

Connick Windows

Thoughts, news and comments concerning the art and craft of Connick stained glass, published periodically by....

The Charles J. Connick Stained Glass Foundation, Ltd.

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Connick Rose & Medallion Windows, Chicago

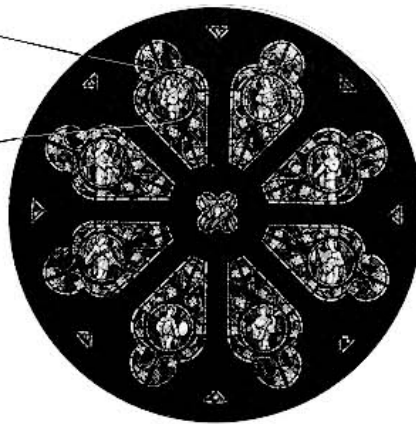
Connick News

Charles Connick wrote in "International Studio", December 1923, "... One of the happiest inventions of the great medieval artists and craftsmen [is] the medallion window. It is related to the rose window in its use of small units and bits of brilliant color, and it pleasantly preserves the proper proportions. Medallion windows are eminently suited to small interiors. The designer took clever advantage of the intimate relationship thus afforded by using them frankly for the telling of stories and for elucidation of sermons and writings of great theologians. ... The rose window units are usually occupied by simple compositions, single figures, and a clear direct use of ornamental themes."

Although Connick windows are varied and prolific in Chicago, our Chicago tour focuses on Connick medallion and rose windows. *Chicago Temple's* full color rose "was designed to enrich the entrance of the great Methodist building with the arresting beauty and symbolism so characteristic of the noble old craft stained glass. The vine is used throughout the rose to recall the significance of the vine in Christian fellowship and the grapes as significant of spiritual achievement. Its quaint angel figures and its prismatic color serve to announce, as



with a song, the dedication of that huge structure to the service of a powerful religious denomination. The circling angels, with the red and blue wings of seraphim and cherubim announce the theme of joy and praise through the golden instruments in their hands."*



Connick also created a small rose window for the *First Unitarian Church*. Four archangels with significant symbols dominate the larger trefoil-shaped petals while four cherubins appear in the smaller triangular shapes. The principal colors, red and blue, are for love and wisdom with gold symbolic of heavenly achievement.

Rose window devoted to Angels of music, praise and prayer, Chicago Temple. Angel with instrument medallion from cartoon. Courtesy of the Trustees of the Boston Public Library of the City of Boston.

The east rose window of *Hyde Park Baptist Church*, developed from Ephesians 2:19 - 20, symbolizes the 12 apostles, 12 prophets, and Jesus as the chief cornerstone. Under the great east rose is a medallion window of the parables. Late in the 1920's *Olivet Institute* had several colorful medallion windows installed. *The Lutheran Deaconess Home Chapel's* few medallion windows contain scenes from Jesus' life.

The chancel window of the University of Chicago's *Church of Disciples of Christ* is developed with medallions, heraldic symbols, and the principal figures of Galahad, Percival and Sir Bors. The light from above is utilized, gaining a brilliant window without too much light. We find in the Connick notes for the *Divinity Chapel's* full color window of St. George these words "Provide the dragon with plenty of fire".

In the *Joseph Bond Chapel* at the University of Chicago the parables furnish the dominant theme of the east medallion window. The fields, predominantly blue, are patterned in growing vine forms flowering in the white fleur-de-lis of purity and supporting colorful medallions. In 1923 *The Quadrangle Club*, University of Chicago, had eight medallions installed in the dining hall. In the Connick Studio notes concerning this commission we find these words, ..." nothing sedate, as the Club is the Professors' playground and not a workshop. Colors can hardly be too gay."

Fourth Presbyterian Church and *St. Chrysostom's* have an abundance of Connick windows. Other Connick windows are found in *St. Paul's Church* and the *Cathedral of St. James*.

* From the Connick collection, Boston Public Library, Department of Fine Arts.

One definition of Window is "a means of obtaining information". Our newsletter will keep you informed of the Foundation's activities, the Connick Collection in the Fine Arts Department of Boston Public Library, and Connick news around the country.

Julia Child's Stained Glass Valentine

At the Connick Studio, Paul Child designed and made this stained glass valentine for his wife, Julia. He had trained and worked at Nine Harcourt Street in the early days and especially worked on the windows for the American Church in Paris. As well as being a stained glass artist Paul Child was a painter, a photographer, a wood carver ... and a black belt in judo. His fellow Connick workers called him "tarzan of the apse."

When asked about the two angels in the valentine medallion, Julia Child responded "I don't think they are any relatives of ours." A few traditional red valentines embellish this primarily blue stained glass medallion devoted to love. Its medieval character shines with serious and happy light.

Photograph from Connick Foundation records, photography by Orin E. Skinner.



Julia Jackson writes to the Foundation: "I want to thank you for the Connick sources. They were invaluable in my research. My thesis, 'Modernism in the Neo-Gothic Stained Glass Windows of Charles Jay Connick', was given the Art History Masters Thesis award by the University of Memphis."

Richard Marks writes that Bovard Studio recently restored the Connick windows in Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago to their original sparkling beauty.

In researching Northminster Presbyterian Church in Evanston, IL at the Boston Public Library, Fine Arts Department, David W. Foote discovered that John Wrska installed almost all of Northminster's Connick windows. Wrska's creative and inventive work inspired Mr. Foote to write a charming article, "John Wrska, Craftsman and Artist". In a letter to the Foundation from Mr. Foote, he writes "I have never met Mr. Wrska and all of my knowledge of him comes from the Connick archives - letters written him by Orin Skinner and from his own notes back to Skinner."

Mr. Wrska installed many, many Connick windows in Chicago.

Some Other Examples of Connick Rose Windows

San Francisco -- *Grace Cathedral*.

New Orleans -- *St. Rita's Church*.

Portland, Oregon -- *Trinity Episcopal Cathedral*.

St. Louis -- *Second Presbyterian Church*.

Spokane -- *Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist*.

New York City -- *St. Patrick's Cathedral and Cathedral of St. John the Divine*.

Paris, France -- *The American Church*.

St. Paul -- *Cathedral of St. Paul*.

Knoxville -- *Church St. Methodist Church*

Cambridge, Mass. -- *SSJE Monastery Chapel of St. Mary and St. John*.

Boston -- *Marsh Chapel, Boston University*.

Worcester, Mass. -- *Wesley Methodist Church*.