**VOTIVE CHAPEL FROM RECYCLED MATERIAL**

**location:**

WROCŁAW, ŻERNIKI (WROCŁAW MOTORWAY BYPASS – AOW)

**team:**

Maćków Pracownia Projektowa: Zbigniew Maćków, Eliasz Matuła

Witwicki, Monika Kalinowska, Aneta Roguszczak, Anna Piekarowicz

**client:**

local parish of St Lawrence

**photo:**

Maciej Lulko, Eliasz Matuła

**text:**

The chapel resulted from the need for a gesture that is quite rare today – a votive offering for the construction of Wrocław Motorway Bypass (AOW). For this task, we decided to transpose the traditional sacred model into contemporary forms and meanings. The sacred sphere, historically enclosed by the outline of the volume of the cult object, in this case has been delimited symbolically. Due to the continuous interaction with AOW, we decided to establish arbitrary boundaries in space. The EPCH 420 energy-consuming traffic barriers create five offset rings, virtually cut out space and make it “safe” in the semantic layer. In order not to interrupt the circumference of the rings, we decided to lift them slightly so that it is possible to enter inside while creating a moment of climax of the form highlighted by a religious symbol. The geometry of the polygons and the supports elements determines the centre of gravity, which was used as a point of reference for a bench for contemplation. In this way, a simple interaction was created between the user and the busy motorway, filtered through religious symbolism.

The vast majority of the elements used to build the chapel comes from recycling and dismantling. The bent barriers still bear traces of traffic accidents; maybe one of them even saved somebody’s life. The concrete and asphalt used for the base surface lay abandoned after the construction of the motorway, overgrowing with weeds. At a time of public discussion about excess and ubiquitous kitsch, we managed to convince church representatives to the modern form and “thinking with recycling.” This is an extremely important experience for us.

The structure is completely open and accessible to everyone. Located by an emerging recreational trail, it can give brief respite for people not seeking contact with religion. Abandoned amongst ceaseless traffic, to be surrounded by a flowery meadow that is currently being designed, the chapel intrigues due to its geometry and may contribute to breaking patterns and leaving the ruts of formal correctness in the design of sacred objects.