

# 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 October, 2007  
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## We Met in a Crypt

Mark David Baden, Ph.D

We met in a crypt. Strange as it may seem, Alisha Cora, Director of Grants, Don Ericksen, President Emeritus and I were dining at different tables in Café Nazareth at Northwestern College (formerly Nazareth Hall of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota). I had heard that Alisha Cora and Amy Carey, Vice President of Advancement were writing a grant request to the Campus Heritage Grant program for the Getty Center in Los Angeles, California. When I approached Ms. Cora, offering my assistance, I learned that they had decided not to pursue the grant. Disappointed, I admonished her and called upon Don Ericksen, to tell the story of Nazareth Hall. To make this long story short, we began to strategize in the bowels of Nazareth about how to bring our beautiful campus into the light.

We called a team of individuals into action. I was convinced that we could write the proposal since I had previously served as a co-director of a Getty sponsored project (The Minnesota Consortium on Discipline-based Art Education, 1995-96). Alisha Cora contacted architectural historian, Marjorie Pearson of Hess Roise and architect, Larry Page, currently of Perkins and Will who along with Doug Schroeder, VP for Finance, Amy Carey, VP for Advancement of Northwestern College discussed the possibilities. During a one-hour meeting, it was determined that we would spend \$7000 to prepare our proposal for the Getty. It was April 1 and the proposal was due on April 10. This team worked rapidly and effectively, each member on overtime; to put together a solid proposal and create a sound budget that would eventually be accepted by the Getty Center in June 2005. It was Marla Dennison who rose to the challenge of keeping us on task and bringing us in on budget!

Our project received the enthusiastic support of Dr. Alan Cureton, President of Northwestern College. Student coursework, an outgrowth of the Campus Preservation Grant included a seminar in Sacred Architecture, three archeological excavations overseen by Dr. Boyd Seevers and Graphic Design coursework coordinated by John Printy. The result of our collaboration was a beautiful and informative brochure illustrating the importance of Nazareth Hall. In the end, over 65 students poured their energy into this project.

Three facts proved the importance of our campus. Architect, Charles D. Maginnis designed it, the R. Guastavino Company constructed the ceiling vaults and a signature discovered by a facilities worker while dusting the stained-glass windows in the crypt of Nazareth Hall. In the lower right corner of the first window in the crypt was an incised, hand-written signature, Charles J. Connick, 1923. We had an artist! We were in for an adventure of a lifetime, discovering and illuminating a collaborative work of art that would take us from our 89-acre campus to inner sanctum of archives in Boston and Washington, D.C.

Boston Public Library

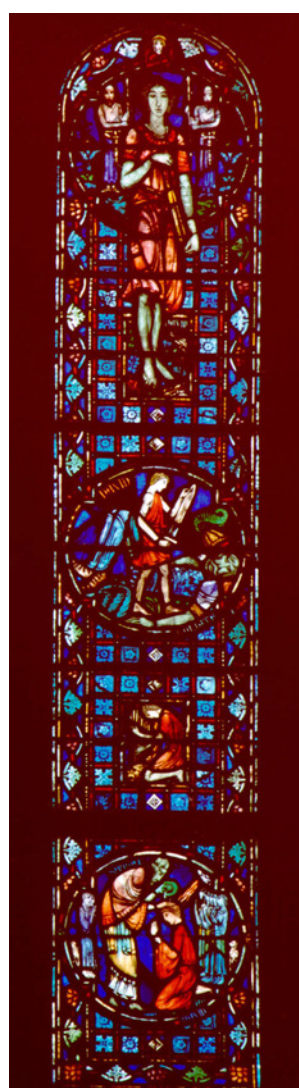
Janice Chadbourne and her team in the Division of Fine Arts at the BPL have been instrumental in facilitating our research. My colleagues and I have been given access to documents in the Charles D. Maginnis and Charles J. Connick collections four times. The Connick Collection contains hundreds of documents related to each individual stained glass project number. The Nazareth Hall file provided 262 documents. You won't believe what we discovered with the help of the Boston Public Library.

The Charles J. Connick Stained Glass Foundation, Ltd.

Marilyn Justice and the Directors of the Connick Foundation have provided us with job tickets, window descriptions and unlimited motivation supporting our research. I find myself saying "we" a lot! I say "we" and "our" because this collaborative adventure has brought so many participants together that not only are we colleagues, we have become good friends. Charles J. Connick and his artists produced 54 windows for Nazareth Hall between 1923 and 1925. I believe that they are some of the most stylistically coherent and thematically complete windows extant.

Archives of American Art at the Smithsonian Institution

Elizabeth Botten, Reference Services, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, helped us access original drawings and Charles Connick "telephone" sketchbooks that he doodled while awaiting telephone line connections to speak with patrons. These sketchbooks illustrate the creative, progression from realism to abstraction that emerged from the hand and mind of Charles Connick.



David window  
Nazareth Hall  
Northwestern College  
St. Paul, Minnesota  
Photo by Brian Tanning



Detail from the Samuel window  
Nazareth Hall, Northwestern College  
St. Paul, Minnesota  
Photograph by Brian Tanning

I will never forget our friends at The Catholic Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, the thousands of "boys" who were educated in halls of Nazareth and the priests who taught at the Seminary and continue to serve the Catholic community or reside at Leo Byrne Residence at St. Paul Seminary.

My November 5 presentation for the Orin E. Skinner Annual Lecture will include images and text that we discovered and used to "unpack" the iconography and interpret a fine set of "jewel-like, medieval style, medallion windows".

Mark David Baden, Ph.D



David and Goliath  
Detail from the David window  
Nazareth Hall, Northwestern College  
St. Paul, Minnesota  
Photograph by Brian Tanning

*The 2007 Orin E. Skinner Annual Lecture will be held on Monday November 5th at 6:30 pm  
at Moseley Hall, Church of the Advent, 30 Brimmer Street, Boston. \**

*Mark David Baden, Ph.D will present an illustrated lecture entitled*

### We Met in a Crypt

Dr. Baden's slide lecture will focus on his fascinating research of Nazareth Hall's jewel-like medallion windows which were created by the Connick Studio in 1926.

At that time Archbishop Dowling wrote the following to architect Charles D. Maginnis regarding the installation of the Connick windows in Nazareth Hall: "All the windows are in the chapel. They are fine. In these gray days they are not fully functioning. Till the Western sun is almost level they are decidedly blue but when the reds are on fire the blue is strangely subordinated and they throw light against the opposite windows. I am very much in love with them."

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\* Directions to the Church can be found on two web sites:

<http://www.theadvent.org/geninfo/direct.htm> (This page shows a map of the area.) or

<http://www.cjconnick.org/> (Click on the Annual Lecture link and then on 30 Brimmer Street, Boston)