

A Multi-Purpose Cultural Building Inspired by the First Goetheanum

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This project is inspired by the building of the first Goetheanum. It will be part of the visitors complex of the anthroposophical cultural center and hotel at Hohenfels Castle in Germany. With its concept, it follows on the ideas of Rudolf Steiner, who in his lecture of March 7, 1914, Development of the art of construction in connection with the turn of the millennium, said at the end of the lecture: "But when the year 2086 comes, buildings will begin to be erected everywhere in Europe, which will be dedicated to spiritual goals and will be the image of our Dornach building with two domes. There will be a golden age of these buildings, in which spiritual life will flourish" (GA 286, Ways to a New Style of Architecture).



Place of construction and delineation of the building outline on the plot.

At the beginning we can ask: "Why should buildings be built that have domes as roofs?" Why should spaces be covered by a smoothly rounded vault? Why should buildings be circular? Rudolf Steiner gives a partial answer to this in his lecture on the importance of curves for a healthy human life. In a lecture from June 28, 1914, he says that "To feel a circle means to feel selfhood. To feel a circle in the plane or a sphere in the space is to feel the self, to feel the ego (Ichheit, Selbstheit)". And for this feeling and perception of the Self is aided by the circle and the dome. Self (I) can be felt in form. Another reason is the "permeability" of the dome as a universal shape for the etheric

and astral body of the human being.

Already in the basic circular form, the premise is created that the spiritual should exceed in the building. It helps the upliftment to the spirit, the circle forms a prerequisite for the gods to speak to us. Under such a shape, a person connects better with his intuition, imagination and inspiration. In the large dome, that which is more physical is greater, and in the small dome that which is spiritual is greater. Two interlocking circles, two intersecting domes – double, doubling, means multiplication and escalation. It also means introducing an axis, i.e. a direction and the resulting movement and subsequent experience of space. In a lecture from June 17, 1914, Rudolf Steiner says: "In all the particulars there must be an expression of an uplift to the spirit, which corresponds to the fact that an organ is created in the building so that the gods can speak to us."

As shapes, the circle and sphere are intrinsically and essentially connected to humanity. They resonate in their shape with the structure of his body. They are also related to his spiritual, mental and his free will activities. They correspond to the cosmic forces in which man is embedded. Rudolf Steiner deals in detail with the principle of the sphere and the structure of the human being in the lecture series *The Study of Man* (GW 293). In the lecture of September 1, 1919. Among other things, he says here: "Now we could draw a person in yet another way. One could say: man is first of all a huge ball that includes the whole world, then a smaller ball, and finally the smallest ball. Only the smallest sphere is fully visible; the slightly larger sphere is only partially visible; from the largest sphere, only the end of the rays that shine into the person can be seen, the rest remains invisible. Thus is the human form wrought by the whole world."

Last but not least, we can also notice that everything rounded, which surrounds us, which creates a feeling of home for us, creates a gesture of embrace. It gives us some mental security and support. The circular shape around us creates a gesture of mental warmth. The circle and dome are kind to us.

This is how the cultural house project at Hohenfels Castle is gradually being created. The goal of its initiators is to revive the impulse of the first Goetheanum. To be inspired by its basic ideas and basic principles. However, in the resulting overall arrangement of internal functions, this building will correspond to what is needed at the given location for the operation of the entire area. The building of the cultural center will include an entrance foyer, a multipurpose cultural hall with a stage, facilities for performers, smaller seminar rooms and technical rooms. On the south side overlooking the castle, there will be a cafe with a separate entrance and facilities (kitchen) for the cafe. Separately, a small chapel will be integrated into the whole building from the eastern side.

The future construction site is located near the heritage-protected grounds of the castle. And so we sensitively and prudently searched for the shape and material concept of the building. It was also important that the scale and character of the volumetric shapes of the new building be related to the

mass of the castle. Because some parts of the castle are rounded, such as the towers or the arched arcade in the courtyard, it was easier to integrate the new building with its rounded shapes and domes into the vicinity of the castle. During participatory design, we first placed the building sensitively and looked for its appropriate orientation. And only then did we deal with more specific shapes of matter. We are still at the beginning of the project. We are waiting for the approval of the building placement from the regional authorities. Subsequently, we will deal with the detailed design and artistic living forms of the building.



The entire design is gradually created in the form of participatory design concept. Before this model was created, it was preceded by four smaller models, on which we repeatedly worked together and searched for the expression and content of the building. I perceive artistic work in the spirit of common consensus as an important criterion for the creation of such a project. In this way, the power of higher inspiration, intuition and imagination can be manifested. And it can be experienced in the process of the work itself. Quality ideas are coming and it is possible to build on one to the another. The mood that arises in this way at the beginning then becomes the basis for the entire further course of construction preparation and will continue during the construction itself.

In the next design process, I will lead the group to incor-

porate anthroposophical artistic principles into the design. For example, the change of shapes, the so-called metamorphosis. Or qualities such as truth, beauty and goodness manifested in architecture. The truth manifests itself, for example, where, looking at the building from the outside, we truly perceive the internal contents of the building's functions. For example, the fact that a multiple group of windows belongs to a large hall and small windows to less important spaces. Or the fact that the windows rise dynamically along the staircase. As an example, the main entrance to the building should be clearly recognizable from a distance. That the house may speak the true language to the approaching people. Beauty manifests itself everywhere, where as an observer we experience the gradual transformation of connected shapes in the motifs of the building. For example, a gradual small change in the shape of a series of windows that are next to each other. Or the development of motifs on the railing of a staircase that rises. These are all details that enliven attention and lead to a temporal experience of space. They attract our attention. If the transformation of shapes is graceful and stylistically balanced, we experience this fact as beautiful in architecture. And goodness manifests itself where things are in harmony. Where the relationships are established.

Good is related to proportions and acoustics. It is related to the carrying of sound in architecture. And this is achieved by appropriate and well-proportioned spaces. For example, the ratio of the dimensions of length and width or height and width of a room in the interval of a fifth 2:3, creates a pleasant pentatonic timbre of the voice (speech), which stands out well in such a space. We also need a slight asymmetry so that the sound of the spoken word is carried well through the space and there is no echo. In such spaces, a person's ability to listen and concentrate is then strengthened. Harmonization occurs between the rhythm of the breath and the rhythm of the heart in a ratio of 1:4.

Throughout the design of the future building, we will work with the artistic principle of metamorphosis of shapes. This will work mainly in the field of experience beauty. In Goetheanistic art one often works with the transformation of shapes between solid and hollow spheres and with the transformations between these polarities. I will present here one of these exercises that I have worked on several times. It is an artistic metamorphosis of forces that expresses the formative action in the formation of bones. These are not realistic bone shapes. But about the artistic expression of the forces that act in their formation. We can go all the way back to Steiner's lectures in the series *Study of Man*, where in the tenth lecture Rudolf Steiner says that those are precisely bones of the limbs that not only show the transitions between hollow and convex, but also the power of overturning, completely turned inside out... From knowing, observation and artistic processing of these forces can be subsequently created living forms of organic architecture that enliven all the four members (bodies) of the human being.

In the previous architectural design, I showed you a project that is in the process of being created out of living principles of organic architecture.