TORREBAKEN .

/ A design proposal for the Pilgrims Center in Røldal, Norway

Joung-Min Kim Master Thesis 2011-2012 Matter, Space & Structure Dep. Architecture Chalmers University of Technology

... work in architecture – is really more a working on oneself."

/Wittgenstein

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PROLOGUE

A master thesis can be seen as a unique opportunity to implement a project that reflects what you have learned throughout your studies. It can also be seen as yet another chance to explore something new, which in turn will bring more knowledge to prepare you for the life outside the academic world.

After my studies at Luleå University of Technology, I have tried to focus more on developing conceptual design here at Chalmers. When I think about my design process, I can be both frustrated and surprised at how varied it can be from time to time. The creation of a design

proposal is not as simple as a linear phenomenon, going from one problem to one ultimate solution. The process can be both irrational and arbitrary, while the architect over time accumulates a number of tools and guidelines to make it more orderly. With each project our understanding will increase further thus add new tools in creating architecture. My desire is to get more knowledge of my own design methodology, while avoiding falling into the same old patterns in the creative process. Hopefully others can see what I've done and get inspired for their own thesis, competition work, or when

designing a Pilgrims Center.

I have chosen to work with Røldal Pilgrim Center, which was an open architectural competition during summer-fall 2011, due to the project's unique and exciting content but also because I had not participated in a competition before. The idea was to hand in the competition material and then continue working with the design. While the thesis has been to design a building, it was also an attempt for me to work with my own design process and the tools, techniques that I have learned during my studies.

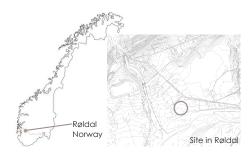
Last but not least, I would like to express

my thanks to those who helped me in the process. Thanks to Martin Jonsson and grandma' for being the strong support at home, thanks to Morten Lund and Daniel Norell (studio teacher and tutor) for pushing my design closer to its concept, thanks to my thesis buddies in the studio for your support and inspiration, and I would also take this opportunity to give a special thanks to all you working at this school; cleaning staff, caretakers, technical support and at the wooden workshop!



View from the highway E134 in a south/east direction towards the site

ROLDAL



Røldal is a little village in Norway with a population of 354 permanent inhabitants (January, 2011). The village is situated 210 km west from Oslo along the popular route (E134) that goes from Oslo to Stavanger.

Røldal is located in a valley and is surrounded by high mountain walls. The mountain ridge extends in a north/east to south/west direction and is met by a lake, Røldalsvatnet. The project site is at the lower part of the valley next to the stave church.



The Pilgrim Center is to convey the history of the medieval stave church in Røldal and the pilgrimage while giving room for different user groups. The Centre will act as a social gathering place that tells the story about the church and to serve with functions such as; exhibition, café, education etc. As a support building for the stave church the Center will also provide spaces for storage, offices, burial ceremony and maintenance of the cemetery. The project was originally an open architectural competition, with deadline in November 2011, but has been worked on continuously until January 2012.





Røldal was one of the most famous pilgrim destinations in the Middle Ages, due to the healing powers of the crucifix in wooden stave church. The pilgrim walk is a way to find the inner road from the earthly life to a spiritual insight and a rewarding experience in both a physical, mental and social way. In recent times the pilgrim walks resurrected and is not only a religious experience but a way to relax and enjoy the nature. Røldal is today the country's most important pilgrim destination in terms of the amount of walkers.



Traveling to the site, the stunning Norwegian landscape made a big impact with its high mountain ridges in contrast to the low depth of the valleys and fjords. You could see small traditional cottages with grass growing on their roofs appearing in clusters in the landscape along the road. These little mysterious houses seemed to randomly appear here and there in the fog and your started to wonder how these could look like inside.



















On-site observation was made to get a personal impression of the environment. This method is one of the most effective tools to collect essential insights and own interpretation of the environment and gain a firsthand knowledge of the site.



PANORAMA 1

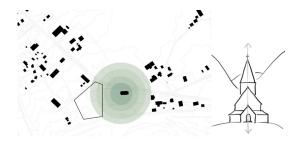


PANORAMA 2



PANORAMA 3

SITE ANALYSIS



When you arrive at the site from the main highway, from the north, you can see that the church is located in the center at the bottom of the valley. The church clearly expresses the transition between the earthly horizontal and the heavenly vertical, with its rising roofs which is pointing more and more vertically the higher you get.

The stave church is in its proportions more high than wide and the dark tarred facade makes the church fall back into the mountains in the background visually. The church stands out against the other buildings in the village through its verticalness and the surrounding open green landscape. By maintaining a distance to the church building with the low vegetation, you will enhance the respectable relationship between the proposed Center and the stave church.



Røldal is situated in a valley enclosed by the steep hillsides that extends north/east to south/west direction and is met by a lake. The competition site is located at the bottom of the valley on a flat surface in contrast to the rising mountain walls. It seems natural for the new Pilgrim Center to be horizontally oriented on the site and follow the rhythm of the valley rather than express itself vertically. By having a low building on site, the proposed Center will not only have a balanced dynamic with the church building but also connect to the existing houses in the village.



Everywhere you look you get reminded of the magnificent hill sides and because of the site being positioned at the bottom of the valley, the views of the mountains are in an upward angle. The views in eye level from the west to the north are blocked by the camping place and the tourist information building (Panorama 3). But when looking above the trailers you can see the view of the valley run to the south/west direction towards the lake Røldalsvatnet. Looking straight to the south from the site you can see waterfalls coming down the mountain side but the view to the creek running along the southern side are blocked by the trees.

CONCEPT

The concept emerged from three key components of the project: Cottage in the moutain (contextual awareness), The inner journey (pilgrimage) and A set of functions (pragmatic approach to the program).

One of the main influences for the proposal was the traditional cottages in the Norwegian mountains and how they related to the landscape in terms of scale and shape. I felt a strong need of incorporate that into the project because of it being a significant part of the contextual identity. I also liked the idea of coming in to something that is warm and inviting. There is a liking in recognizing a buildings language and make it coexist with the surrounding buildings, especially when the goal is to not dominate the site.

The pilgrimage is the main reason for this whole project and is one of the most important elements for the proposal. The original essence of the pilgrimage is to find a inner road to a spiritual insight by walking a physical demanding journey on earth. I wanted to explore the meaning of this journey both in a physical term but also as a inner state of mind. Like the pilgrims journey with the spiritual inner and the physical earthly, the designed proposal reflects this dynamics with a having more earthly exterior and an abstract interpretation of the inner journey in its interior.

The purpose of the Center is to work as a support building for Røldal stave church. This includes functions that should be provided for in the best way and solved pragmatically. I believe that every building should have a system that works and be practical for every day usage. It feels logical to think of the people that are daily using in the building.



COTTAGE IN THE MOUNTAIN



Traditional wooden cottages in the Norwegan landscape was seen on my way to Røldal, and was one of the main influences to the proposal.



THE INNER JOURNEY



The pilgrim journey is a way to find the inner road from the earthly life to a spiritual insight. I wanted to explore the dynamics of this journey.

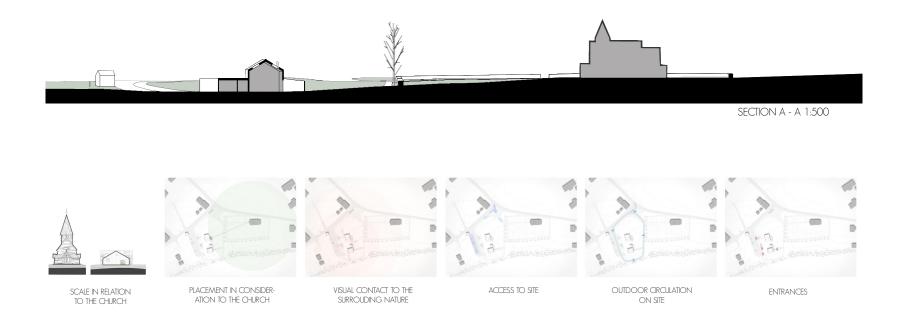


A SET OF FUNCTIONS



The existing support building at the site is small & humble and works well with the church. The building serves functions such as; public restrooms, storage and mortuary. With the growing needs and demands for more space, this will be replaces by the new Pilgrim Center.

SITE



Whether you arrive on the site on foot, by car or by bus the visitor is gently directed towards the church. The church is the natural destination and is in focus when you arrive. The Pilgrim Center is humbly placed next to the church with proportions that makes it harmonize with the other houses in the village. By having most of the building mass integrated into the landscape the visible parts are kept at minimum. The parts of the building that are visible entreat the visitors for further exploration. The proposal is placed within a respectable distance to the church and keeps

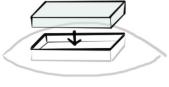
most of the green area so it does not dominate the site. The positioning of the building is made by consideration of the main axle from the church towards the direction of the valley and also for creating an open outdoor place just outside the entrance of the cemetery. The outdoor walking paths create a natural circulation connecting the entrances and the church with the site. Car parking is located along the western part of the competition area. For the visitors this means that the focus is on the church and center, and that the parking lots are arranged aside.



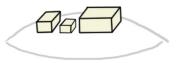


View from the Churchroad east towards the designed proposal

MASS STUDY







ADD VOLUME & SPACE



DIRECTIONS



OPENINGS IN THE GROUND

MASS COMPOSITION

To keep the visual impact of the building mass on the site as little as possible, the proposal has most of its mass integrated into the landscape. Volume and space are then added on significant areas in the building program. The roofs of the added volumes are cut to accentuate the relation to the church and the public. Openings in the ground mass are made for access and light. The overall building mass of the proposal complements the houses in the village and keeps the integrity of the site.



TESTS

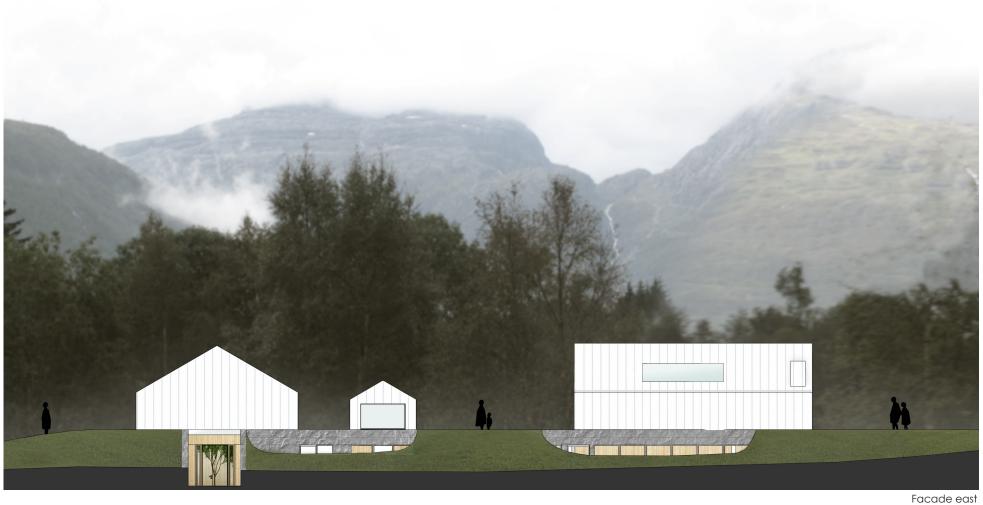
I wanted to place the building in a respectable distance from the church and that the church would be in focus as you arrived the site. So I decided quite early in the process that the new building should be placed towards the creek or the camping site, as you can

Tests where made to study the building mass and the relation between the church and the proposed design.



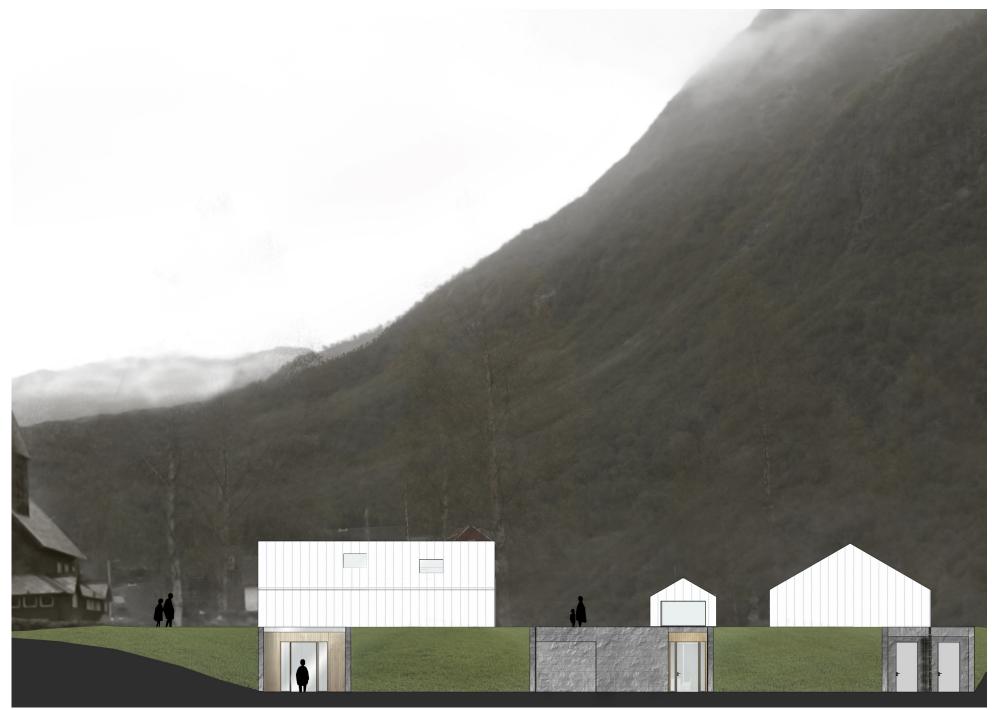


View from the main road



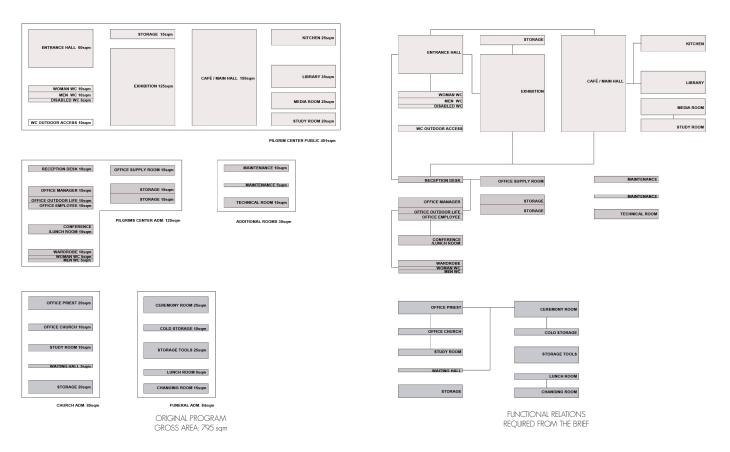


Facade north



Facade west

PROGRAM



MEDIA ROOM

STUDY ROOM

LIBRARY

ENTENDE HALL

ENTENDED

CAFÉ I MAN HALL

OUTDOOR SEATING

WICH DESTRUCTION

MAINTENANCE

STORAGE

NITCHEN

RECEPTION DESK

MAINTENANCE

OFFICE MANAGER

OFFICE MANAGER

OFFICE EMPLOYEE

TECHNICAL ROOM

STORAGE

WARDROBE

WARDROBE

WARDROBE

WARDROBE

AUNCH ROOM

OFFICE PRIEST

OFFICE PRIEST

CHANGING ROOM

OFFICE PRIEST

CEREMONY ROOM

CEREMONY ROOM

CEREMONY ROOM

CEREMONY ROOM

CEREMONY ROOM

CEREMONY ROOM

STORAGE

WARTING HALL

CEREMONY ROOM

CEREMONY ROOM

STORAGE

FINAL PROGRAM & FUNCTIONAL RELATIONS

NET AREA: 627 sqm

SEVICE AREA: 129 sqm - 17%

GROSS AREA: 756 sqm

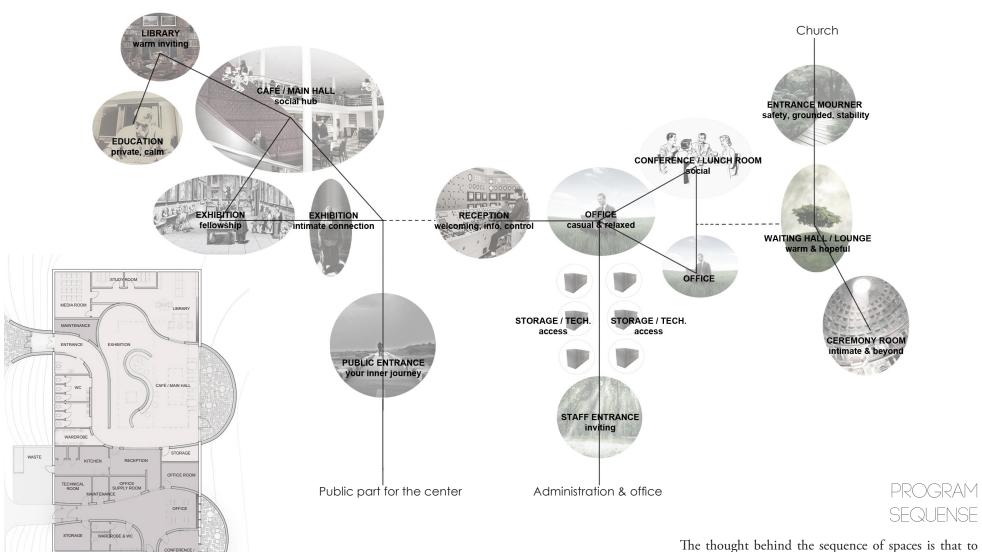
The program was first divided into three areas: public, administrative and churchly. After dividing the program an analysis of the functions where made to locate the necessary connections. In order to rationalize the program I let some functions overlap each other and some for co-usage.

The public part is placed closest to the

main road towards north, and the churchly activities are placed more protected in the south towards the nature. The administrative part of the center is located between the public and the churchly part enabling co-usage of common functions such as the dining room/conference room, paper machine room, toilets, etc. for the employees.

The focus on co-usage of the common functions provides opportunities to have coffee and lunch breaks together when working under the same roof. The location of the kitchen in relation to the reception makes it possible for one person to run the Café and reception when it is low season. The positioning of the reception makes it possible for good visual

overview of the Center. The flows of the public, churchly and administrative parts are separated. The employees and visitors can park and convenient access from the entrances from the west while the mourners have a more private entrance that faces the church in the east.



COLD STORAGE

PROGRAM IN PLAN

The thought behind the sequence of spaces is that to create a value for each room. The program was seen as three parts, each of them having different users.

The Center's various areas are related to each other and the site by its different conditions. Based on a functional analysis, different functions with strong required connections both spatially and functionally were placed adjacent to each other.



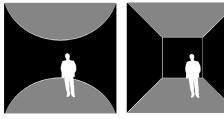


Section B - B 1:100

TNTERTOR

SPATIAL RELATION

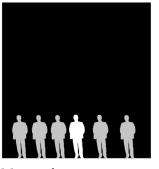
Some spatial relations have been investigated to emphasize the concept of the inner journey. The spatial representation of the walk is created by combining volume and movement, then strengthen with light.

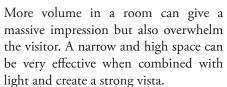


With the concept of the journey, I wanted to create a fluent movement in the building with natural transitions between the rooms. Curved walls define rooms in a continuous flow while straight walls meet in angles that mark a border. There are softer transitions from space to space by creating curved walls.



A narrow space creates a more intimate room. Wider rooms in the other hand provide a more social space.







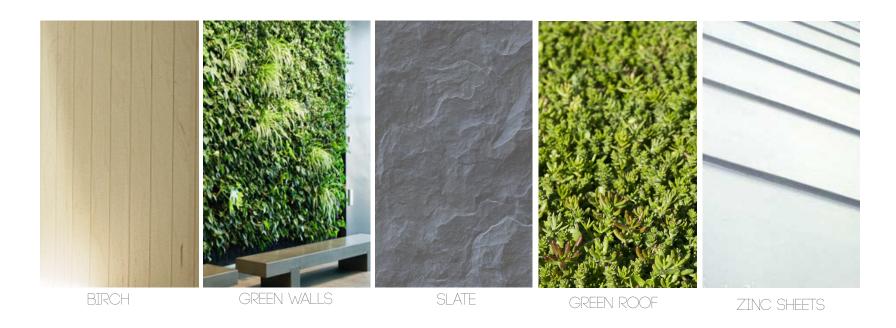






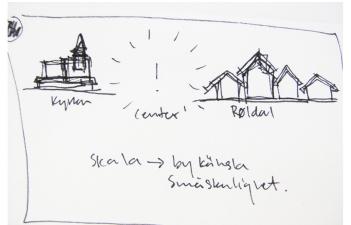
Entering the churchly part the curved wooden walls embraces you with warmth. The main feature in the waiting room is an intimate courtyard with light from above that gives hope and creates a peaceful and respectable place.

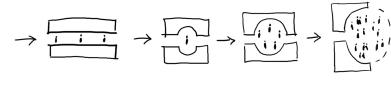
MATERIAL



There are birch trees on the site so it felt natural to incorporate it to the project. The birch creates an inviting and light feeling to the Center. Green walls gives restorative and relaxing atmosphere in the library and offices. The site characteristic slate was placed at the cut-outs of the facades while the most of the building mass has a green roof. The zinc sheets that covers the cottage like volumes works as a contemporary feature in contrast to the traditional shape of the buildings.



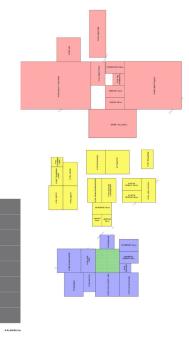




SKETCHES



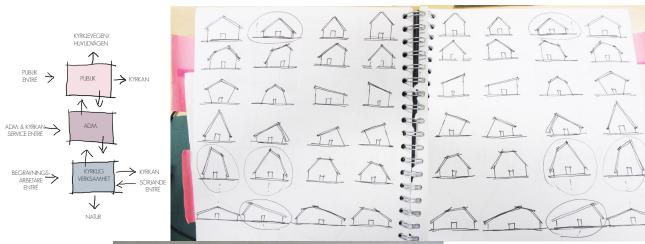


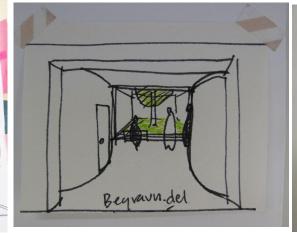




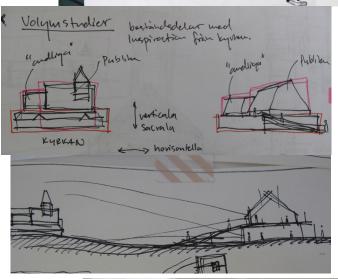


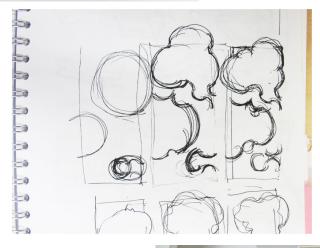


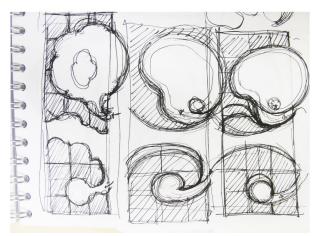




















KONSEP



Pfgrinsvandringen svarer på mange forskjelige behov for både kropp og spel. Reisen er et set til fine den nåde ver fine det verdiget lige i en rådelig innsåt, og samtidig turne til an felleskap bland de som ferdes. Usersat hov for telle frangreisen må være så er det en givernå opplevelse både på et fysik, menttil og sosiat plan froslaget skaper med dess enkle hukkropp og lurvedet inde en dabtrott bakring av hovråra det inde en dabtrott bakring av hovråra det jordige kommer sammen med det sprituelle. Kyrkjebakken er ydmykt plassert intil kirken i det omkringligende landskapet samtidig som den byder in besøkeren til fortsatt utforskring forslaget rikter sin oppmerksomhet mot kirken og den valrer dolen gjernom at la besøkeren fortsette sin vandring på kyrkjebakken. Plgrimsvandringen svarar på många olika sehev för både kropp & själ. Resan är ett sätt til hat den rev sögen från de världliga til en andlig siskt och santidigt kunn ge gemenskapland de som fändas. Coverett har kart eller ång resan än må vara så är det en givande polipelesip på ett fysiskt, mental och socialt solan förlaget skappar med deste erikka huskrapp och kruvade in en adstrådt kolkinga va hur det jordsåga kommer samman med det spirituelt. Kyrktjebakken är ödnight placerad intil kyrka i det ankringlagande landskapet samtligt, den bjuder in besökaren till fortsatt utforskring. Förslaget riktar sin uppmärksamhet mot kyrka och den vackar delse genom at låta besökare lartsätta sin vandring på dess kyrkobacke.





COMPETITION

The hand-in for the competition was:

- Max. 6 posters in A2 showing your proposal (seen to your right)
- A booklet in A3 with the design proposal in detail
- A CD with your posters and booklet in PDF



Plgrims senteret er indelt i tre områder, publik, administrativi og kirkelig. Disse tilke områdene forholder sig til hererande og plassen utefra dens forhoteringer. Den publike delen er plassent rammeret indertes fra krimeresen, förlediga virksomhet ligger med beskytet nærment den trygger krimeresen. Förlediga virksomhet ligger med beskytet nærment den trygger karlestige, her krimeresen, förlediga virksomhet ligger med beskytet forærmet den trygger kritikage, dellen förlediga her krimeresen, bet oderhinstrative for senteret er plasset mellom den publike og krikkage dellen förlasse her et tillt lag og helse bruk ov felles fruksigneri, mot, konferrameren, konton makkrom og bodelter, för alle som jabber i plgrims senteret dominstrativt og krikkej. Det filmes en grede ov å karne te kolfle og lungspaser sommen den nan jabber undet somme tils. Plassenergen or kykklen i redspas fil reseppinnen gar det også målg for at kun en person jabber med diffen av kolfenen og tar med besaltendig en der for der forholdige anväldere er segarete det av envirengragen i veret somteldig som de som særger får en til men privat rangsag som verette og gen til kriken. Det første bonsklede in er en for men kommer til den krikelige delen er at de lett badet freveggene som enfonrer deg å til bet tre i en nirk makelagion er plasset i verteretormet og er belydt med lyset overfrin. Den symbolsserer kv og hopp og kan traste de som har det vanskelig.





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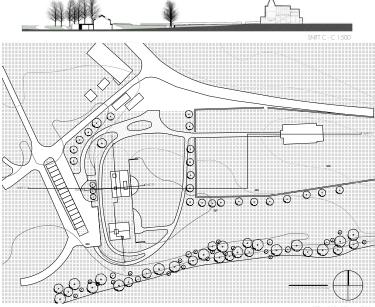
KYRKJEBAKK







Hela Røldal er omgitt av den dal som har gitt byen sitt navn. Kirken er i sin skala og farge i samspill med den øvrige bebyggelsen i Røldal. Med bergryggen i fonden utmerker seg kirken ved sin plassering og omgitte grøntområde. Derfor har man her prøvd å ha mye grøntområder på korkurranseplassen, mellom kirken og sentrum samt på sentret, samtidig som det gir muligheter for rosteplasser med bra utsikt. Uansett hvis man kommer til plassen til fots, bil eller buss kastes besøkeren in mot kirken. Bussparkeringen er plassert på den eksisterende asfalterte yten nærmest er plassert på om eksistrerenae astaliterie yren nätrimest kirkeveggem bak turistinformasjonen. Bilgankeringen er plassert langs med den vestre dellen av konkurranseområdet, for besøkeren innebær dette at fokus stills på kirken og senteret og at parkeringsplassen blir satt 11 side. Kirken skal være den naturlige tilkomsten og ligge i folus da man kommer til plassen. Pligrins senteret gir ærbædighet innfør kirken gjennom å integrere det meste av huskroppen i landskapet samtidig som en liten del forsiktig vekker en interesse.





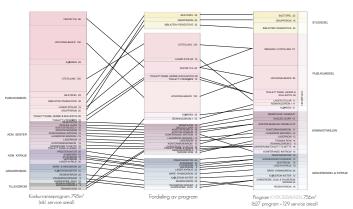




INTEGRERT I JANDSKAPE 00

VOLUM OG PS

 $\emptyset \Longrightarrow$





Raldals mange bjørker og karakteristiske skilertak i kombinasjon med det årlige snøteppe gav en hydelig palett for materiale og forgesammensetning av senteret. De lyse bjørk ribbene aksentueer valgte deler av huset og byder in til værme. Snøen skal ses på som en naturilig del av området og gir senteret en skinnende dress på vinteren. Det hvite eksteriøret, med et lett innslag av blått, oppfattes da som en del av snølandskapet. Forslaget ligger nære landskapet og gir et stabilt og trygt inntrykk.





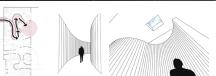
FASADE NORD 1:200



Etter å ha sett kirken fortsetter man vandringen in i senteret. De rom. Denne del ligger mer adskilt med myke tregulv i kontrast til rom. Denné dei ligger mer odskilt med myke fregjui v konfrast fit sklærguke som er lagt i utstlignen og hovedden. Her kan man slappe av vid idstaden med en bok og få et overblikk over de nykommene. Kammerenes vegger er kraftige og lett buede der det passer med partier av tre og hilte vegger. Todettene kan skjermes av og brukes separat etter stengetid for besøkende.















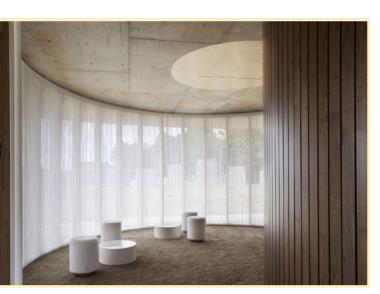




INSPIRATION PROJECTS



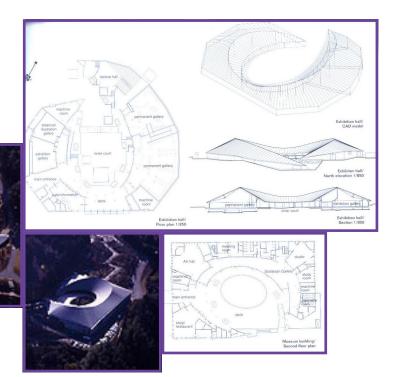






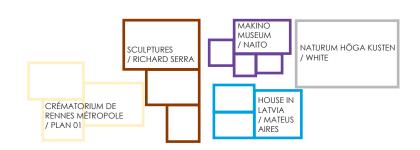












It is important that you have inspiration while working on a project. Inspiration that fuels the designing of a concept and gives ideas to continue on. For this project I had two separate inputs. One that worked with the part above ground and the other one with the curved shaped interior.

"The six phases of a design project:

- 1. Enthusiasm
- 2. Disillusionment
- 3. Panic
- 4. Search for the guilty
- 5. Redemption
- 6. Acceptance

"