

The Uses of Beauty

Santiago Calatrava, architect-engineer, is the designer of the New York Port of Authority's new subway terminal at the World Trade Center. It will open in 2008. I plan to be there soon after to celebrate not only the vision of this lovely man, but also the triumph of beauty over terror.

I believe that our context forms the soul of man. The Gothic cathedrals were designed and built by a people not only to demonstrate their faith, but also to make a physical context in which such faith could grow. Remember, the Goths were barbarians. They were often the terrorists of their time. Gothic architecture not only raised cathedrals, but also transformed the soul of a century.

In Gothic architecture... form, idea and material link together. It has a symbolism that goes beyond functionality. It is the symbolism that makes people grow. We want to create a building which is readable, even a hundred years from now...

As I looked at the design of the new hub, metaphysical and transcendent through the use of light, glass and steel, I realized that terrorists could not

In an interview with Charlie Rose, Calatrava said, *"Architecture is always like that. Architecture surprises everybody, even the architect. Sometimes I go into spaces I have created, and I see the shadows and light and recognize something which I have never seen in my mind. Put all those materials together and they start speaking their own language, in an independent way."*

What has all this to do with the design and implementation of dialogue education? Everything! We create a context for learning as we design with the principles and practices. We create a beautiful space in the midst of a world of death and destruction, pain and suffering, oppression and domination. Such beauty is operative. It works, as Santiago Calatrava's subway station made of sunlight and steel works.

"Sometimes I go into spaces I have created, and I see the shadows and light and recognize something which I have never seen in my mind." Use dialogue education and prepare to be surprised.