



Pre-Fab Chapel

by Luis Pons

The Problem

Personal spiritual communion has been a part of human experience for as long as we have recorded human history. Every generation, every culture, every society, creates its own environments for such experiences. The spatial solutions for such activity have been unique to every culture. The more privileged members of each and every society have had the luxury of a personal space to conduct this personal communion. The problem stated clearly is what is an appropriate solution for such a space today with all of the pressures the moment and means of communication that are the hallmark of the beginnings of the twenty-first century.

The Program

A space where we leave the distractions and chatter of the everyday world behind and are able to embrace and enhance our ability to connect to the energy source that is within ourselves and always available in the universe. It should be able to house one to four individuals and feel enveloping at any occupancy. All senses should be touched and activated to best open all of one's senses to best facilitate connection.

The Solution

Designed by an architect Luis Pons, the Chapel offers a relaxed interior for one to four people and is pre-programmed by the facilitator to support users' individual needs during daily visits. Upon entering, users participate in a period of meditation, during which the chapel's integrated lighting, sound, and aroma therapeutic scent systems are set to create a calming environment. Meditation is followed by activation of the teleconferencing mode, during which users engage in a dialogue with an energy expert via the Chapel's Internet-connected state-of-the-art communications system. Sessions close with the Chapel returning once again to a meditation atmosphere for a period of time. When users leave the Chapel, low-level lighting gently illuminates the interior until the next session begins. The chapel's organic shape is a symbol of life itself. Like a cocoon, it is a place of peace and protection where birth, rebirth, renewal, and growth can occur. Just as a caterpillar retreats into its silken cocoon, where, through metamorphosis, it becomes a butterfly, the user retreats to the peaceful, comforting interior of the Chapel for daily contemplation which facilitates each visitor's personal transformation.

The Structure

The Chapel is a 15' x 12' x 8' structure fabricated from 61 elliptical panels crafted from translucent white fabric that was custom designed, creating a soft oval interior space. This floor of the Chapel is an oval platform made of acrylic light cast cotton. A custom designed sofa bench offering seating for up to four people is oriented toward a 42" visual display with an integrated sound system. Control of the communications platform is through a Mini Mac Computer. There is also an HD web camera and microphone, as well as an iPod Touch. In addition, a high-performance LED lighting system can be programmed to bathe the interior in various pre-programmed scenes.

