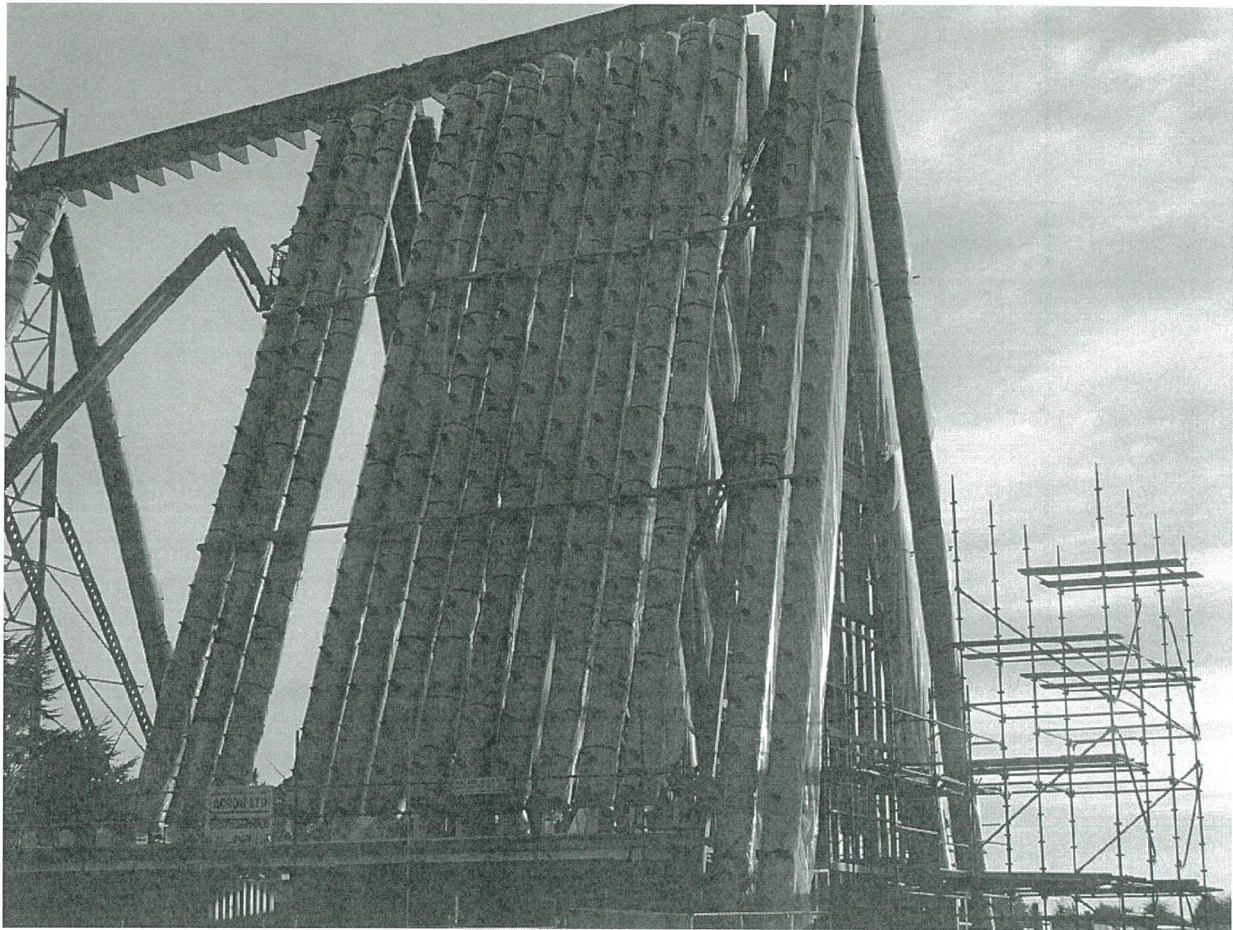




Porada, 2013

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Shigeru Ban's Cardboard Cathedral Underway in New Zealand



Written by **Barbara Porada**

March 17, 2013

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Shigeru Ban just can't get enough of paper tubes. The Japanese architect, renowned for his design of structures that can be quickly and inexpensively erected in disaster zones, is at it again in the city of Christchurch, New Zealand, which was hit hard by a devastating earthquake last February. The earthquake of magnitude 6.3 killed over 200 people and inflicted irreparable damage on the city's iconic gothic cathedral of 132 years. The cathedral was a copy of one in Oxford, England, and was one of the most famous landmarks of the Christchurch, pictured on postcards, souvenirs and tea towels.

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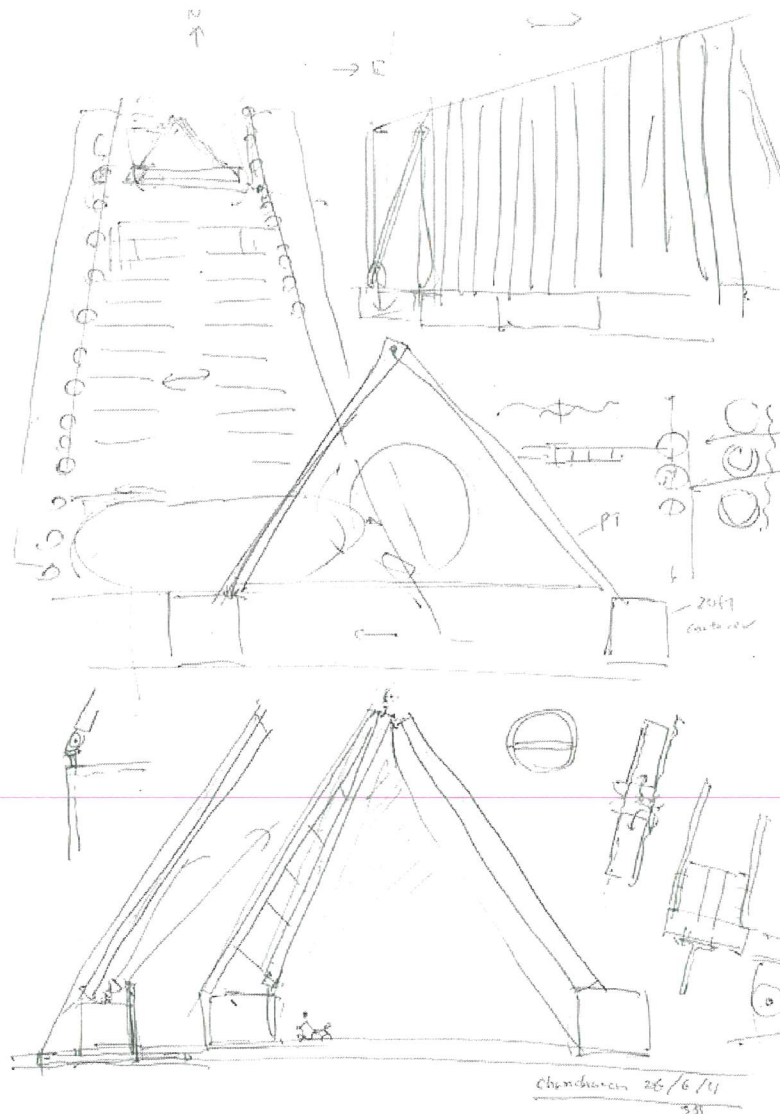


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inexpensive recycled materials were even a concern in architecture.

Read more about Ban's visionary Cardboard Cathedral after the break...



Ban's simple structure rests on a deep concrete foundation, with eight shipping containers sitting on top - four on each side - to stabilize the cathedral's sloping walls. These walls, coming together at a point 70 feet above the altar, are comprised of 96 cardboard tubes. Church officials wanted Ban to use his signature cardboard tubes for the cathedral, but the architect decided it was more important to use tubes manufactured locally, even though they were too small to support his structure. This problem was resolved quickly by internally reinforcing each tube with local laminated wood beams. Finally, two-inch gaps between the tubes will allow light to filter into the Cardboard Cathedral, creating a peaceful and

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"People are not killed by earthquakes, they're killed by collapsing buildings," claims Ban. "That's the responsibility of architects, but the architects are not there when people need some temporary structure because we're too busy working for (the) privileged. Even a temporary structure can become a home."

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Victoria Matthews, Bishop of Christchurch Cathedral, could not agree more with Ban's vision, having firsthand experience with the earthquake and its heartbreaking aftermath. "At this point, what [the city of] Christchurch needs above all else is something to celebrate," she says. "There's been so much loss, so much sadness [and] we've said goodbye to so many things. To be able to put up this cathedral quickly and effectively and be able to worship there and invite people in will be absolutely terrific."

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The Cardboard Cathedral will be the largest paper tube structure of Shigeru Ban's career thus far. The cathedral will have a capacity of 700 people and will be used not only as a place of worship, but also as an event and concert space. Shigeru Ban plans to finish the Cardboard Cathedral by April of 2013, while he works on similar paper structures in Russia, India, Switzerland and beyond. Church authorities see the design as temporary, erected for no more than 10 years until the original cathedral can be restored, but the Japanese architect hopes that the enthusiastic response already apparent in Christchurch residents will make the new cathedral permanent.

"Even a building made of cardboard can be permanent if people love it," said Ban.

'Cardboard' cathedral rises in New Zealand



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References: *Shigeru Ban Architects, BBC, designboom, Architectural Record*

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