

Finnish Nationality Room Student Design Competition 2005/06



First Prize is a trip to Western Pennsylvania, USA to visit Fallingwater, the most acclaimed work of American architect Frank Lloyd Wright and \$1000 USD, second prize is \$1200 and third prize is \$800.

Introduction

The Nationality Rooms at the University of Pittsburgh

The Cathedral of Learning, a historic landmark, is the second-tallest education building in the world—42 stories and 535 feet tall. It is also the geographic and traditional heart of the University of Pittsburgh campus. Begun by Chancellor John Bowman in 1926 and dedicated in 1937, the building was realized with the help of contributions from men, women, and children throughout the region and the world.

It was in commemoration of this effort that the Nationality Rooms were initiated. The Nationality Rooms comprise over twenty-six classrooms on its lower floors which are decorated in the styles of classrooms of various nationalities and cultures as they would have appeared prior to the University's founding in 1787. While many of the rooms contain fine artwork and museum-quality pieces in display cases, all of these rooms are functioning classrooms. The rooms showcase the rich cultural heritage of many of Pittsburgh's ethnic groups. The rooms are gifts to the University and the ethnic committees formed to create classrooms honor and preserve the traditions of their heritage. Eight more rooms are in the planning stages, including the Finnish Nationality Room.

In addition to housing the Nationality Rooms, the Cathedral of Learning serves as the heart of the University of Pittsburgh. It contains the University of Pittsburgh's administrative offices, libraries, a computer center, a restaurant, and offices and classrooms for many liberal arts departments. The centerpiece of the building, both in plan and in student life, is the three-story "Commons Room" at ground level.

The Nationality Rooms are a locus of cultural life for both the University and the City alike. Nationality room committees sponsor workshops on ethnic studies and foster courses in the mother languages. University classes meet in the classrooms from early morning until late at night, amidst surroundings designed to enhance the learning experience. A single hand-carved chair or a stained glass portrait may set the viewer on a rewarding quest. A steady stream of people -- often families of three generations - - come to see the world-famous rooms, which evoke pride in their own heritage and warm appreciation of other cultures. The Nationality Rooms Program conduct tours 7 days a week.

Upon completion of their rooms, the nationality room committees are dedicated to intercultural education as well as social and cultural events. Since 1948, more than 1500 annual summer study abroad scholarships have been granted to University of Pittsburgh students and faculty. The committees sponsor lectures, concerts, exhibits, and social events to highlight facets of some 28 heritages, and receive distinguished international visitors to the University. The committees embark on special projects ranging from the purchase of books for the University libraries to publication of volumes on comparative literature as well as ethnic recipes. Committees sponsor workshops on ethnic studies and foster courses in their mother languages.

Finns in the United States

Finns have played an important role in American history since 1638 when they constituted the majority of the residents of the New Sweden colony along the Delaware River. In the New Sweden colony Finns built their customary log dwellings, soon to become a traditional feature of the American scene, and also cleared the land using their "kaskiviljely" technique of burning the forest and sowing seeds into the fertile ashes. Their ministers were the first Lutheran clergy in America and their churches, law courts, flour mills, and homes were the first permanent ones in eastern Pennsylvania. Later Finns were among the immigrants who came to work in the Pennsylvania steel mills. The autonomous relation with Russia had created many difficulties for the Finnish people in Finland so many came looking for a living in the industrial centers in the USA, among them Monessen, New Castle, Steel City and other parts of Western Pennsylvania. The Titanic carried many Finns headed for this area, some of whom lost their lives when the ship sank. The Finnish people who lived and worked around Pittsburgh kept their language and culture and they supported the Finnish churches.

The Finnish Nationality Room

The Finnish Nationality Room will reflect the culture and customs of Finland, and will serve as a memorial where the relatives of early Finnish immigrants will learn about their heritage and remember the contributions of their ancestors and as a place where students and visitors will learn about Finland and Finnish traditions. It will also provide a focal point for local Finnish organizations and activities.

Objectives

The aim of the competition is to find the design best suited to use as a basis for the further design and construction of the Finnish Nationality Room in the Cathedral of Learning at the University of Pittsburgh. The intent is to build a room which best represents Finnish culture and the Finnish built environment as they existed prior to 1787.

The Finnish Nationality Room has two overarching functions:

1. **It should work as a functioning classroom**, with all the contemporary teaching aids that are normally found in teaching classrooms, such as chalkboards, a projection screen, an audio/visual system, and variable lighting.
2. **It should also be an authentic embodiment of Finnish culture** from some period between c.1000 A.D. and 1787 A.D.

To that end, the successful design must be characterised by conveying a high artistic value, relating how the majority of the Finnish people lived, and employing the austere simplicity that remains characteristic of the Finnish approach to the built environment. While the successful design must employ an historical architectural idiom, it must do so

in a way that exudes architectural imagination and technical mastery, and it must make a compelling story about the Finns in the twentieth century.

As a functional classroom, the design of the Finnish Nationality Room is more than an exercise in creating a visual atmosphere. It must also be a welcoming space to teach, to learn, to study, and to pass time. So, in addition to artistic quality and historical authenticity, the successful design should demonstrate superior management of environmental systems, such as natural and artificial lighting, ventilation, and audio and visual systems. The more technological aspects of the environmental systems must be handled within the chosen historical idiom.

Parameters/Programme

The Finnish Nationality Room must incorporate the technological requirements of the contemporary university teaching classroom into an architectural interior that is expressive of Finland's past, prior to 1787, the year of the University of Pittsburgh's founding. The classroom is a world of its own, existing in a 1930s neo-Gothic skyscraper of 42 stories in height, the Cathedral of Learning, alongside some 26 other Nationality Rooms of a host of other nations, including other Nordic and European nations, but extending to nationalities from Asia, Africa, and America.

Site

The designer(s) shall choose **one of two possible rooms** of the Cathedral of Learning as the site for the Finnish Nationality Room. Both rooms are located on the third floor of the building:

- Room 329, facing southwest, located between the African Heritage Room and the Early American Room.
- Room 306, at the northeast corner of the building near to the proposed Philippines Room.

The rooms are of different sizes and characters. The successful design will exploit the potential of the chosen room for maximum architectural impact

Functional Requirements

The room must have a clear and coherent arrangement for the purposes of university education. Thus, there shall be a clear intent for how the room is to be used: for instance, it could be used as a small lecture room with individual seating directed toward a focal point, such as a chalkboard/projection screen; or it could be envisaged as a seminar room with a central table and seating around the periphery of that table.

Therefore, a furnishing arrangement and strategy is an essential component of the room. The furniture may be permanently fixed, or be portable and repositionable. In all cases, the furniture must provide seating and writing space for students and address the lecturing and presentation needs of the instructor incorporating chalkboards, a projection screen, speakers, and a projector. And in all cases, the furniture design will

be a part of the room.

The room must also incorporate contemporary building systems. These include fire protection sprinklers, ventilation, and artificial lighting. These systems must be seen as an integral part of the room.

Budget

The estimated budget for the project is \$300,000. USD.

Resources

Digital files of the existing plans, elevations, and sections of rooms 306 and 329 will be made available to those parties interested in entering the competition. For more information send email to Professor Anna-Maija Ylimaula, ylimaula@oulu.fi.

Key internet sites that may be useful are listed below:

<http://www.umc.pitt.edu:16080/tour/tour-080.html>

<http://www.pittsburghfinns.org>

Adjudication Criteria

The jury will adjudicate the competition based on the competition programme, any additional addenda, and the answers to questions submitted as per the competition regulations.

In particular, the competition will be based on the historical authenticity, functional requirements, indoor environmental quality, and overall spatial and materials quality. The jury will attach importance to finding imaginative solutions within the context of the aforementioned criteria.

Submission Requirements

All submissions shall include both hard copy (drawings) and soft copy (digital files). All drawings, illustrations, descriptions, and text shall be mounted on rigid boards. All digital files shall be in PDF format (Acrobat 5 format), burned onto a standard CD-R compact disc. All drawings must be clearly legible, even when viewed on-screen in digital format.

Required Documents

Situation Plan, Scale 1:200

The plan will graphically show the selection of room for the design. The plan should be oriented with north at the top.

Floor Plan, Scale 1:20

The plan will graphically show the architectural features, including materials and colors,

and furniture arrangement of the room. The plan should be oriented with north at the top.

Interior Elevations, Scale 1:20

The elevations will include materials and colors to be used.

Reflected Ceiling Plan, Scale 1:20

The plan will graphically show the architectural features, including materials and colors, of the room ceiling. The plan should be oriented with north at the top.

Details, Scale 1:5

The plan will graphically show the architectural features, including materials and colors, of the room ceiling. The plan should be oriented with north at the top.

Three-Dimensional Representation

The illustration(s) may be either in perspective, isometric, or other axonometric projection, and should illustrate the spatial character of the room.

Brief Description

The description must state the entrant's intentions and provide other relevant information about the design. The handling and incorporation of classroom technical requirements shall also be explained. Any substantial deviations from the programme must be explained and justified. The description must be present both on the presentation boards and in the digital media.

Anonymity

The competition documents shall be submitted anonymously. All submitted documents (drawings, explanatory text, compact discs) shall be clearly marked with an identification code or slogan. An accompanying sealed envelope bearing the same code or slogan shall contain a single A4 sheet printed with the following information:

- names of all team members,
- courses of study of all team members,
- central contact address, email address, and telephone number for the team.

Regulations

Competition Secretariat

Professor Anna-Maija Ylimaula, University of Oulu

phone: +358-8-5537300 fax: +358-8-5537399 email: ylimaula@oulu.fi

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Competition Language

The primary language of the competition will be Finnish. English will be used as a secondary language for the submission of questions and documents.

Eligibility

The competition is open to all Finnish students of architecture and interior architecture. Students may also form teams with students of architecture, interior architecture, art history, or anthropology as they see fit. However, the team must include at least one student of architecture or interior architecture.

Registration

Registration will be accepted until the Submission Deadline. There is no fee.

Submission Deadline

Entries must be postmarked or received by 16:00 Monday, March 5, 2006

Jury and Adjudication

Adjudication will take place in a closed location, and the anonymity of the designs will be protected until the conclusion of the process.

Judging will take place in two phases. A first phase of judging by the jury will result in a ranked short-list of schemes. These will then be forwarded to the Finnish Nationality Room Committee for final adjudication and approval. The first phase jury will comprise academics, historians of architecture, and other specialists. The second phase jury will comprise representatives of the Finnish Nationality Room Committee.

Phase 1:

- Dr. Anna-Maija Ylimaula, University of Oulu
- John Stanislav Sadar, University of Pennsylvania

Phase 2:

- Seija Cohen, Finnish Nationality Room Committee
- Director Maxine Bruhns
- Dr. Anna-Maija Ylimaula, University of Oulu

Exhibition and publishing

All prize-winning schemes may be used by the Finnish Nationality Room Committee for publicity purposes.

Prizes

Three prizes will be given to be distributed as follows:

1st Prize: A trip to Pittsburgh and a visit to Falling Water (designed by Frank Lloyd Wright) flights, hotel + 1000,00 USD

2nd Prize: 1200,00 USD

3rd Prize: 800,00 USD

If the result is satisfactory, the first prize winner will eventually be asked to become the design architect for the implementation of the project. The design architect will be required by law to enter into a working relationship with a local architect (architect-of-record) to ensure the design meets all local codes and regulations, and that documents meet local standards.

Return of entries

Entries that are awarded a prize will be retained by the organisers. Entries that are not awarded prizes will be made available for return at the entrant's expense. The jury's criticism and report will be distributed to each respective entrant.

Ownership and rights

The competition organisers retains material ownership rights to any designs awarded prizes. Entrants retain copyright over their designs. The organisers retain the right to incorporate aspects of other prize-winning schemes.