

Exploring the Practice of Transcendent Architecture

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PART One- Workshop Introduction: (15 minutes)

In keeping with the symposium theme, we will focus our limited time together on the “why” and “how” to achieve Transcendent Architecture (TA) by looking at the role(s) that designers, teachers, researchers, scholars, allied practitioners, and other advocates may/should play to achieve it. TA unfolds under the umbrella of the ACSF Declaration of Transcendent Human Habitat that was endorsed by the Board of Directors in 2019 and made available to the membership through our ACSF website: <http://www.acsforum.org/acsf-declaration-of-transcendent-human-habitat/>

The same research team that developed the Declaration has subsequently been developing a TA Framework, focusing on cases studies of individual buildings and sites, which remains a work in progress. After a brief presentation of these works, we will begin the workshop by defining what we mean by Transcendent Architecture and, explore how the Declaration and the TA Framework may be used in actual practice related to professional work, in pedagogy, service, or other endeavors.

Part Two- Questions to Frame the Discussion: (45 minutes)

The following questions are how the conversation on the practice of TA will be facilitated.

- How do you practice TA? Rather than personal spiritual practices such as meditation, prayer, fasting, etc., we are referring to the practice of architecture, as well as those engaged in its allied professions, education, scholarly research, creative work, service, advocacy, or other similar pursuits. By this, we mean, how do you as an individual, and the collective “we” as professionals and academics, meaningfully practice, teach, and advocate for advancing a Transcendent Architecture ideology/position/vision/agenda that will assist in addressing the multitude of contemporary challenges facing humanity?
- Are there particular ways in which one is more likely to achieve TA?
- How do we address the ‘other’ or the ‘context’ involved in producing TA? What kind of systemic, institutional, or organizational structures are needed to facilitate the pursuit of TA?
- What is the role and responsibility of the individual in such an effort?

In addition to the “productive” dimension of TA, we would also like to explore its “receptive” or experiential dimension.

- How do we prepare ourselves and others to engage an existing building, site, social situation, etc. so that we are receptive to the TA message that its creator(s) is(are) communicating?
- Are there aesthetic, ethical, and cultural dimensions to TA, and how do we address them both in their “productive” and “receptive” modes?

Part 3-Summary and Workshop Outcomes: (30 minutes)

To sum up, we will strive to arrive at consensus in the top 10 ways in which one can intentionally pursue TA in practice/teaching/advocacy and experience.

Desired workshop outcomes include a broader engagement of the ACSF membership in the explicit conversation surrounding the definition and understanding of how to produce/experience Transcendent Architecture. Finally, it is anticipated that the workshop conversation will assist in the further development, and future dissemination/integration of the Declaration and TA Framework in actual practice, teaching, and advocacy pursuits.

By way of example, we will briefly introduce the "Transcendent Architecture Demonstration Case Study Project " as a possible next step to implementing the Declaration and TA theory into practice.