

The Sunflower

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A drawing of the geometry of a sunflower was given to me by Ann Tyng in 1970. It demonstrated how the spirals determine the growth of the sunflower seeds, and that the spiral proceeds in the golden progression. It is Undoubtedly one of the great marvels of nature.

In the early 1970s I attempted to use the sunflower geometry in the Ramot Housing in Jerusalem: the resulting plan bears no resemblance to the sunflower, although it is based on pentagonal symmetry related to the golden section. I was much more successful in the application of the geometry in the design of the City Centre of Ramat Hasharon. This project however remained unrealised.

Finally, the Jewish School in Berlin provided me with the opportunity to pursue my fascination with the phenomenon of the sunflower's phenomena a little bit further: adapted to fit the program of the school, the sunflower lost much of its precise geometrical structure, but it retained its dynamic and organic character, with resonances intimately related to the nature of education.