

The Declaration of Transcendent Human Habitat: A Workshop to Explore Next Steps

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Introduction to the Workshop

As an important next step to ACSF's research and publication of *Transcending Architecture, Contemporary Views on Sacred Space* (2015), and achieving the overarching vision and goals of ACSF, a small team of ASCF members was assigned the task of developing a charter/declaration of transcendent human habitat to address the critical, though overlooked role of spirituality as a framework for the design of the built environment. Over a period of two and a half years, Nader Ardalan, Julio Bermudez, Roberto Chiotti, and Tammy Gaber, collectively researched, wrote, edited, and honed the Declaration with periodic board feedback culminating in their unanimous endorsement at our last ACSF board meeting.

Introduction to the Declaration of Transcendent Human Habitat

The Declaration of Transcendent Human Habitat was developed to address the enormous challenges facing the human community and all planetary existence today. It contributes a spiritually based, critical framework for bringing about more effective and viable human environments within local, regional, and global contexts. Professing a worldview that acknowledges a spiritual dimension to the universe, the authors embrace this ineffable realm as central to pursuing, finding, appreciating and supporting life's meaning. Three core spiritual practices of contemplation, compassion, and moderation are offered as principles to cultivate human spirituality in the process of envisioning, planning, designing, and realizing a sustainable future existence. The six interconnected and interdependent criteria of *cultural consciousness, justice, participation, environmental adaptation, ecotechnology, and essential simplicity* are offered as the means by which we can bring about spiritually inspired, and nurturing human environments at every scale.

Workshop Format

Facilitated by Roberto Chiotti and Nader Ardalan, this workshop will introduce participants to the team's mandate and vision, the research process and key references, their process of deliberation, and its final outcome. Participants will then be invited to discuss its key component sections: Worldview, Principles, and Criteria, and have an opportunity to brainstorm and workshop important next steps to expand the charter, research and document case studies, as well as consider its contribution to the ongoing discourse on human habitat established by such initiatives as the Congress of New Urbanism, the UN Habitat Sustainability Goals, and ACSF's own Transcendent Architecture Research. We seek input from the ASCF membership on potential funding opportunities, ways in which the Declaration of Transcendent Human Habitat can be further developed to influence pedagogy and curriculum within academia, and impact the policies and practice of urban planning, architecture, landscape architecture, and related arts. The workshop will be structured to offer opportunities for quiet contemplation, intimate conversation, and full group discussion. A digital copy of the Declaration of Transcendent Human Habitat has been attached. Printed copies will be made available to all attendees of the symposium at Taliesin West. A brief introduction to the workshop will be given by the co-authors on the day before the workshop. We look forward to your participation.