



MOSAIC

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REDISCOVERING THE LOST ART OF PATRONAGE

The By/For Project is building bridges between churches and artists.

By Brian Moss

In Exodus 31, God called Bezalel and Oholiab to help with the construction of the Tabernacle and gifted them through the Spirit with the artistic ability to complete the task. But like all artists, they could not do their work in a vacuum. They needed a commissioning from their community and the materials to work with.

I believe, partly because I have met so many of them, that there are hundreds of artists within the church today who are waiting for a commission. While music has long played a front and center role in the church, the visual arts, dance, and poetry are making their way into more and more congregations. I want to tell you about a new model of artist patronage that I have been involved with called By/For that is already connecting artists and the church.

By the church, for the church

By/For (www.byfor.org) is the brainchild of Lance Mansfield, a software designer, who developed the idea in



The Descending of New Jerusalem by Scott Erickson. Acrylic on panel, 24"x24". 2008.

concert with Nashville singer/songwriter Michael Card and New York painter Makoto Fujimura. By/For stands for “by the church, for the church.” Lance had long witnessed the power of homegrown worship art in the church and wanted to find new ways of encouraging and distributing this kind of work. If worship

is, among other things, a response to God, then it makes perfect sense for the worship of any congregation to include art born within the congregation.

In January of 2008, I traveled to Franklin, Tennessee, with Kurt Dyrhsen and Molly McCue to work with Michael Card on the first By/For project. Kurt, Molly, and I were worship leaders at different churches in the Seattle area. Because of the generous patronage of these three churches, we were able to record *Sweet Sacrifice* (byfor.org/project_sweet_sacrifice.html), a collection of songs

for Lent. Since the church had given us the means by which to make the record, we in return gave the songs back to the church. All of the music was made available for free via the Creative Commons license. We also toured among the patron churches and performed the music in a live concert setting.



By What Blessedness Do I Weep? by Jen Grabarczyk. Acrylic on canvas (two panels), 25"x36". 2008

The Vancouver Project

Building on the reception of this first project, I put together a group of six up-and-coming visual artists from the Pacific Northwest—Scott Kolbo, Christen Mattix, Scott Erickson, Jen Grabarczyk, Jeremy Mangan, and Matt Whitney—to go to Regent College in Vancouver, British Columbia, for two weeks of uninterrupted art making. Five churches and two graduate schools jumped on board in support of the project. Working with the triple theme of “the beautiful, the grotesque, and the sublime,” these artists created what became The Vancouver Project (www.byfor.org/project_vancouver.html).

We invited all of the patron organizations to an opening in downtown Seattle during the regular First Thursday Art Walk. By displaying the artwork at Fat Tiger studios, a gallery not associated with any church, we introduced it to the diverse, and mostly un-churched, city of Seattle.

Over five hundred people attended the opening, and we were excited by the response, which included a recommendation from *The Seattle Times*. Since then, the work has traveled to each of the supporting churches and graduate schools and received a warm welcome. Every exhibit opening has included a reception where the

artists could connect with church members and talk about their art and art-making process.

While some of the churches had regularly hosted art exhibits in the past, others were doing so for the very first time. Harry Weidenaar from First Christian Reformed Church in Seattle says the congregation



Artists of the Vancouver Project (left to right): Matthew Whitney, Jeremy Mangan, Scott Erickson, Christen Mattix, Jen Grabarczyk, and Scott Kolbo.

was so taken in by the exhibit that they are talking about permanently turning their lobby area into a gallery space. Harry writes, “The By/For art not only sparked discussion among church members about the paintings, but it also revealed to us how well our building hangs art. Now we’ve developed a thirst to see more, experience more, talk more about art and its relevance to us. Our hope is that we can someday use our building as a gallery to display the works of our own church members and others in our community.”

The artists themselves speak of the lasting impact the project has had on them. Christen Mattix, one of the project leaders, writes, “The By/For residency gave me a breathing space in which I was able to reconnect with what my work is about, to see my work as part of bringing God’s kingdom (truth, justice, mercy) here on earth. I had lost my vision, but being in a grace-filled community of Christian artists gave me the courage and the hope to start over again.” The communal aspect of the project had a considerable effect on the other artist facilitator, Scott Kolbo: “Some of my favorite memories of the residency are the quiet buzz of fans in the studio as all of us worked in the same room for hours at a time without speaking, the nightly adventures we had looking for a place to eat, and the privilege of getting to learn the stories behind so many different journeys of faith.”

Practicing patronage

Another artist residency is currently scheduled for August 10-21, 2009, at Regent College, and I hope to see similar projects develop throughout the church. All of us, regardless of our financial means, are patrons of the arts. Whether it is choosing what show to watch (or not to watch) on television or establishing an international center for the arts, we are all making artistic choices that include where we spend our money. So how do we move forward? I would like to suggest three simple steps.

First, pay attention to how God is using artists and their art within your community. Just as God called Bezalel and Oholiab, the Holy Spirit is calling and equipping artists within your midst. Often you will

have to look beyond the doors of your church building. Many artists have felt abandoned by the church and have therefore abandoned the church. Support local artists. Buy their work. Pray for them.

Second, ask these artists about their work. Are there any new projects on the horizon? Many churches have not supported artists because they have not looked for them or known how their work could contribute to the beauty and worship of the congregation. But also be sensitive and discerning in your approach. The church has often faltered in the past by being more concerned with art than the artists who make it. Our patronage of artists can never simply be a means to an end.

Third, consider how you could be an artist’s patron. If you have never partnered with an artist before, read *Art in Service of the Sacred* by Catherine Kapikian and *The Arts in Your Church* by Fiona Bond. If you are interested in working with an artist for a particular commission but do not know of anyone to work with, By/For has several resources to help you get connected. The organization Christians in the Visual Arts (www.civa.org) is another great resource in this regard.

More than enough

Part of what makes the By/For model particularly helpful and challenging is that all of the artists are encouraged to work together in community. This does not necessarily mean collaborating on projects but sharing space. While all of us have different working methods, the “lone wolf” model of art making has probably done more harm than good, especially in the church.

In Exodus 35:30–36:7, we see the people of God working together in community to carry out God’s plan for the Tabernacle. Moses revealed what God had spoken to him about the artists called to the task, and the people listened and responded. It is important for us, especially during this downtime in the economy, not to be overcome by fear but to remember that we serve a God of abundance. This is not some kind of “health and wealth” nonsense, but a reminder that in God we have everything we need. My prayer is that we

would all live out our place in the story and experience again the following verses from Exodus:

Then Moses gave an order and they sent this word throughout the camp: “No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary.” And so the people were restrained from bringing more, because what they already had was more than enough to do all the work. 🌐

Brian Moss is the Worship and Music Coordinator at Regent College in Vancouver, BC, Canada. He has been writing, recording, and performing music for over 15 years. Brian has toured with Michael Card, Jeff Johnson, and others. Read Brian’s blog at www.prayerbookproject.com.



Tall Barn by Jeremy Mangan. Acrylic on canvas, 12"x30", 2008

Envisioning a New Christian Renaissance

The 2009 European Arts Summit

By David Mills

Mittersill, Austria, is a picturesque village nestled at a strategic and historic trading crossroads in the Austrian Alps. Here, in the shadow of some of the Alps' most beautiful and highest snow-capped peaks, lies the nearly cloud-level castle of Schloss Mittersill, whose current buildings date to the 16th century but whose story goes back as far the 12th. At various times in history it has seen witch trials, persecution of Protestants by Catholics, Himmler's SS, and visits from celebrities like the Shah of Iran, Clark Gable, Henry Ford, and Gina Lollobrigida. In 1967, the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students purchased the castle to use as a center for Christian students. The Schloss Mittersill organization now sponsors research, conferences, symposia, sabbaticals, and retreats in the hope of stimulating a new Christian renaissance in Europe.

This historic and aesthetic setting was ideal for the 2009 European Arts Summit, an inaugural collaboration between five Christian networks working in the arts:

[Schloss Mittersill](#), [Stoneworks](#), [Creative Arts Europe](#), [Crescendo](#), and [Arts+](#).

Although significant gatherings of artistic leaders have taken place in the last ten to fifteen years, this was the first collaborative effort hosted by independent pan-European networks for the purpose of strategically, prayerfully, and corporately looking ahead at the potential role of the arts in cultural reformation.

The four-day summit in May brought together over fifty artists, musicians,



teachers, pastors, and arts leaders from fourteen nations and ten different language groups. The eclectic group of delegates included Brian Haab, a sculptor and president of Soul Works Foundation in Basel, Switzerland, an initiative to foster the arts for the benefit of society and to the glory of God; Murray Watts, an English screenwriter who directs the work of Freswick Castle in northern Scotland, a creative haven that seeks to empower an international community of artists to

engage with culture; Daniel Pastircák, a Slovenian theologian, pastor, and playwright with much experience in incorporating the arts into church liturgy; and Jeff Fountain, editor of *HOPE Magazine*, author of *Living as People of Hope*, and director of YWAM Europe since 1990.

Dr. Andrzej Turkanik, president of Schloss Mittersill, welcomed the delegates with a message on the current European zeitgeist and how the arts can play a significant role in igniting a Christian renaissance. Europe is experiencing the effects of post-modern cultural disintegration as it abandons its moral moorings. Christianity has been written off as a harmless social necessity with no relevant voice in contemporary society. Europeans today as never before look to the arts, rather than to government or the church, in order to find transcendent bearings. English poet and author Steve Turner pointed out in his 2001 book *Imagine: A Vision for Christians in the Arts*, "Debates are taking place in cinema, painting, dance,

fiction, poetry, and theater on issues where Christians have something to give . . . I think we should be in those debates as part of our mandate to look after and care for the world."

In the morning sessions of the summit, StoneWorks international director Colin Harbinson spoke on the tumultuous relationship between the church and the arts, the calling and needs of artists, and the call to cultural awareness and transformation. Colin emphasized, "Artists need to be



A moment of levity during small group dialogue

encouraged to exchange mediocrity for excellence, irrelevance for contextualized creativity, compromise for faithfulness, lack of accountability for mentor relationships, and isolation for partnerships.”

Delegates then broke into four focus groups—church, academy, marketplace, and missions—to envision the role of the arts over the next ten to thirty years, to identify the stones preventing forward progress, and to brainstorm practical strategies, partnerships, and resources for removing those stones. The church focus group, for example, formulated this vision statement: “We dream of a future in which the church humbly acknowledges her humanity, celebrates God and His creation, lives out authentic relationships, embraces a diversity of creative artistic expression, affirms artists in their calling, and acts as a catalyst for cultural change inspired by a holistic Christian worldview.” In order to accomplish this, the group laid out three practical steps:

“1. We, as the church, must educate and disseminate an ethos for the arts, the artist, and culture in the church, through the integration of art into our church life and service.


“2. We, as the church, must rediscover and cultivate cultural awareness, openness, and an appreciation of art in the broader

culture, working towards a mutual reconciliation between artists and the church community.

“3. We, as the church, must develop nurturing, caring communities, which welcome the artist and support them in their often arduous and lonely assignment in the broader culture.”

The diversity of nations and cultures represented at the summit created a rich atmosphere for exchange and dialogue, and also a unique challenge. Sharing a biblical

worldview and a belief in the significance of the arts for a Christian renaissance, delegates could learn from each other’s successes and failures at overcoming similar obstacles. New friendships provided the soil for future collaborations. The passion of all the summit delegates was to turn their dialogue and prayers into action and real progress towards cultural reformation through the arts. But at the same time, delegates recognized that specific strategies will differ according to particular national and cultural contexts. One concrete result of the conference will be the publication of a paper for wider distribution and education. The purpose of the document is not only to inform but also to foster ongoing conversation around the topic of “stones” and reformation throughout Europe.

As Colin Harbinson observed, “There can be no doubt that we are at a significant and historic crossroads in what God is doing in, and through, the artist and the arts in Europe. This is not a time for business as usual. Rather, it is an opportunity to take more courageous steps, to dream bigger dreams and to embrace creative partnerships that will empower those visions.” 

David Mills works with Creative Arts Europe and currently lives in Belgium.




Andrea Wellard performs during an evening lounge concert

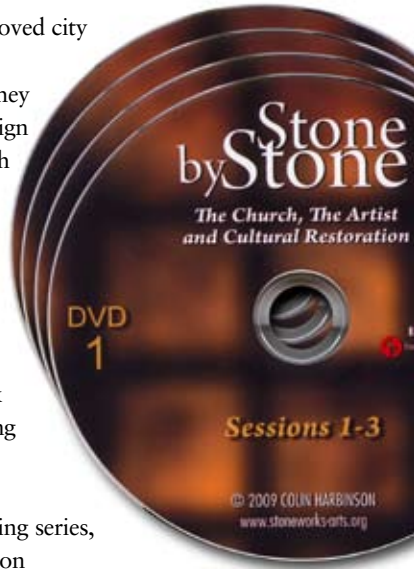
Stone by Stone

A New DVD Teaching Series on the Arts by
StoneWorks International Director Colin Harbinson

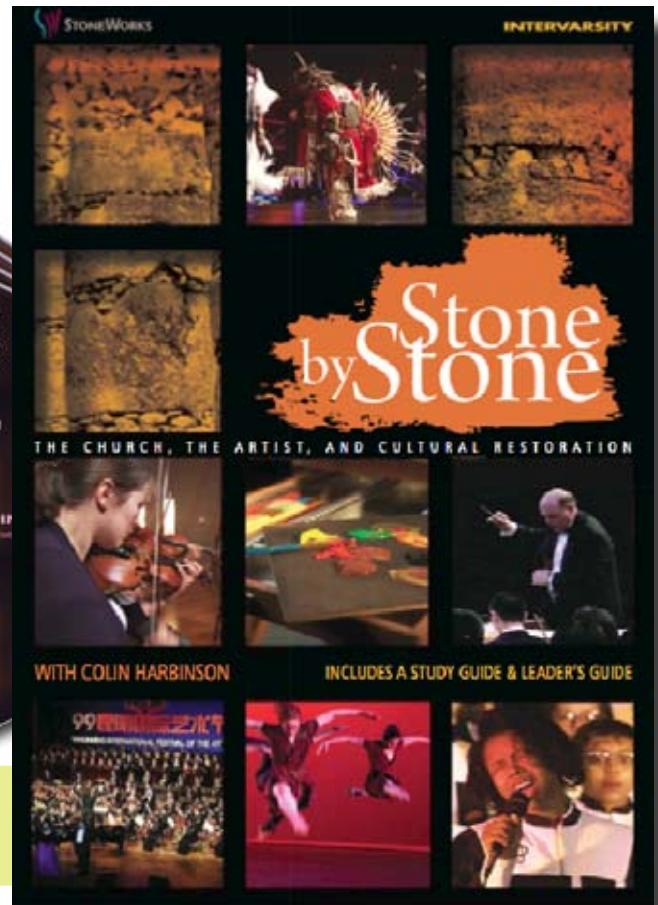
The ancient Jews saw their beloved city of Jerusalem taken apart by the Babylonians “stone by stone.” They were led off to captivity in a foreign land. God used the prophet Isaiah to announce freedom to these captives—they would be allowed to return home—but first, the stones that were blocking their way had to be removed. When they did finally arrive back in Jerusalem, the task that faced them was the rebuilding and restoration of their broken homeland.

In a new nine-part video teaching series, “Stone by Stone,” Colin Harbinson explores some of the stones in the church and in the life of the artist that have prevented us from embracing God’s good gifts of imagination and creativity, and stones that have prevented us from bringing hope and restoration to the brokenness of our surrounding culture. He examines what it means to remove these stumbling blocks and to participate as artists in God’s restoration plan for his creation.

The “Stone by Stone” curriculum, a joint venture by StoneWorks and InterVarsity 2100 Productions, is designed for artists and emerging artists who want to discuss how to connect their creative gifts with God’s redemptive purposes. It is ideal for university arts students, a small group of artists within a church, and members of a music group, orchestra, or dance/theatre company who meet for worship and devotions. The accompanying Study Guide can be used for both personal reflection and small group discussion, and the DVD set includes bonus video material showing Christians engaged in the arts in different contexts, a Leader’s Guide in downloadable PDF format, and a trailer that can be used for promotional purposes. 



For information on ordering the DVD Series and Study Guide, go to www.stoneworks-arts.org/sxs



“Colin Harbinson has done all of us in the artistic world a great service by creating the ‘Stone by Stone’ series. He speaks with great authority for two reasons. First, he knows what Scripture says about God’s intent for the arts better than anyone I know. Second, Colin has lived what he talks about, as a creative artist and as a producer and as a teacher. He has seen God do for artists what the Bible says He wants to do! This discussion series is truly unique and I expect to see the lives of many artists changed through experiencing ‘Stone by Stone.’”

—Dick Ryan, National Director for the Arts, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA

“‘Stone by Stone’ provides an invaluable resource for my undergraduate visual arts majors, introducing them to questions of artistic practice within a Christian worldview. The themes Colin Harbinson addresses in the DVDs and the questions in the Study Guide go right to the heart of the key issues for any Christian student pursuing the arts: questions of identity, individual discipleship, relationship to the church and to the culture, the language of the arts, and much more. ‘Stone by Stone’ is as rewarding in an academic context as it is in a professional, ministry, or church-related setting.”

—Dr. Melissa Hause, Associate Professor of Art History, Belhaven College

The Invisible in the Visible

A review of Images of Faith, CIVA's new digital art gallery

By Melissa T. Hause

A rich visual feast lies in store for viewers of *Images of Faith*, a CD produced by Christians in the Visual Arts (CIVA) in cooperation with the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship. Edited by CIVA founder and former president Sandra Bowden, *Images of Faith* reproduces 100 works by contemporary artists to be used in churches, colleges, and seminaries for teaching, preaching, and devotional purposes.

A number of helpful features enhance *Images of Faith* as a resource. The works of art are organized around four major themes: Creation/Creator, The Fall, Redemption (Life of Christ), and The Life of Faith. An index provides access to image galleries for each theme; from there, viewers can click on thumbnails to see larger views of each work as well as title, medium, dimensions, and links to the artist's name, bio, and contact information. Viewers can also search for works related to specific topics such as Baptism, Celebration, Forgiveness, Incarnation, Miracles, Resurrection, Suffering, and many more.

A refreshingly wide range of subjects, media, and styles appears in the works on the CD. Realistic depictions of biblical narratives—whether in historical or contemporary settings—are juxtaposed with expressionistic, painterly interpretations as well as highly allusive abstractions. Installation pieces with found objects and mixed-media works in two and three dimensions stand alongside oil painting, printmaking, bronze sculpture, and liturgical objects. The mysterious play of lights and darks in silver gelatin photographs contrasts with the bright, celebratory colors of works created in traditional folk idioms.

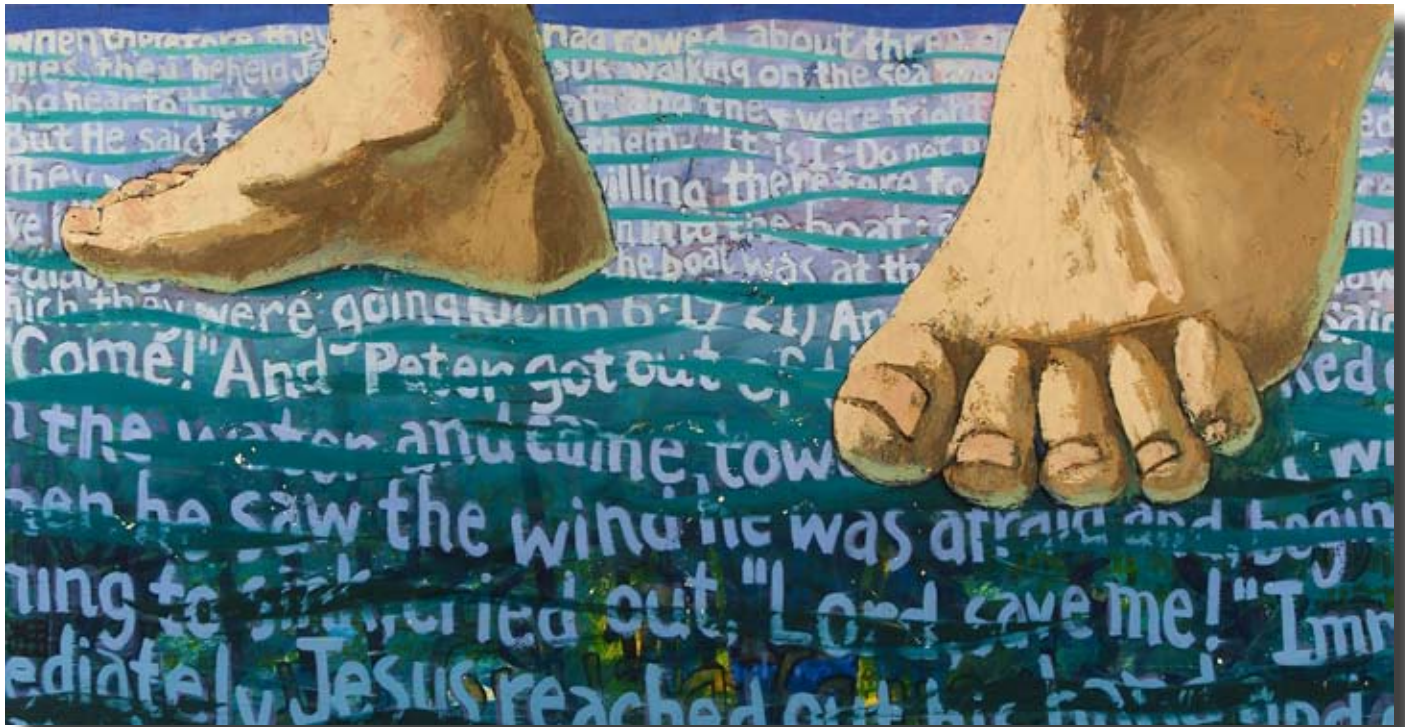
Valuable textual resources are also included on the CD, available to users for handouts, bulletin inserts, and other study purposes. Each work of art is



Joyful Mystery #1: The Annunciation by James Janknegt. Oil on canvas, 30" x 30"



Book of Nails by Sandra Bowden. Mixed media, acrylic and gold leaf, 9" x 6" x 1".



Get Out of the Boat by Wayne Forte. Oil and acrylic on canvas, 60" x 120"

accompanied by a short text explaining its iconography and providing interpretive guidance. An essay by painter Ed Knippers entitled “Resurrection of the Body” elucidates the centrality of the human body not only for his own artistic imagination, but for Christian faith itself: “Disembodiment is not an option for the Christian,” says Knippers. “Our faith comes to naught if the Incarnation was not accomplished in actual time and space—if God did not send His Son to us in a real body with real blood. . . . Without His Body broken for us, . . .

there can be no redemptive resurrection.” Art historian James Romaine likewise emphasizes the uniquely incarnational nature of artistic expression in his essay “From Looking to Seeing: The Visual Aesthetics of Worship.” “Every work of art is a proposition for seeing the immaterial present in the material,” says Romaine. Learning to see the invisible embodied in a work of art helps us learn to see God’s grace in the world and in our lives—eternal rather than merely temporal things. “A sacramental Christian faith requires forms of expres-

sion that are both material and spiritual,” Romaine writes. “The visual arts are uniquely positioned among all forms of creative expression for this vital role in our personal and corporate faith lives.” In the quest for eyes to see, *Images of Faith* provides an excellent starting point. 🌐

Dr. Melissa T. Hause is Associate Professor of Art History and Dean of the Honors College at Belhaven College in Jackson, MS.

Please Give Us Your Feedback

As we work to make MOSAIC as engaging and helpful as possible, we would greatly appreciate your input on the following questions. You can email your responses to stoneworksjt@gmail.com. Thank you for your time!

1. What have been your favorite articles so far?
2. What topics, people, or events would you like to see us cover in the future?
3. How could MOSAIC better fit your needs or the needs of your organization?
4. Do you regularly forward the MOSAIC newsletter to your network, organization, or church group? If so, approximately how many people does this include? (Please encourage the people in your network/group to subscribe to MOSAIC individually. This will help us keep track of who is receiving the newsletter.)

Introducing Christians In Theatre Arts

StoneWorks is eager to support organizations or institutions that exemplify some aspect of our vision to (1) teach Christians to understand and embrace the language of the arts in life and faith, (2) mentor and disciple emerging artists within the Christian community, and (3) restore the arts and renew culture through the recovery of the imagination. In each newsletter, one of these organizations will introduce itself to you.



Mission: To encourage and equip Christians in theatre arts to impact the world and further the kingdom of God.

Christians face unique challenges—and opportunities—when working in the theatre. Christians In Theatre Arts (CITA) has been organized to give Christians a continent-wide support network of other believers who are also theatre artists.

Whether you're leading or participating in a church drama ministry, teaching at a high school or college, or working in the professional theatre, whether you're a performer, director, designer, or playwright, CITA is dedicated to serving you! Through our publications and our conferences, we encourage dialogue about art and faith.

Activities, resources, and events:

CITA holds a national conference each year in June, as well as regional conferences.

CITA members enjoy dynamic interactions with other Christians involved in all kinds of theatre. To promote these interactions, CITA offers these benefits to members:

- E-CITANews, a monthly email newsletter featuring resources, news events, and member activities.
- CITA's membership directory.
- Discounts to regional, national, and international conferences.
- Advance notice of CITA's annual playwriting and sketch writing competitions and also of auditions for affiliated professional theatre companies.
- Access to the CITA Listserv, a members-only internet discussion group.

- Access to some of the finest people involved in theatre today!

Encouraging the creation of new plays has been a part of CITA's mandate since the beginning of the organization. CITA's commitment to playwrights is evidenced by the number of playwrights on the board, the quality of workshops offered at summer conferences, and the number of new plays featured in our competitions. Winning full-length plays have been performed at professional and educational theatres across the country. Winning sketches serve the church and drama ministry communities.

In May 2008, the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, with funds provided by the Lilly Endowment, awarded CITA a Worship Renewal Grant to work with five congregations to integrate theatre into their worship services with biblical and artistic integrity.

How to get involved:

Visit www.cita.org to join CITA and to see our upcoming events.

How to contact: admin@cita.org

Partnership needs:

We are open to collaboration.

Upcoming Events

September 26: Fusion's International Expo Day

Fusion International, headquartered in Poatina, Australia, is a youth and community organization with a special focus on the arts. Fusion is committed to building lasting networks (social capital) that will transform local communities. Each year Poatina Village hosts a colorful and interactive exposition of Fusion's work around the world. Special guests include teams from the U.K., Canada, Ghana, Germany, Albania, and Jamaica. One of Fusion's notable Open Crowd Festivals will offer free fun activities for children. Go to www.fusion.org.au to learn more.



Photo courtesy of Fusion International.

September 25-27: Project Dance Atlanta

Project Dance® is a movement of dancers seeking to positively impact culture through artistic integrity. The annual three-day event offers training, networking, inspiration, and

performance opportunities. Go to www.projectdance.com or email info@projectdance.com for more info.

October 18-24: Faith and the Arts Summer School

Fusion International's Faith and the Arts Summer School is a practical, week-long residential program for adults and teenagers that offers the chance to focus on a variety of creative arts. Faith and the Arts is about to make its Northern Hemisphere debut in October at Fusion's new academy in Iserlohn, Germany. Visit www.faihandthearts.org or www.fusion-deutschland.de for more information. Early bird registrations close on September 18, but registrations will be accepted until October 9.

Have you read *The Gift* by Lewis Hyde?

Recommended by Makoto Fujimura

In *The Gift*, a remarkably prescient book written in 1983, poet Lewis Hyde makes a link between an economy of rampant commoditization and the killing off of artistic thriving. He writes in the introduction:

It is the assumption of this book that a work of art is a gift, not a commodity. Or, to state the modern case with more precision, that works of art exist simultaneously in two “economies,” a market economy and a gift economy. Only one of these is essential however: a work of art can survive without the market, but where there is no gift, there is no art.

Hyde identifies the blind spot of modern economics and provides an alternative hybrid model, combining his “gift economy” and “market economy” into a model that takes into account creativity, the arts, and sustainability. He leads the way for inventive ways of sharing our creative gifts—such as Creative Commons, an agreement for open sourcing of creative gifts. (For my attempts to participate in this, go to www.byfor.org, a site that singer/songwriter Michael Card is developing with Lance Mansfield.)

When I consider the need for the churches to communicate their Gift to the world, reading Lewis Hyde is like walking into a wardrobe that leads to Narnia: Hyde’s words reverberate into the enchanted heart of culture making and what the Bible calls the gospel, the Good News.

Hyde writes:

It is also the case that a gift may be the actual agent of change, the bearer of new life. In the simplest examples, gifts carry an identity with them, and to accept the gift amounts to incorporating the new identity. It is as if such a gift passes

through the body and leaves us altered. The gift is not merely the witness or guardian to new life, but the creator.

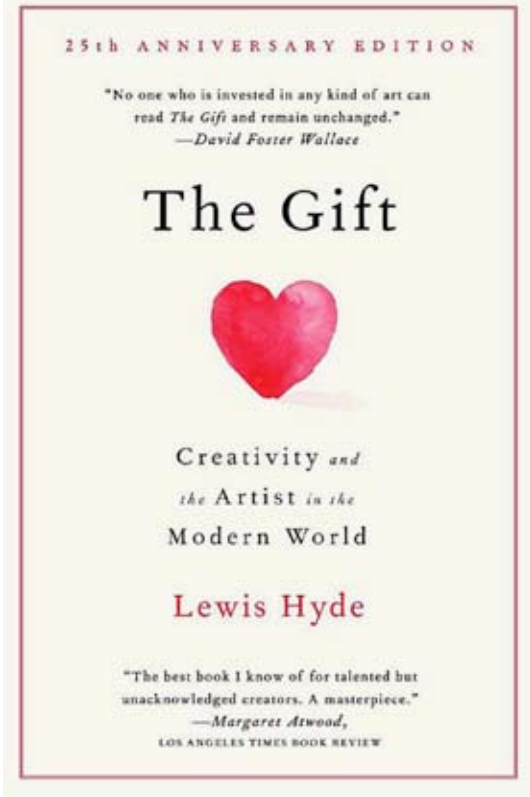
Though Hyde does not go so far as to say this, Christ is not only an example of such a pure gift, he is THE Gift. In Communion, the Gift literally passes through our body and leaves us altered (or altar-ed, if you will, not only transforming us but sanctifying us).

And yet in our churches we have treated the gospel like a commodity, shopping it around like salesmen, or worse yet, showmen full of savvy. When our churches look like gigantic malls, hotels, or even strip malls, and when we proclaim, “Salvation comes free, at no cost,” we are unintentionally tapping into the language of consumer economy.

We may seek out experienced business minds to lead our church drives, but churches usually do not seek out artists who exemplify “the gift economy” to guide and direct stewardship and communication. If we do not consider the context of our communication, the context will define our message, as much as our preaching or singing.

Hyde notes, “Just as gifts are linked to the death that moves toward new life, so, for those who believe in transformation (either in this life or in another), ideologies of market exchange have become associated with the death that goes nowhere.”

But the gospel is The Gift: and a true gift, by definition, cannot be bought or sold. It can only be passed on, but possi-



bly with a great sacrifice. The true gift, if fully understood and embraced, will transform us from within and make us beings of hope.

Books like Hyde’s rely on the borrowed capital of the biblical paradigm. Without the idea of a supra-natural source of a generative reality, Hyde’s argument would simply be wishful thinking. But precisely because Hyde leaves open the connection between faith and generosity in many of the remarkable pages of *The Gift*, we can read the book and rejoice. 🌍

Makoto Fujimura is an internationally known artist, speaker, and writer. This review is adapted from his blog “Refractions” with permission. <http://makotofujimura.blogspot.com>