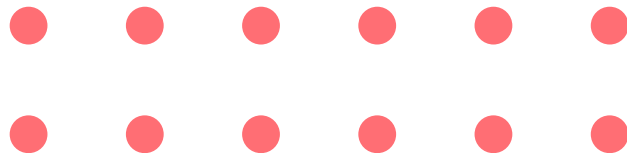
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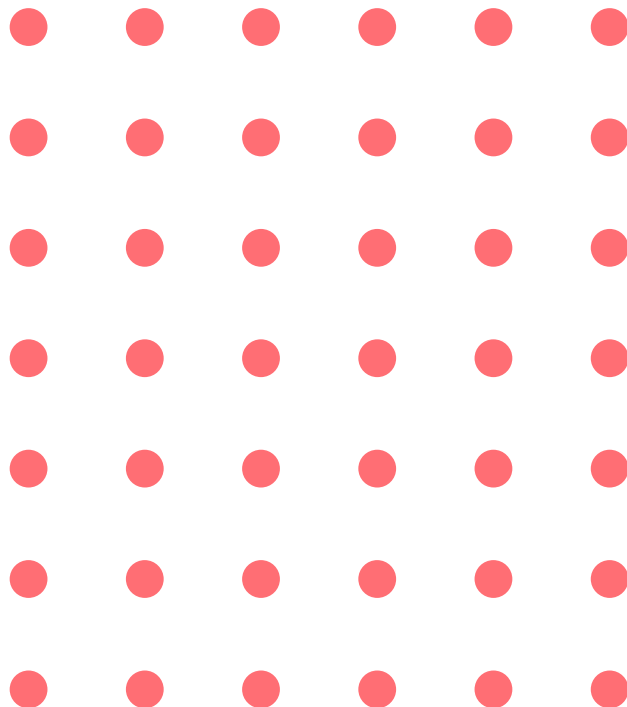
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THE WHITE BOOK



**NEW ROME CONVENTION CENTER HOTEL MONO GIJANG WAVEON CROWN 515 PARIS CHURCH EL SEÑOR DE LA MISERICORDIA
JAN SHREM & MARIA MANETTI SHREM MUSEUM OF ART PORT HOUSE BETWEEN TWO WHITE WALLS CITY OF THE SUN RUINS STUDIO
DONGZHUANG-BUILDING MUSEUM OF WESTERN REGIONS LOFT PANZERHALLE ISLAMIC COMPLEX PUTRAJAYA O2 RESIDENCE NUBO**





SOLID FORM

WORDS CHARIS CHIANG • PHOTOGRAPHY JORGE TABOADA & MONEO BROCK



PROJECT
**PARISH CHURCH
EL SEÑOR DE LA
MISERICORDIA**

DESIGNERS
**JEFFREY BROCK
& BELÉN MONEO**

FIRM
MONEO BROCK



IN THE DISTANCE, THE MOUNTAINS PAINT A PICTURE-PERFECT BACKDROP FOR THIS NEW ARCHITECTURE. EMANATING IN MAJESTIC SPLendor, THE EL SEÑOR DE LA MISERICORDIA CHURCH FINDS ITS HOME IN THE CENTRE OF A NEW URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN MONTERREY, MEXICO. ITS WHITE AND STRUCTURED FORM APPEARS SIMILAR TO A SNOWCAP ON A SOLITARY MOUNTAINTOP.

Externally the church appears abstract and modern in form – unlike the rich detailed and elaborate churches of old. However, its concept is linked to that of its predecessors – with recognisable architectural features taken from early Christian temples such as the bell tower, the stained-glass windows, the frontal altar, the baptistery and the lateral courtyard.

Moneo Brock has created a design that is contemporary while remaining subtly recognisable. Among these structures, the 43-meter-tall bell tower stands out from a great distance, serving as a landmark in the area.

The key point to the orientation of the church lies in its relationship to the plaza. As the focal point to the structure, its main entry opens straight onto the plaza, and its opening measuring at an unobstructed width of 11.5 meters, allows one to make the visual connection between the church's interior space and the plaza. This is apt considering that the plaza can function as an annex, with religious celebrations and rites extending past its doors when attending crowd

exceeds the church's capacity of 350 worshippers.

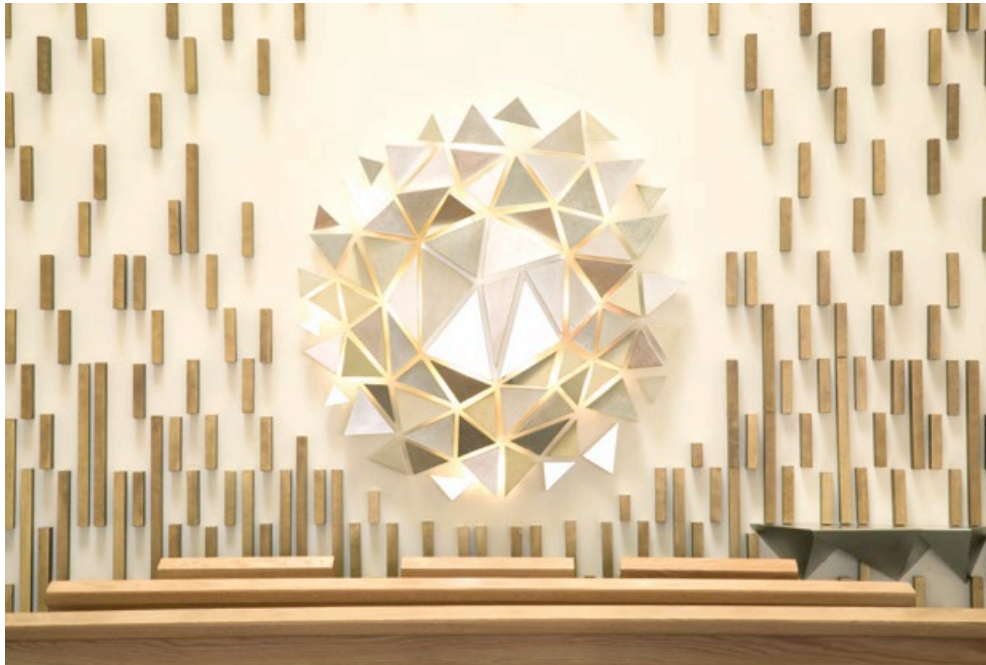
This connection is further emphasised by a large trapezoidal canopy cantilevered off the main façade. A flat featureless wall looks seemingly cold and almost brutal, projects the otherness and sacredness of the space within. Its blatant frontal towards the square is entirely intentional – at once projecting a certain peace yet with an almost distant air about it, set off by its connection to the main entry.

EMPATHETIC INTERIOR

While its exterior is designed to exude a solid yet mystical atmosphere, it's within the interiors where the space takes on an enlightened and recognisable note. Skylights located in different cardinal points in each of the three chapels let in natural light, which would vary in colour and intensity throughout the day.

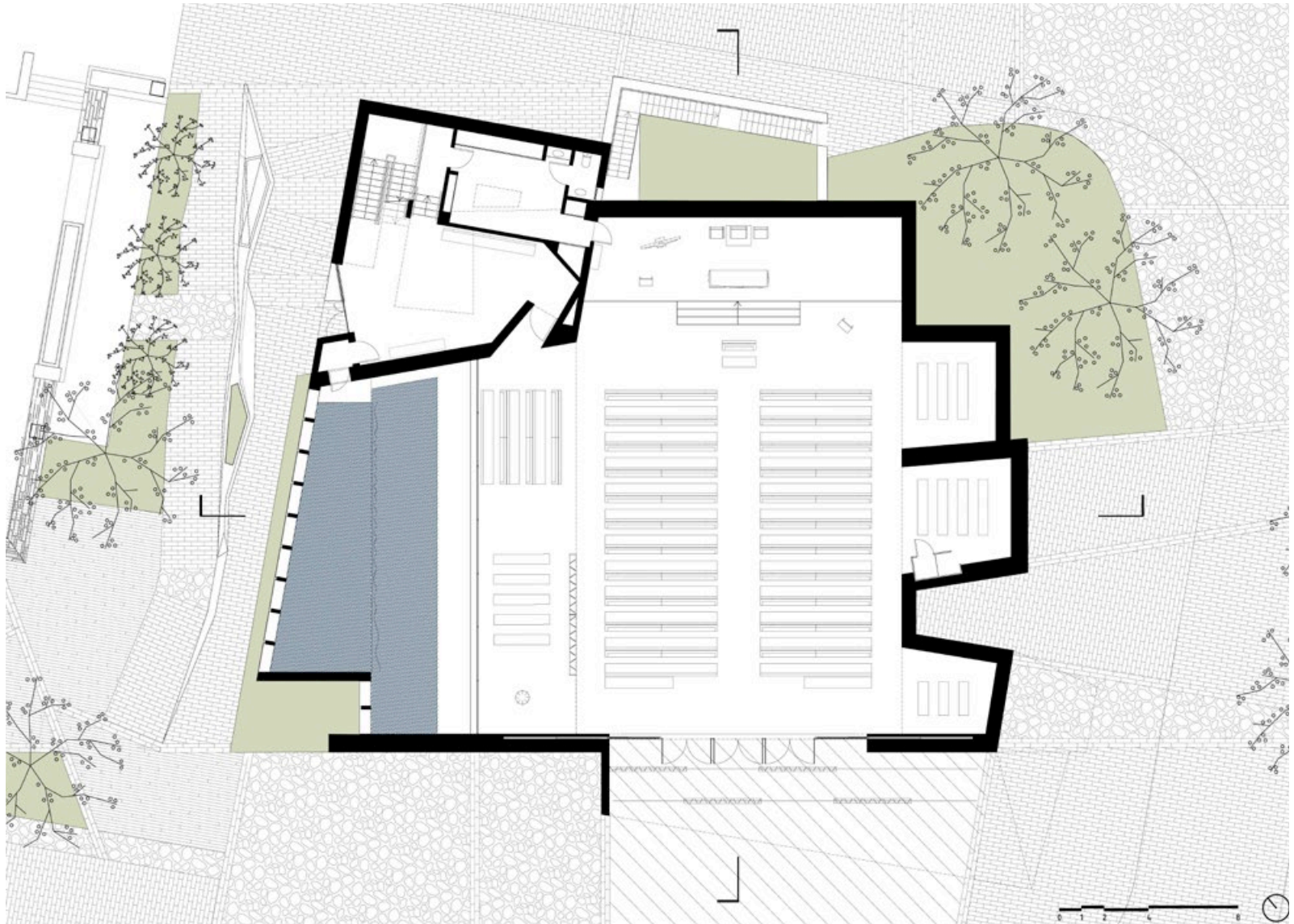
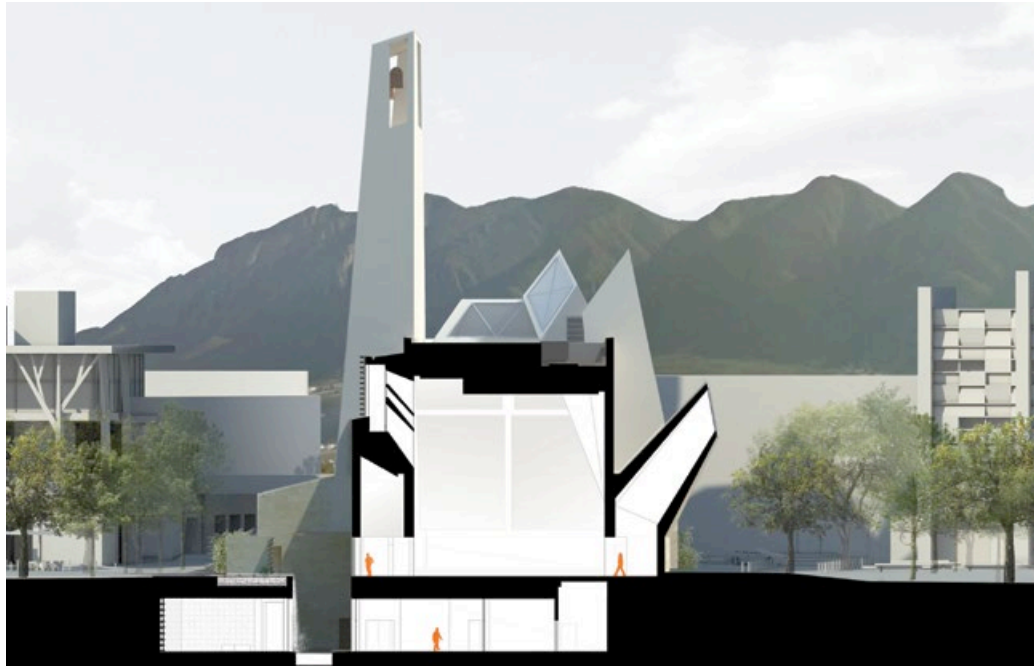
In pursuit to retain its sacred atmosphere, a touch of softness is being applied. A fourth skylight is placed over the altar in the main chapel. Light washes down behind an inclined panel that is then cut into four sections to reveal a large Latin cross – glowing with the light from above. The church layout also follows the layout of a basilica, injecting a sense of familiarity to followers of the faith.

Taking a break from the cool tones of its exterior, the interior space is endowed with a sense of warmth. Wood furnishings are applied in the central nave and benches in the chapel.



“AFTER ENSURING THE PROJECT’S INCORPORATION OF THERMAL INSULATION OF FAR AND AWAY GREATER PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS THAN IS TYPICALLY USED IN LOCAL CONSTRUCTION, WE DEvised A SYSTEM OF NATURAL VENTILATION THAT TAKES ADVANTAGE OF THE BELL TOWER’S GREAT HEIGHT TO CREATE A STRONG CHIMNEY EFFECT DRAWING AIR THROUGH LARGE-SCALE GRILLS INCORPORATED IN THE ENTRY FAÇADE.”

Belén Moneo & Jeffrey Brock, Architects
Moneo Brock





Seen in the church's acoustic features – diffusing wood battens located behind the altar, the back of the three chapels, the choir, and over the entry door – the space takes on a symbolism and a balance of soft earthy tones that reach up the white walls (pointing to the sky).

This equilibrium is suffused with a reimagination of the more artistic elements, present in a traditional church. Stained glass on the “rose window” seen at the entry to the ossuaries, and two sanctuaries add a touch of colour while sunbursts made of gold or silver triangles bring a touch of grandeur to the space.

Going down towards the church's basement, one would see sunken patios illuminated with light from the skylights above. While the parish's administrative offices are located in the north patio, the patio to the west where the cascading water feature ends is where the ossuaries and a small chapel for funeral rites are found. As for more restricted spaces, the placement is made more private in their location behind the cascade of water

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

Sustainable solutions are incorporated into the building where possible to reduce energy expenditure. The tall bell tower functions as a ventilation system that channels air through large-scale grills on the entry façade. Daylighting is also carefully studied to be sufficient without the need for electrical lighting in all spaces, both public as well as staff areas to preserve energy.

In addition, much of the building program is located underground, where temperatures are constantly comfortable. Daylight is provided by opening up the sunken patios; flooding the space with natural light. A vestibule lit by an open-air, prismatic skylight with a reflecting pool beneath connects the basement atrium with the church above.

Minimalistic in form yet standing firm in its traditional nuances, the El Señor de la Misericordia Church remains rooted in its function while renewing itself with its new design ethos – a perfect blend of continuity and renewal.

