

The First Goetheanum

Part 1: Rudolf Steiner's Architectural Impulse

Anthroposophy is the awareness of the divine wisdom incorporated in the complete human being

Rudolf Steiner's First Goetheanum

This unique building was in existence for less than ten years just over a hundred years ago. It was designed by Rudolf Steiner as an earthly home for the spirit of anthroposophy: **Anthroposophia**.

In this presentation I will give some background on:

- ❖ **Part 1: Rudolf Steiner and his artistic architectural impulse.**
- ❖ Part 2: The evolution of architectural monuments/temples through the ages.
- ❖ Part 3: The Geometry of the Building.
- ❖ Part 4: Building construction.
- ❖ Part 5: The Art within.

Brief outline of Rudolf Steiner's life

Rudolf Steiner was born in Kraljevec (Croatia) on 25 February 1861 as eldest of 3 children to Austrian parents. Educated near or in Vienna, Austria.

Second 21 Years: 21 to 42y:

1882-89. Vienna. Edited the scientific writings of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe – Kürschners edition.

1890-97. Weimar. Goethe-Schiller Archives. Wrote his masterpiece *Philosophy of Spiritual Activity [Freiheit]*.

1899-1904. Berlin. Worker's Educational Institute – expelled for not being a Marxist.

Third 21 Years: 42 to 63y,

1902-12. The Theosophical Society. Appointed leader of German section with the proviso that he would lecture out of his own insights into spiritual worlds.

Expelled for not supporting Annie Besant's assertions about Krishnamurti.

Those who followed him formed the ***Anthroposophical Society*** around him.

1913-22. Dornach. Building the First Goetheanum, Dornach, Switzerland, which was burnt down after 9 years.

1919-24 Waldorf School in Stuttgart.

Last Years. 63y on.

1923. Dornach. Christmas Foundation of General Anthroposophical Society as leader.

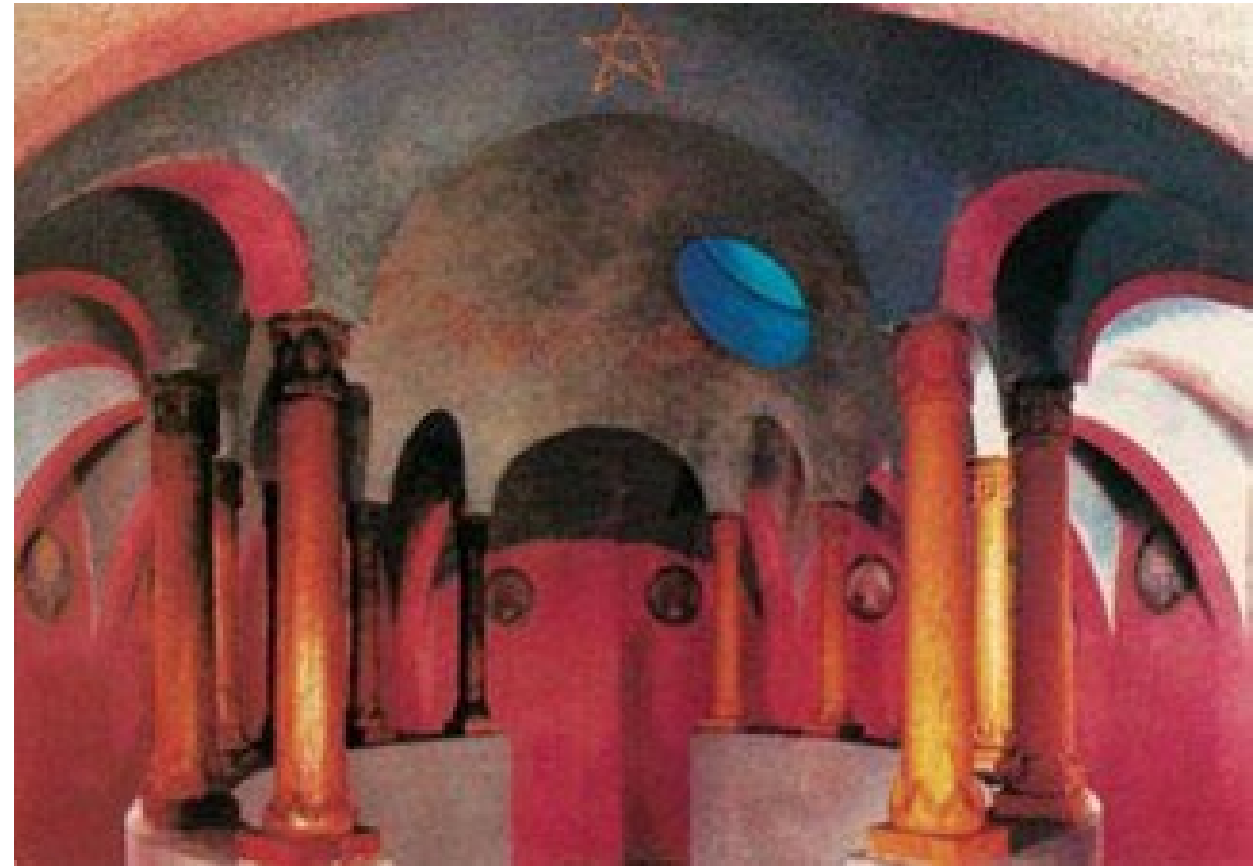
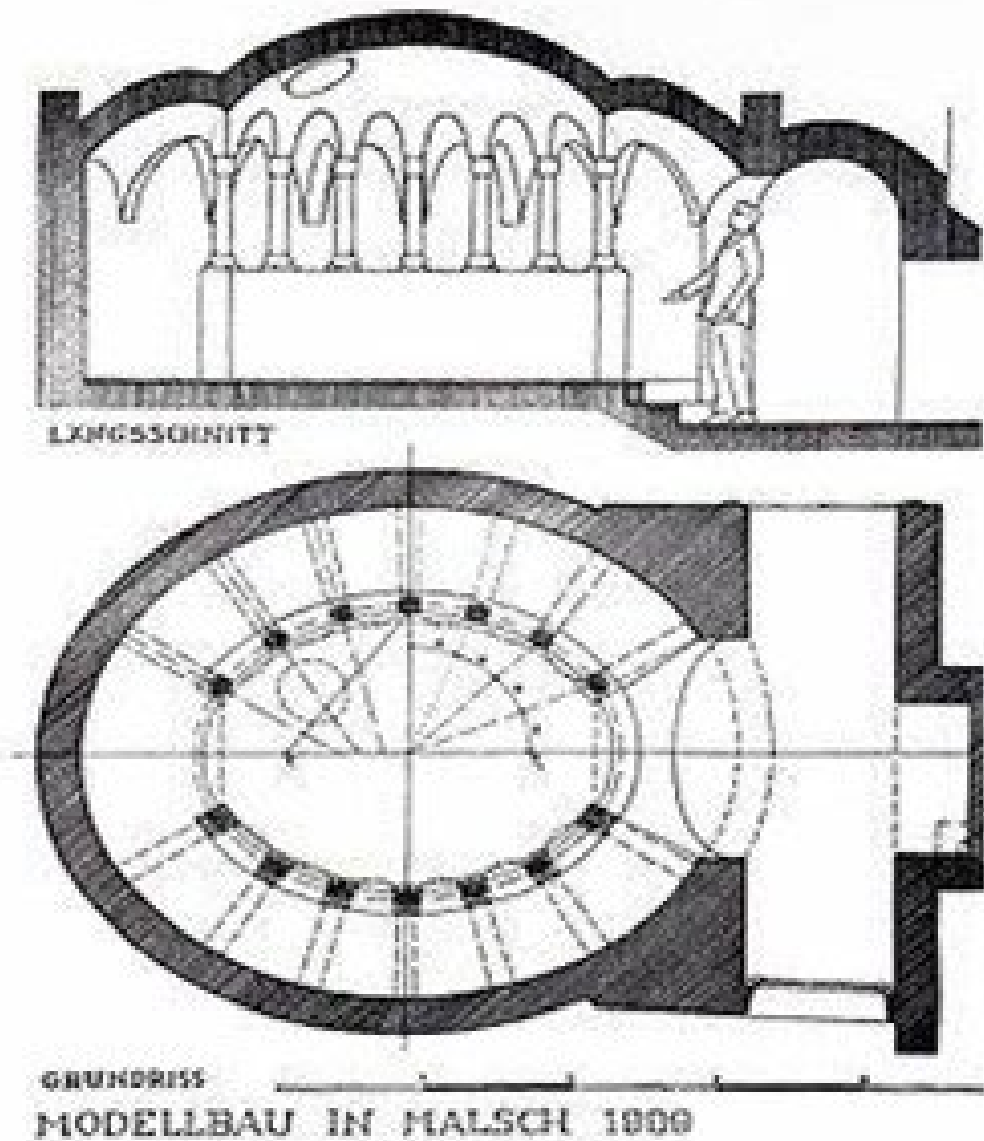
1924 Starts School of Spiritual Science. Courses on Education, Medicine, Health, Biodynamics, Christianity.

Very busy lecturing all over Europe until he falls ill end of September.

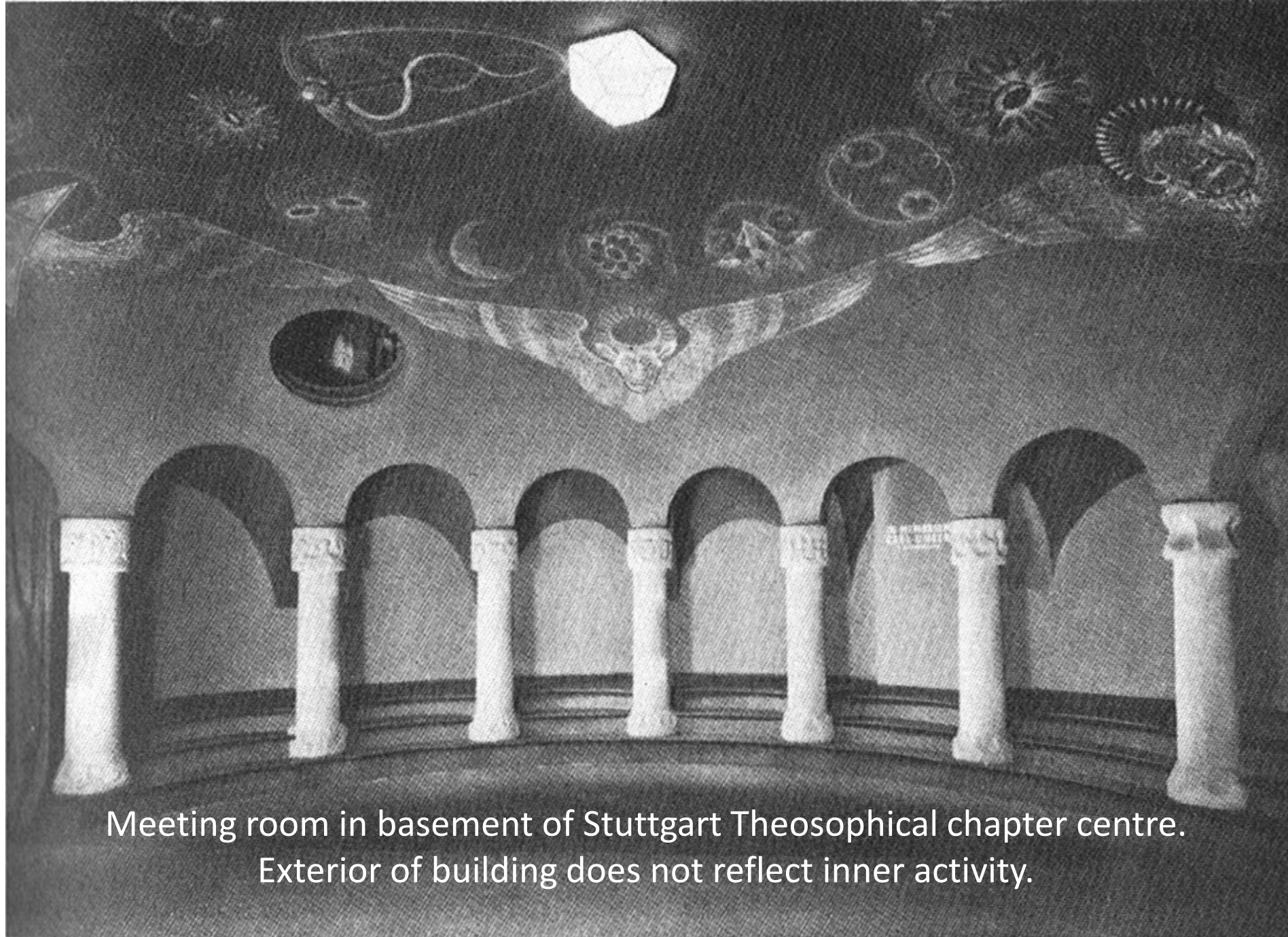
1925. Dies on 31 March.

Building Initiatives

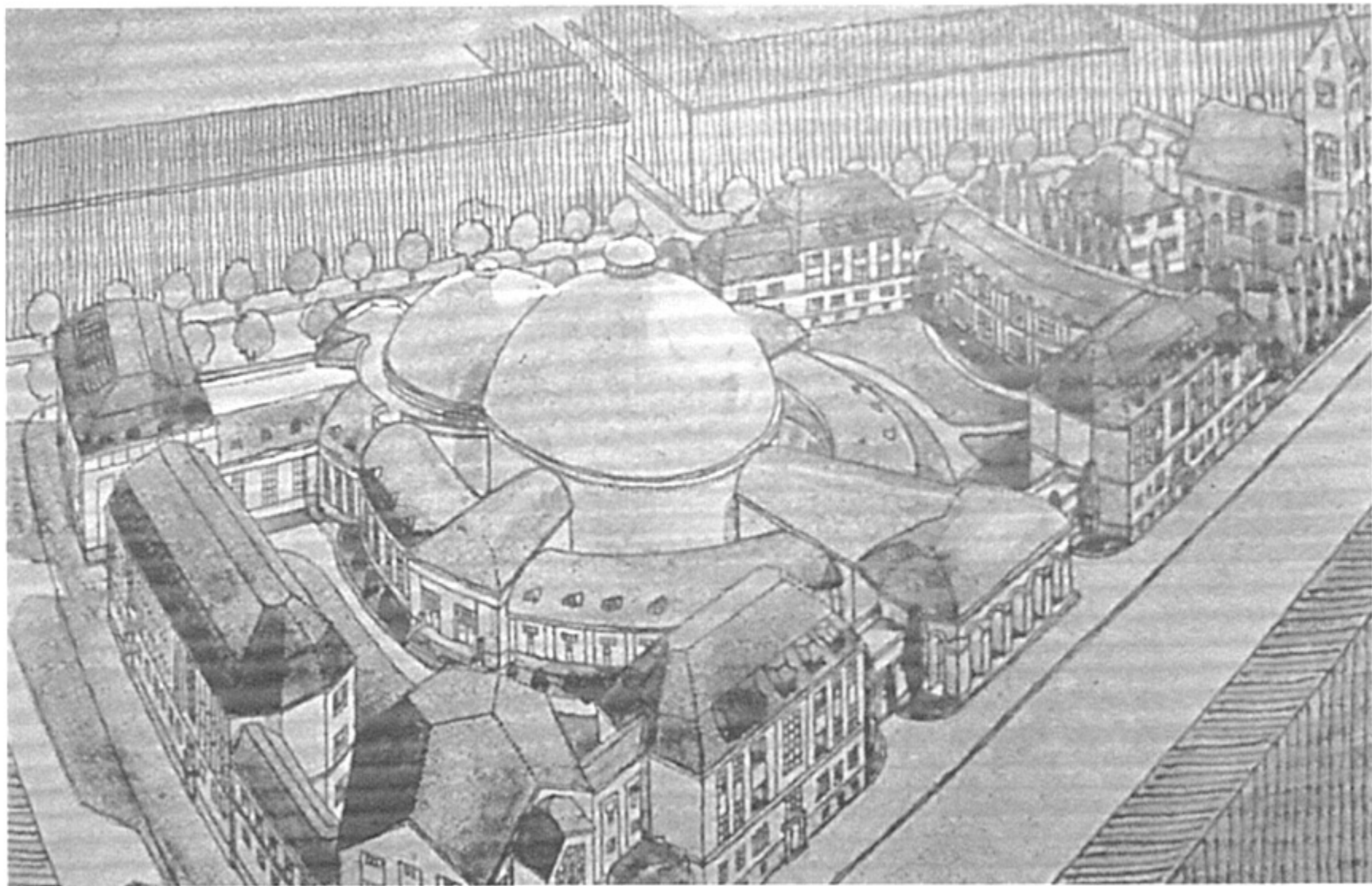
- Rudolf Steiner was involved with a number of initiatives to create a suitable home for the study of Anthroposophy.
- 1907. The Theosophical Society Congress in Munich – decorates the hall with curtains, painted columns and circular designs.
- **1908.** Karl Stockmeyer[21y], impressed by the Munich designs, asks RS for advice (*“Imagine an elliptical space enclosed on both sides by a row of 7 columns supporting an ellipsoidal dome ... with an ambulatory behind the columns”*) and creates a scale-model building in Malsch, near Stuttgart.
- **1910.** Stuttgart chapter of the Theosophical Society builds a centre with a basement similar to Malsch model (not visible outwardly to the public).
- 1911-12. Plans to build a double-domed Theatre (Johannes-bau) in Munich does not get city authorities’ approval, so abandoned.
- 1913-22. Building starts on the wooden Goetheanum on gifted land in Dornach, near Basel. Switzerland. Artistic aspect predominately inward. Burnt down on 31-12-1922.
- 1924. Rudolf Steiner designs a second Goetheanum to be built in concrete with forms more outwardly visible. Not circular – more trapezoidal.



Karl Stockmeyer's Malsch model



Meeting room in basement of Stuttgart Theosophical chapter centre.
Exterior of building does not reflect inner activity.



Bird's-eye view of Munich project, 1911

