

MARCH - APRIL 2005 \$3.50

Architecture

MINNESOTA

Minnesota Architects **WIN**
4 AIA National
Honor Awards

HONOR AWARDS

The Luminous, Uplifting
Bigelow Chapel

Historic Modern
Landscape Preservation

Landscape Photographer **Lynn Geesaman**
Explores Form and Color

Bigelow Chapel, United Theological Seminary, New Brighton

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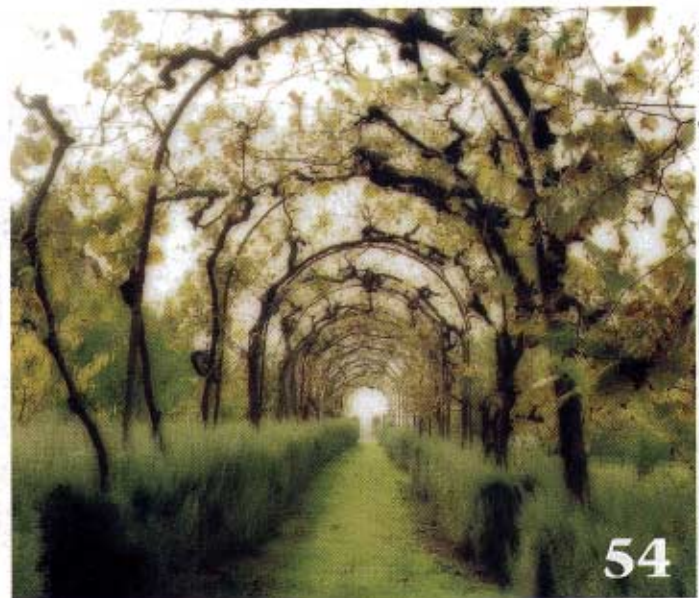
PETER BASTIANELLI KERZE

Cover

Bigelow Chapel, United Theological Seminary
New Brighton, Minnesota
Architect: Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, Inc.
Photographer: Paul Warchol Photography



TIM HURSELEY



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Mission Statement

Architecture Minnesota, the primary public outreach tool of the American Institute of Architects Minnesota, is published to inform the public about architecture designed by AIA Minnesota members and to communicate the spirit and value of quality architecture to both the public and the membership.

AIA Minnesota 2004 Honor Awards

During the AIA Minnesota 70th Annual Convention and Exhibition in November, the 2004 Honor Awards jury selected ten projects to receive Honor Awards and one for a Divine Detail Award. The jurors were: Jeanne Gang, AIA, principal, Studio Gang Architects, Chicago; James Stewart Polshek, FAIA, partner, Polshek Partnership Architects, New York; and Ron Radziner, AIA, design principal, Marmol Radziner + Associates, Los Angeles. Listed are the award-winning projects, firm names and locations, the issue of *Architecture Minnesota* in which a full profile appears or will appear, and a portion of the jurors' comments.

Dalseth Family Dental Clinic

Apple Valley, Minnesota
ALTUS Architecture + Design with
Coen + Partners (landscape architect)
Minneapolis, Minnesota
See profile on page 38

"The brise-soleil used to control the sunlight breaks down the scale of the glass-box waiting room, while the random pattern of windows in the exam rooms gives dentists, hygienists, and patients—whether standing or seated—a view outside."

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Rochester Art Center

Rochester, Minnesota
Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, Inc.
Minneapolis, Minnesota
See January–February 2005 issue

"The two simple volumes, slightly offset and clad in different metals—copper and zinc—are handled well. The zinc box seems to float, with the space between the two masses bringing light into the center."



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An eye-catching dental clinic

breaks the mold BY CHRISTOPHER HUDSON

Open Wide



Design team (left to right): Roger Cummelin, AIA; Tim Alt, AIA; Chad Healy

Above: A strong geometry informs the glass-box waiting room, brise-soleil, and flanking fence. Opposite: Natural light bathes the waiting room.

Quick, make a list of building types that have yielded great architecture.

Chances are, museum, church, and skyscraper leap to mind. Dental clinic surely does not. Alas, the poor dental clinic is associated with closed interiors composed of white walls, gray carpeting, sterile lighting, and the faint whine of dental equipment.

But the architecturally adventurous Dalseth Family Dental Clinic in Apple Valley, Minnesota, aims to change all that. Designed by ALTUS Architecture + Design, Minneapolis, and winner of a 2004 AIA Minnesota Honor Award, the clinic commands attention on a busy suburban boulevard populated with the usual brown-brick boxes. In fact, visitors to the clinic are treated to views of the building from all four directions, thanks to clever siting and a well-conceived arrival sequence. Facing the boulevard, a crisp glass

box sits in a field of tall prairie grasses, flanked by a wood-screen wall that extends the length of the property to the south. A *brise-soleil* along the upper southwest corner of the glass box echoes the long fence, and a clean line of sugar maples lies at a shallow angle from the fence, guiding the eye to the main entrance.

Turning into the side street at the northwest corner of the property, visitors pass a long and low stucco wall whose earth-tone red, yellow, and cream horizontal panels convey a sense of movement. A collage arrangement of irregularly shaped windows into the exam rooms is especially striking at night, when lit from within. Above and set back from the north wall is a long and narrow clerestory that brings daylight into the center of the clinic.

At the east end of the building, two glass panels at the ends of interior corridors offer sight



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lines through the building. Visitors then turn west into the parking lot, which is elegantly framed by the geometric ipé (Brazilian hardwood) fence and the south wall rotated slightly to funnel guests toward the entry. The subtle angle of the wall also brings the edge of the curved, champagne-colored metal roof, accentuated with one-inch standing seams, closer to the ground at the entrance, providing another visual cue to visitors. The tactile burnished-block wall is punctuated with three panels of satiny, dark-purple endicott brick and six irregularly shaped, raised windows that create a layering effect.

Indeed, this is not your average dental clinic. Design principal Tim Alt, AIA, credits Dr. Stephen Dalseth—or “Dr. D,” as he is better known—with having a sophisticated design sense and the courage to make a bold statement. “Dr. D’s a really interesting man. He’s a biker, an



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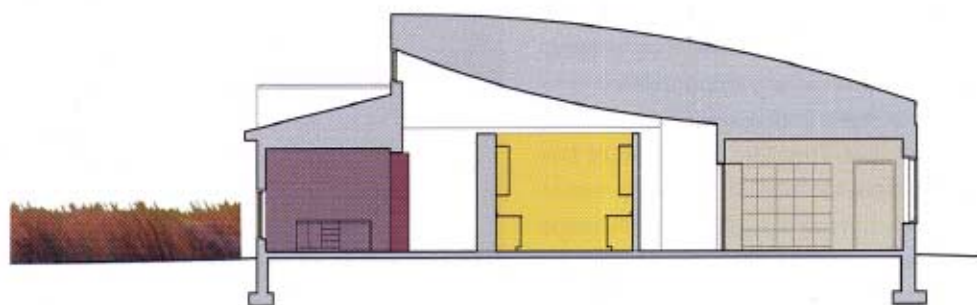
Above: A north-facing clerestory brings natural light into the clinic, while a collage of windows below brings the outside in for exam-room occupants. Opposite: The central area is animated by three free-standing sculptural pods, each painted an intense, saturated color.

art aficionado, his three sons are very well versed in culture and in the arts, and that very much came through in the design process." Dr. D's oldest son, Pascal, recently joined him in the practice, and his middle son, Daniel, who holds an M.F.A. from the University of Pennsylvania, was instrumental in devising the interior and exterior color palette.

Dr. D's main requirement for the new building was an abundance of natural light, a commodity in short supply at his previous office. "Light gives us life. You start to understand that during the dark days of winter," he says. "Sunlight always energizes people." Thus the decision to wrap the waiting room in glass, so that patients would feel good about their visit to the dentist. Additionally, each of the 12 exam rooms along the north side of the building contains a

unique pairing of windows that offers focused views of the sky, the church across the street, or prairie grasses just outside the window. Virtually every location in the building affords a view to the outside.

The open central area features a high inverted barrel-shaped ceiling sloping down from the clerestory and a line of three sculptural pods dressed in saturated colors: deep red (private meeting room and small work area), bright yellow (lab), and gray-green (supply room). On either side of these three modules is a squared-off enclosure housing additional functions; its brownish green fiber-cement panels transition to the exterior through a glass panel at each end of the exam-room corridor. Alt notes that the stainless-steel fasteners dotting the fiber-cement pan-





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els "give a sense of how the building is put together, in a way that kids can relate to."

The building also boasts a few notable "green" features. With Dr. D's blessing, Coen + Partners, Minneapolis, selected drought-resistant and rain-water-filtering prairie grasses for the area immediately surrounding the building, and a filtration pond captures parking lot runoff. The facility also employs an energy-efficient heating and cooling system that circulates 55-degree water (the ground temperature year-round) via a geothermal pump through the building's concrete slab for radiant summer cooling; in winter, the water is heated a mere 15 degrees for warmth.

One of the Honor Awards jurors noted that "going to the dentist is rarely a pleasant experience, but this building could make it so." It's no surprise, then, that the Dalseth practice saw a twofold increase in new patients and a 25 percent increase in revenue in the two years following the opening of the building in May 2002. Good design will have that effect.

Dalseth Family Dental Clinic
 Apple Valley, Minnesota
 ALTUS Architecture + Design
 Minneapolis, Minnesota



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