

# PROFESSIONAL LIGHTING DESIGN



Magazine for professional lighting design

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### ⇒ Coming to rest

#### New roof enclosure for the archaeological ruins of St. Maurice's Abbey in Switzerland.

St. Maurice's Abbey is almost 1500 years old. It is situated at the foot of a mountain between Geneva and Simplon Pass. The site did not turn out to be as beneficial for the abbey as hoped. Instead of providing protection, the mountain caused considerable damage over the years. In 1611 a massive rockslide practically destroyed the building, and in 1942 falling rock destroyed the spire, the portal and the nave. Given the significance of the project, which was built on the ruins of a Roman shrine around 500 B.C., the architects engaged to provide a solution for the historical site developed the idea of preserving the archaeological ruins by demonstrating

the threat the building has lived under throughout history.

The new 'roof' comprises a rectangular steel grid with 170 tons of stones spread evenly over it, filtering the daylight and generating a calm and almost contemplative ambience on the historical site.

The roof enclosure is installed above the foundations to maintain the dialogue between the facades and the rock face.

Time will tell how the mountain will respond. In the meantime, the abbey has come to rest, this time indeed sheltered by the natural forces that surround it.

#### Project team:

Client: Abbaye de St-Maurice, St-Maurice/CH

Architects: Savioz Fabrizio Architectes, Sion/CH  
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Civil engineers: Alpatec sa, Martigny/CH  
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Photos: Thomas Jantscher; www.jantscher.ch

