



The original synagogue interior



The synagogue after restoration

WORSHIP PROJECT

HAMPSTEAD SYNAGOGUE

West Hampstead, London

CLIENT:

UNITED SYNAGOGUE

ARCHITECT:

STEPHEN LEVRANT: HERITAGE ARCHITECTURE LTD

COST:

£2,400,000

The Past

Hampstead Synagogue dates to 1892 and is a Grade II* listed building. Designed by Delissa Joseph to an unusual octagonal form with magnificent dome, it has been extended and altered a number of times over the years. These alterations include the beautiful marble and alabaster decoration added in 1923/4. There are also glorious stained glass windows, originally added over the years to a concept by Solomon J Solomon, with windows designed by Maurice Sochachewsky replacing war damaged pieces in 1946. Unfortunately a lack of maintenance and the building's age resulted in a sad state of repair, with poor electrics and heating.

Transformation

After many years of fund raising the congregation were able to transform the building into something barely recognisable. The synagogue has been returned to its former glory, newly decorated to an historically accurate colour scheme. The wonderful stained glass windows, externally illuminated at night, shine down on the worshippers who can now enjoy totally reconditioned and redesigned toilets (with hot water!) and cloakrooms. The behind-the-scenes offices have been similarly modernized.

Light and Warmth

The old heating system included some original decorated cast iron radiators (Duet radiators manufactured by the Gurney Foundry in Toronto), with numerous and varied cast iron replacements, none of which worked. The days of shivering are gone, however, with a completely new heating system being installed, the historic Duet radiators being retained in a decorative role. The electrical services have obviously been renewed, with lighting brought up to modern standards, for which the lighting consultants, Light Perceptions, designed fittings for the hall based on the 1902 originals. A range of highly sophisticated controls keep everything running smoothly.

Award Winning

The restoration project came runner up in the 2010 RICS London building conservation award.