

### **Worship Space Acoustics: 3 Decades of Design**

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Lauren M. Ronsse, Editors  
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This book is an excellent compilation of the architectural and acoustical designs of 67 worship spaces. The book covers the work carried out over three decades. The editors have done excellent work in putting together highly useful information about these spaces. The editors in their preface have nicely described the context for this work. The book, before presenting the details of the spaces, has six excellent essays. These essays are reflections from key design team members. The essays together give a nice, comprehensive description of the nature of work involved in the acoustics and architectural aspects of sacred spaces of worship. These essays complement the acoustical data and architectural drawings.

These six essays and their authors are (1) The Soundscape of Worship by Gary Siebein, (2) Changes and Trends in Ecclesiastical Design at the Turn of the 21st Century by Evelyn E. Wilwerding, (3) Strength, Function, and Beauty in Worship Space Design by John A. Prokos, (4) Audio for Worship Space: Design for the Big Picture by Dan Clayton, (5) The Holiness of Acoustics by Mark K. Williams, and (6) Good Sound Takes a Lot of Hard Work! by John D. Waldbaum.

The worship spaces are presented in order of the number of seats in spaces. Six categories, namely 100–250, 251–500, 501–750, 751–1000, 1001–2000 and 2001–5000+

seats, are presented. Nine types of worship spaces, namely Auditorium, Cathedral, Chapel, Church, House of Worship, Meditation/Teaching Hall, Meeting House, Mosque and Synagogue, are described. These worship spaces are used by various faiths such as Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam. Of the sixty-seven worship spaces given, fifty-seven are in the United States, seven are in Japan, one in Cyprus, one in Norway and one in Singapore.

The book provides technical descriptions, photographs of the interior and exterior, drawings and the acoustical data of the worship spaces. The technical descriptions give information on construction details, materials, etc. The photographs which are of excellent quality are a visual treat that shows the architecture and acoustics of the worship spaces. The acoustical data given are in terms of graphs of sound pressure levels and reverberation times as functions of octave bands and noise criteria. The book has very useful appendices such as an overview of acoustical design of worship spaces, glossary, location of worship spaces, and consulting firms (along with the spaces with which they worked) and references.

In summary, this book is a useful and an excellent addition to the field of architectural acoustics in general and to the area of worship space acoustics in particular.

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