

MARK

ANOTHER
ARCHITECTURE

MARK #11
DECEMBER 2007 / JANUARY 2008

EUROPE €19.95 / UK £ 14
JAPAN ¥ 3,570 / KOREA 40,000 WON
CANADA \$ 29.50 / USA \$ 24.95

BY THE MAKERS OF
FRAME

HOUSING
IN MARRIAGE



AND:
PETER ZUMTHOR: LOST IN RELIGION
CLIMB EVERY MOUNTAIN WITH ZAHA HADID
SADOMASOCHISTIC ARCHITECTURE



CROSS SECTION.



PLAN.

- 01 CORRIDOR
- 02 KITCHEN
- 03 LIVING AREA
- 04 STAIRS TO STUDY AND ROOF TERRACE
- 05 COMBINED BEDROOM BATHROOM
- 06 STORAGE

BROTHER WHERE ART THOU?

ZECC
APARTMENT
UTRECHT

THE ALTAR WAS GIVEN AWAY AND THE CHANDELIER NOW HANGS IN THE BEDROOM: ZECC HAS CONVERTED A CHAPEL INTO AN APARTMENT.

TEXT ARTHUR WORTMANN
PHOTO CORNBREAD

The decline in church attendance over the last several decades has meant that countless churches across the Netherlands have lost their function. They are crumbling, are demolished, or are put to new uses. Their specific architectural features often fall by the wayside in this process. Not every church can be turned into a municipal exhibition hall, and if, for example, a residential use is chosen, the

original spatial qualities are usually lost. Not in Utrecht, where the young Dutch firm Zecc has converted a chapel into an apartment. The success of the enterprise lies in its scale: the chapel was comparatively small, and the client wanted a spacious home. This proved a match, and a unique 'residential chapel' is the result.

The chapel was part of a large housing complex of the Friars of Utrecht, which at its height, around the mid-20th century, housed 217 residents. The remaining 13 elderly friars, however, moved to a nursing home in 2005, and the complex was divided up and converted into about 40 apartments. The chapel caught the eye of an estate agent, who had it transformed into a home for himself. Thanks to his predilection for large open spaces, the chapel

can be experienced in all its spatial grandeur. And who else can say they have a church organ from 1951 in their house?

The chapel is not visible from the street. Apparently it was not designated as a landmark building because the city had 'forgotten' it existed. This is part of the charm of the project: it is hidden away in the centre of the old city, and after a labyrinthine journey along modest corridors and stairwells, one is startled to find oneself inside a spacious, white, peaceful world. What's more, the client is hooked. He has now bought a larger church in which to live; the building permit application is ongoing, and Zecc is once again the architect.

WWW.ZECC.NL