

**ACLS**



**NEWSLETTER**

**ASSOCIATION OF CONSULTANTS FOR LITURGICAL SPACE**

**Upcoming ACLS Activities**  
 Please join us at:  
 University of Dallas Ministry Conference, Irving Convention Center  
 Oct. 11-13, 2018  
 SouthWest Liturgical Conference, Houston, TX  
 Jan. 23-26, 2019

**Upcoming Events**

**WEBINAR:**

**OCTOBER 16, 2018 1pm EDT**  
**WEBINAR - "LITURGICAL MEDIA ART: NEW POSSIBILITIES AWAIT" BY EILEEN CROWLEY**

**Conferences**

**UDMC** - Dallas

Oct. 11-13, 2018

**SWLC** - Houston

Jan. 23-26, 2019

**ACLS Trip**

Passion of Christ  
 Play:  
 Oberammergau  
 2020

**Member News**

**A five-Point Approach to Liturgical Sculpture by Jay Hall Carpenter**

In evaluating my own humble career as a liturgical sculptor, which will soon span five decades, one realizes there are no formulas for success, but there may be definable, common elements to those sculptures generally regarded as the most successful. I have assembled here a five-point approach to evaluating my own work and the work of those artists I most admire. Most of the following may apply to other liturgical and secular creative disciplines.

**The Decisive Moment**

In my early career I often struggled to find a way through the fog surrounding the sculpture's design. Where to begin? What would make this sculpture more than a mere portrait of a saint? How could I give it inner life? Happily, I often found the answer in my research of the saint. Each individual had within their biography a pivotal moment, often a moment of decision, that revealed and solidified their path to sainthood. This moment defined them as individuals, and I have found this to be true of my secular biographical sculptures, as well. In the case of *St Paul in Damascus*, the moment comes when Paul has been converted on the road by Christ and is in Damascus in the company of Christians as he regains his sight. He has removed the

## Website Photos

We need your help!

Our website is a wonderful resource for people in need of our services! The photos on it are exquisite and serve as a great catalogue for our work. Please continue to add new photos of your projects, not only will they be on the website, but now we are pinning them on Pinterest and Facebook. Take advantage of ACLS promoting you! When you do add your photos make sure you are renaming the slides with your information, not the image number.

**Send your Member News to be included in the next Newsletter!**

**We'd like to know more about you and your work.**



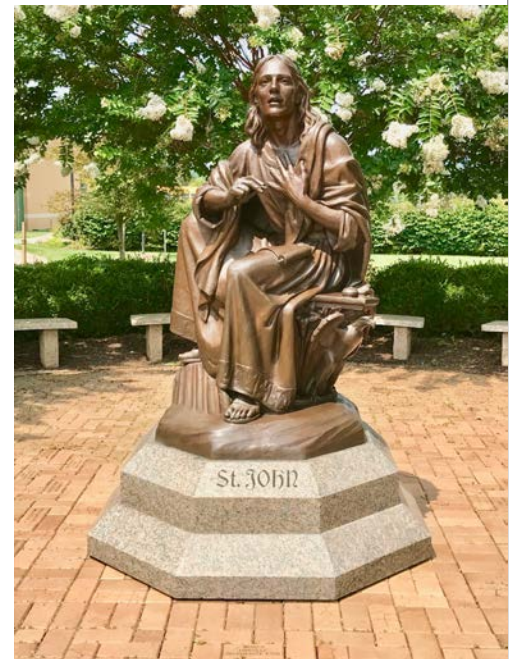
sword of persecution from his belt, and holds it like a cross. He is learning to grasp with his mind that which his heart has already accepted. [*St Paul in Damascus*, 1989, clay for limestone, St Paul's Episcopal Church, Winston-Salem, NC]

### Integrated Iconography

Sitting in numerous darkened lecture halls at Pratt Institute, Wesley Theological Seminary, and The Catholic University of America, viewing slide after slide of historic religious paintings, I became increasingly dissatisfied with the often clumsy inclusions of accepted iconography for each particular saint

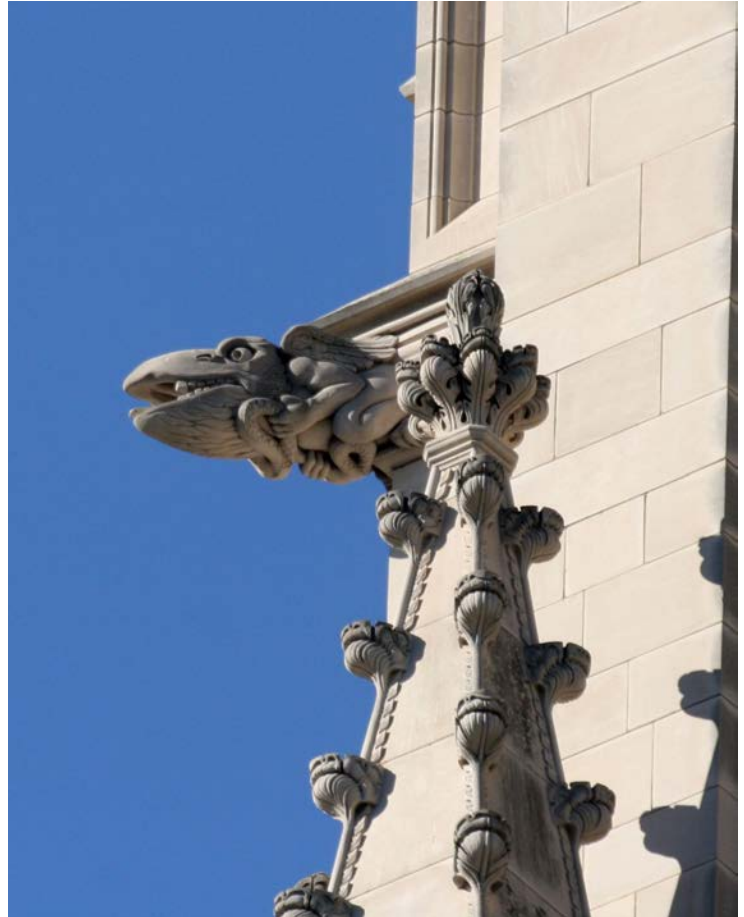
or story. I did not think it would be possible to create similar work myself and have it feel meaningful or be accepted. I strove to find a better way to make use of such attributes, a way I hoped would be understated and nuanced.

By example my sculpture of *St John the Evangelist*, bronze, 2007, is heavy with symbols, but each one is incorporated into the monument. John has paused in his writing and awaits inspiration. He is seated upon a column capitol— Paul had called him one of the three pillars of the church. The capitol is decorated with eagles and lilies, the symbols for John and Mary (an allusion to Christ's request that John care for Mary after His death. In this instance we had the Evangelist and the Beloved Johns melded into one). And John's foot rests upon a broken column, intended to represent the failed, pagan religions of Greece and Rome. [*St John the Evangelist*, bronze, 2007, St John's Regional Catholic School, Frederick, MD]



### Site Specificity

When we are given the honor and opportunity of creating a unique work of art for a specific location, each sculpture must account for the sightlines, traffic patterns, tone being set by its purpose and surroundings, and its color and materials as they relate to the architecture. Just as each scripted character should *belong* in a given play, each artistic embellishment should belong to the same building. At the National Cathedral, where I sculpted for twenty years, this point was driven home over and over and often taken to extremes. Much of the work I created was made to be seen from 160 feet below. The modeling had to be bold and not overly complex. Upper surfaces had to be smooth and shed water and snow readily. The forms had to be robust enough to withstand the elements through the centuries ahead. [*Horse Skeleton Gargoyle*, limestone, 1987, Washington National Cathedral]



### Emotional Truth

I would like respectfully to suggest here that sentimentality is the death of art. Just as melodrama reads as false drama, sentimentality reads as false emotion. I would like us to challenge ourselves to seek emotional truth and avoid the clichés of emotion so often pedaled in catalogues and gift shops. These vapid objects reveal nothing and insult the viewer with their cloying sweetness. I have sought out those moments that are decisive and robust, what one might call intentional faith, to focus on in my work. Bartholomew is surrendering his life for his God, but it is not an easy moment. His clothing has been stripped away, his muscles are revealed through his skin to foreshadow his death by flaying. He braces for what's ahead, he does not swoon in religious ecstasy. I was able to strike this tone in part because this was designed as an exterior sculpture. [*Bartholomew*, clay for bronze, 2003, St Bartholomew's Church, Pewaukee, WI]

### The Unknown

At the recent ACLS retreat led by John Buscemi, one thought I have struggled to articulate crystallized for me. Sculpture is more effective posing questions than answering them. A sculpture can invite the viewer into the mystery, but sculpture can fail when it expresses easy certainty or heroism, or explains doctrine. Great poetry can be found in awe, confusion, fear, grief, and uncertainty. For me this approach calls to mind the *Adams Memorial* by Saint Gaudens, Rodin's *The Thinker*, and Frederick Hart's sculpture of *Adam*. Through my exploration of sculpture, I have found this paradox to hold true: The fewer things a sculpture tries to accomplish, the more accomplished it becomes. Put another way, proclaim less, wonder more. [*Emerging Woman*, bronze, 1995, Rock Creek Cemetery, Washington, DC]



### *ACLS President's Letter July 2018*

Every September I feel the need to replenish pens, pencils and notebooks. This comes from many years as both student and teacher. So this is an appropriate time to write to you about some educational opportunities that are coming up.

Conferences offer an opportunity where we can both expand our knowledge and perspective and share our understanding with others. Over the past few years ACLS members have been actively involved in a number of conferences. The next upcoming conference is the Dallas Ministries Conference where ACLS members Alberto Portello and Claire Wing will be giving presentations. The theme of the conference this year is 'Building Bridges in the Catholic Community today' – a very timely theme. It will be held October 11 – 13 at the Irving Convention Center. Be sure to stop by the meditation center that Shelley Kolman Smith is putting together for the conference. This conference sponsored by the University of Dallas and the diocese of Dallas brings thousands of people together to focus on the ministries in which they serve and those with which they come in contact.

The other annual fall conference that offers opportunities for our growth in the area of liturgy is the FDLC conference. The Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions operates in an advisory capacity with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. ACLS members who serve on their diocesan liturgical commissions will attend this conference. Some of the brightest and most influential thinkers in the area of liturgy have been speakers at this conference. This year they are meeting in Atlanta October 2 -4 and the theme of the conference is 'The Body of Christ: A Prophetic Sign of Unity and Concord'.

There will be an even larger ACLS presence at conferences in January. First and smaller is the Cathedral Ministries Conference that will be hosted by St. James Cathedral in Seattle January 14 - 17. Two ACLS members (Johan van Parys and Carol Frenning) will be giving presentations in workshops for this conference whose focus is on the ministry and function of the cathedral.

By far the largest representation of ACLS members will be present for the next Southwest Liturgical Conference. This conference will meet in Houston January 23 - 26, 2019. The theme of the conference 'Encountering the Sacred: Beauty and the Liturgy' will have many ways to focus on the arts. There will be six workshops presented by ACLS members as part of our partnership with SWLC in bringing the arts to prominence in this conference. Many events and experiences surrounding the conference are in the works. For example, there will be tours of churches in this rapidly building area. At least six full building committees have already registered for attendance at the conference and we are starting a new experiment in having 'mentors' from ACLS assigned to facilitate their conference experience. In addition to regular conference activities ACLS will have its biennial meeting at this time. There are many details we are working on and which will be forthcoming to all the membership. So please watch for updates and save the date for an outstanding experience in Houston this January.

There are other conferences that are being explored for partnership with ACLS. You will hear about these later. However, if there is one which you attend and feel would benefit by our presence, please do not hesitate to contact me so we can follow up in an official manner. Promoting the expertise of our members is a primary goal for ACLS along with the enrichment, education and support of our members.

With gratitude for opportunities for lifelong learning,

*Carol Frenning*

*ACLS Letter from the President*

## Welcome new Members!

**Paul Mattek of Design Fugitives**  
**Deborah Bird of Keyes Architecture**

## Reminders

Members are welcome to post information on the Website which may be of interest to other members. If you know of a seminar, a conference or any event you think we would like to know about, please don't hesitate to tell us! And if you aren't sure if it's appropriate, you're welcome to contact a board member and ask.

Please keep an eye on our facebook page and "Like" or "Share" us - this helps keep our page up front. It's also a great place to post pics of your projects, news about what you're up to and helps us all keep up with each other. This organization strives to create a bond between our members. We'd love to hear from you.

Your seven member ACLS board meets once a month in an online video call. If you have an interest in joining us, let Carol or any board member know! We would love to find a member who will help us with marketing and advertising ACLS. The commitment isn't huge, but the benefits are. By becoming involved, you can help with planning our events, build long lasting friendships and you'll be "in the know". In addition to marketing, we have a need for a Treasurer. Robert Habiger has had this position for years and is ready to pass the torch. He tells us it's only a few hours a month commitment.

Another way you can help out your ACLS organization is to invite your friends to join. If each member recruited one new member, just imagine what would happen - new friends, new ideas, new connections. We have a presence at several conferences around the country - in addition to SWLC and Univ. of Dallas Ministry conference - there's also Val Praiso, FDLC, Cathedral Ministries. YOU are promoted each time ACLS is represented! Make sure your information and photos are on the ACLS website, it's an ideal way for clients to find out about you. Speaking of the Website - did you know that if you miss a webinar, you can log in to see it by Clicking on Member's Area, Sign in, then go back to "Member's Area" and click Webinars. It's that easy! They are usually posted 3 months after they originally air.

Before I forget, check out the tour dates at the SouthWest Liturgical Conference in Houston! And remember, at least SIX complete building committees have already signed up to attend the conference.

If you have any questions, any news, or just want to visit - call or email me:  
[shelley@ShelleyKolmanSmith.com](mailto:shelley@ShelleyKolmanSmith.com) or 214-734-9133,

Until then,

I'll see you at the Dallas Conference in October and the SWLC in January!

By God's Grace, Shelley