

Central Synagogue

New York, New York

Owner

Central Synagogue

Client

Hardy Holzman & Pfeiffer Associates, LLP

Restoration Architect

DPK&A Architects, LLP

Construction Manager

F.J. Sciamie Construction Co., Inc.

Completion Date

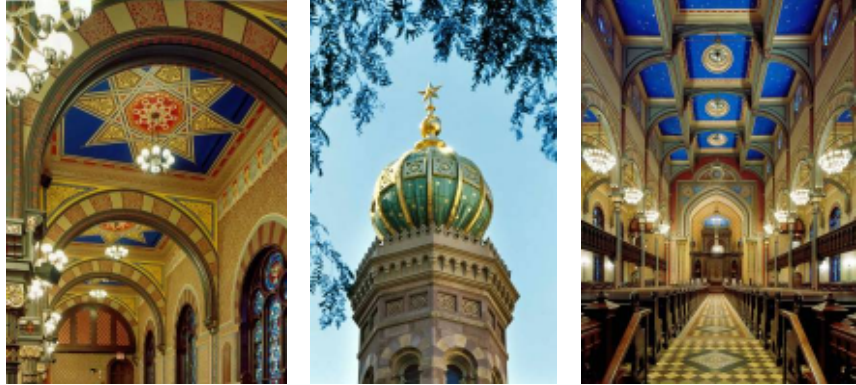
2001

Construction Cost

\$40 million

Total Area

70,000 sf



Central Synagogue, built in 1872, is the oldest synagogue in continual usage in New York City. Designed by Henry Fernbach of Germany, the design is loosely called "Moorish-Islamic Revival."

On August 28, 1998, a fire developed during renovations to the building which destroyed most of the timber roof and water from the fire fighting effort caused much damage to the building. Within hours of the fire, DPK&A Restoration Architects and Thornton Tomasetti were working to survey structural damage to the synagogue and design a temporary scaffolding-supported roof to protect the interior.

The scope of the project included reinforcing the original timber truss system, excavating the cellar to create a larger public gathering space below the sanctuary, and integrating a modern HVAC system into the historic building.

The challenges encountered by all members of the project team in rebuilding the synagogue were numerous. The scope of the project – with more than 700 workers from 70 firms – was enormous; and its three-year, fast-track schedule required careful coordination and cooperation among all team members.

With the hard work and dedication of hundreds of design professionals, contractors, craftsmen and other workers, a "miracle" was performed and the structure was returned to its original glory. As the synagogue's chief rabbi said during a gathering of all of the construction workers to celebrate the completion of the work, this "miracle" is a tribute to the level of professionalism and craftsmanship of the New York construction and design trades.

This project was awarded The National Trust for Historic Preservation's *National Preservation Honor Award*, New York Construction News' 2001 *Restoration Project of the Year*, the Preservation League of New York State's *Project Excellence Award* and the Lucy G. Moses *Preservation Award* for 2001.



Central Synagogue before the restoration



After the restoration

