

Architect: Richard Meier, New York
Lighting designer: Fisher Marantz Stone, New York
Photographer: Frieder Blickle, Christopher Ward-Jones
Project location: Rom

Chiesa Dives in Misericordia

Following five years of building work, Richard Meier has completed one of the most interesting church buildings of recent years in Rome.

26 October 2003: Following five years of building work, the ceremonial inauguration of the 'Dives in Misericordia' church took place in the Roman suburb, Tor Tre Teste. The snow-white building designed by the architect Richard Meier has given this anonymous residential area a centre and character. The new church is the culmination of the large-scale church building program of the Vatican on the occasion of the 'Holy Year 2000'.

The main room is enveloped by three sail-type, arched concrete boards. The walls and skylights in steel/glass design flood the room with daylight. A vertical glass wall separates the church sanctuary from the adjoining facilities of the parish house.

The clean-cut geometric forms and areas so typical of Richard Meier's architecture display their full attraction in changing light.

The lighting concept was developed by the lighting designers from Fisher Marantz Stone in New York. One of its important components

is the direct, directional light to zone the church sanctuary and to accentuate the main focus such as the pulpit and the crucifix. For this, ERCO Gimbal spotlights for halogen lamps were combined in groups and fixed to the steel construction of the skylight.

Recessed floor luminaires additionally emphasise the lines of this piece of architecture, creating dramatic effects.

The other central light component results from the even illumination of the interior of the arched concrete boards. It is important not only as pleasant, diffuse basic lighting of the church sanctuary. It also characterises the outward appearance of the church at night: almost magically, the light seems to pour out of the gaps of the boards.

The lighting equipment used here are Beamer spotlights and Parscoop wallwashers from the ERCO exterior range installed outside, above the skylights.

The lighting design of the Chiesa Dives in Misericordia also constitutes a milestone in that this is the first time that virtual luminaires from ERCO have been used for light simulation. This made it possible to show, check and analyse concept variants at an earlier planning stage. A visual inspection shows how realistic such simulation processes are even today.

Left: Photorealistic lighting simulation of the church with the 'Lightscape' software from Autodesk.

Right: Isolux false-colour display of the same scene with the help of the analysis functions of Lightscape.

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Start of construction:

March 1998

Inauguration:

26 October 2004

approx. 14,000 m³ of cubature, 976 m² of glass areas, highest point: 27 m, height of belltower: 20 m.



