

# **‘How is Faith Reflected in the Architecture of Contemporary Finnish Religious Buildings? Through the Comparison and Investigation of Finnish Church Design’**

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Course: BSc Architecture

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Module Code: ACAA6003

Word Count: 10,654

Date: 05.05.2023

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# Abstract

This dissertation focuses on the contextual and cultural influences on the typology of contemporary religious Finnish architecture. Through the investigation of selected and visited case studies to analyse how Finnish religious architecture has adapted to suit a contemporary, increasingly secular society. Therefore, a study into how faith can be reflected in the architecture in different ways through community and societal values, as opposed to traditional, direct symbolism, is a new and interesting approach.

Chapter 1 focuses on the Finnish identity in terms of its culture, context and architecture and Finland's religious parameters and social context in terms of population trends are considered. The ideas surrounding Kenneth Frampton's "Critical Regionalism" are applied to the Finnish perspective in order to evaluate how Finnish architects interpret the contextual and cultural needs of the country.

Chapter 2 delves into how Finnish context has informed the characteristics of its religious architecture in order to meet the requirements of a modern society. It explores how the architecture has manifested in two distinct typologies of religious architecture – public interest and community based.

Chapter 3 explores religious architecture that have become sources of public interest and subsequently, popular tourist destinations of Helsinki. This includes Temppeliaukio Church and Kamppi Chapel; both iconic landmarks of the city. This chapter also acknowledges the spiritual significance experienced by tourists entering the sites.

The final chapter is a study of two case studies associated with a highly contemporary religious architecture, in both physical form and philosophy. This chapter focuses on OOEAA's buildings, Suvela Chapel and Tikkurila Church, exploring the ideas and community principles behind the architecture

The culmination of the research and site visits allow a conclusion to be drawn about the extent that faith is reflected in Finnish religious architecture and what the future might entail. It is concluded that architects must anticipate fluctuations in cultural and religious changes to ensure maximised use of said buildings, whilst embracing the sustainability agenda of Finland and the well-being of its people.

Hence, architecture can be said to transcend religion as it considers functionality, longevity, opportunity as well as atmosphere and spirituality.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank my dissertation tutors Ian Standen and Dr Elizabeth Walder for their guidance and support throughout the dissertation writing process.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to my parents for their continued support and encouragement throughout my education.

# Table of Contents

| <b>PAGE TITLE</b>                                                   | <b>PAGE NO</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| Author's Declaration                                                | 2              |
| Copyright Statement                                                 | 3              |
| Abstract                                                            | 4              |
| Acknowledgements                                                    | 5              |
| List of Illustrations                                               | 7              |
| List of Tables                                                      | 9              |
| <b>Introduction</b>                                                 | 10             |
| <b>Chapter 1: Finnish Identity and Cultural Framework</b>           | 12             |
| <b>Chapter 2: Finnish Design Philosophy and Principles</b>          | 23             |
| <b>Chapter 3: Public Interest Case Studies</b>                      | 28             |
| <b>Last Chapter: Community Based Religious Buildings</b>            | 44             |
| <b>Conclusion: Legacy and the Future</b>                            | 58             |
| Bibliography: Published Works                                       | 61             |
| Bibliography: Unpublished Works                                     | 69             |
| Appendix A: Questions for Heli Suhtala Uvalic, Temppeliaukio Church | 70             |
| Appendix B: Questions for Gareth Barker, Lion Architects            | 72             |

# List of Illustrations

|                                                                         | PAGE NO |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| <b>Introduction</b>                                                     |         |
| Figure 1: Map of Southern Finland with key case studies                 | 12      |
| <b>Chapter 1: Finnish Identity and Cultural Framework</b>               |         |
| Figure 2: Figure 2: Bagsværd Church, Copenhagen                         | 14      |
| Figure 3: Kamppi Chapel, 2012                                           | 15      |
| Figure 4: The Church of the Three Crosses, Alvar Aalto                  | 17      |
| Figure 5: Saint John's Church, Helsinki                                 | 19      |
| Figure 6: Uspenski Cathedral, Helsinki                                  | 20      |
| Figure 7: Timber detailing on Kamppi Chapel                             | 21      |
| Figure 8: Helsinki Cathedral, Senate Square                             | 22      |
| <b>Chapter 2: Finnish Design Philosophy and Principles</b>              |         |
| Figure 9: Minimal symbolism of Temppeliaukio Church                     | 23      |
| <b>Chapter 3: Public Interest Case Studies</b>                          |         |
| Figure 10: Kamppi Chapel, 2012                                          | 28      |
| Figure 11: Temppeliaukio Church, 1969                                   | 28      |
| Figure 12: Temppeliaukio Church interiors from mezzanine layer          | 29      |
| Figure 13: Temppeliaukio plan                                           | 30      |
| Figure 14: Timber pressed concrete walls with subtle cross symbolism    | 31      |
| Figure 15: Minimal symbolism of a cross sculpture embedded in the stone | 31      |
| Figure 16: Raised platform for preaching and utilised for concerts      | 32      |
| Figure 17: The church organ                                             | 32      |
| Figure 18: View of the 24m diameter dome                                | 33      |
| Figure 19: The underground Amos Rex Museum                              | 33      |
| Figure 20: The stone walls of Temppeliaukio Church                      | 35      |
| Figure 21: Street view of Temppeliaukio Church                          | 36      |
| Figure 22: A sense of the scale of Kamppi Chapel                        | 37      |
| Figure 23: Concrete secondary space of Kamppi Chapel                    | 38      |
| Figure 24: Kamppi Chapel plan in context with Narinkka Square           | 39      |
| Figure 25: Kamppi Chapel detailing                                      | 40      |
| Figure 26: Kamppi Chapel within the context of Narinkka Square          | 41      |
| Figure 27: The quality of light within Kamppi Chapel                    | 42      |

|                                                                                                                                                                         |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Figure 28: The concert setup reflecting the intimate performances Kamppi Chapel facilitates                                                                             | 43 |
| <b>Last Chapter: Community Based Religious Buildings</b>                                                                                                                |    |
| Figure 29: Street view of Suvela Chapel showing the areas density and position next to residential blocks                                                               | 44 |
| Figure 30: Suvela Chapel, site plan                                                                                                                                     | 45 |
| Figure 31: Suvela Chapel, ground floor plan                                                                                                                             | 46 |
| Figure 32: Stone courtyard showing extensive glazing of building allowing for views                                                                                     | 47 |
| Figure 33: Suvela Chapel's section showing the courtyard in relation to surrounding rooms and the tower reminiscent of the towers of traditional religious architecture | 47 |
| Figure 34: Photograph showing the interior quality of the chapel                                                                                                        | 48 |
| Figure 35: Interior screening windows with inscriptions and a minimalistic, wooden material palette throughout                                                          | 49 |
| Figure 36: Suvela Chapel's luminous shiny copper façade when first constructed                                                                                          | 49 |
| Figure 37: Suvela Chapel's dull brown façade at the present and the green of the next stage of aging                                                                    | 49 |
| Figure 38: Location of Tikkurila Church positioned on the corner of the street                                                                                          | 50 |
| Figure 39: Diagram of Tikkurila Church in context showing massing and delineation of public space                                                                       | 51 |
| Figure 40: Tikkurila Church ground floor plan                                                                                                                           | 52 |
| Figure 41: Tikkurila Church first floor plan                                                                                                                            | 52 |
| Figure 42: Section through the building showing housing and administration space as well as the main hall to the right                                                  | 53 |
| Figure 43: The interior quality of the main church hall. The irregular window placements reminiscent of Le Corbusier's Notre Dame du Ronchamp                           | 54 |
| Figure 44: Le Corbusier's Notre Dame du Ronchamp                                                                                                                        | 54 |
| Figure 45: The multitoned brick façade of Tikkurila Church                                                                                                              | 55 |
| Figure 46: Tikkurila Church's bricks with carvings                                                                                                                      | 55 |
| Figure 47: Double height circulation space                                                                                                                              | 56 |
| Figure 48: Church café; clearly valued and enjoyed by the public                                                                                                        | 57 |

## List of Tables

### PAGE NO

#### Chapter 2: Finnish Design Philosophy and Principles

Figure A: Graph showing population in relation to religious trends

19

# Introduction

This dissertation will introduce the topic of faith in contemporary Finnish architecture to determine how it is reflected and how it might impact the position of religion in an increasingly secular, multi-cultural society. These ideas are explored through studying contextual and cultural influences on the characteristics and principles behind Finnish contemporary architecture and suggesting the reasoning behind stylistic and functional features.

Finland is a Scandinavian country well renowned for its architecture and quality design as a whole; it has produced pioneers of architecture including Alvar Aalto and has been a great source of inspiration amongst designers across the globe for its distinct identity<sup>1</sup>. Out of all of the Scandinavian countries Finland was chosen as it has an exemplar selection of religious buildings with an interesting contextual and cultural background. As well as this, the inherent respect and understanding of what design means to the Finnish people as a nation suggested an interesting, unique perspective on architecture. Research of Finnish religious architecture raised intrigue for contemporary design and where this fits into the context and history of the country. This led to applying Kenneth Frampton's ideas about "Critical Regionalism" to Finnish design<sup>2</sup>. As a result four case studies were chosen for their varying cultural value; Temppeliaukio Church, Kamppi Chapel, Suvela Chapel and Tikkurila Church. The first two case studies explore the public perception and interest towards Finnish religious architecture, while the other two look at the churches' community role within multi-cultural Finnish districts. The predominant religion of Lutheranism<sup>3</sup> suggested a consistent style and typology, which made the often contrasting comparison between Finnish religious architecture all the more interesting. Heathcote and Moffatt quote Mies Van Der Rohe stating "God is in the details" when referring to contemporary religious architecture<sup>4</sup>. This statement holds greater value in the Finnish context where arguably the details within design and architecture are further emphasised. In a sense religion is in the details of how the building engages the user, generates emotion and supports worship. Kowalczyk and Lewandowska validates this by suggesting that the religious architecture of Finland has a greater comprehension of a humanist design<sup>5</sup>. This idea influenced the driver behind the

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<sup>1</sup> O'Brien, 2019, p.1

<sup>2</sup> Frampton (2002, p.82) defines "Critical Regionalism" about having a self-aware understanding of the peculiarities of the site from light and topography to the specific architectural qualities. Cutieru (2021) elaborates suggesting that this concept is a rejection of the lack of contextual distinction displayed in modernism.

<sup>3</sup> Official Statistics of Finland, 2016

<sup>4</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, p.73

<sup>5</sup> Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p.595

dissertation, to determine how Finland's context and culture impact the typology of contemporary religious architecture and how faith is translated through the design.

## Methodology

In order to answer the dissertation a range of methodologies were explored that will be the key to responding to the question. The most valuable part of the methodology includes completing site visits which will not only allow for visitation to the case studies but also a feel for Finnish culture and design as a whole. Hence, the visit to Finland consists of a mix of traditional and contemporary churches to get a deeper understanding for the architecture including Temppeliaukio Church, Kamppi Chapel, Suvela Chapel, Tikkurila Church, Helsinki Cathedral and Uspenski Cathedral. This allowed for firsthand analysis of the architecture to coincide with research. Furthermore, visitations to museums such as the Museum of Architecture and Design Museum in Helsinki will give insight to the country's stance on architecture as well as the pride that they take in design as a whole. From here the exploration with a detailed analysis and comparison of four key case studies including buildings of public interest and community value will help to develop a targeted idea for faith in architecture. Furthermore, interviews with key individuals including the manager of Temppeliaukio Church and a practicing architect with experience in the UK and Finland. Both will give personal, valuable information unavailable through literature resources. Furthermore in depth reviews of literature, academic reviewed journals and reliable websites such as those of magazines and the architects will be used in addition.

## Aims and Objectives

The main aim of the dissertation is to assess how faith is represented in the architecture of contemporary Finnish sacred design within the context of a multi-cultural society. This will be explored through a range of objectives including evaluating the extent to which the architecture of Finnish church design reflects the regional and cultural lifestyle of the country; establishing why contemporary religious Finnish architecture is the way it is aesthetically and why architects changed their design approach; investigating how historical traditions have developed into those of today and how architectural philosophies have had to adjust to this and determining how architecture can assist in maintaining religious buildings significance in an increasingly secular society.

## Literature Review

There were key drivers in this dissertation including site visits to the various case studies, key interviews and literature reviews. A wide range of literature was explored from the work

of Kenneth Frampton and his ideas surrounding Critical Regionalism, literature specific to Finland such as *Finland 20<sup>th</sup>-Century Architecture* (Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000), literature surrounding sacred architecture as a whole such as *Sacred Spaces* (Pallister, 2015) or *Contemporary Church Architecture* (Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007) and case study specific research including journal articles like *Sacral Architecture in Finland and its Community Forming Role* (Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022) and the architect's websites such as K2S Architects and OOPEAA who have buildings featured in the case study proportion. The literature reviews add value in forming an argument about faith in Finland as well as gathering insight into the building typology as a whole. The interviews with Temppeliaukio manager, Heli Suhtala Uvalic and architect Gareth Barker gave a valuable insight into the perspective of someone working in a Finnish religious building as well as an architect who has had experience practicing in both the UK and Finland. This showed what Finnish architecture meant to them from someone who has a direct impact on the architecture and one who experiences a profound piece of Finnish architecture every day.



Figure 1: Map of Southern Finland with key case studies (Credit: A. Messer)

# Chapter 1: Finnish Identity and Cultural Framework

Finnish design as a whole has a strong sense of identity and pride; this was evident through exploring various museums, exhibitions and architectural sites during site visits to the country. Along with visiting locations designated to exhibiting Finnish design, walking the streets and experiencing the culture was extremely valuable in understanding how established Finnish identity is and how it is imbedded into the everyday culture. Aav and Stritzler-Levine suggest that nationalist ideas on the ideals of an independent Finland influenced their desire for this distinguishable identity <sup>6</sup>. The nation has not always had such strong identity; Finland has historically had to prove itself as an established country following a past of being under the control of Russia and having to assert its independence, this often brought great social change which in turn prompted a shift to modern architecture <sup>7</sup>. The inherent respect and admiration that the Finns have for their country has undoubtedly influenced the architectural expression of religious buildings <sup>8</sup>. It must also be acknowledged that the Finnish modernism that stemmed from the end of World War I has not only been key to the development of Finnish architecture but was also an important stimulus to many other countries <sup>9</sup>.

Finland's geographical location aided their strive to uniqueness; generally Scandinavian countries are known to be more open to contemporary design ideas in comparison to the majority of Europe <sup>10</sup>. The theme of contemporary architecture according to Pallister is one of fluidity between countries with adaptations to each specific region <sup>11</sup>. While this is visible throughout Scandinavian design as a whole, where many principles apply to all of the countries such as approaches to minimalism, social value, organicism and well-being; each Scandinavian nationality however view the differences between the design styles as greater than the similarities <sup>12</sup>. Flows of ideas in terms of religious architecture can be seen from Bagsværd Church by Jørn Utzon in Copenhagen, see figure 2, which is an excellent example of how Danish architects respond to the secularisation of society <sup>13</sup>. Frampton suggests that although design might be governed by the wider location, the light and topography of the specific site is what makes the architecture be a successful contextual response<sup>14</sup>. Hence, although a certain style is associated with the whole of Scandinavia and

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<sup>6</sup> Aav and Stritzler-Levine, 1998, p. 53

<sup>7</sup> Curtis, 1996, p.330

<sup>8</sup> Finland has its own association of architects called SAFA; it is a key credential to the profession (SAFA, 2018)

<sup>9</sup> Tempel, 1968, p.7

<sup>10</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, p.65

<sup>11</sup> Pallister, 2015, p.7

<sup>12</sup> Sommar, 2003, p.14

<sup>13</sup> Frampton, 2002, p.84

<sup>14</sup> Frampton, 2002, p.86

each country might take inspiration from others, the regional context determines the degree of individualism <sup>15</sup>



Figure 2: Bagsværd Church, Copenhagen (Photo credit: Utzon Archives)

In a time where religion has become less relevant in a secular society, not only the physical context of the site must be considered, the social context must be examined. The need for religious buildings have changed; they are less focussed on ornament and grandeur and more concerned with how they serve the community. One individual who articulates the importance of a contextual design within his writing is Kenneth Frampton. Frampton expresses that to fully understand “Critical Regionalism” there must be a deep sense of understanding for the culture and traditions of the given context; this is suggested to be through an awareness of the region <sup>16</sup>. It is evident that a sense of Finnish Critical Regionalism is deeply embedded into Finnish Design as a whole, particularly in their design of religious architecture. Something that Frampton highlights is the importance between differentiating between the “Critical Regionalism” as a concept over simply recreating the past <sup>17</sup>. There is a risk of this in Finnish design due to the fact that a particular style is

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<sup>15</sup> This ability for an architect to have a contextually sound design is becoming increasingly challenging due to the high exposure to media which has the danger of becoming too influential resulting in the context becoming secondary. (Pallister, 2015, p.60)

<sup>16</sup> “Critical Regionalism” is a term accredited to Alex Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre in the 1981 writing ‘The Grid and the Pathway’ Frampton (2002, pp. 81-82)

<sup>17</sup> Frampton, 2002, p.82

embedded into their culture. This is amplified when studying sacred architecture as there is an expectation when it comes to what a traditional religious building should be. This risks a sense of revivalism in both aspects; however, from the case studies it is evident that the Finnish response to Critical Regionalism is one of great understanding due to a respect for the past but a forward thinking design philosophy. In this sense the religious buildings of Finland might be seen as a microcosm of the country as a whole.



Figure 3: Kamppi Chapel, 2012 (Photo credit: A. Messer)

Mara credits Finland's success and prestigious reputation in architecture to their innate need to promote their work and solidify their position as a separate established nation to its neighbouring countries <sup>18</sup>. Their pride and the amount of importance they put on Finnish architecture can be seen through the various exhibitions at the Finnish Museum of Architecture in Helsinki. Furthermore, Frampton explains that the prestigious architectural education that the country offers contributes to their success <sup>19</sup>; this focus on enhancing architectural education shows the value that the Finnish put on the future of architecture <sup>20</sup>. The theme of quality education is something that Finland as a whole values highly. O'Brien states that Finland has some of the highest scores when it comes to education surveys,

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<sup>18</sup> Helsinki was determined to be the World Design Capital in 2012; at this time 150 schemes were linked to the city including Kamppi Chapel as seen in figure 3 (Mara, 2012)

<sup>19</sup> Frampton, 2007, p.332

<sup>20</sup> At present there are just three universities in Finland teaching architecture professionally (SAFA, 2018)

whether this be due to the quality education itself or the focus on well-being that creates an advantageous learning environment <sup>21</sup>. These ideas surrounding education are also embedded within Finnish religion; the Lutheran Church's beliefs are focussed on education which played a strong role in developing the secularisation of Finnish society <sup>22</sup>.

Worldwide admiration of Finnish architecture roots not only from the designs but from the overall attitude of the Finnish. Finland has established themselves as a nation to be respected internationally through their design culture which shines through the architecture <sup>23</sup>. The way in which the Finnish approach architecture with humility is evident through the Finnish Aalto prize recognising international architecture, which displays that the Finnish have a deep appreciation for quality architecture elsewhere <sup>24</sup>. This is an attribute of their design that they can learn from international influences. This sense of design inclusivity is also seen through the Finnish offering architecture contracts through competitions <sup>25</sup>. This encourages creative, unique designs from various avenues and specialties <sup>26</sup>. However, these competitions were often a point of contest within the Finnish architecture community's rules founded by the Architect's Club 1893 <sup>27</sup>. While this might be true it shows that Finnish designers did not hesitate to push architectural boundaries which is reflected in their identity.

The principle of Finland being uniquely designed is inherently down to the culture which is distinct to Finnish people. This is not a new phenomenon amongst Finnish design; post war, people led the need for not only reconstruction but additional housing for people from the East, this gave architecture a whole new meaning socially, which was a catalyst for big changes <sup>28</sup>. Following periods of economic hardship and reduced production during war, the 1950s and 1960s saw an increased prosperity which in turn resulted in a greater requirement and increased allowance for investment in public architecture <sup>29</sup>. Meyer expands by stating that the "essence" of Finland is credited to the cultural identity, political climate and a prosperous economic position<sup>30</sup>. Frampton however discredits this idea that

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<sup>21</sup> O'Brien, 2019, p.1

<sup>22</sup> Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p.589

<sup>23</sup> Interview with Barker (2023); Barker suggests that to submit a planning application you have to have an architect on record. This shows the degree of importance the Finnish place on the architects role.

<sup>24</sup> Frampton, 2007, p.332

<sup>25</sup> Frampton, 2007, p.332

<sup>26</sup> Competitions were often responsible for the progression of Finnish religious architecture through the exploration of irregular floor plans which were traditionally uncommon for religious buildings (Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.22-24)

<sup>27</sup> Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.18

<sup>28</sup> Aav, Stritzler-Levine, 1998, p. 64

<sup>29</sup> Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, pp.38-39

<sup>30</sup> Meyer, 2018, p.17

the reason behind the architectural success was prosperity, he states that the sheer talent of the Finnish people is down to more than simply the prosperity of Finland at a given time <sup>31</sup>.



Figure 4: The Church of the Three Crosses, Alvar Aalto (Photo credit: P. Ingervo, Alvar Aalto Foundation)

At this time of great social change, Alvar Aalto began to gain traction in Finland, his influence along with the prosperous economic position Finland was in meant that the next stage of Finnish religious architecture could begin. This manifested in a religious architecture that incorporated strong links between the building, context and human experience <sup>32</sup>. One of the first examples that hints at the Finnish identity and principles that we see within contemporary religious buildings today is Alvar Aalto's Vuoksenniska Church in figure 4 <sup>33</sup>. Alvar Aalto's aesthetic and philosophies paved the way for the Finnish architects of today <sup>34</sup> as well as being highly influential internationally <sup>35</sup>. His interpretation of the International style and the way in which he experimented with irregular floor plans, massing and materiality undoubtedly changed the course of Finnish contemporary religious architecture <sup>36</sup>. Though his work created precedent for today's Finnish architects, the challenge architects face is how they learn from his work but also retain their own identity. There is therefore a conflict as

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<sup>31</sup> Frampton, 2007, p.332

<sup>32</sup> Permanent Delegation of Finland, 2021

<sup>33</sup> This church built in 1957-59 possesses similar characteristics to the religious buildings of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Tempel, 1968, p.184).

<sup>34</sup> Aalto's Church of the Three Crosses in Vuoksenniska set the standard for how light could be used in a new Finnish religious architecture where emphasis is placed on materiality and context, see figure 4 (Reed, 2016).

<sup>35</sup> Permanent Delegation of Finland, 2021

<sup>36</sup> Tempel, 1968, p.22

Critical Regionalism suggests a continual review of architectures position but since Aalto's principles are so widely respected and taught to future architects at the very telling, Aalto University, students might feel restricted to a certain style created by Aalto. Frampton explains that this idea of uniqueness while still taking inspiration from Aalto has manifested in an organic and geometric architecture <sup>37</sup>.

| Religion                               | Year      |           |           |           |
|----------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                                        | 2000      | 2005      | 2010      | 2015      |
| Population                             | 5,181,115 | 5,255,580 | 5,375,276 | 5,487,308 |
| Christianity                           | 4,496,227 | 4,466,126 | 4,308,342 | 4,112,681 |
| Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland | 4,409,576 | 4,373,556 | 4,207,192 | 4,004,369 |
| Not members of any religion            | 659,979   | 761,522   | 1,032,429 | 1,336,106 |

Figure A: Graph showing population in relation to religious trends (Official Statistics of Finland, 2016). (Credit: A. Messer)

Finland as a country is highly vast measuring 305,500 sq km and the ratio of population to land is extremely wide <sup>38</sup>. As of 2015 Finland had a population of around five and a half million <sup>39</sup>, of which four million of these are Christian with the majority belonging to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland <sup>40</sup>. These statistics in figure 5 demonstrate that religion has maintained its relevance in Finland and justifies the construction of religious buildings. Kowalczyk and Lewandowska support that though we are seeing desacralisation in Finland, the church still has a significant role <sup>41</sup>. This demonstrates the level of value placed on religion as a whole suggesting higher budgets and therefore higher quality design. Although these figures suggest a high demand for religious buildings, many of the 60 churches built between 1890 and 1910 became redundant with many now commercial or residential spaces <sup>42 43</sup>. This raises questions about the demand for future religious buildings and questions how architects can design to anticipate possible disuse <sup>44</sup>.

<sup>37</sup> Frampton, 2007, p.331

<sup>38</sup> Tempel, 1968, p.8

<sup>39</sup> In 2021, the population of Finland had a population of 5,548,241, a 0.3% rise across the year. (Official Statistics of Finland, 2022)

<sup>40</sup> Official Statistics of Finland, 2016

<sup>41</sup> Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p.587

<sup>42</sup> Norri, Standertskjöld and Wang, 2000. p.17

<sup>43</sup> In 2022 as of the site visits, Saint John's Church, 1891 by Adolf Emil Melander, had become a construction site, see figure 6 (Johannes Församling, 2022)

<sup>44</sup> Further issues with maintaining religious buildings are the reduced tax revenues of the Lutheran Church (Arkkitehti, 2021)

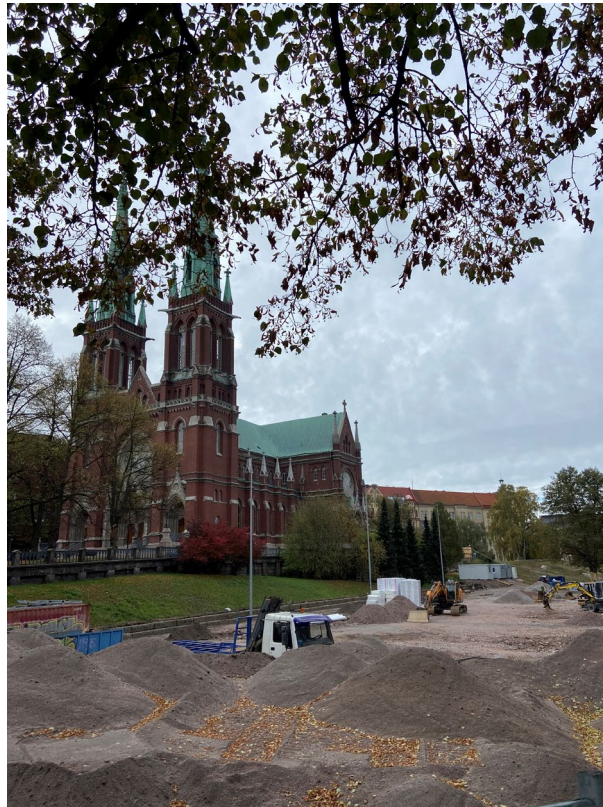


Figure 5: Saint John's Church, Helsinki (Photo credit: A. Messer)

Traditionally, religious architecture is associated with opulence, symbolism and monument as seen at Uspenski Cathedral, see figure 6. While some characteristics are still visible in some contemporary religious architecture, it has become less important with more value placed on a contextual response. Richardson states that in modern cities the value of a religious building is no longer placed on it becoming a landmark but instead on the way it fits in context and the way in which it becomes an escape from the urban build up <sup>45</sup>. This is somewhat valid but perhaps less when using central Helsinki as an example with a focus on Temppilaukio Church and Kamppi Chapel <sup>46</sup>. Where Richardson's view becomes more valid is when looking at religious buildings within Finnish residential communities. Prime examples of this are OOPEAA's <sup>47</sup> community based religious buildings <sup>48</sup>. Religious buildings are now being designed to naturally fit within the urban settings which is exemplified through OOPEAA's designs <sup>49</sup>. This is a contrast to the past where a religious building was a focal point with the urban layout being influenced by it <sup>50</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> Richardson, 2004, p.63

<sup>46</sup> Both respond to the context in their own ways yet have both become landmarks of the city

<sup>47</sup> OOPEAA stands for "Office For Peripheral Architecture", it was founded by Anssi Lassila. The practice focuses on a relationship between the context, the people and tradition (OOPEAA, 2023a)

<sup>48</sup> Including Suvela Chapel and Tikkurila Church.

<sup>49</sup> (Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.22-24).

<sup>50</sup> This can be seen by the manner in which Helsinki Cathedral sits in Senate Square, see figure 9.

Finland's rich geographical context and rather harsh weather conditions produces ground for a contextually rich architecture. O'Brien (2019, pp.1-2) questions whether the achievements behind Finnish design are due to its natural surroundings or due to the fact that Finland is at a distance to the rest of a more hustling Europe, inherently making the nation strong and free to develop new ideas and building typologies. The battle with the Finnish environment is manifested within the culture and the positivity and strength of the Finnish according to O'Brien <sup>51</sup>. When some might look at the harsh winters that the country endures as a limitation, others possibly see it as a unique opportunity and integrate it within the characteristics of the architecture; this is visible at Temppeliaukio Church where the design embraces the wet weather allowing water to run down the walls <sup>52</sup>. One might argue that this is the truest sense of Critical regionalism; embracing challenging contexts and incorporating

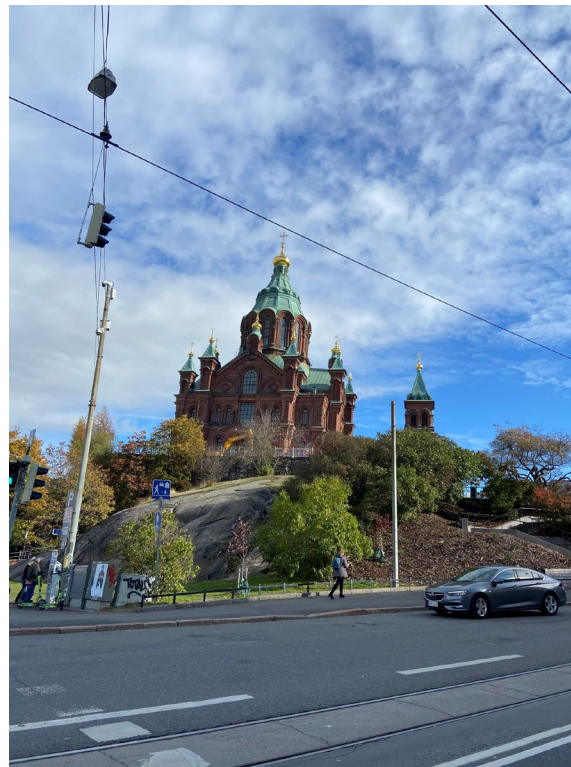


Figure 6: Uspenski Cathedral, Helsinki (Photo credit: A. Messer)

them into a design.

Undoubtedly, besides the weather conditions, Finland's vast environment has much to offer architecturally. This includes the long standing tradition of using Finnish grown timber in sustainable construction and innovative design according to Summanen <sup>53</sup>. While mid Finland is known for its extensive lakes, the north is recognised for its timber; here much of

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<sup>51</sup> O'Brien, 2019, pp.1-2

<sup>52</sup> Uvalic, 2022

<sup>53</sup> Tikkurila, 2019

the Finnish grown timber is felled <sup>54</sup>. In the twenty first century with increased the sustainability agenda, architects are becoming more conscious about the natural environment and the way architecture impacts it. An excellent example of innovative timber construction is Kamppi Chapel <sup>55</sup> by K2S Architects <sup>56</sup>.



Figure 7: Timber detailing on Kamppi Chapel (Photo credit: A. Messer)

Mann adopts an interesting school of thought surrounding the environment; he suggests that as architects and the general population are becoming increasingly educated on the environment, they are in turn becoming more informed on the universe as a whole <sup>57</sup>. This is a completely different mindset to when religious buildings were constructed historically where people would view the universe as a religious creation. It can be suggested that sacred for many people may now reflect the natural environment and that faith is represented through the respect and protection of the natural. Frampton adds to this by explaining that to achieve Critical Regionalism the architecture must relate to nature <sup>58</sup>. While this could be through a design that is superficially organic through its form, it could be interpreted to be the way in which it fits within nature and how it can have a symbiotic relationship to the architecture so the two benefit each other. Cutieru elaborates stating that a design that incorporates sustainability reflected by the site specific knowledge and

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<sup>54</sup> Tempel, 1968, p.8

<sup>55</sup> Kamppi Chapel uses a CNC-milled glulam frame (Jodidio, 2013)

<sup>56</sup> K2S Architects are a Finnish practice founded in 2001; they have a deep commitment to Finnish tradition, context and material diversity. (K2S, 2019b)

<sup>57</sup> Mann, 2002, p.186

<sup>58</sup> Frampton, 2002, p.86

resources is a contemporary interpretation of Critical Regionalism <sup>59</sup>. The Finnish Government recognise that the architectural parameters have to change in their official architectural report stating that though “beauty”, “stability” and “utility” still apply, the focus must shift to sustainability, adaptability and well-being <sup>60</sup>. They later state that sustainable architecture is not only environmental sustainability but also about the longevity of the building and social inclusivity, which is extremely prevalent to religious buildings which risk becoming disused if an inclusive architecture is not applied.

With all of these contextual, religious and cultural factors as well as the challenges that secularisation within the 21<sup>st</sup> century brings, Finnish contemporary religious architecture has a huge task. Sacred spaces throughout history has been one of the few public buildings freely open to all <sup>61</sup>, this idea retains merit, however, architects now have to think of ways in which these buildings can enhance the building typology to attract visitors. Along with this, there is also the fact that Finland is such a design proud nation which is highly focused on individuality within architecture. Hence, the architect must respond to the way in which Finnish identity, the specific region and religion is incorporated into sacred architecture to respond to the cultural needs of a 21<sup>st</sup> century Finland <sup>62</sup>.

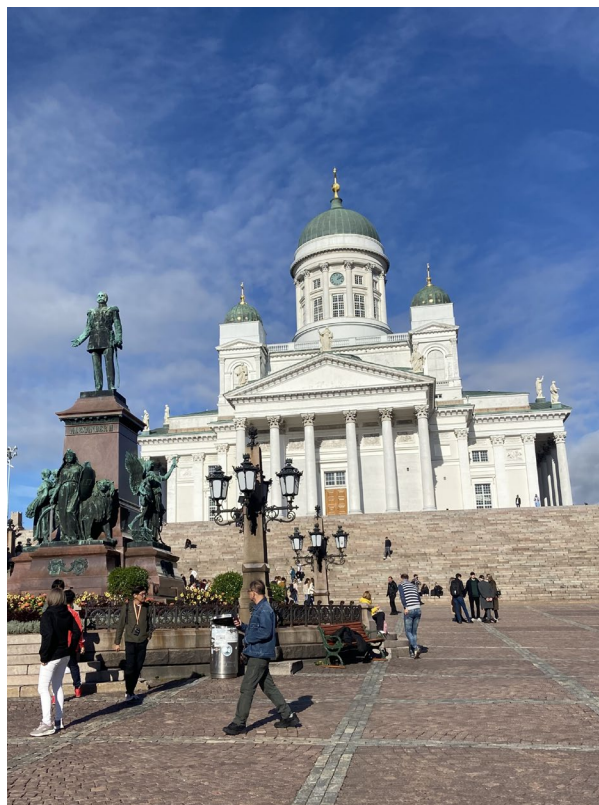


Figure 8: Helsinki Cathedral, Senate Square (Photo credit: A. Messer)

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<sup>59</sup> Cutieru, 2021

<sup>60</sup> The Finnish Government, 2022, p.9

<sup>61</sup> Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p. 588

<sup>62</sup> Pallister, 2015, p.13

## Chapter 2: Finnish Design Philosophy and Principles

Traditional characteristics associated with religious architecture have become less desirable in a Finnish society where a greater focus on well-being has become more prevalent as a result of the timelessness of Alvar Aalto's philosophies surrounding a humanist architecture<sup>63</sup>. The goal for any religious building is to be a welcoming, comfortable place with people and faith at its heart; Finnish contemporary religious architecture goes further in designing an atmospheric destination that enhances its environment and the user experience to channel a sense of faith and community<sup>64</sup>. Summanen states that designing a religious building presents great possibility to bridge the logical with the emotional while being a nod to the past<sup>65</sup>.



Figure 9: Minimal symbolism of Tempelpiaukio Church (Photo credit: A. Messer)

The architect designing a religious building undoubtedly has a huge challenge as they have the additional responsibility of incorporating spirituality into a building, which already has to address all of the features expected from a secular building<sup>66</sup>. Richardson articulates that

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<sup>63</sup> Kim, 2009, p.15

<sup>64</sup> Richardson, 2004, p.7

<sup>65</sup> A+ Architecture in Belgium, 2021

<sup>66</sup> Richardson, 2004, p.7

sacred architecture must inspire in several different aspects; this includes satisfying architectural parameters expected from any quality building but going further to ignite a sense of curiosity <sup>67</sup>. This said feeling might come from the spiritual aspects for the religious but might originate from a sense of awe to the religious and non-religious alike if the architecture can ignite a feeling of wonder. The challenge for architects designing religious buildings is to assess what a building can achieve past the physical <sup>68</sup>. Though quality architecture should inherently make the user feel a sense of awe, religious architecture should take the user to a different place spiritually. This is a challenge that many architects take in their stride and in fact strive towards as a part of their career goals <sup>69</sup>.

Although the design of religious architecture is nothing new, the way in which architects approach designing contemporary sacred spaces have a whole set of new societal challenges within their briefs in ensuring longevity of the building. In the past the traditional purpose of religious buildings was for mass and various ceremonies based around religion <sup>70</sup>. Over time the building typologies have changed to become more multifunctional for such buildings to retain their relevance within a desacralized Finnish society. This has manifested in various ways but can be split mainly into two categories; community based and public interest led. In said new buildings the interior characteristics have had to adapt; in cases of buildings that have become tourist attractions, they are often used for concerts and large gatherings. In this case the acoustic properties applied to traditional religious buildings can be translated into modern day <sup>71</sup>. Something that becomes more challenging layout wise to architects is creating numerous multi-functional rooms along with a main hall <sup>72</sup>. This often manifests in a reduced space for worship to place the same emphasis on other functions that the building can accommodate <sup>73</sup>.

To understand how faith is reflected in contemporary Finnish architecture, the history of why there was a move from the traditional must be considered. Although developments in traditional sacred architecture is not a new phenomenon <sup>74</sup>, the huge stylistic change that we see in Finnish design from Uspenski Cathedral to Kamppi Chapel begs to be studied. This change goes further than simply the secularisation of society, it is clear that humanistic

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<sup>67</sup> Richardson, 2004, p.7

<sup>68</sup> Richardson, 2004, p.17

<sup>69</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, p.74

<sup>70</sup> Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p.588

<sup>71</sup> Traditionally religious architecture followed the idea of a large main hall led by a bell tower (Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p.592)

<sup>72</sup> Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p.587

<sup>73</sup> These ideas of dividing the space practically has become more widespread through the Finnish experimentation with modern technologies and materials to aid design.(Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p.592)

<sup>74</sup> Richardson, 2004, p.7

connection, not only to higher powers but to the community is now more deeply valued <sup>75</sup>. As a result of stylistic changes during this period, the architecture had two clear aesthetics, Nordic Classicism which hinted at traditions and an organic architecture that focussed on the context and social setting <sup>76</sup>.

Traditional Finnish religious buildings demonstrate their function through symbolism, grandeur and recognisable features associated with religious buildings, such as ornamentation and incorporation of towers; the visitor can recognise the building's purpose with ease. This is clear where traditional design features such as a regular plan and symmetry on the external façade with an obvious entrance <sup>77</sup> seen at Helsinki Cathedral <sup>78</sup>. In an increasingly secularised Finnish society, the architecture has adapted to develop with societal changes. Heathcote and Moffatt explain that the issue that contemporary religious buildings face is similar to that of the house; that the user is lacking the ability to read the meaning behind the architecture <sup>79</sup>. This is becoming prevalent in Finnish religious buildings which are becoming more community based and therefore have to encompass a new range of functions. A similar set of challenges come when designing religious buildings within an urban setting. There is a risk here of the architecture becoming a generic, commercial, public building that blends into a city particularly where the focus is on a contextual response over standing out <sup>80</sup>. As a result these buildings need to be dynamic and stand out; in the case of Helsinki, such architecture becomes landmarks and tourist attractions which again strays away from the intended function.

We see the greatest contrast in design when studying the use of symbolism. Mann suggests that the removal of sacred symbolism was to the credit of modern architecture of the 20<sup>th</sup> century <sup>81</sup>. Pallister (2015, p.60) backs this up by explaining the attractiveness of a minimalist design within religious architecture. There is something about a minimalist architecture that ignites a sense of solidity and trust in the structure which creates a sense of permanence, resonating with the permanence that people associate with religion <sup>82</sup>. Shen explains that regardless of the faith, sacred buildings have similarities in their principles and characteristics, all with the aim of arousing faith which might have influenced the minimalistic style <sup>83</sup>. This is exemplified in the multi-faith Kamppi Chapel in Helsinki.

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<sup>75</sup> The beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a significant change in composition, massing and layout of sacred architecture, much of this is credited to changes in the Lutheran Church (Norri, Standertskjöld and Wang, 2000)

<sup>76</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, p.65

<sup>77</sup> Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.22-24

<sup>78</sup> Helsinki Cathedral was built in 1852 by Carl Ludwig Engel (Meyer, 2018, p.15)

<sup>79</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, p.74

<sup>80</sup> Richardson, 2004, p.63

<sup>81</sup> Mann, 2002, p.185

<sup>82</sup> Pallister, 2015, p.100

<sup>83</sup> Shen, 2018

Societal changes undoubtedly have seen a shift in the architectural brief for religious buildings. Heathcote and Moffatt credit this to rediscovering the everyday within architecture, this is particularly prevalent within Finnish architecture where social values and the quality of living is so highly regarded <sup>84</sup>. This applies to both the way that people live their everyday lives in the way they come together as a community, but also the way in which they experience religion within everyday life. How the people gather together and muster a sense of faith through gathering in any aspect. Throughout history the church has been an extremely essential part of society; though this is becoming less true it is still a place where people go for life's monumental moments such as marriage and death <sup>85</sup>. The contemporary sacred architecture in Finland is evidently attempting to reintegrate this aspect of the church being an essential, utilised part of society through multifunctional religious buildings. Hence why religious spaces are therefore becoming increasingly utilised as community hubs for the religious and non-religious alike to reach its full potential <sup>86</sup>. The way in which many architects are addressing this new brief is through creating a multitude of spaces <sup>87</sup>. Kowalczyk and Lewandowska backs this up by commenting on the fact that traditional Finnish religious buildings previously encompassed one large space but now take into account the specific needs of the context in which it sits and the requirements of the specific demographic <sup>88</sup>. Something that might be at risk in these cases are the buildings becoming too secularised. If the architecture offers too much flexibility, what are the parameters that set in place that said building must have an underlying religious function? Kowalczyk and Lewandowska says that this can be achieved through the allocation of spaces for specific functions <sup>89</sup>. In many instances this is being done through the design of a highly ethereal, large mass of space intended for worship with adjoining secondary spaces for other functions <sup>90</sup>.

This idea of the building being readable and attractive to worshippers and atheists alike often manifests in the way light can be utilised. Heathcote and Moffatt explains that light is a symbol of modernity in architecture and that a play on light becomes particularly key to the architect of a sacred space <sup>91</sup>. They state that light is a universal tool that can be interpreted by all to represent the ethereal; this becomes a key design feature for architects who do not have a deep understanding for religion as this is universally understood. While an emphasis

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<sup>84</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, p.73

<sup>85</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, p.77

<sup>86</sup> Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p.598

<sup>87</sup> Pallister explains that the composition of the plan is somewhat consistent for many religious buildings with features such as a main hall with secondary, functional spaces (Pallister, 2015, p.20)

<sup>88</sup> Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p.587

<sup>89</sup> Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p.598

<sup>90</sup> Pallister explains the risk that with these universal ideas associated with multi-functional contemporary religious architecture might result in an architecture with limited regional identity (Pallister, 2015, p.15)

<sup>91</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, pp.76-77

on light within a sacred space might be seen as a symbolic cliché; it is so highly utilised throughout history for good reason <sup>92</sup>. To the credit of Finnish architects designing sacred architecture they have a deep understanding of how light can evoke emotions and engage the senses within their designs; this became obvious when carrying out site visits <sup>93</sup>. This might be down to the emphasis and appreciation of natural light as an indication for seasonal changes which is greatly celebrated throughout all Scandinavian countries <sup>94</sup>. Or the fact that light in general is a design tool utilised by the architecture profession as a whole for its aesthetic and atmospheric benefits <sup>95</sup>.

While in the past, grandeur and opulence prevailed over minimalism in religious architecture, contemporary religious architecture has a greater focus on integrating religion into the everyday <sup>96</sup>. Heathcote and Moffatt articulate how the mindset of architects have changed, this is particularly prevalent to Finnish architects where the focus is on the quality of the atmosphere within the space and how it makes the user feel over physical prompts <sup>97</sup>. Religious architecture is now on a far more approachable arguably. Traditionally, the philosophy behind a sacred space was to build high to be closer to their God (Shen, 2018). While this is visible in traditional Finnish chapels, the contemporary architecture of Finland have a far more human scale with the link to higher powers through light instead. In this sense the contemporary building typology of Finnish architecture is not only in the building's function and role but in the characteristics surrounding massing, light and atmosphere <sup>98</sup>.

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<sup>92</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, p.76

<sup>93</sup> Frampton, 2002, p.88

<sup>94</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, p.76

<sup>95</sup> Interview with Barker (2023); Barker states that architects must consider the different seasonal light conditions; for example how light can be maximised during winter where Finland gets just five hours of daylight.

<sup>96</sup> Heathcote, Moffatt, 2007, pp.73-75

<sup>97</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, p.75

<sup>98</sup> Shen, 2018

## Chapter 3: Public Interest Case Studies

Something that became obvious while carrying out site visits was that many of the well-known religious buildings of Helsinki have become points of public interest. Pallister suggests that a piece of architecture can reflect a certain period in time or become appreciated along the line, sometimes becoming “intrinsically linked to a places identity” <sup>99</sup>. This is particularly evident when studying the case studies, Temppeliaukio Church and Kamppi Chapel in Helsinki. While being highly regarded architecturally with many writings on both buildings, they have become somewhat iconic to Helsinki’s identity and as a result become tourist attractions. This could become somewhat problematic to the buildings function to act as a sacred space that would be its core function as a place of worship.

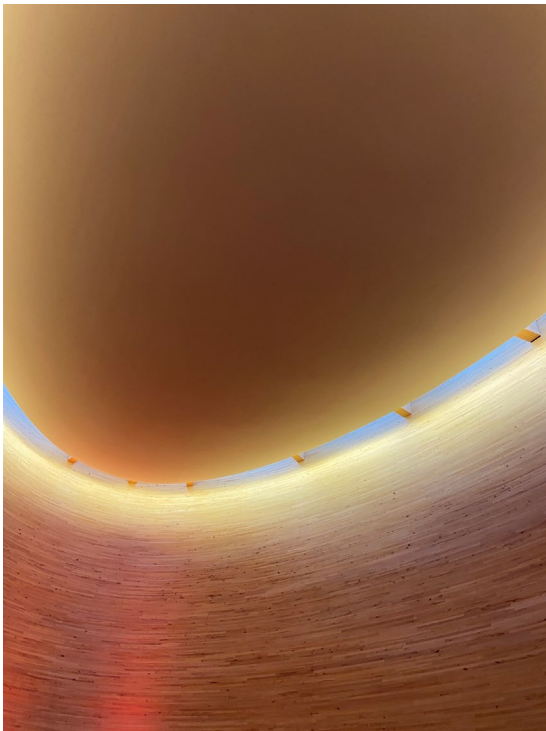


Figure 10: Kamppi Chapel, 2012 (Photo credit: A. Messer)

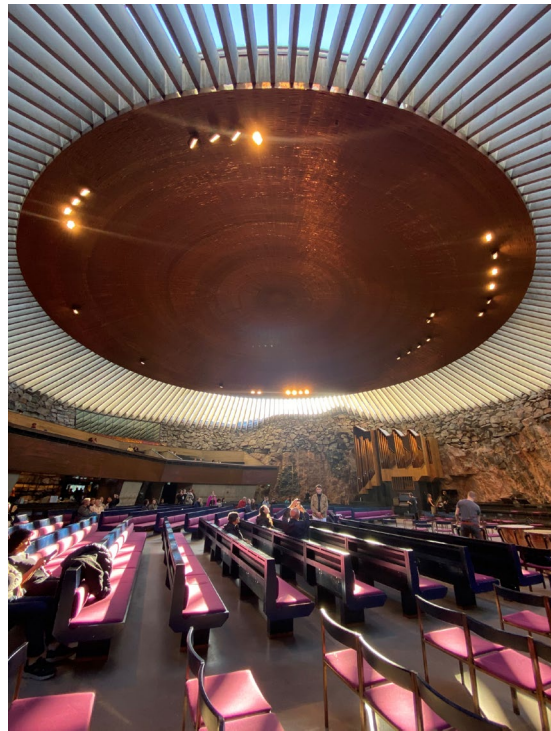


Figure 11: Temppeliaukio Church, 1969 (Photo credit: A. Messer)

Another way of looking at this however is to think about how tourism might actually bring worshippers into the churches. This could be classed as a modern form of pilgrimage in the sense that worshippers travel to these religious buildings, in this sense, the architect succeeds in creating a sense of faith through gathering while still being encouraged to be respectful to the building <sup>100</sup>.

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<sup>99</sup> Pallister, 2015, p.21

<sup>100</sup> Griffin, Raj, 2018, p.6

## Temppeliaukio Church

Temppeliaukio Church is a prime example of this phenomenon of religious buildings becoming tourist attractions with high public interest. Timo and Tuomo Suomalainen <sup>101</sup> designed Temppeliaukio Church in 1961 <sup>102</sup> for the Toolo masterplan of 1906 <sup>103</sup>; the church completed construction in 1969 <sup>104</sup> at a cost of 3.85 million Finnish marks <sup>105</sup>. The brief called for a main hall, administration rooms, an office and club spaces that are captured within a rock <sup>106</sup>.



Figure 12: Temppeliaukio Church interiors from mezzanine layer (Photo credit: A. Messer)

It was evident that the church has become a national landmark with it being deeply engraved within the way in which Helsinki brands itself. The church embodies much of Finland's culture in a multitude of ways through materiality, tourism, religion and symbolism. It has become a symbol of Helsinki which in turn increased the public interest; the focus on the tourism aspect of the church was evident upon visiting with advertisement for visitors and themed memorabilia throughout the city.

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<sup>101</sup> Timo and Tuomo were brothers; they became a part of a new community of Finnish architects of young designers open to exploring with unique forms (Connah, 2005, p.170).

<sup>102</sup> There were three separate design competitions for Temppeliaukio Church in 1933, 1936 and 1961 (Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.255).

<sup>103</sup> The Toolo masterplan was the first of this type in the country and was won by Gustaf Nystrom and Herman Norrmén (Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.150). This solidified the role that the architect played in urban planning (Connah, 2005, p.40)

<sup>104</sup> Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.255

<sup>105</sup> Reis, 2002, p.64

<sup>106</sup> Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.255



Figure 13: TempPELLIAUKIO plan (Credit: Hidden Architecture)

It is an interesting comparison how the church itself has become a symbol of the city when religion has such a strong tradition of symbolism. One might argue that its popularity amongst tourists encourages visitors, however, this might bring visitors for other purposes other than religion, the original intention. In turn, the building has become limited as it requires an entry fee. Where a religious building should be accessible to all, the influence of tourism upon the church has resulted in a more privatised religion which might deter worshippers <sup>107</sup>. Heathcote and Moffatt articulate the importance of retaining a public place which is available to all, particularly in a modern society where commercialism and profit prevails <sup>108</sup>. Although the fee might be necessary for maintenance and staffing, it doesn't necessarily reflect the social values of Finland. However, this does show the value that Finland places on its culture that they are actively seeking funds to preserve it. Uvalic offers a differing view stating that the different opening times works efficiently in retaining the buildings sacred nature <sup>109</sup>. Furthermore, one might argue that the church would become slightly underutilised if it did not have the tourism angle; Uvalic states that the church welcomes around 50-70 people for services, while for concerts it can reach full capacity and in the summer months where cruises pass through, the church can welcome up to 12,000

<sup>107</sup> Heathcote, Moffatt, 2007, p.77

<sup>108</sup> Heathcote, Moffatt, 2007, p.77

<sup>109</sup> Interview with Uvalic, 2022

visitors a day <sup>110</sup>. This questions that without the architectural interest whether the church would fulfil its function.

The materiality of the church is highly representative of the tectonic qualities that Finland has to offer. The overarching materials of the natural rough stone against the smooth, cool concrete below the shiny copper ceiling as well as the buildings organic feel was again, very consistent with the period in which it was designed <sup>111</sup>. The use of natural materials and the impression of the organic arguably gives the building a false sense of sustainability. As seen by the steel cross embedded into the rock and the timber pressed concrete of the secondary spaces in figures 14 and 15.



Figure 14: Timber pressed concrete walls with subtle cross symbolism (Photo credit: A. Messer)



Figure 15: Minimal symbolism of a cross sculpture embedded in the stone (Photo credit: A. Messer)

The church contrasts earlier points made about religious buildings moving away from serving as opulent landmarks. The church has an obvious grandeur from the interiors with an unassuming appearance from the street. Nevertheless, it is a recognisable building that inspires intrigue, which is why it is one of the most visited tourist attractions in Helsinki <sup>112</sup>. In addition to being a tourist attraction, the church is also a popular concert destination, a function facilitated by the excellent acoustic properties. Although the original concept called

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<sup>110</sup> Interview with Uvalic (2022); Uvalic states that their busiest year was in 2019 where approximately one million people visited the church.

<sup>111</sup> Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.255

<sup>112</sup> Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.105

for an smooth concrete aesthetic, the introduction of acoustic engineers advised on a textured surface, hence the natural stone <sup>113</sup>. Furthermore, the layout of the plan facilitates the churches performative function with the raised mezzanine overlooking a platform stage see figure 12; this design feels extremely intentional as though the desired purpose was to perform music <sup>114</sup>. The architects had input from a conductor during the concept design; this had a clear valuable impact on the performance of the main hall <sup>115</sup>.



Figure 16: Raised platform for preaching and utilised for concerts (Photo credit: A. Messer)



Figure 17: The church organ (Photo credit: A. Messer)

The site for the church was designated from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to satisfy the needs of the Taivallahti congregation <sup>116</sup>. The church was constructed over sixty years later following two world wars; this suggests huge cultural and societal changes which inevitably would impact the building typology of the church. Since the church was part of a prestigious architectural competition there is a chance that the architecture came before the purpose. This is backed up by the fact that the floorplan was decreased by a quarter following cost issues (Reis, 2022, p.64). As a result of the architectural ambition of building a 24m diameter

<sup>113</sup> Florian, 2023

<sup>114</sup> The plan shows how the main hall is the key driver with secondary spaces surrounding it in the same arrangement (Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.255)

<sup>115</sup> The architects collaborated with conductor Paavo Baerglund and acoustic engineer Mauri Parjo; music from composer Taneli Kuusisto plays throughout the church (Florian, 2023).

<sup>116</sup> Reis, 2002, p.64

dome into a rock the functional aspects of the building such as secondary space suffered<sup>117</sup>. Mara states that it was a trend in Finland where architectural projects would come above budget<sup>118</sup>. In this case, Uvalic explains that while the construction did not go over budget, funds depleted which caused a reduction in the plan<sup>119</sup>. From the view of Uvalic, the service manager, the church lacks administrative space that would be extremely difficult to rectify as any additional space would have to be sourced behind the grand altar.



Figure 18: View of the 24m diameter dome (Photo credit: A. Messer)

The manner in which the public viewed the church also hints that it was not representative of Finland's cultural identity at the time. The public believed that the money should be spent elsewhere; it was suggested that the people of Biafra would benefit more with Finnish Christian students even protesting on the site<sup>120</sup>. This demonstrates how even those of the Lutheran faith were opposed to the construction; this perhaps suggests a culturally unaware design as technically, the extent of the design, while now admired, was not necessarily appropriate or needed at the time. The church continues to be costly with fees to enter, plus, the staff of the church feel that in addition to the lack of administrative space, the heating,

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<sup>117</sup> The dome is on a structure of reinforced concrete struts and steel framing (Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.255).

<sup>118</sup> Mara, 2012

<sup>119</sup> Interview with Uvalic, 2022

<sup>120</sup> Florian, 2023

cooling and ventilation of the building is inadequate causing discomfort in both the winter and summer <sup>121</sup>. This hints at further costs being required to meet the requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century <sup>122</sup>, particularly with the church of Finland working towards the sustainability goals set out for 2030 <sup>123</sup>.

The church is an example of the mass of the building can appear lessened; this contrasts traditional philosophies surrounding religious architecture where they would be impactful and tall towards God <sup>124</sup>. Temppeliaukio Church goes against the grain here by being concealed behind rocks and being built underground. This concept raised questions amongst the public with them suggesting it could have the qualities of a bunker <sup>125</sup>. Symbolically, where traditionally churches were built high to be closer to God, Uvalic explains that some backlash that the church faced was from comments that it resembled a bunker for the devil <sup>126</sup>. However, the idea of building underground in Helsinki is not unique to the church; in fact the city is one of the few that has an underground plan for schemes such as the church and the Amos Rex Museum <sup>127</sup>, see figure 19.



Figure 19: The underground Amos Rex Museum (Photo credit: A. Messer)

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<sup>121</sup> Florian, 2023

<sup>122</sup> Finland have set out the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” (Prime Minister’s Office, 2020, p.28).

<sup>123</sup> Interview with Uvalic, 2022

<sup>124</sup> Norri, Standertskjöld and Wang, 2000, p.105

<sup>125</sup> Florian, 2023

<sup>126</sup> Interview with Uvalic, 2022

<sup>127</sup> Florian, 2023

Contextually the church is extremely interesting and arguably meets much of the criteria of Critical Regionalism. It is set within an existing rock which is a unique response to the site. Instead of flattening the site, the Finnish natural environment is embraced and celebrated, see figure 21. Additional granite rocks sourced from the site are placed upon the existing stone <sup>128</sup>. This proves that even before the sustainability agenda became widespread, Finnish designers had a great appreciation of the natural resources the country has to offer. This is further exhibited through the woven copper ceiling. Copper is highly prevalent within Finnish architecture adding to this sense of Finnish design identity<sup>129</sup>. The architects also chose copper as it is complementary to the pink granite used as the walls <sup>130</sup>. Temppeliaukio Church takes this feature to the extreme using seemingly untouched and unmoved stones on the exterior with quarried stone on the interior. This feels like a nod to Helsinki's past while pushing the design boundaries visible in the architecture at the time; this is therefore arguably the architects interpretation of Critical Regionalism.



Figure 20: The stone walls of Temppeliaukio Church (Photo credit: A. Messer)

This church is the earliest of all of the case studies presented. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century there is an abundance of internet resources which might cause an excess of inspiration and a lack of national identity <sup>131</sup>. One might assume that this was far less of a factor in the 1960s,

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<sup>128</sup> Florian, 2023

<sup>129</sup> Uvalic states that the copper ceiling was woven by one skilled worker, this demonstrates the talent of the Finnish craftsmanship at the time (Uvalic, 2022)

<sup>130</sup> Florian, 2023

<sup>131</sup> Pallister, 2015, p.13

however, the jury judging the church suggested similarities with a 1933 design by P E Blomsteadt <sup>132</sup>. This begs the question about how unique any Finnish religious building can be. Throughout history there has been a consistent cross plan to churches with constant symbolism shown throughout. This shows that it is too simple to blame modern technology for religious buildings that lack national identity. Arguably, if architects follow ideas surrounding Critical Regionalism, although each would have their own interpretation, they could each recognise the common themes of a place which is exemplified by the themes of Temppeliaukio Church in relation to Helsinki.



Figure 21: Street view of Temppeliaukio Church (Photo credit: A. Messer)

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<sup>132</sup> Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.105

## Kamppi Chapel

A religious building that has similarly become an iconic landmark of Helsinki is Kamppi Chapel. K2S Architect's 352m<sup>2</sup> multi-faith building was erected in 2012 costing 7 million euros <sup>133</sup>.



Figure 22: A sense of the scale of Kamppi Chapel (Photo credit: A. Messer)

The chapel follows a similar building typology as Temppeliaukio Church; they both have an predominant purpose for worship with additional functions for concerts and have become popular destinations amongst the public. The attraction to Kamppi Chapel for the religious and non-religious alike might be credited to its excellent location, strikingly curious design or its atmospheric qualities. The chapel was clearly designed for a wide audience with it being multi-faith <sup>134</sup>. Shen states that typical multi-faith spaces such as those in public places, are often minimal to the extreme, where all design that might inspire faith is removed <sup>135</sup>. However, with modernism being drawn to minimalism, a “universal” architecture is more widespread, hence multi-functional spaces become more likely <sup>136</sup>. Although Kamppi Chapel

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<sup>133</sup> Messahel, 2013

<sup>134</sup> Summanen (A+ Architecture in Belgium, 2021) explains the choice for the Greek cross at the entrance was to promote equality.

<sup>135</sup> Shen, 2018

<sup>136</sup> Crompton, 2013, p.482

embraces minimalism in the main hall, it most certainly is a sacred space that encourages a sense of awe, serenity and contemplation for all faiths.

Heathcote and Moffatt suggest that the role that a religious building plays is at its most important in a contemporary society <sup>137</sup>. One can apply this to the philosophy behind Kamppi and the role that it plays in its context. They expand to say that it should act as somewhere “for quiet contemplation” <sup>138</sup>. Pallister suggests that a religious building no matter its scale has the ability to design a space that inspires one to reflect and arouse a sense of faith <sup>139</sup>. Messahel relates this idea directly to Kamppi by stating that the chapel “embraces” those who enter as well as “shielding” them <sup>140</sup>. These ideas suggest a sense of safety and comfort which is shared in the community. Although this religious building was not necessarily labelled as community based, it plays an important role in the context in which it sits, arguably creating a safe, welcoming, micro-community for those who enter.

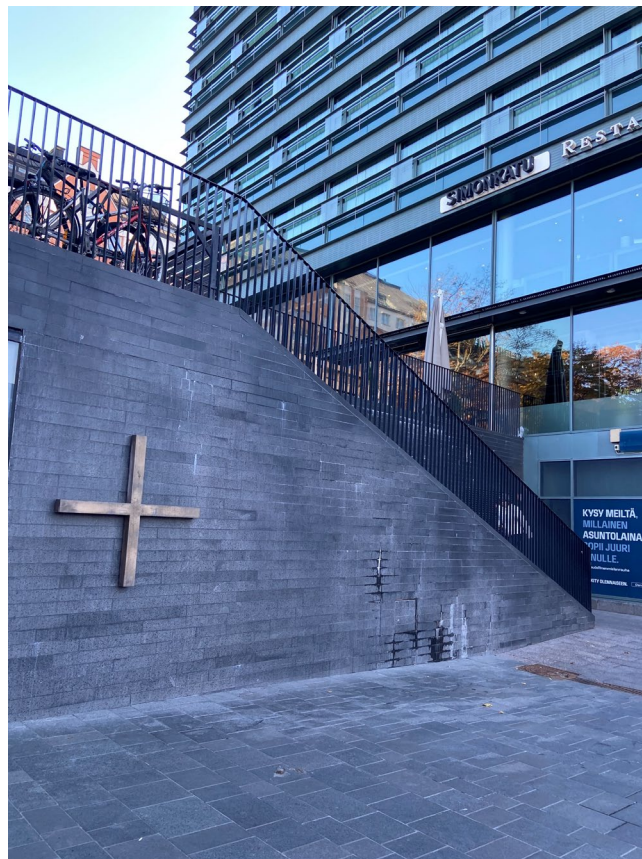


Figure 23: Concrete secondary space of Kamppi Chapel (Jodidio, 2013) (Photo credit: A. Messer)

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<sup>137</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, p.77

<sup>138</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, p.77

<sup>139</sup> Pallister, 2015, p.140

<sup>140</sup> Messahel, 2013

There is a strong and obvious spatial division between the main hall and the adjacent spaces. The secondary rooms are tucked below an existing raised walkway on the site and are of a concrete construction, whereas the main hall stands proud of its surroundings <sup>141</sup>. Although timber is often associated with Finnish architecture, the site is extremely urbanised with high rise buildings. In this case the chapel responds to Finland's wider context but not that of the materiality on the site. The Helsinki Parish Union and City of Helsinki were the clients; Summanen explains that they were keen on using wood as the primary material<sup>142</sup>. The dynamic spruce cladding stacked to create definition <sup>143</sup> contrasts the smooth interior panelled walls <sup>144</sup>. This could be symbolic of the busy, dynamic environment of the exterior Helsinki square and the calm, serene atmosphere of the main hall.

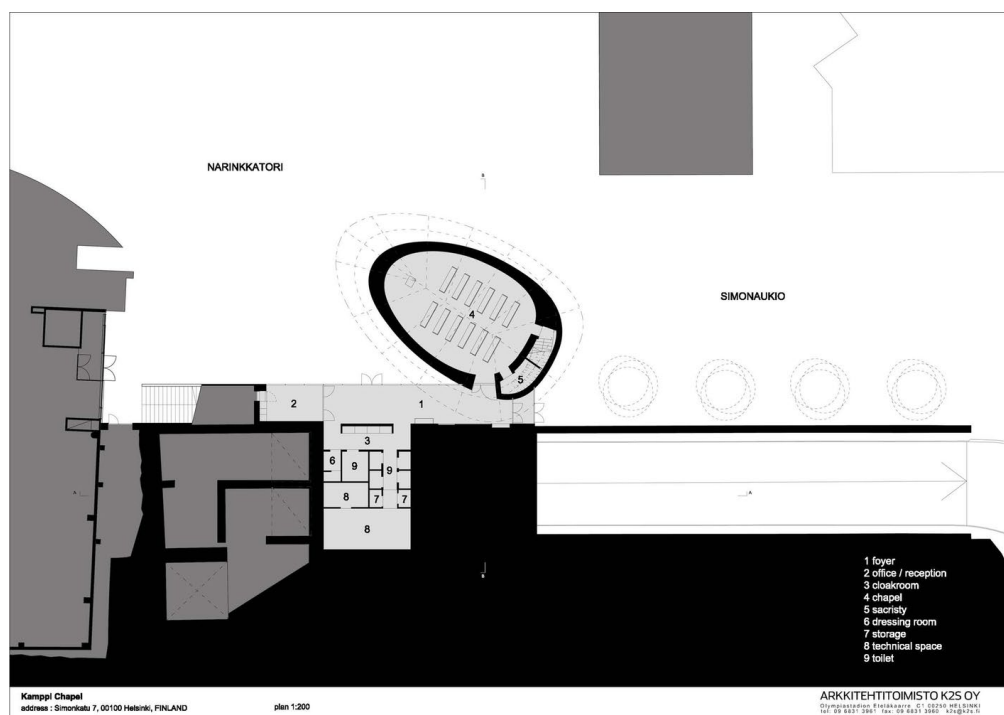


Figure 24: Kamppi Chapel plan in context with Narinkka Square (Credit: K2S)

The anticipation of the chapel was exhibited by the one hundred thousand visitors within the opening two months <sup>145</sup>. One can assume that there are a multitude of reasons for the popularity aside from the architecture. Partner of K2S, Mikko Summanen, gives immense credit to the chapel crowning at as one of his highest architectural achievements <sup>146</sup>. It is clear that he sees the chapel as a building for the people; Summanen states “Architecture

<sup>141</sup> Antoniazzi, Magerøy, Ardlila Ospina, 2022, p.1

<sup>142</sup> The architects ensured that the wood used was of Finnish descent; the wood used was sourced within 200km of the chapel (Tikkurila, 2019)

<sup>143</sup> Antoniazzi, Magerøy, Ardlila Ospina, 2022, p.6

<sup>144</sup> The panelled walls are made of alder wood that has been oiled (Jodidio, 2013)

<sup>145</sup> Mara, 2012

<sup>146</sup> Tikkurila, 2019

only comes to life through people” in regards to the building <sup>147</sup>. This is an interesting statement as people make the atmosphere externally completely different to internally. Arguably, the same architectural language is used for the external and interior; an interpretation of organic architecture using curves and natural wood. However, the fast pace, busy nature of the square in which it sits in contrast to the serene, quiet interior space is all down the people occupying the respective spaces.

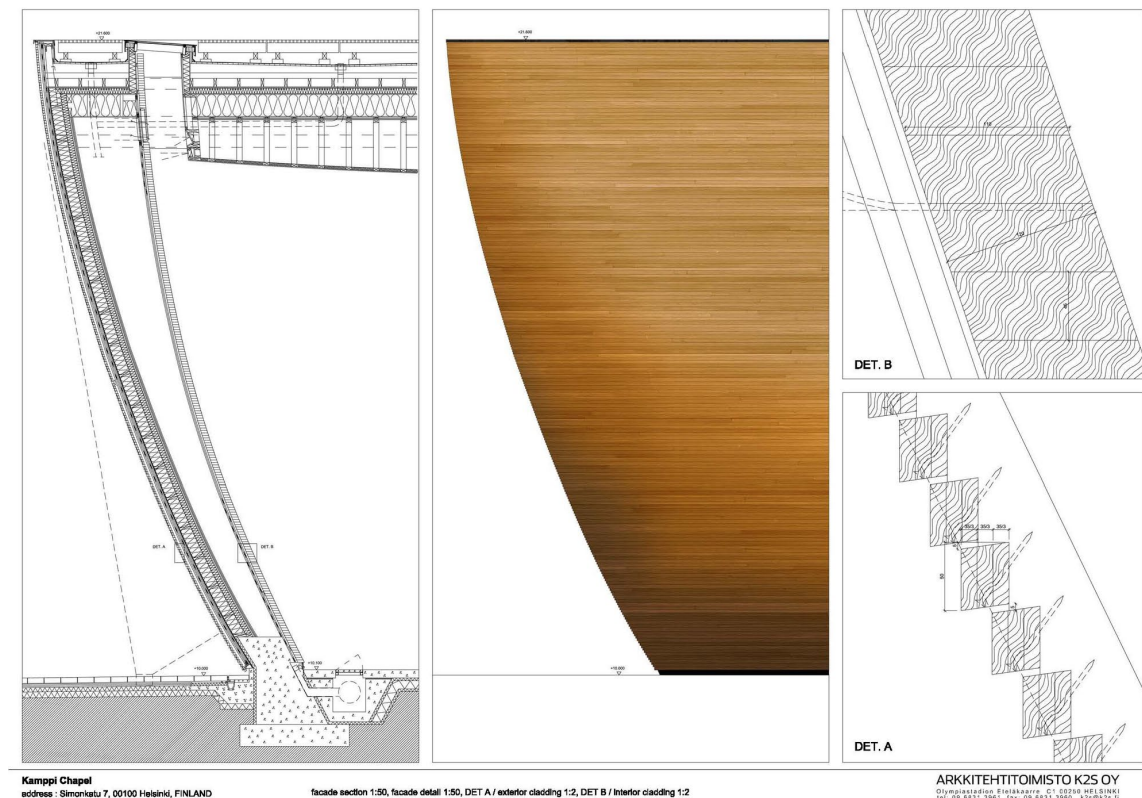


Figure 25: Kamppi Chapel detailing (Credit: K2S)

It is evident from visiting that the chapel fits into the context excellently, see figure 26. The main contextual theme surrounding this small sacred space is acting as a break from the bustling Narinkka Square in the heart of Helsinki <sup>148</sup>. Although placed in a square the curved façade enhances the flow of the space almost drawing visitors along a path to the building’s entrance. This is key to a public sacred space in order to make it feel welcoming and accessible in all aspects <sup>149</sup>. This idea of accessibility and inclusivity is also woven into the fact that the chapel is one of multi-faith <sup>150</sup>. This is significant as the architects clearly understood the cultural climate of a 21<sup>st</sup> century Finland and the importance of inclusivity

<sup>147</sup> Tikkurila, 2019

<sup>148</sup> Messahel, 2013

<sup>149</sup> Summanen states that it was a challenge to create a religious building that would stand out in a commercial setting while maintaining a human scale (A+ Architecture in Belgium, 2021)

<sup>150</sup> K2S, 2019a

within religion. Since the chapel is multi-faith the interiors of the hall are somewhat ambiguous with no physical symbolism, instead the symbolic religious connotations come from the atmosphere of gathering and the lighting.

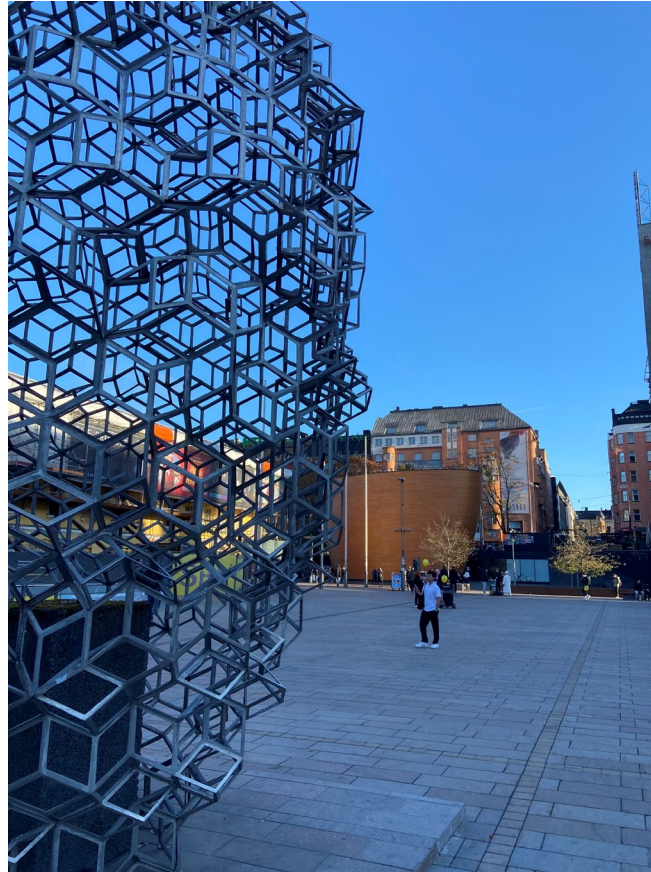


Figure 26: Kamppi Chapel within the context of Narinkka Square (Photo credit: A. Messer)

The internal quality of the chapel is ethereal and transformative and is a main reason as to why the building is so special. The combination of the soft lighting against the warm, textured wood creates a highly relaxing space to be in reminiscent of a spa. The common theme of light which can be symbolic to all no matter the religion is utilised effectively in this example. The non-visible thin rooflights <sup>151</sup> allow light to pour down the curved walls of the interior, this along with the materiality create a warm atmosphere <sup>152</sup>. This feeling created is appealing to the religious and the non-religious as it is a space that calls for contemplation, whether this be for religion or otherwise. This raises the point that as long as these buildings bring someone comfort, peace and solace in whatever form, a sense of faith is reflected in the architecture.

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<sup>151</sup> Mara, 2012

<sup>152</sup> Messahel, 2013

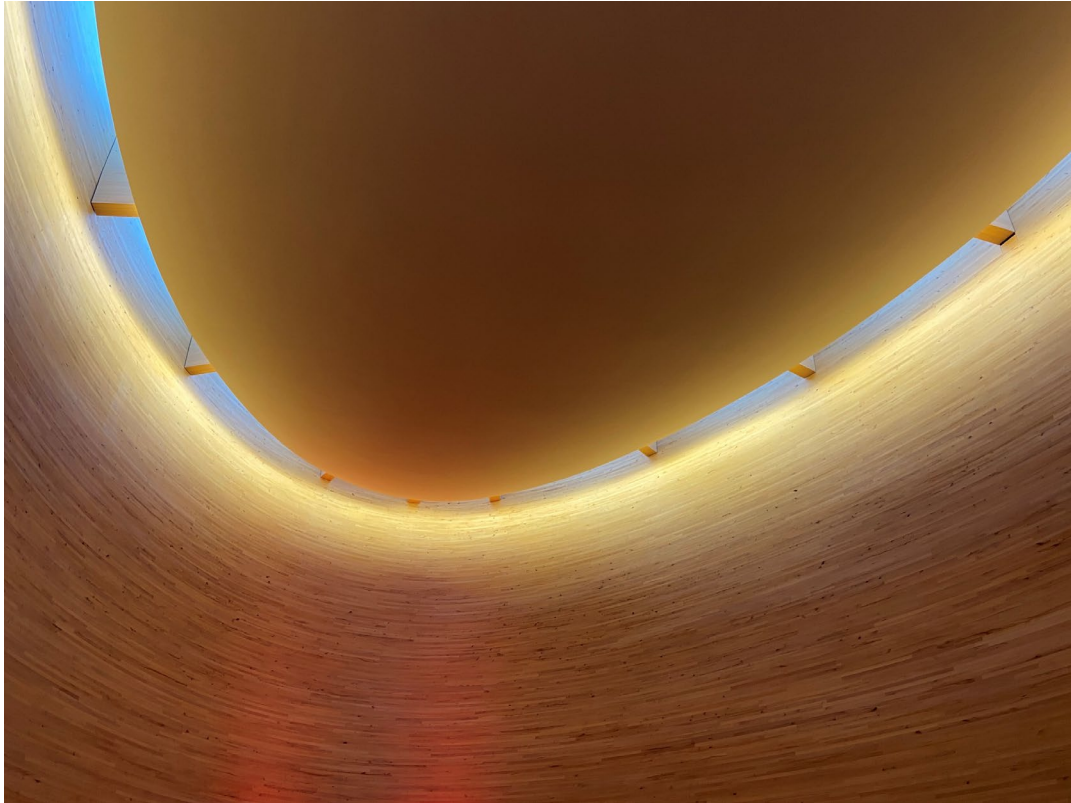


Figure 27: The quality of light within Kamppi Chapel (Photo credit: A. Messer)

Furthermore, the chapel has other roles, this includes functioning as a concert hall <sup>153</sup>. The curved walls, matte roof and wooden materials make for excellent acoustic properties for musical performances <sup>154</sup>. The scale of the main hall is rather small which creates a similar intimate feeling for concerts as it would for worship, see figure 28. Additionally, the adjacent space used for admin is also utilised as exhibition space <sup>155</sup>. For a building of such a small scale, a lot of functions and purposes are created past simply accommodating for religion. In this sense Kamppi Chapel is a culmination of the case studies presented; it is extremely admirable that the religious aspects of the building were handled with such sensitivity and symbolism but also functionality. As Summanen rightfully says, Kamppi Chapel is “a small building with a big impact” <sup>156</sup>.

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<sup>153</sup> Summanen states the chapel also upholds a sense of social responsibility; the City of Helsinki social services occupy the space (Tikkurila, 2019)

<sup>154</sup> K2S, 2019a

<sup>155</sup> Messahel, 2013

<sup>156</sup> Tikkurila, 2019



Figure 28: The concert setup reflecting the intimate performances Kamppi Chapel facilitates  
(Photo credit: A. Messer)

## Last Chapter: Community Based Religious Buildings

When exploring the religious buildings in residential districts away from the capital city of Helsinki it was clear that there was a significant change in the building typology of the religious architecture. As one travels further from more urbanised parts of Finland to residential districts a whole new multitude of social, contextual and regional factors arise that the architect must respond to<sup>157</sup>. The following case studies prove that this often materialises into a community based religious building. Pioneers in this type of architecture are OOPEAA who are responsible for the design of a large proportion of Finland's contemporary religious buildings<sup>158</sup>.

### Suvela Chapel



Figure 29: Street view of Suvela Chapel showing the areas density and position next to residential blocks (Photo credit: A. Messer)

Suvela Chapel signifies how faith can be effectively embodied within an architecture that services a contemporary community. The chapel is located in Espoo<sup>159</sup>, Finland within a residential district; it is surrounded by an array of large residential blocks, schools, playing

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<sup>157</sup> Such ideas presented in this chapter stem from characteristics displayed in Aalto's Church of the Three Crosses, where a multitude of multi-functional spaces with an emphasis on community and nature (Permanent Delegation of Finland, 2021)

<sup>158</sup> Including Suvela Chapel and Tikkurila Church

<sup>159</sup> Espoo is a district west of Helsinki. It is a rapidly growing area, specifically growing by 4,336 people in 2021. (Official Statistics of Finland, 2022)

fields and local businesses, see figure 29. The architects, OOPEAA ambition was to design an building with numerous functions to create a hub for the community to gather <sup>160</sup>. The context in which it sits undoubtedly influenced the typology of the building. The way in which the architect addresses the needs of the community is evident through the activities and facilities provided such as somewhere to worship, play, socialise and work <sup>161</sup>. This building is not intended to function as an ornate or extravagant architecture that's main purpose is attracting visitors from far beyond the district, therefore, the architecture does not need to be as obviously religious. It is clearly there to serve the community; in this case faith does not necessarily come from the physical direct symbolism that we might see elsewhere but through the sense of community and connection that such a building creates. This suggests that the architects deeply understood what faith meant to a community and that the way in which the users could form connections with others built upon a sense of faith. This limited the need for direct religious symbolism, instead faith stems from the community. How the user could experience and grow their faith through the building is down to the architects designs suggesting that architecture transcends faith.

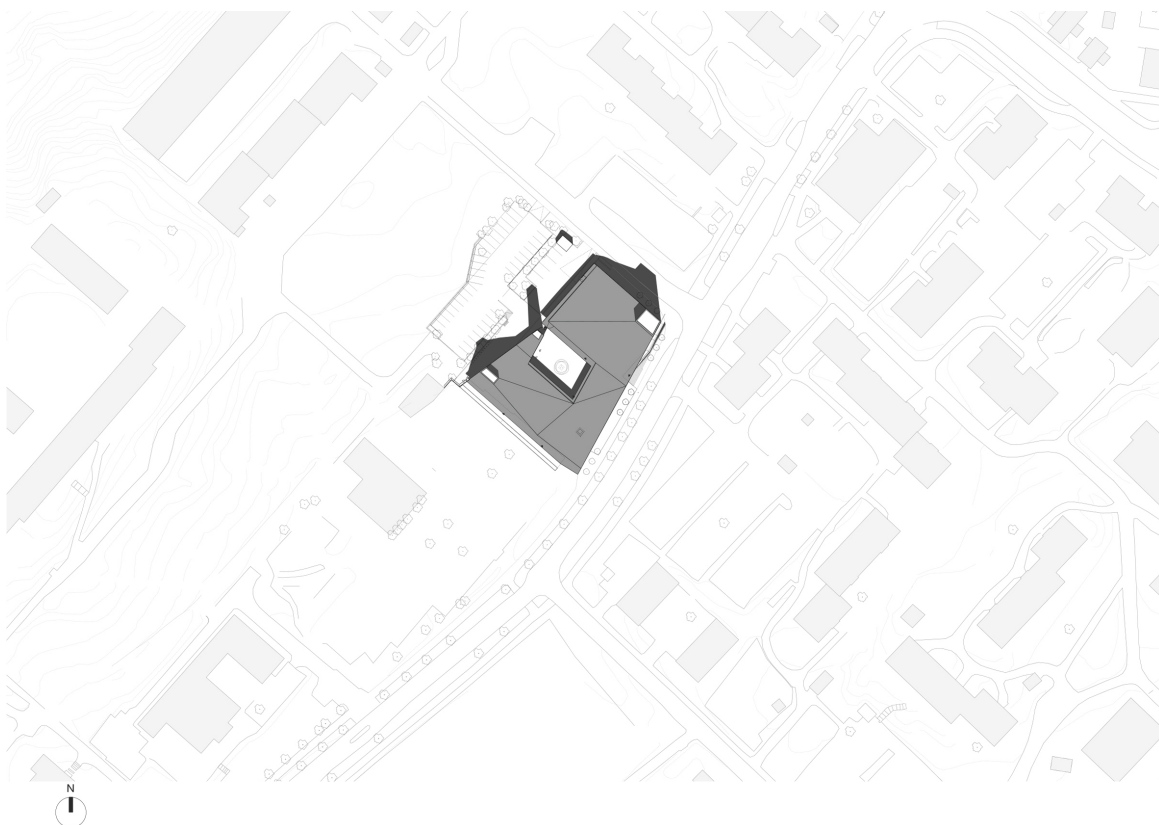


Figure 30: Suvela Chapel, site plan (Credit: OOPEAA)

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<sup>160</sup> OOPEAA, 2023b

<sup>161</sup> OOPEAA, 2023b

The way in which faith is physically shown within the architecture is through the large window to the north-east of the building letting in a soft, ethereal glow throughout the day <sup>162</sup>, see figure 34. The angular massing of the roof is used to let light in as well as house the servicing of the building <sup>163</sup>. This window projects light directly into the main meeting space creating a highly airy atmosphere that only amplified by the courtyard<sup>164</sup>. The architects are especially efficient with framing views which is further shown by the spaces serving the community facing outwards to the park <sup>165</sup>. This enhances the sense of community as children can play in both areas and connect with nature while being safely watched by the parents, see figure 32.

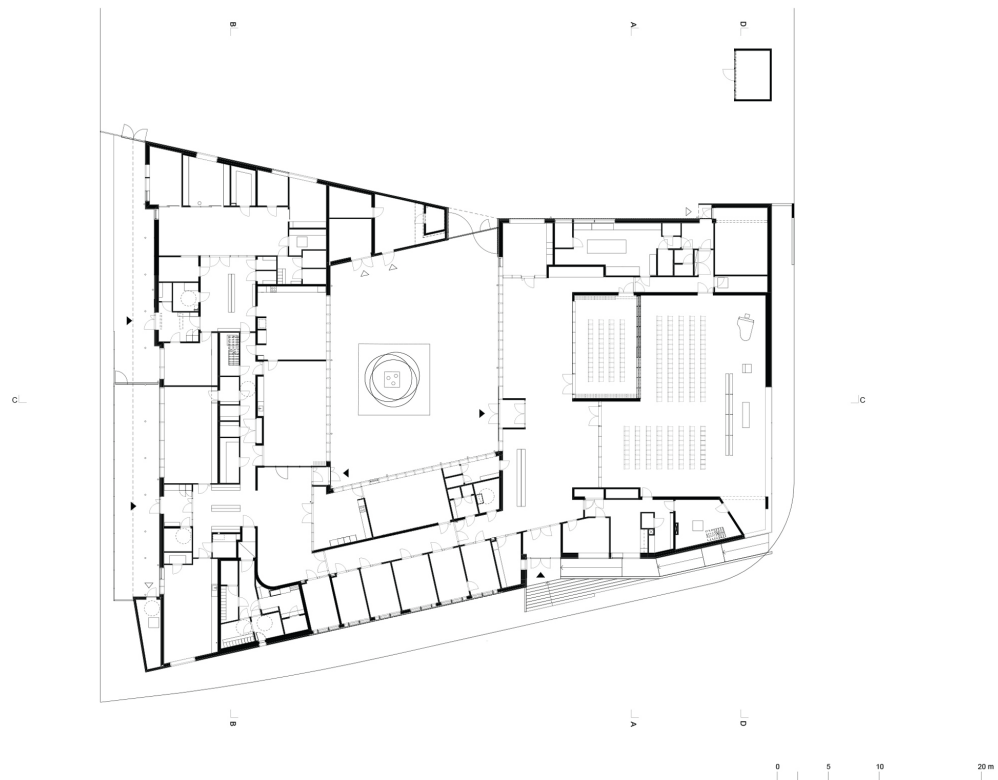


Figure 31: Suvela Chapel, ground floor plan. (Credit: OOPEAA)

<sup>162</sup> OOPEAA, 2023b

<sup>163</sup> MacKeith, 2017

<sup>164</sup> Due to the plan which wraps around in a courtyard, extra views are created internally (OOPEAA, 2023b)

<sup>165</sup> OOPEAA, 2023b



Figure 32: Stone courtyard showing extensive glazing of building allowing for views (Photo credit: M. Goodwin)

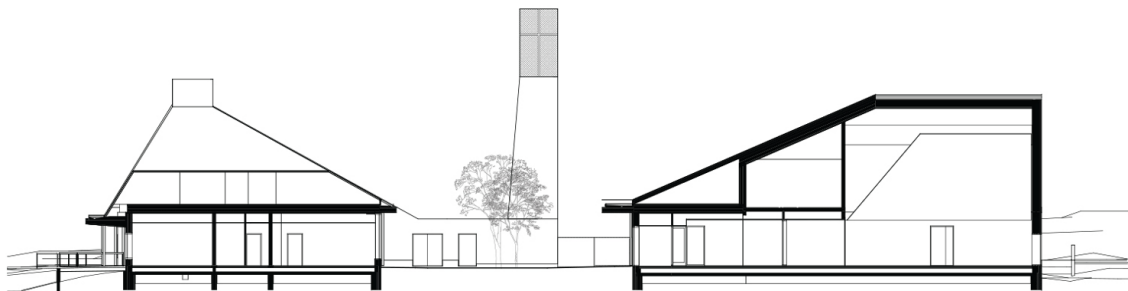


Figure 33: Suvela Chapel's section showing the courtyard in relation to surrounding rooms and the tower reminiscent of the towers of traditional religious architecture (Credit: OOEPA)

Though the chapel is not multi faith, the district's multi-cultural nature <sup>166</sup> might suggest that in the future the chapel might need to accommodate other religions <sup>167</sup>. Currently, the architecture does reflect faith within multiple cultures as it incorporates glass panels with

<sup>166</sup> As of 2021, Finland had the greatest increase in foreign language speakers, a growth of 25,195. (Official Statistics of Finland, 2022)

<sup>167</sup> OOEPA, 2023b

Bible verses in various languages <sup>168</sup>. This is particularly prevalent to the context as a third of the districts residents are not Finnish <sup>169</sup>. This helps to create an inclusive environment where visitors feel welcomed and understood, which is what faith should be about. The elegant simplicity of the architecture suggests that the architects were forward thinking about the future needs of religious building. This could mean that in the future if the building becomes redundant the architecture means that it can be repurposed into a community building. The theme of inclusivity is further shown through the ease of approach to the entrance <sup>170</sup>. This is a drastic contrast to traditional religious buildings that had imposing entrances flanked with grand staircases, as seen at Helsinki Cathedral. This overall makes the architecture more approachable and welcoming which can be understood universally by all culture living in the district.

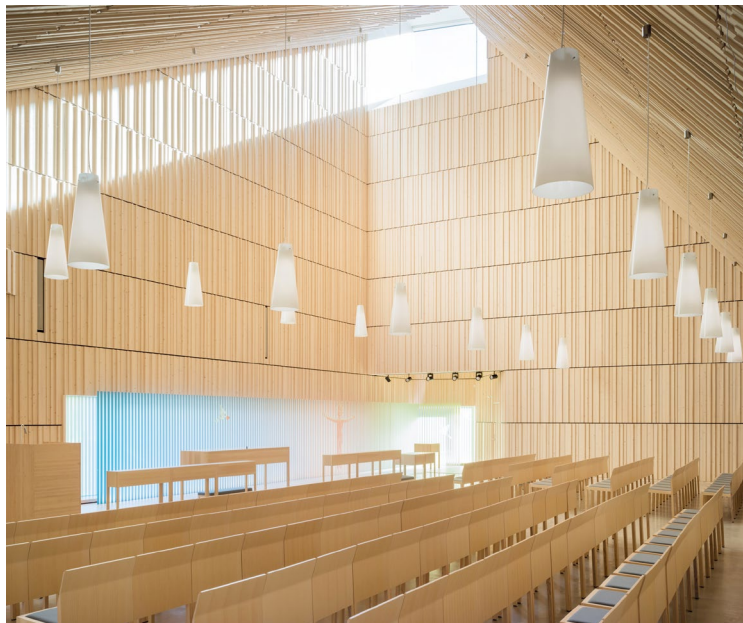


Figure 34: Photograph showing the interior quality of the chapel (Photo credit: M. Goodwin)

The ongoing theme of Critical regionalism within Finnish architecture is evident throughout Suvela Chapel. From the materiality to the philosophies surrounding nature, the chapel encapsulates Finnish design. The use of copper and timber throughout the building creates a warm, welcoming space which reflects the similar feelings behind faith. The simplicity of the interiors allows all of the focus of the users to be on the internal atmosphere and words being preached. In terms of materiality, a multitude of spruce panels lines the walls of the main hall as in figure 34; not only does this add architectural interest it also has acoustic

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<sup>168</sup> MacKeith, 2017

<sup>169</sup> OOEPA, 2023b

<sup>170</sup> OOEPA, 2023b

benefits <sup>171</sup>. When studying the exterior, although it is highly contrasting to the multi-storey, prefabricated residential blocks, it slots into the site with great sensitivity to the surroundings <sup>172</sup>. The copper cladding and varied massing makes the building extremely dynamic. Furthermore, the copper cladding will change with the weather as the building ages. While the building still stood out in form, its colouring tended to blend with its surroundings over time but will eventually stand out again when it turns to a green overtime, which the architects saw as an attractive feature <sup>173</sup>, see figures 35 and 36.

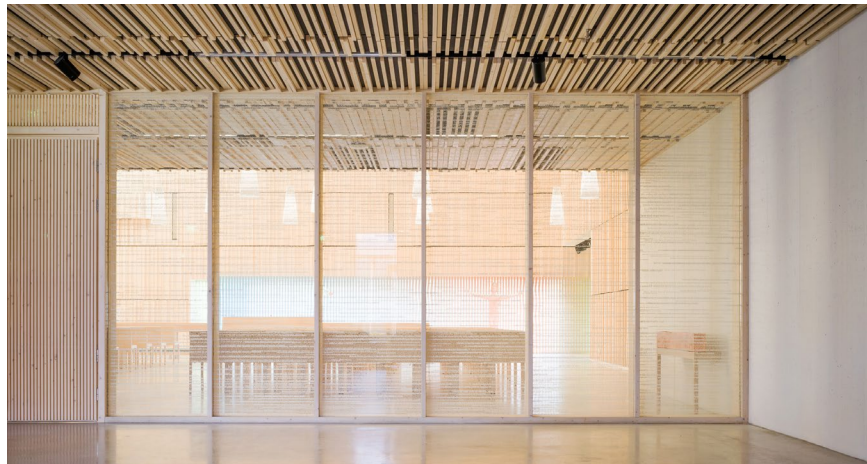


Figure 35: Interior screening windows with inscriptions and a minimalistic, wooden material palette throughout (Photo credit: M. Goodwin)



Figure 36: Suvela Chapel's luminous shiny copper façade when first constructed (Photo credit: M. Huisman)



Figure 37: Suvela Chapel's dull brown façade at the present and the green of the next stage of aging (Photo credit: A. Messer)

<sup>171</sup> MacKeith, 2017

<sup>172</sup> MacKeith, 2017

<sup>173</sup> MacKeith, 2017

## Tikkurila Church

Tikkurila Church and Housing , also by OOEPA, pushes the boundary between faith and the community further to the point where living, worshiping and socialising are unified within the architecture. Shah states that this acts as a potential for the future of religious architecture in the way that it has the opportunity to unite the different parts of people's lives <sup>174</sup>. Within the architecture is the main church which includes community space such as a family room and café; office space for around 140 persons including a multitude of meeting rooms and housing including affordable rental to student housing <sup>175</sup>. This is an extremely interesting approach to religious architecture as it is reminiscent of the past where the church was at the heart of the town but is a modern take on the churches role and how to retain its relevance.



Figure 38: Location of Tikkurila Church positioned on the corner of the street (Photo credit: A. Messer)

The church is located on a tight site in the busy, built up Tikkurila near Helsinki airport; it is evident that this physical and social context of the site influenced the building typology and form, see figure 38. There is an extreme contrast between the exterior and interior; the window placements on the pointed portion of the church suggest a dynamic interior; however, the dark, robust materiality of the exterior is a direct contrast to the bright, soft materiality of the interiors. Cleverly, since the site is so densely built up, the architects design

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<sup>174</sup> Shah, 2022

<sup>175</sup> Pintos, 2021

the plan around a courtyard that can be used as extra meeting space and as an internal link to the exterior <sup>176</sup>. The exterior is somewhat reminiscent to the adjacent buildings with its brick façade and form similar to that of neighbouring buildings, shows a great sensitivity to the surroundings. For a pedestrian passing the building it might be somewhat difficult to understand that it is a religious building. Similarly to Suvela Chapel, subtle symbolism on the exterior is utilised in the form of a cross. This is an extreme architectural statement by OOEPA that Finnish architecture has moved away from ornamental, obvious religious symbolism of the past. This can be seen comparatively to the highly opulent Uspenski Cathedral and the grand Helsinki Cathedral.

### Public space and functions

The block offers a multiplicity of functions to the community.  
The church square and the courtyard serve as a gathering space.

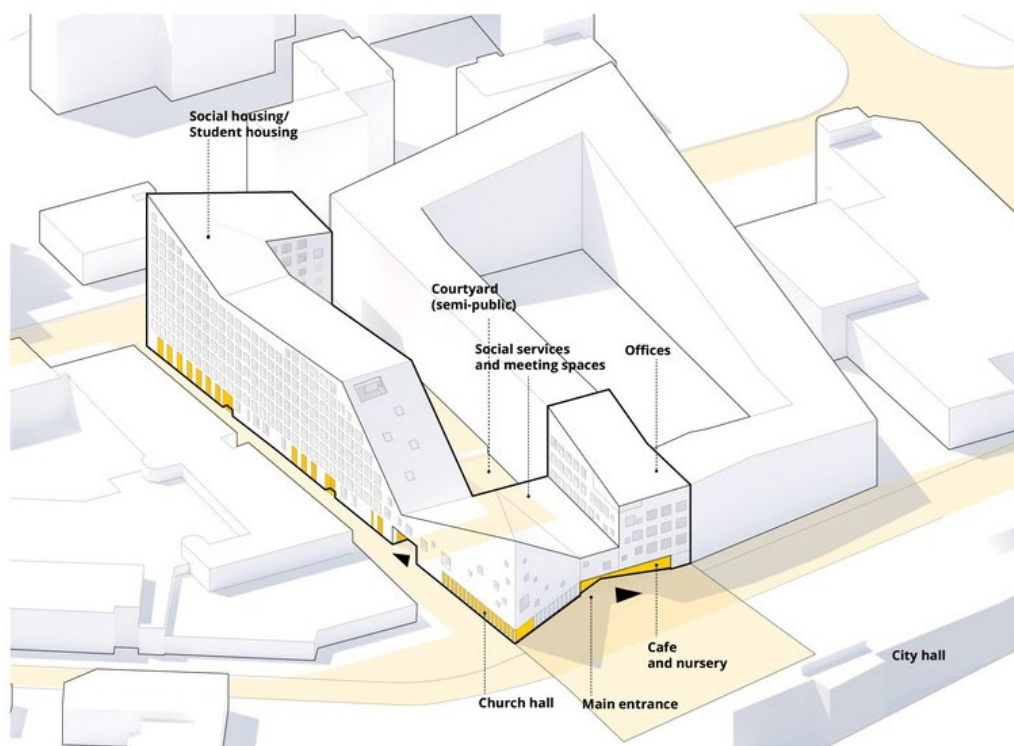


Figure 39: Diagram of Tikkurila Church in context showing massing and delineation of public space (Credit: OOEPA)

<sup>176</sup> Pintos, 2021



Figure 40: Tikkurila Church ground floor plan (Credit: OOPEAA)



Figure 41: Tikkurila Church first floor plan (Credit: OOPEAA)

The church is an excellent example of a contemporary response to critical regionalism in several aspects. Shah (2022) explains that the district is one of the most diverse and rapidly growing throughout Helsinki and therefore as a sacred community building it had to address

the requirements of the worshippers and the community. Inclusivity is a theme seen throughout the building from translations in Finnish, Swedish and English throughout as well as a café, extensive facilities and a family room. Furthermore, the timber flanked entrance and a glass front under the cantilevered building creates an intimate, embracing welcome to the church <sup>177</sup>. Similarly to Suvela Chapel, the entrance is obvious but not imposing which hints at a common theme around OOPEAA's religious architecture. Unlike Suvela however, the church is multi-storey so seems less accessible but being a 21<sup>st</sup> century building it incorporates elevators which sets it apart from the somewhat inaccessible religious architecture of the past. The human scale created by the low entrance is contrasted by the double height space once one enters the building where the space grows as the boundary of exterior and interior is crossed (Shah, 2022). There are therefore elements of traditional religious architecture of height and impact that has retained a position in contemporary religious architecture. The simplicity of the pews and minimal decorative symbolism allows the focus to be placed on the words spoken and the feeling of serenity that the building arouses<sup>178</sup>.

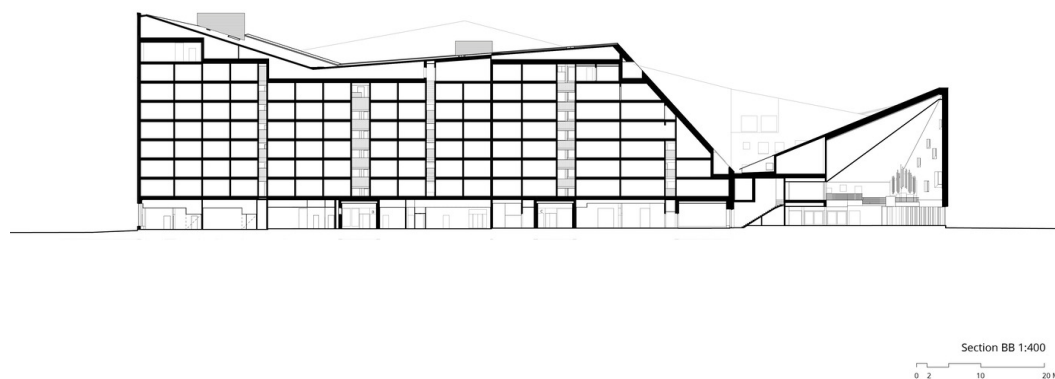


Figure 42: Section through the building showing housing and administration space as well as the main hall to the right (Credit: OOPEAA)

The church embodies a well-rounded, forward thinking design associated with Finnish architecture. Not only does it consider how it can enhance the site socially but how the building typology can benefit the design. This is seen through the overall massing of the building and how it slots into the already densely urbanised site <sup>179</sup>. Shah (2022) suggests that the materials of the building were chosen to fit in with that of the surrounding buildings

<sup>177</sup> Shah, 2022

<sup>178</sup> Although the main hall can seat around 520, the layout and massing of the space creates an intimate atmosphere which arguable, the churches of the past lacked (OOPEAA, 2023c)

<sup>179</sup> Shah, 2022

but the massing of the building is what makes it distinguishable. The external materiality is an extremely interesting textured brick of multiple tones, see figures 45 and 46. The colouring and the chamfered placement of the bricks make a potentially flat façade extremely dynamic. Upon closer inspection, said bricks are inscribed. In this way, the building tells a story of the culture and society of Vantaa before stepping into the building. A great deal of pride for the tectonic quality and materiality of the architecture can be seen not only through the execution of the building but also physical exhibitions of the process displayed within.



Figure 43: The interior quality of the main church hall. The irregular window placements reminiscent of Le Corbusier's Notre Dame du Ronchamp (Photo credit: A. Messer)



Figure 44: Le Corbusier's Notre Dame du Ronchamp (Photo credit: R. Hyde)



The way in which the building performs in terms of sustainability was a clear focus for the architects <sup>180</sup>. Hence why the robust exterior brick façade was chosen as it follows a traditional ideology about lasting materials which aligns with the goal of longevity <sup>181</sup>. The longevity of the building and the sureness that the occupant has in the structure mirrors the confidence and feeling of lasting in their faith; in this case the physical is a metaphor for the ideological. Having all of the building typologies in one is a sustainable option where people can work, worship and live in the same building reducing the need for unsustainable transport.

Both of OOPEAA's buildings studied are extremely alike in form. They have an almost folded quality to their roofs with the main hall being the tallest point. Although the exterior materiality is different with both responding to their specific context, the interior materials are extremely comparative. Both of the main halls have a pale stained wood panelling which created a very similar ethereal, delicate feeling. Similarly within the plans, both have similar facilities including major spaces such as the main hall and minor spaces including spaces for children and for staff. In this sense, plus the fact that the societal and contextual climate of each location is so similar, has resulted in to buildings of extremely similar typologies. This also shows that OOPEAA are pioneers in this type of architecture and could possibly be

<sup>180</sup> This is evident from a range of measures installed to meet the building's goal to last for two hundred years, such as solar panels and green roofs (Shah, 2022)

<sup>181</sup> Pintos, 2021.

paving the way for the development of similar architecture in Finland. It is clear that both of their community based churches are exemplary examples of contemporary Finnish architecture. The practice has a clear understanding and respect for the meaning and importance behind such buildings which has made them successful. This was seen through the design of Suvela where the architects underwent a process of direct dialect with the residents <sup>182</sup>. This suggests that community and social value in Finnish architecture surpass religion; hence it could be said that architecture as a whole goes beyond religion.



Figure 47: Double height circulation space. (Photo credits: A. Messer)

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<sup>182</sup> MacKeith, 2017



Figure 48: Church café; clearly valued and enjoyed by the public. (Photo credits: A. Messer)

## Conclusion: Legacy and the Future

To conclude, it is arguably safe to say that as of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, architecture transcends religion. This is seen through the ways in which the architect responds to the context and their interpretation of critical regionalism and the way that contemporary Finnish religious architecture has firmly established its position within a multi-cultural society. Through the case studies it is clear to see that this is manifesting in multi-functional buildings that appeal and benefit the general public. Something that is also evident is the way in which architects are future proofing both in terms of the sustainability agenda as well as weighing the need and relevance of such buildings and how they serve the people <sup>183</sup>. This is clearly being addressed through their response to 2030 sustainability goals as well as ensuring longevity of the building typology and what it stands for now and in the future <sup>184</sup>. Furthermore, one can infer that the lack of symbolism and flexibility of the interiors on 21<sup>st</sup> century sacred Finnish buildings suggest that the architects are aware of the social and cultural climate within Finland and how in the future buildings purely devoted to religion might become disused <sup>185</sup>. Hence why they are introducing community spaces as well as features that could generate revenue such as concert performances and cafes. In this sense the architecture goes beyond religion and musters faith through the way in which the building performs.

Universally, religious buildings utilise symbolism and light to provoke a sense of faith within the occupants; arguably the characteristics of the buildings studied would create a sense of spirituality in whomever enters no matter their standpoint on religion <sup>186</sup>. This enhances the credibility and justification behind building religious buildings in an increasingly secular Finnish society. Furthermore, one can say that the way in which faith is represented in contemporary Finnish religious architecture is through the way in which it brings people together now and how it creates a sense of confidence for the future of their sacred buildings <sup>187</sup>.

The way in which Finnish architects deeply consider their impact on the community that they design for as well as how the context can enhance their design is something that architects around the world should be inspired by. Similarly, their approach to architectural education where Finnish design principles are so valued is to the credit of the dedication and respect that the architectural lecturers have for their country's identity and well-being <sup>188</sup>. These

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<sup>183</sup> The Finnish Government, 2022, p.9

<sup>184</sup> Prime Minister's Office, 2020, p.28

<sup>185</sup> Crompton, 2013, p.482

<sup>186</sup> Heathcote and Moffatt, 2007, pp.76-77

<sup>187</sup> Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p.587

<sup>188</sup> Pallister, 2015, p.13

ideas are translated into their religious architecture through creating community spaces that can be used for socialisation and education; here, impressionable young minds could get inspired through the architecture giving them an appreciation for the design from a young age <sup>189</sup>. The emphasis on design might therefore attribute to why the Finnish are willing to invest in the country's architecture <sup>190</sup>. All of these factors accumulate to rightfully put Finland in a highly regarded position when it comes to design.

It would be highly interesting to see how the buildings presented might perform in several years when the cultural and social factors that influence the architecture have changed. As well as this, a possible comparison to a completely contrasting country with different cultural and religious parameters would further determine how well faith is represented in Finland. It would also be valuable to understand how exactly the atmosphere enhances the user experience by running tests amongst worshippers how a space specifically designed for a spiritual experience impacts them differently to one that is not. There is a common theme of light and linking to the environment within religious buildings but could the building become redundant if the user can experience faith in the outdoors in the direct sunlight and within nature. So it would be interesting to conduct a study on what extent a building can generate a sense of faith or if being directly in the natural Finnish environment could result in faith being fully experienced. It would also be valuable to gather data on the proportion of visitors who use the sacred buildings for religion and those who use it for other functions. Here one might be able to determine if faith should be the main driver or if the buildings would be better characterised as general community based, public architecture and if it really matters the why behind why people visit these buildings as long as they mean something to someone.

The respect for design, admiration for the Finnish environment and the concern for social well-being shines through contemporary Finnish religious architecture <sup>191</sup>. Therefore, one might suggest that faith is reflected not only through the religious philosophies behind the design but through the people, the design and the links to Finnish identity. As after all, no matter when or why sacred buildings were constructed, they were unique to the Finnish civilisation at any given time and were a representation of the culture in that period <sup>192</sup>. One might suggest that the Finnish response to critical regionalism is continual review of the contextual response, with a respect and ability to take inspiration in the surrounding environment, without simply recreating the past <sup>193</sup>. They go the extra mile for inclusivity in

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<sup>189</sup> Kowalczyk and Lewandowska, 2022, p.589

<sup>190</sup> Norri, Standertskjöld, Wang, 2000, p.38-39

<sup>191</sup> Sommar, 2003, p. 14

<sup>192</sup> Pallister, 2015, p. 21

<sup>193</sup> Frampton, 2002, p. 82

all aspects of the architecture to reflect Finnish culture as a whole <sup>194</sup>. To the credit of contemporary architects the flexibility that they achieve in their designs anticipates changing religious and cultural circumstances allowing for adjustments. In such a way the architecture transcends religion and there is a far wider scope for faith than one might initially consider.

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<sup>194</sup> Interview with Barker, 2023

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## **Bibliography: Unpublished Works**

Interview with Gareth Barker, Director, Lion Architects, 07 February 2023.

Interview with Heli Suhtala Uvalic, Service Manager, Temppeliaukio Church, Helsinki, Finland, 22 December 2022.

## **Appendix A: Questions for Heli Suhtala Uvalic, Temppeliaukio Church**

The following questions were asked, during a MS Teams conversation, to Heli Suhtala Uvalic, Service Manager, Temppeliaukio Church, Lutherinkatu 3, 00100 Helsinki, Finland.

The questions were devised by the author of this dissertation.

1. What does the demographic of visitors reveal about the types of people who use the Church?
2. How does the Lutheran denominating church accommodate all faiths? Why has this approach been chosen and would there ever be a shift in approach from the board to make it more targeted to all religions?
3. How does the architecture of the building support the individuals who choose to worship within its walls?
4. How does the architecture of the building better help tourists to understand and respect the church?
5. When is the building at its highest capacity?
6. How much did the church originally cost to build? Did this go over the original intended budget?
7. Who currently takes ownership of the building? Could you tell me how the building is currently run and who is in charge of the administration?
8. What were some of the challenges during construction? What challenges did the contractor face when building within the rock?
9. How was the dome constructed? Has the structural integrity of the dome ever been compromised?
10. The site is very enclosed within the square of buildings where it sits; during the planning and construction phases, were there any formal objections?
11. What were the plans for the site prior to the design of the church?

12. How does the building respond to the harsh weather conditions Helsinki faces during the winter months? Have any additional structural precautions been added over the years?

13. How does the building currently get its energy? How will the building respond to the energy and sustainability issues of the 21st century?

14. Do the materials of the building require a lot of maintenance?

15. Have there been architects hired to aid with the conservation of the church? If so, who are they?

16. Have there been any major renovations or changes to the structure or plan since the construction?

17. Are there any issues with the building and is there anything about the building that you would change as someone who works there?

18. Finally, is there any additional information that you could provide such as the original plans or documentation for the building?

Responses were received during MS Teams conversation with Heli Suhtala Uvalic which was held on 22 December 2022.

## **Appendix B: Questions for Gareth Barker, Lion Architects**

### Appendix B: Questions for Gareth Barker, Lion Architects

The following questions were asked, during a MS Teams conversation, to Gareth Barker, Director, Lion Architects.

The questions were devised by the author of this dissertation.

1. How do you view Finland's regional architectural identity as someone who has worked in the U.K?
2. What do you believe to be the fundamental characteristics of Finnish architecture?
3. How would you explain the balance between the Finnish aesthetic and the philosophy of wellbeing and society? How do the two merge together in your experience?
4. How could Finnish design principles be utilised elsewhere? Do you think that the U.K would be ready for an architecture so heavily focused on Scandinavian principles of wellbeing?
5. What do you view as aspects of Finnish architecture and design as a whole that future architects could learn and embrace?
6. Could you tell me about how you had to adapt your design process and philosophies to fit into a Finnish context? Was the approach of an architecture highly focused on wellbeing and the Finnish society a dramatic shift from the philosophies of British architecture?
7. As with the U.K and the RIBA, is there a strong sense of an architecture community within the SAFA?
8. Are you part of a large community of international architects working in Finland?
9. Could you explain a bit about the planning process and building regulations in Finland? Does this differ greatly to that of the U.K?
10. How have you been advised/how to you plan to tackle the future of Finnish architecture in alignment with the sustainability agenda?

Responses were received during MS Teams conversation with Gareth Barker which was held on 07 February 2023.