

YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL News Release

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Global Village Shelters installed on Yale campus

NEW HAVEN, CT— “What does it mean to build the city of God today?”

That is a question posed by Judith Dupré, a Yale Divinity School student from Mamaroneck, NY who curated the installation of six Global Village Shelters on Sterling Divinity Quadrangle—home of Yale Divinity School, Berkeley Divinity School at Yale, and the Yale Institute of Sacred Music.

Her answer: “At the Divinity School, I’m investigating the nature of sacred architecture. At a time when half the world lives on less than two dollars a day, what’s sacred is the provision of basic shelter.”

Inexpensively manufactured GVS shelters are used as transitional homes and health clinics in Pakistan, Grenada, and Afghanistan. The public installation, erected Jan. 23 and on display until the end of February, is intended to raise social consciousness and provide practical knowledge to graduates who might eventually work with the world’s poorest communities.

“The Global Village Shelter can create communities and individual homes while preserving dignity, property, and hope for people in need,” said Mia Ferrara Pelosi, part of the father-daughter architectural team based in Morris, CT that designed the shelters and donated them for this installation. “The shelter’s simple and effective design has a direct correlation with its action in the field. Simple on-site set up, clean aesthetics, and a concise solution to a vast problem; these elements allow our design to be both humble and grand in its humanitarian endeavor.”

The innovative design permits assembly of units in under a half hour, using common tools. Manufactured by Weyerhaeuser, the paper company, the houses are made of laminated corrugated cardboard that is waterproof, fire resistant, biodegradable, and can withstand most climates for at least 18 months. As architectural types they are unique, having greater stability and offering more privacy than tents, but costing a fraction of other temporary shelters now on the market.

As stark and simple as the homes might appear, they would be considered a profound luxury in most refugee camps, Dupré notes. Typically, refugees live in open fields, and for the lucky ones home is a ragged plastic tarp that provides little defense against rain or running waste.

The installation puts Sterling Divinity Quadrangle in company with a number of distinguished venues where the shelters have already been displayed, including the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Aspen Ideas Festival, Fortune's Brainstorm Conference, Washington D.C.'s National Building Museum, Oregon Museum of Science and Industry. Global Village Shelters are a part of the Museum of Modern Art's permanent collection.

At the exhibition's conclusion, the shelters will be available to anyone having use for them and the willingness to take them away.

Sterling Divinity Quadrangle is located at 409 Prospect St., New Haven.

Photos

Photo cutlines (all photos taken by Judith Dupré):

GVS3: Yale Divinity School students position roof on Global Village Shelter

GVS7: Six Global Village Shelters on Sterling Divinity Quadrangle

David Dill-GVS: Yale Divinity School student David Dill adjusts guy rope on Global Village Shelter.

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