

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., Orin E. Skinner, Founder Marilyn B. Justice, President June, 2005

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Meditation

Judith G. Edington¹

That dance of light and color had fascinated me with a flash of active glassiness that never let me rest with stolid picture windows.

from *Adventures in Light and Color* by Charles J. Connick



Untitled, Oil on Canvas, by Charles J. Connick, 1939

There is something about spring that bespeaks ecstatic movement infused with color, sound and light: the rapid changing hues of the trees as they bud and leaf, the succession of spring flowers, the fluttering of song birds, and the tumbling of brooks full from the winter's melt. It is a season of energy that refuses to be contained or tamed. If we let it, the rush of the season will affect even us, the most tamed of God's creation, and remind us once again that we too are tied to the cycle of birth, death and renewal.

It is fitting that The Connick Foundation was blessed this spring with the gift of two paintings by Charles J. Connick that radiate this ecstatic movement of the season. I believe that it must have been a spring day when Mr. Connick applied his philosophy of light and color to the opaque



Tumbling Water
Water Color, by Charles J. Connick, 1939

medium of paint and paper and produced *Tumbling Water* and an unnamed piece that I will call *Liquid Jewels*.

Mr. Connick was fascinated by water. In fact, he chose as his symbol Pegasus, the mythical horse that struck the ground at Mount Helicon causing a spring to flow forth. That Hippocrene spring, sometimes rendered as a fountain, became known as the source of poetic inspiration. I am told that Charles Connick and Orin Skinner would often stop at the brook that crossed the path between home and studio to contemplate its movement and the way the light played on its surface. Of course, this was not idle contemplation. Understanding how light played through glass was central to their art. As Orin Skinner wrote, "The radiance of glass in the ever-changing light of day brings forth a magic quality of life with fascinating swiftness and the glass man must learn to make the most of his materials."²

Of the two works, *Liquid Jewels*, which is oil on canvas, is most suggestive of the interplay of light and color. Here the water moves serpentine through banks infused with color, which may be interspersed flowers or just the way the light plays against the marsh grass. The eye is most drawn to the lower center of the painting where the water has just stepped down a fall and is whirling in a small eddy. The genius in this painting, as in his stained glass, is Mr. Connick's placement of color against color to the best advantage.³ The effect of the whole is to see color as movement.

Tumbling Water suggests a visit to the brook late in the day, as the colors are cool. But what is lost by the absence of the morning sun, is made up in the heat of the rushing water. Aptly named by Mr. Connick, *Tumbling Water* reflects the sometimes furious energy of water, each lick's seemingly desperate need to be the first to reach the calm at the end of the rapid. The paper holding this work is completely filled by the water; there is no hint of enclosing bank. Because of this, you lose yourself in the blur of movement and soon find that your pulse has quickened.

The Foundation is most thankful to Ann Wallace for these gifts of light, color and movement as expressed in Mr. Connick's work. Both paintings come from the collection of John E. Wallace, Ann's father, who was a Congregational minister and who also worked at the Connick Studio.

The Connick Foundation looks forward to sharing these treasures with all of you. Please visit our website at www.cjconnick.org where both paintings can be viewed in vivid color!

¹ Judith G. Edington has been a director of The Connick Foundation for over 5 years. She practices law in Boston, where her work focuses primarily on tax-exempt organizations and charitable giving.

² *Stained Glass in all its Inspiring Beauty*, Orin E. Skinner, *Church Property Administration*, vol. 9, No. 6 (November-December, 1945).

³ In *Adventures in Light and Color*, Mr. Connick writes, "One cannot experiment long with water-color on white paper or with oil paints on canvas without discovering that colors influence each other for better or worse. He must also notice, from time to time, that some colors are more powerful in radiation than others."

The Stained Glass Association of America summer conference entitled 'Stained Glass Painting: Fusing the Past with the Future' will be June 21-24, in Denver, Colorado. Connick windows in Denver can be found in Cathedral of Saint John in the Wilderness, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Church of the Ascension, Saint Luke's Episcopal Church and Saint Barnabas Episcopal Church.



St Cuthbert. Aisle window (1924) in All Saints' Church, Ashmont, Massachusetts.
Photograph by Peter Cormack.

A recent British publication *The Journal of Stained Glass, America Issue* includes a significant article entitled *Glazing 'with careless care': Charles J. Connick and the Arts and Crafts Philosophy of Stained Glass*, by Peter Cormack. Also a cadre of stained glass scholars who have written and lectured for The Connick Foundation have contributed to this edition: among them are Julie Sloan, James Yarnall, Joan Gaul, Lance Kasparian as well as Albert Tannler who will give the Orin E. Skinner annual lecture on stained glass in Boston on November 7, 2005.

Joan Jessop Brewster will review *The Journal of Stained Glass, America Issue*, Volume XXVIII for our October newsletter. Ms. Brewster is author of *The Stained Glass of All Saints'*, a publication of the stained glass in All Saints' Parish Church, Peterborough, New Hampshire. (See *Connick Windows* publication June 2002.)

This America Issue of *The Journal of Stained Glass*, Volume XXVIII (2004) was published in London February 2005 by the British Society of Master Glass Painters (see www.bsmgp.org.uk). The issue contains 222 pages, 128 color and 18 black and white illustrations. It is available in the U.S. through the Art in Architecture Press at P.O. Box 1809, North Adams, MA 01247; Tel. (413) 663-7946, Fax: (413) 663-7167; or visit www.aiap.com. The price is \$45 plus \$6.95 for U.S. shipping and insurance.