



POPE JOHN PAUL II CULTURAL CENTER

Washington, DC, United States

Owner

Pope John Paul II Cultural Foundation

Size

120,000 SF

Scope

Architecture, Full Engineering, Rezoning, Programming, Master Planning, Site Planning, Exhibit Programming and Design, Interiors

Award

2002 Religious Art and Architecture Award, IFRAA / Faith & Forum
 2001 Award for Excellence in Architecture, American Institute of Architects
 -The Virginia Society
 2000 Award for Excellence in Architecture, American Institute of Architects
 -The Virginia Society
 1999 Award for Excellence in Conceptual Design, American Institute of Architects
 -The Virginia Society

LEO A DALY was commissioned to design this scholarly study center and interactive museum dedicated to religion and modern cultural issues. Located in an urban park, its neighbors are other institutions including The Catholic University of America, The US Soldiers and Airmen’s Home, and Washington Hospital Center.

The top floor houses the foundation’s intercultural forum, an endowed think tank supporting up to 12 scholars. The other three stories house a 30,000-SF technology interactive museum at ground level; a permanent Marian exhibit at the entry level; and a changing exhibits gallery on level two. LEO A DALY engaged Edwin Schlossberg as Exhibits Consultant.

A chapel, floating above the reflecting pool’s waters, underscores the facility’s Catholic basis. A dramatic copper roof plane above



the main structure visually ties all the elements together. A drum-shaped form connects the think tank and the museum floors functionally, visually, and symbolically.

“...one of the more compelling works of architecture to go up in the Washington area in the last few years... this emphatic modernist statement comes as a shock when it first pops into view... already is an architectural landmark of a high order – an at-times exhilarating demonstration of architecture’s power to move the soul.”

The Washington Post