

Mitchell Wall Architecture & Design Is Recognized By The 2022 Architecture Awards, Won An Honorable Mention For Its Cascade Mausoleum

by Emily Guyer

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ST. LOUIS - [Mitchell Wall Architecture & Design](#) is proud to announce its Cascade Mausoleum is recognized by the 2022 Architecture Awards. [Architecture MasterPrize](#) gave the mausoleum, located in Bellefontaine Cemetery in St. Louis, an Honorable Mention in Architectural Design.

A mausoleum had not been built in Bellefontaine Cemetery for over 70 years. Then a family approached Thomas Wall of Mitchell Wall Architecture & Design to design a mausoleum. They trusted Wall and his process and allowed him to express his creativity without financial or aesthetic restrictions.

“Thomas has an amazing appreciation of art and beauty,” said the client, who wishes to remain anonymous. “He has the unique ability to extract, cultivate, and realize a vision that goes far beyond simple bricks and mortar. Mitchell Wall does not miss a detail.”

Built at a cost of \$5.3 million, the structure with a solid concrete core encased in granite panels and blocks overlooks Cascade Lake. Visitors are invited to sit down, climb a staircase for the view, or admire stained-glass windows.

“In all my research, one idea kept occurring: mausoleums are, by and large, never built for the living. They are designed to encapsulate a crypt and provide a small space for family members to mourn. I wanted this mausoleum to be more,” said Thomas Wall, Owner and Lead Architect of Mitchell Wall Architecture & Design. “I designed a building that is interactive for everyone. This is a space where people can celebrate life while remembering those who have passed.”

Wall developed a 3x3 grid. The elements of man - mind, body, and spirit - run east to west. The Holy Trinity - the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - run north to south. At each intersection of the grid, design moments occur.

- The mind is represented by benches, which allow people to sit down and reflect. Each bench has a biblical quote inspiring thought of the Holy Trinity.
- The body is represented by three gates leading into the crypt, each with a reference to the Holy Trinity.
- The spirit is represented by three stained glass windows, each showing an element of the Holy Trinity. At sunset, they are illuminated, shining their colored light into the crypt.

There is also a division from an elevation standpoint. When someone is viewing the mausoleum from the outside, among the trees and plants, they are in life. When the viewer climbs the first set of stairs, they are in death. They find themselves under an oppressive amount of stone that opens to a stair inviting the viewer to ascend. Once they

ascend the second flight of stairs, the viewer is in the afterlife, on the terrace and overlooking the cemetery.

December 20 is the client's birthday, and Wall wanted to celebrate that date in the design of the building. It was calculated that, at noon, the sun would be at an angle of 27.9 degrees from the horizon. A 32,000-pound 9x9x2 ft wall of granite stands at the top of the staircase. In it, a cross was cut at this precise angle and functions as a sundial.

On the bottom landing, a cross was etched. Each year, the light coming through the wall and the etching of the cross align. Underneath the etching is a time capsule for the family to store mementos.

While there is no name on the mausoleum, there is a sculpture of a lion standing at the front, a symbol the family uses to represent itself. The lion sculpture is by Abraham Mohler, the stained-glass windows are by Emil Frei & Associates, and the construction is by Tarlton Corporation.

The Cascade Mausoleum is registered with the North American Sundial Society as [Sundial #1042](#). To learn about more projects by Mitchell Wall Architecture & Design, please visit <https://www.mitchellwall.com/our-projects/>.

ABOUT MITCHELL WALL ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

Mitchell Wall created Mitchell Wall Architecture & Design in 1976 in response to a growing need in St. Louis for high-end residential design. In 2011, his son Thomas took over the business, which now specializes in residential architecture, commercial architecture, and interior design. Projects are being commissioned all over America today. To learn more, please visit <https://www.mitchellwall.com/>.