In a time when spirituality has been discarded as a result of the ever-quickening lifestyles we lead, our bodies long for spiritual reconnection while our minds push forward to meet the next deadline. We have become driven by material forces to achieve what we believe to be success in the physical world instead of striving to enrich our lives in the spiritual world. It is time we recognize our misguided steps down this hazardous path before we become completely lost in a cold meaningless life.

We must begin to reintroduce spirituality into our lives, but not in our typical Sunday church-going fashion. We will regain our lost souls through a daily recognition of our spiritual nature and also through a connection with our natural surroundings. It is time we salvage our long lost inner beings.

In attempting to influence our everyday lives with a sacred touch, a spiritual opportunity has been introduced into our daily functional pauses. They have been designed to call our attention to the bigger picture of life beyond the quotidian act which takes place within the space. However, it is each of our responsibility to pause our racing minds long enough to accept and contemplate the thought provoking issues posed within these spaces of spirituality. In order to be impacted by these spaces, we must be willing to go beyond ourselves and be open to the opportunities which exist within the realm of the sacred.
SPIRITUAL BEINGS

I believe we as humans are spiritual beings. Our spirituality makes us more than biological organisms, setting us apart from all other living creatures. We display characteristics which cannot be described by science alone. We have been gifted with a spiritual conscious, or soul as some call it, which supplies us with our emotions, beliefs, hopes, and dreams.

Through our biological make up we live, but through our souls, we experience life. It is the combination of both our spiritual and physical structure, not either or, which satisfies our human existence. Without both, we wither. However, it appears that we have begun to disregard our spiritual consciousness and thus have limited our existence to be purely biological. Our spiritual side of life has become marginalized due to the modern era's emphasis on schedules, tasks, profits, and materialism in general. Spirituality has been reduced to a Sunday event, which is assuming that it has not already been overshadowed by our hectic schedules.

More and more cases of spiritual depression are being reported where we complain of a lack of purpose and meaning within our lives. Our bodies are calling for a spiritual connection while our minds have already tossed it aside after losing sight of its significance. Reconnecting with our spiritual consciousness provides awareness in our lives, and through this awareness we can truly live. This connection must take place daily. We understand and never question our biological daily needs. It would be absurd to starve our body of its necessary nourishment. Why, then, do we ignore our spiritual needs? We are suffocating ourselves. We search for reconnection, but where?
When studying spirituality and sacred spaces, one must first establish a definition of the word "sacred." The Tenth Edition of the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary defines the word "sacred" as "entitled to reverence and respect." Others who have studied sacred spaces have elaborated on this definition. Mircea Eliade attempts to elucidate the subject through contrast, defining sacred as "the opposite of the profane." He further describes that in the presence of something sacred, "man senses his profound nothingness." Sacredness does not always have to be religious in nature or subject, but is always associated with a spiritual experience of reflection. A. T. Mann explains, "The architecture I consider sacred is that which has a common root in the life of the soul and spiritual vision, rather than merely in forms which qualify as being religious." After analyzing these writings, I have developed one comprehensive definition. Sacredness is an intangible, abstract quality of "something" which evokes from within a person a spiritual experience of transcendence to a deeper and richer state of being. A sacred space is where one experiences a reconnection with his or her spiritual nature. Further, it is respected as an area of deeper meaning than its surrounding areas because of its profound effect upon those who accept the experience it presents. One can have a spiritual experience anywhere at any time, but I believe these experiences are triggered by a person, place, or event which takes place in the physical world.

Since the beginning of time, sacred spaces have existed in every culture. These spaces, which historically have been set apart from that of everyday living space, are humans' visible attempts to explain the mysteries of the world and the questions of themselves as cognitive beings. This sacredness adds stability to the lives of people, "revealing absolute reality and at the same time making orientation possible; hence it founds the world." Human's spiritual spaces make this sacredness tangible and present in this world.

The intrigue of sacrality lies in the fact that the feelings of transcendence, mystery and awe associated with experiencing a sacred space are uniform among all people, despite differing opinions on what space is classified as being sacred. Within all that is sacred lies many distinct human feelings which combine together to create a sense of sacredness or spirituality. These feelings deal with people's questions of the world as seen through their stages of life, beginning with an individual's birth and past, to his or her place in the present world, to one's quest for immortality, and to that individual's questions of what lies beyond. They are feelings of timelessness, reflection, and an overall sense of awe, wonder, and mystery.
CRITICAL AWARENESS

Our souls are what make us truly human. Through our souls, we feel emotions. We love. We believe. We desire. We ache. We hate. We understand beauty. We wonder. So many emotions are experienced as we go through our lives. Occasionally, we experience something so powerful that it takes us beyond our emotions to a deeper level of ourselves. We experience our true spirituality. There is no explanation for many of the feelings and impulses that pass through our minds and bodies. They simply occur as part of us, as part of our unique souls. But it is through these impulses, through our souls, that we experience life. But how do we live through our souls in order to realize these deeper experiences?

Through an inner awareness, an inner knowing, we can begin to grasp this soulful state. How can this be instigated in our lives? Tadao Ando designs space with a philosophy, which provides the answer. He simplifies this idea into one simple, yet profound phrase: "Tension awakens consciousness." We can be led to this spiritual awareness through feeling a tension between opposing forces in our surrounding environment, such as between the natural and built worlds as is seen throughout Ando's work. This friction we experience will awaken our spiritual consciousness, and for that instant we can experience a deep awareness that runs beyond our emotions into our inner beings.

In these uneasy environments, we, as their inhabitants, become the mediators between battling forces. The dynamics of the space draws us in and calls us to transform its ever-present tensions into our own conscious awakening. These brief but intense experiences with our surroundings cause us to transcend the functions of the space itself to questions of life and beyond. Through these experiences, we may fully live.
SPIRITUAL STRUCTURES

Just as we as humans are two sided, composed of both a biological side which creates our presence in the physical world and a spiritual side which allows us to truly be alive, architecture is also two-fold. True architecture is not only shelter, but also a reflection of our humanity. It is an expression of spirit shown through structure, an embodiment of ourselves. True architecture can influence our lives.

Anthony Lawlor beautifully describes the spirit of architecture. He says, “The perimeter is made of four elements - floor, walls, ceiling, and ornament. Together these four create a container that cups the fluidity of the soul. They structure a vessel that protects and prompts heart and mind to engage in the alchemy of spiritual transformation.”

The experience of this type of architecture could be instrumental in reincorporating spirituality into our lives. Because of space’s direct impact on our lives, this type of architecture could assist in filling the current void we feel and alter the perspective through which we live. Winston Churchill once said, “We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us.” Our immediate surroundings shape who we are, how we think, the way we feel, and the way we act. Through the experience of true architecture, we will begin to absorb its reflecting spirit which can gratify our mind’s spiritual longing. How beneficial would it be if our surroundings were comprised of true architecture?
CONNECTION WITH NATURE

Nature alone has the power to overwhelm humans, taking us into a spiritual trance. However, when we encounter a combination of the natural and the built worlds, the experience becomes even more powerful. Normally, these feelings are absent from our lives, but in certain instances where the built world touches its natural surroundings seamlessly, the experience becomes unforgettable. The connection between the two enhances both worlds. Even structures deprived of an awe-inspiring natural environment can evoke these feelings by reminding us of what it is without. By calling to mind the natural world, the spiritual connection can take place.

Vincent Scully described the profound impact the conjunction of the natural and built worlds can have on our lives. “The relationship of manmade structures to the natural world offers, in my view at least, the richest and most valuable physical and intellectual experience that architecture can show.” I would add “spiritual experience” to this statement as well.

This union of the built world with its natural surroundings is a prominent feature among many spiritual places. This harmony exists in three of the most famous sacred sites in the world, the Oracle at Delphi in Greece, the Temple of Karnak in Egypt, and Machu Picchu in Peru. The sites in Greece and Peru both sit within the most breathtaking natural landscapes of their areas. But the Temple of Karnak shows the significance of nature not in its physical surroundings, but through symbolism which covers the sacred site. Both methods of connection to nature prove successful in creating a sacred place.

Our connection to the undomesticated world has become more and more meaningful to us as we continue to remove ourselves from any interaction with the elements. We currently move from our condition controlled homes to those of our cars to those of wherever our destination may be. Non-conditioned buildings or vehicles no longer exist. This lack of natural contact is why people flee to areas with incredible scenes of nature whenever they can escape their hectic lives. James Earl Jones once said, “I have always thought it quite wonderful and necessary to keep connected to nature, to a place in a country landscape where one can rest and muse and listen.”
OUR DAILY NEEDS

Currently, we travel thousands of miles to visit ruins of an extinct civilization's sacred sites in an effort to touch the sacred in our own lives. We long for spiritual connection daily, but we only try to reach to it when we travel elsewhere. Abraham Maslow once said, "The sacred is in the ordinary, that it is to be found in one's daily life; ...and travel may be a flight from confronting the sacred. To be looking elsewhere for miracles is to me a sure sign of ignorance that everything is miraculous."

We need to recognize the sacred within our everyday activities. A spiritual experience does not always have to be one that leaves us speechless and awed. It can be a brief moment where we find ourselves in a deeper state of being. It might be an instant when our scattered lives suddenly seem to become clear and ordered. Time becomes extinct, and all of our stress, deadlines, and issues fall by the wayside. We become free from this world, even if it is only for a split second. We need this spiritual escape daily.

Rather than relying on pilgrimages to distant lands to discover meaning in our lives, we should bring sacred spaces into our personal worlds. We need spiritual spaces for the modern man. Instead of abandoning our daily lives to touch the sacred, we must incorporate the sacred into our daily lives. We need our functional spaces to possess underlying spiritual sides which we can seek in our times of need.
WE MUST PAUSE

We must pause within our hectic schedules to recognize the spiritual aspects which surround us. In this fast paced world ruled by technology and scientific reasoning to solve problems quickly and efficiently, we see days, weeks, even months pass, and we wonder where that time went. Time eludes us as we float through our days driven by appointments. We must learn to pause for a few brief moments to actually experience life and all its true colors. I reason that because of the bustle of today's life, we need these sacred moments in our lives more than ever before. The calming reconnection to the spiritual world causes life's realities to fall away, leaving only one's thoughts, dreams, and questions of the world which is spinning wildly around them.

We cannot rely completely on our surroundings to provide us with the spiritual experiences we currently lack. Our environment definitely should present us with the opportunities for these encounters; however, it is our responsibility to pause and recognize these opportunities. We must seek spiritual reconnection with our inner selves. Sacred places are only meaningful if we allow them to be. We must open ourselves to these experiences in order to connect with our inner beings. We must learn to pause and accept spiritual experiences within our lives.
APPLYING PAUSES

With these passions and ideas, I desired to create a series of pauses of spiritual repose for people in today's hectic world. They are spaces of quotidian functions which introduced people to spiritual experiences through a connection with the natural world. These individual spiritual dimensions place a person in an awkward space between the built and the natural realms where they are left to decipher their own existence.

I chose the campus of Ball State University as the site of these structural pauses due to the college's commitment to guiding young adults to healthy successful lives. The university's purpose is to assist in the development of its students' minds and bodies through education and physical activity. Through awareness, I am encouraging the development of these students' entire lives by introducing spirituality as another of their vital daily needs. My familiarity of the campus and the easy accessibility it offered to me throughout my design decisions were also an important factor in the success of the project.

After searching campus for areas of connection with the natural world and analyzing people's everyday activities, I began to look for connections and overlaps between the two necessary components of my chosen sites. In the end, I focused on three spaces where I felt I could insert a spiritual pauses into people's daily lives. These three spaces each offered unique opportunities for connection to the natural world, addressed various levels of publicity, and housed different everyday functions. These three spaces took the form of, in the order I discovered and designed them, a shuttle stop, a day care facility drop-off and pick-up shelter, and a message board/telephone/newspaper depot. These functions formerly existed on the chosen sites, and already acted as places of pause in people's daily lives. However, it was my goal to make this pause meaningful.
SHUTTLE STOP

Through the juxtaposition of the shuttle stop and the spiritual node, a relationship between reality and sacrality is created and divided by a thin long wall. On the reality side of the wall, people quickly pass back and forth from their cars to the shuttle, sometimes impatiently leaning against the thin high bench while reviewing their scheduled activities for their hectic day. The shuttle comes and goes carrying people to and from the space. Most people never stop to think twice about the meaning of the long wall or where it might lead. They see the string of words running the length of the wall, but are unaffected by them or their meaning.

However, one lonely soul in desperate times begins to wander, intrigued by the unending wall and the engraved words it holds. At this time, she does not realize that on the reverse side of it, a space of a different sort exists. She rounds the end of the wall to notice a path leading to somewhere. Stepping onto the gently descending ramp, she is led slowly down away from reality. The string of words, read backwards now on this side of the wall, envelop her as she sinks beneath them. The unknown destination seems to call to her, inviting her in to be held safely by the sky and earth. She struggles to read the mirrored text as she moves into the earth while the low bench at the end of the path awaits her presence. As she enters the space, she notices the steady stream of water flowing through and realizes that the space has exposed a natural world that had been hidden by the world above. She finishes deciphering the coded text and understands that some force has brought her here to this previously unknown place. Why was she led away from her typically busy day into this hidden place?

She can hear the chaos of the world she has escaped on the opposite side of the wall, but here she sits in contemplation, in anticipation of nothing while being held by the space itself.
CONTEMPLATION
REUNIFICATION SHELTER

As the children stood soaking wet in a single file line with umbrellas attempting to keep both their little bodies and their oversized back-packs dry, they were anxiously waiting to reunite with their parents. From this scene alone, it became obvious that a shelter is needed at the Child Study Center as their designated drop off and pick up point. The new structure will provide not only shelter from the natural elements, but also a reconnection to the surrounding natural and spiritual world.

As the children arrive to the daycare center, a long wall highlighted with morning glories reassures them as they see their familiar car disappear over the hill. The wall leads them down a path to the newly constructed outdoor playground where they play while their parents are away at work. Toward the end of the path, they feel comfort as they move further down the path. Looking back, they can see over the fading wall to the curious shelter they will be visiting later.

By the end of the day, the children begin to get antsy as they anticipate getting to see their parents soon. When it becomes time, they follow the path back toward that curious shelter. The path leads them to the new structure where they reunite with their parents one by one.

The shelter stemmed from the two-dimensional painted box, which used to contain the children during this time. This painted box grew into a three dimensional “wooded grove-like” filter of water and light which they no longer stand in, but pass through in reconnecting with their parents after a long day apart. Water has been introduced into the structure and filters through the space, ordering the structure, and at the same time being ordered by it. The water pauses as it fills a concrete basin only to overflow and trickle to the next basin, the next pause, just as the children pause rhythmically in anticipation until it is their turn to reconnect with their parents. This pause calls one’s attention to the random order of the natural world as it filters both water and people on their journeys to other destinations.
ANTICIPATION
INFORMATION CENTER

The corner of McKinley and Riverside has the heaviest pedestrian traffic at Ball State between class periods and is the most transient space on campus. It is a site of chaos with masses of people moving in all directions. The site currently reflects the wildness of the wind as people pass through it in every direction with schedules to keep and people to meet. It is also the site that welcomes visitors into the North Quad of campus, one of the most beautiful lawns at the university and a space with a strong connection with nature. In an effort to create a spiritual pause in the hectic lives of the passers-by, this structure becomes campus's information center with message boards, a telephone, newspapers, and other daily needs of hurried students. But deeper than these everyday functions, the shelter causes the students to recognize the winds, an often forgotten natural element.

The structure's sails block the cold winter winds racing down Riverside, while accepting the warm spiritual breezes of the quad. While walking by the structure against the fierce winter winds amidst the chaos, the words of Abu Yazid al-Bistami can be found along the base of the protected inner bench encouraging a student to step "inside the veil (where there) is silence and calm and peace."

The design has created several layers of pause within this space. Just off the main chaotic thoroughfare, people can step into a wind shadow created by brightly colored message walls to pause briefly while catching up on campus activities. On the other side of the walls is a much more secluded space under the flowing sails. Here several people can sit to talk while escaping both their busy days and the breezes that are deflected overhead.

The space both creates a portal to the quad and creates a gathering space at the crossroads of McKinley and Riverside. As students are stopped at the crossroads, they recognize the wind's uncontainable nature as it blows on into the traffic. At the same time, the structure invites students into the quad, creates an entry for the crossroads, and most importantly creates a space of pause where students can step away from the chaos to recognize the winds.
THESIS REFLECTION

In looking back at my progression of spiritual pauses, the design criteria for each space became more challenging to me as the project unfolded. The three space's designs all dealt with various levels of publicity, created different spiritual connections, and highlighted unique natural elements which were dictated by their respective sites. Also, besides the single natural element which was focus on within each space, other elements were also utilized within the designs as constants which exist throughout each space. An example is the use of lighting and shadows throughout all three designs. Within each space, I explored the spiritual experience in terms of its intensity, duration, and frequency. I found that these criteria were determined within each space by its external factors within its site and were also dictated by its target audience.

The first space of my design progression was the shuttle stop where I created a very private space by digging out the malleable earth to expose a previously hidden natural vein which runs through campus. I was free to create a very definite experience for a single visitor because of the earth's ability to be manipulated.

My second attempt to create a spiritual experience was with the Child Study Center drop off and pick up shelter. The design criteria for this space became more challenging as I attempted to influence not just one person, but a group of people. Here, I introduced water, a flexible but confinable natural element, to the design. In order to touch each person's spiritual nature, I was forced to create different options for a person to interact with the shelter. I designed several paths of which filter people through the structure. I attempted to manipulate the water in the same way as I guided the children, by forcing it to pause temporarily before continuing on toward its final destination. This similarity between the children, and the manipulation of the water creates a strong connection between the two interacting forces.

Then, in dealing with a recalcitrant element, the wind, at the most public site on campus, I designed several layers of spaces which varied from public to semi private to private in an attempt to create a recognition of the wind. These options give users flexibility to experience the structure in a manner fitting to them. Also, the layers of spaces create dynamics to the space and encourage people to use it for a variety of uses. At such a public site this was an important aspect of the design. In order for the space to be successful, it
was required to be flexible to the students needs and wants. These design criteria were very different than those of the shuttle stop which focused on creating an experience for a single person.

To further encourage a spiritual mode of being, I incorporated a thought provoking quotation into each of the three designs. These words were meant to instigate the spiritual experience I was attempting to create. Though the structural designs themselves were meant to bring about these feelings, the quote would cause one to realize the design intent and begin to contemplate its true purpose. The quotations were inserted as yet another attempt to connect people to their inner thoughts. They act as catalysts in evoking a spiritual mindset.

My main observation in designing a space, which attempts to create a spiritual experience in a visitor, was that I, as the designer, had to walk through the space as if I was an unfamiliar visitor. I had to enter into the space and design through trial and error. Through the use of sketching, physical models, and computer-generated models, I had to work through each design until it began to become more than a design but a spiritual expression of my own.

I also discovered that as I attempted to reach more people, I had to become bolder with my design decisions. My initial designs were very subtle with simple forms and natural materials, but as my spaces became more public, the forms became more expressive, materials became more flexible, and colors became vivid. This was an aspect of the progression that I would not have predicted at the beginning of the project.

These spaces are not for everyone, but for those who need them or want them. They act as functional spaces on a daily basis, but in certain instances when a number of factors fall into place, they can become a very special experience for a visitor. Though we will not have a spiritual experience every time we visit these structures, it is important that they are there when we need them. It is important that we bring this spirituality back into our everyday lives and reconnect with who we really are and who we can become.
REFLECTION

"Modern man will never find peace until he comes into harmony with the place where he lives."
Carl Jung

REFLECTION BEYOND

The question has been posed, "If you were to continue on designing more spaces around campus, what and where would they be?" I have had several other ideas which regard my progression of spiritual pauses around campus. The next pause I would undertake would be a site on the cowpath, and another would exist within Christy Woods.

The next space would be along the cowpath, a student shortcut path that runs parallel to McKinley and leads to many of Ball State's buildings. In this space, I wanted to work with the sky as a natural element. The design would exist where the cow path crosses Petty and would give students the option to cross either above or under the street to avoid conflict with passing cars. This site would give me another opportunity to cause students to pause and touch their spiritual side.

With a location in Christy Woods, I was planning to create a very personal experience for a single person. Due to the already powerful natural setting, this site would give me the opportunity to create a very intense experience. However, I opted not to pursue this site due to the woods already spiritual presence. I chose my sites because I saw a potential spiritual connection at locations where it did not already exist.
Along with these recommendations for further study, I would also recommend that a person do exhaustive research on spirituality in general and its role within our lives. This year, I have gotten very interested in the relationship between science and spirit which has led me to many of my ideas and research for this topic. I would recommend starting this research early, for there is enough sources to overwhelm a person in a one-year thesis. I would also recommend reading fictional books relating to the topic for inspiration. During my thesis, I was reaching a sticking point when I was led to the book *Illusions*, by Richard Bach, and suddenly things became clear once again. One must remember to satisfy your own soul while working with such a topic.

As for my hopes and dreams for the future, I would like to bring my passions into professional practice. Although this may be difficult at first, I am hoping to find ways to call these issues to mind through my designs. Another way to continue my investigation of spirituality is simply by questioning the life I am living and the pace at which I live. I must remember myself to pause in an attempt to understand this world which is spinning so wildly around us.
we as humans are spiritual beings.
but this has become lost within our hectic lives.
we must pause to regain our humanity.
we must begin within ourselves.
we must begin today.
we must begin now.

"the simplest questions are the most profound."
what are you doing?

think about these once in a while and watch your answers change.

where are you going?

ANTICIPATION
RECONCILIATION
INFORMATION
ANIMULATION
BACKGROUND


PRECEDENT STUDIES


INSPIRATION AND SPIRITUALITY


