CLASSIS

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE
ASSOCIATION OF CLASSICAL & CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

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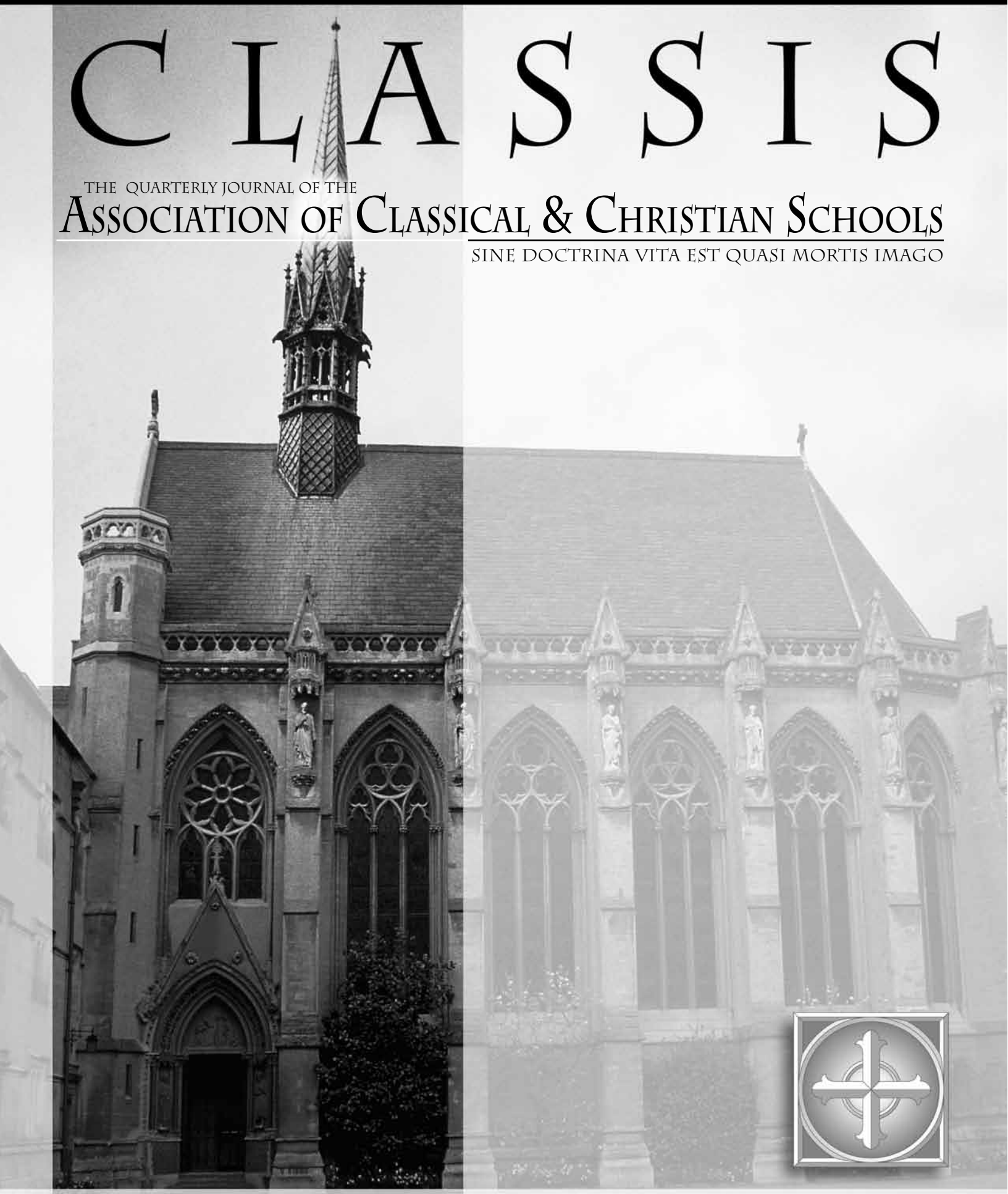

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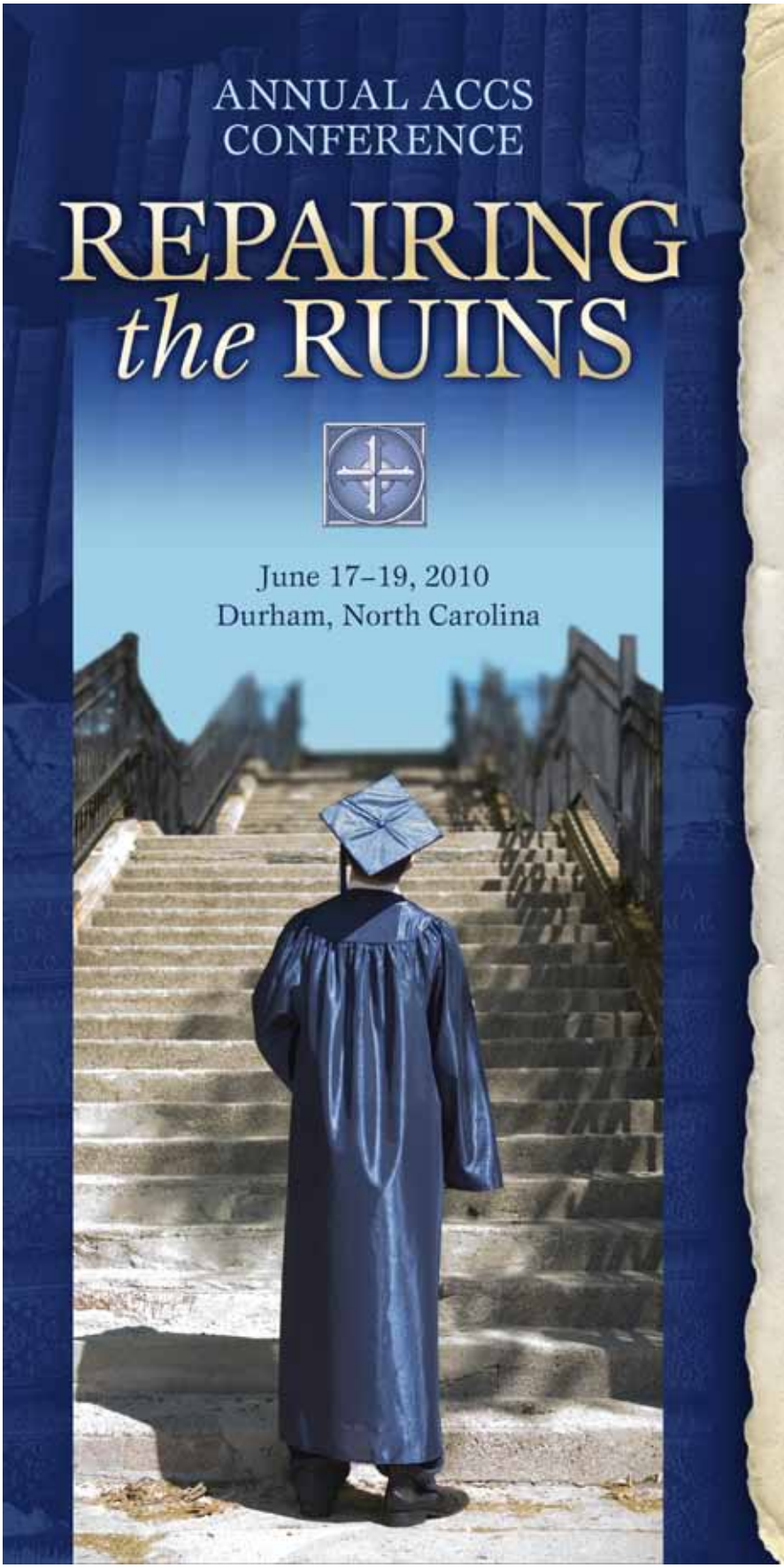

Featured Speakers

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Os Guinness is an author and speaker who lives in the Washington DC area. Great-great grandson of Arthur Guinness, the Dublin brewer, he was born in China in World War II where his parents were medical missionaries. Os has written or edited more than twenty five books, including *The American Hour*, *Time for Truth*, *The Call*, *Invitation to the Classics*, and *Long Journey Home*. His latest book is *Unspeakable: Facing up to the Challenge of Evil*, which was published by Harper San Francisco in January 2005.

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Sine doctrina vita est quasi mortis imago

SPRING 2010 VOLUME XVII NUMBER 1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ARTICLES

The ACCS staff would like to acknowledge the Classical Christian Fine Arts Symposium to be hosted (March 19-20, 2010) by Veritas Academy in Leola, Pennsylvania, as the source for many of our authors and their articles.

ACCS

Classical Christian education for the world

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mission statement

The primary mission of this association is to promote, establish, and equip schools committed to a classical approach to education in light of a Christian worldview grounded in the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

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The Arts and Classical Christian Education

by Patch Blakey

In writing this brief introductory article for this issue of *Classis*, I wondered where the first mention of "songs" or "singing" was in the Bible. The first reference that I could find was in Genesis 31:27: "Wherefore didst thou flee away secretly, and steal away from me; and didst not tell me, that I might have sent thee away with mirth, and with songs, with tabret, and with harp?"

This statement was made by Laban to his son-in-law, Jacob, after Jacob's secret departure from his deceiving father-in-law. Of course, Laban didn't mean what he said about sending Jacob away with mirth and songs. He was continuing to be sly and deceptive. The Lord had already told Laban in a dream not to speak either good or bad to Jacob. The reasons that Jacob fled secretively are given earlier in the passage, and it wasn't because Jacob didn't want a cheerful send-off.

The second reference to singing that I found was in Exodus 15:1: "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the LORD, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea."

This occurrence was to praise and glorify God for His miraculous deliverance of the children of Israel from Pharaoh and his army at the Red Sea. It was not a cheerful time for Pharaoh and his charioteers, but on the other hand, the Israelites were pretty thrilled.

It can be seen that singing songs was something that all men had access to and did, both those who faithfully submitted to the God of Abraham as well as those that did not. Man was created to be creative, which includes being musical (Job 38:7). It is part of his nature, and it is an aspect of man that does not appear to have been lost during the Fall. It would seem then, that music, like anything else creative that man does, can be either used to glorify God or not.

If we as classical Christian educators believe that man is to glorify God in all that we do (1 Cor. 10:31), then we need to give careful thought to how we are to instruct students in a way that glorifies God. How are we to incorporate not only singing, but all of the arts into the Christ-centered liberal arts education that we desire to provide the students entrusted to our care? Do the fine arts become our major emphasis in our curriculum, our primary emphasis, or our only emphasis? Where's the balance?

An administrator at a classical Christian school once told me of an essay he had read. It noted that students must be taught music (as a requirement of a faithful educator), but to such a degree that there would be no time to teach them anything else! If we were to expand this requirement—not just as regards music, but to all of the arts—then answering the question of balance and emphasis in the curriculum is made even more difficult.

However, let me offer an observation based on an explanation from the apostle Paul. He wrote to the Corinthian church, "For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ" (1 Cor. 12:12).

The Triune God created all things, and in Him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col. 2:2-3). That means that He created math as well as language arts as well as the fine arts. He intended, like the human body which has many parts, yet is one body, that all types of knowledge should have their place, yet comprise the well-rounded education of our students. This is as Paul further explained to the Corinthians in his body analogy: "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body" (1 Cor. 12:17-20).

Likewise, if the whole curriculum were math, then where is the Latin? If it were all music, then where is painting or drama? But all knowledge derives ultimately from the Creator God, and therefore points back to Him. It is all a vast body of knowledge, and as classical Christian educators, we want our students to be grounded in that body as broadly as possible, to the glory of God.

With that said, I am extremely pleased with the articles in this issue of *Classis*, and want to thank each of the authors for their thought-provoking submissions. Hopefully, administrators and teachers will all feel stretched by these articles and, also just a little uncomfortable so that each is forced to take another look, perhaps a broader look, at what is included in the school's curriculum with regard to the fine arts.

***Patch Blakey** is the executive director of ACCS.*

Educational Aesthetics and Restoring Our Humanity

by Stephen Richard Turley

In 1944, a book critiquing the state of British education was published entitled *The Abolition of Man*. The author was C.S. Lewis. His critique was initiated by a textbook, which he leaves unnamed, calling it *The Green Book*, written by two authors he also leaves unnamed, referring to them as Gaius and Titius. The authors of this book recount the famous visit to the Falls of the Clyde in Scotland taken by the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge in the early 1800s. As Coleridge stood before the waterfall, he overheard the response of two tourists: one remarked that the waterfall was "sublime" while the other said it was "pretty." Coleridge mentally endorsed the first judgment and rejected the second with disgust.

Gaius and Titius then offer their own commentary on this scene: " 'When the man said *This is sublime*, he appeared to be making a remark about the waterfall . . . . Actually . . . he was not making a remark about the waterfall, but a remark about his own feelings. What he was saying was really *I have feelings associated in my mind with the word "Sublime"*, or shortly, *I have sublime feelings*. . . . This confusion is continually present in language as we use it. We appear to be saying something very important about something: and actually we are only saying something about our own feelings.' "[1]

This aesthetic encounter with the waterfall and the conflict over the transcendence or immanence of the sublime began what was to be Lewis' most profound exposition on the nature of the modern world and its devastating consequences for education and our humanity. Lewis understood the collapse of aesthetic reasoning into subjective processes as inextricably linked to the collapse of meaning in the modern age. I, too, have witnessed in my own teaching experience at both the high school and university levels how modernist assumptions have worked themselves out in our aesthetic conceptions, such that when called to give a basic account for the classical conception of Beauty, students entering my classroom consistently exemplify a complete and total devotion to aesthetic relativism. It is this link between aesthetics and modernity that I therefore wish to explore, for in doing so, I believe we can in fact locate and transform the source of the aesthetic relativism that pervades the sensibilities of our students.

This suggests to me that while we have put much thought into teaching Truth and Goodness in our classical schools, we have done so at the expense of teaching Beauty, and I am very concerned that our educational efforts are in fact being undermined by a ubiquitously present relativism coming through the back door.

An important starting point for this exploration is the role of classical *paideia* for the early Church. Werner Jaeger notes in his great work, *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture*, that *paideia* had the dual meaning of education and culture, and thus *paideia* served to both articulate culture and provide the process of initiation into that culture. Beginning with St. Paul (Eph 6:4, 2 Tim 3:14-16, Heb 12:5) and developed by the patristics, the importance of *paideia* for the early Church reflected the fact that Christianity was understood not so much as a *belief* but as a way of *being*, an encounter with a genuine physical reality in the Incarnation, a shared life world that constituted a distinct culture in the Graeco-Roman world.

The importance of culture is that it substantiates what the Greeks called *telos*, the meaning and purpose inherent in the created order, and thereby provides the means by which intangible *telos* is made tangible. As the abstract transforms into the concrete through culture, we are able to have an aesthetic encounter, an embodied and sensory experience, with divinely imparted meaning. This is the classical relationship between culture and cosmos: culture awakens concretely the meaning that exists abstractly in the created order.

It is in this frame of reference that the classical conception of Beauty is situated. *Telos* is constituted by the tripartite virtues, Truth, Goodness, and Beauty, which are in turn represented

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Educational Aesthetics ...

tangibly, substantially, in our cultural pursuits (mathematics, music, architecture, geometry, poetry, literature, athletics, and politics), and held together by worship. In this context, Beauty is the manifestation of the loveliness, the delectableness, the desirableness of Truth and Goodness. Divinely infused meaning was not simply known or impartially observed, it was loved, it was cherished; meaning awakened a sense of delight within us. And this delight, this sense of the loveliness of the True and the Good, served the indispensable role of *momentum* or *motivation* in intellectual, moral, and spiritual pursuits. This is why we associate Beauty with "attraction"; through Beauty we are drawn to the True and the Good. Beauty provides us with the allure, the momentum toward the True and the Good without which the True and the Good would simply dissipate into neutrality. As evidenced in the classical formulation of "ascent" from the beautiful to the divine found in Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus* or Dante's *Divine Comedy*, or Augustine's conversion account in his *Confessions*, or Jonathan Edwards' masterful analysis of the motivation of the will in every act of the mind's choosing, Beauty provides the momentum, the gravitational pull, the attraction for the True and the Good through the stages of physical, moral, and spiritual life.

Now, this classical vision of Beauty has been buried under layers and layers of modernity. With the break-up of Christendom, it became increasingly plausible to view knowledge as limited solely to that which could be verified by a *method*, namely, the application of science and mathematics. It was argued that only those things that could be verified by the empirical method were those things that could be known in a way that was completely detached from the preconceptions of the observer. Anything that was not subjected to or failed this method was reduced to the state of person-relativity and excluded from the arena of what can be known. Thus knowledge was now open to man: all he had to do, in any area of life, was to apply the method. But there was a toll that had to be paid for such promise: we collectively had to surrender the concept of meaning—*telos*—as a reality divinely embedded in a created order, since method was impervious to meaning. *Telos* simply could not be placed in a test tube.

Beauty provides the momentum, the gravitational pull, the attraction for the True and the Good through the stages of physical, moral, and spiritual life.

It is here, with this shift from divine creation to impersonal nature, that you begin to see the categories of Art and Beauty relocated from the objective world to the subjective mind. The writings of Francis Hutcheson, David Hume, and Immanuel Kant, exposit on a natural world known only by ideas that come into the mind through sense perception, including the idea of Beauty. Beauty, like meaning, is part of an overall internal subjective interpretation of an external world made up of cause and effect processes devoid of any inherent meaning. Thus, by removing meaning from the cosmos, the classical conception of Beauty withers away and dies; it simply cannot be sustained by modernist cosmological conceptions.

By separating *meaning* from *method*, the modernist experiment has in fact separated *knowledge* from *Beauty* and, in doing so, has put asunder what classical education has historically joined together. For Lewis, this dichotomy between knowledge and Beauty has devastating consequences for our humanity. Jews, Greeks, and Christians understood that the cultivation of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty in our souls was inextricably linked with encountering those tripartite virtues in the created order and substantiated in cultural pursuits, such that the severing of meaning from objective reality entails the proportionate absence of the virtues from our souls. Further, by stressing technology and science over meaning and communion in its doctrine of knowledge, the modern age robs the very conception of humanity itself of any objective meaning and purpose, thus rendering humanity inherently meaningless. Hence Lewis' title, *The Abolition of Man*.

As classical educators, we must scrutinize the extent to which we too have inadvertently perpetuated this modernist dichotomy between knowledge and Beauty. I believe it is this dichotomy that is the primary carrier for the aesthetic relativism that remains embodied by our students, not to mention us. This suggests to me that while we have put much thought into

Educational Aesthetics...

teaching Truth and Goodness in our classical schools, we have done so at the expense of teaching Beauty, and I am very concerned that our educational efforts are in fact being undermined by a ubiquitously present relativism coming through the back door. Truth, Goodness, and Beauty are not sequestered from one another–they need each other and they are implied in one another. And if Beauty is robbed of its transcendent nature and relocated solely within the private psychological processes, then Truth and Goodness are sure to follow.

Thus, we must ask ourselves: Are we presenting music and mathematics, Beauty and symmetry, as inseparable? Do we teach our students to see athletic skill as an embodiment of control over chaos and thus exemplative of the processes of creation? Do our science classes teach that discovery not only gives us knowledge but awakens awe and wonder integral to our knowing? Do our history classes present the totality of history as an eschatological narrative from garden to city, from creation to communion, from water to wine? Do our Bible classes present theology as rooted in *philokalia*, the love of Beauty? Do we teach our students that there is something extraordinary about the *Imagio Dei*, that we yearn for a meaning and a purpose outside of ourselves; that we long for a beauty that awakens us from our self-centered slumbers; that our hearts ache for a life filled with wonder and awe? Are we cultivating an insatiable desire in our students to encounter the True, the Good, and the Beautiful in a life-transformative way, a way that enables our souls to reach for and embrace a state of being than which none greater can possibly be thought? This is the classic view of what it means to be human, summed up in Augustine's opening prayer in his *Confessions*: "Thou, O Lord, hast made us for thyself, and our hearts remain restless until they find their rest in thee."

For Lewis, Gaius and Titius would have us believe that the purpose of education is to make men masters of method, guardians of utilitarianism and pragmatism, equipped to deconstruct human nature and cultural endeavor as empty social constructs. Standing against these dehumanizing tendencies is John Ruskin's aesthetic description of the purpose of education: "The entire object of true education is to make people not merely do the right things, but enjoy the right things—not merely industrious, but to love industry—not merely learned, but to love knowledge—not merely pure, but to love purity—not merely just, but to hunger and thirst after justice." [2]

Our task as educators is nothing less than to awaken students to the self-replenishing fountain of indescribable delights of a new creation in Christ, to give them the gift of the freedom to be human again, and in so doing, to watch their lives blossom into rational, poetic worshippers of God, and through their lives, to get a taste of what life will be like when Christ returns, when God will be all in all. This is our calling, and it is beautiful.

ENDNOTES

1. C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man or Reflections on education with special reference to the teaching of English in the upper forms of schools* (New York: Harper One, 1971, 1974), 2.

2. John Ruskin, *The Crown of Wild Olive: Three Lectures on Work, Traffic, and War* (New York: John Wiley & Son, 1866), 50.

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The Ancient Treasure House

by David Erb, New Saint Andrews College

In the second book of C. S. Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia, *Prince Caspian*, the four Pevensie children are magically transported from England to another world—an overgrown, uninhabited, forsaken island upon which they discover the ruins of a castle. Eventually they begin to realize that the castle ruins are the remains of Cair Paravel, where they had once reigned for years and years. The epiphany of the truth occurs in chapter two, entitled "The Ancient Treasure House," [1] as the children locate the door and stairs to the treasure chamber. As they reach the bottom of the stairs, all the children say at once, "O-o-o-oh!!"

"For now all knew that it was indeed the ancient treasure chamber of Cair Paravel where they had once reigned as Kings and Queens of Narnia. There was a kind of path up the middle (as it might be in a greenhouse), and along each side at intervals stood rich suits of armor, like knights guarding the treasures. In between the suits of armor, and on each side of the path, were shelves covered with precious things—necklaces and arm rings and finger rings and golden bowls and dishes and long tusks of ivory, brooches and coronets and chains of gold, and heaps of unset stones lying piled anyhow as if they were marbles or potatoes—diamonds, rubies, carbuncles, emeralds, topazes, and amethysts. Under the shelves stood great chests of oak strengthened with iron bars and heavily padlocked. And it was bitterly cold, and so still that they could hear themselves breathing, and the treasures were so covered with dust that unless they had realized where they were and remembered most of the things, they would hardly have known they were treasures. There was something sad and a little frightening about the place, because it all seemed so forsaken and long ago. That was why nobody said anything for at least a minute.

"Then, of course, they began walking about and picking things up to look at. It was like meeting very old friends. If you had been there you would have heard them saying things like, 'Oh look! Our coronation rings—do you remember first wearing this?—Why, this is the little brooch we all thought was lost—I say, isn't that the armor you wore in the great tournament in the Lone Islands—do you remember the dwarf making that for me?—do you remember drinking out of that horn?—do you remember, do you remember?' " [2]

Later in the story we learn that 1300 years have passed in Narnia, albeit only one earth year. The castle ruins of Cair Paravel are overgrown and unknown to everyone as it is now situated on an island considered to be haunted. The human race of the Telmarines, who conquered Narnia, has completely suppressed any talk of the history of Old Narnia. Even the majority of the underground remnant of "Old Narnians" does not really believe there even *were* real kings and queens named Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy or that Aslan is real.

I think this story serves as a fitting analogy for the relation of the contemporary church in America to its history and heritage with regards to liturgy, music, and worship. Most of us have no idea that there is a treasure chamber and since we do not recognize the treasures as old friends when we see or hear them, we dismiss them. Our heritage has been lost and buried, hidden from sight, long forgotten. We do not remember.

Once upon a time the best music and the best musicians were to be found in the churches of God.

Once upon a time the best music and the best musicians were to be found in the churches of God. There really were skillful, faithful church musicians named Leonin and Perotin, Praetorius and Palestrina, Buxtehude and Bach who walked in the ways of their fathers David and Cheneniah. And they left us a storehouse beyond measure: psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, masses, motets, anthems, cantatas, oratorios—dear old friends in which we may delight, if only we would take the time to reacquaint ourselves with them.

So where are these musical treasures? They are most commonly found as "museum pieces" in secular universities and concert halls. The most glorious songs of praise in the history of the Church are sung more frequently and with greater fervor by people and institutions who do not purpose to glorify the Triune God of Scripture. The secular "keepers of the artistic canon of the brotherhood of mankind" claim

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The Ancient Treasure House...

our treasures as *their* heritage. But we are the rightful heirs of this ancient treasure house; we are the kings and queens who are to be faithful stewards of what has been bequeathed to us.

Now the goal is not to merely uncover these musical treasures, study them, and deposit them in Christian universities and concert halls. God does not call us to be musical curators or sideline spectators. He calls us to participate actively as musical worshippers. God's people have always sung. Think of Israel after they passed through the Red Sea under Moses and Miriam; or David, the great psalmist of Israel; or Mary, Zechariah, Simeon, and on and on. Recall the description of heavenly worship in the Book of Revelation with the choir of the four living creatures, the choir of the twenty-four elders, the choir of angels, the choir of every creature which is in heaven and on earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them. The question is not if you are in the choir, but rather, which choir are you in?

As Christians we cannot deny that we are to sing unto the Lord. Yet it is not uncommon to hear many Christians state that they don't sing as a matter of fact—a situation that they have no intention of changing either. But there is no "get out of jail card" for singing unto the Lord. The command to sing is never qualified by "if you sing well," or "if you like to sing," or "if you took music lessons when you were a kid." There are qualifications, however: sing with understanding, sing skillfully, sing with a loud joyful voice. And they are for all God's people, not just for professional musicians.

ACCS schools are well positioned to implement musical instruction in such a way which would have, I believe, a monumental long-term effect on worship and culture, not only in our constituent churches, but throughout the nation.

So what shall we do? First of all, ***we must remember***. We must remember our musical heritage. We must recover and restore; we must reclaim and rebuild. Like Josiah when the Book of the Law was rediscovered, we too must tear our clothes and humble ourselves and submit to the Word of God and the example of our faithful forefathers.

Secondly, we must roll up our sleeves and go to work; we must purpose to change our paradigm. As many have rightly understood, to effect such a change one must begin with children. The wise builder starts with the foundation and builds upon it. ACCS schools are well positioned to implement musical instruction in such a way which would have, I believe, a monumental long-term effect on worship and culture, not only in our constituent churches, but throughout the nation.

Achieving such ends can only come by the grace of God. For our part, we need to provide skillful K–12 instruction; we need to teach music as a language, not as a cultural accoutrement to be appreciated. Music is a language with a great wealth and variety of genres. The purpose of learning a language is to achieve full literacy: the ability to read, write, speak, and comprehend with skill and understanding. This is no different in English, Latin, or music. As a language, the teaching and learning of music is well suited to the structure of the Trivium: (1) *grammar*–learning the basic structural elements of music (rhythm, melody, harmony, timbre, texture, form, dynamics), (2) *dialectic*—learning how the elements are used to create music (i.e. music theory), and (3) *rhetoric*—learning how to assess, perform, and create music skillfully and with understanding.

The educational philosophy and method of Zoltán Kodály is amazingly well suited to the classical approach. It is a linguistic approach to music education as opposed to a subject-logic approach. Kodály believed in musical literacy for all people. Just as it must have been impossible to think of a literate society five hundred years ago, it can be equally so with regards to musical literacy today. But it is possible and has happened before. In the span of roughly forty years, Kodály and his musical disciples transformed the entire country of Hungary from musical illiteracy to musical literacy.[3] If all students are taught music K–12 in a systematic fashion by a qualified teacher, this can be accomplished in one to two generations.

This is not art for arts' sake; it is for the glory of God. Music is first and foremost a means by which we are to let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one

The Ancient Treasure House...

another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts to the Lord.[4]

May God direct us to discover the former riches in our treasure house and grant us eyes to see them and hearts that delight in them. May we endeavor to be diligent to acquire the skills of musical literacy necessary to sing and play skillfully. May God grant us yet more glorious treasures today, tomorrow, and forevermore. *Soli Deo gloria.*

NOTE: This article is a revision of the 2008 Convocation Address at New Saint Andrews College in Moscow, ID.

ENDNOTES

1. C. S. Lewis, "The Ancient Treasure House," in *Prince Caspian* (NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1970), chap. 2.

2. Ibid. p.21-23.

3. Lois Choksy, *The Kodály Method I: Comprehensive Music Education, 3rd ed.* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1999), 1-4.

4. The Apostle Paul, Colossians 3:16-17, in *The Holy Bible*; *New Geneva Study Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995).

The Necessity of the Visual Aesthetic in Classical and Christian Education

by Heidi Stevens

Classical and Christian educators have been about the task of "rebuilding the ruins" for many years now, and have done so with a conscious bias toward building around the framework of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty. Yet most educators would probably feel some discomfort in trying to enumerate exactly what a purposeful study of Beauty, especially visual beauty, should look like. We're confident that Truth and Goodness will be revealed through the perspicuity of Scripture and the providence of general revelation, but we're less sure that we can draw from these same sources guiding principles regarding a visual aesthetic. While we would never leave Truth or Goodness to flounder in such lack of definition, we're suspicious that Beauty lies inscrutably, as the world has taught us, "in the eye of the beholder," and that we have little right to wrest it from its comfortable position there. We elevate sensate judgment to a role as the final arbitrator of Beauty in a way that we would never expect conscience to be an exclusive judge of Goodness or natural reason to be a solitary source of Truth.

Ultimately, we either recognize the role God calls us to in relation to the visual world He has created, or admit that we are treating an unavoidable realm of our existence as if it is outside His concern. Dutch theologian Hermann Bavinck pointed out that: "There are only two paths open—either humanity, with all its culture, is a means for the unconscious, unreasonable, and purposeless world-power, or it is a means for the glorifying of God. The first can . . . never be believed by humanity, for it is tantamount to suicide. The second . . . brings indeed the True, the Good, and the Beautiful to eternal triumph." [1]

We elevate sensate judgment to a role as the final arbitrator of Beauty in a way that we would never expect conscience to be an exclusive judge of Goodness or natural reason to be a solitary source of Truth.

As we consider these two alternatives, we must begin by seeing that the way we think about the visual arts and indeed all our aesthetic judgments and pursuits (or lack of them) is deeply connected to our theology. What we believe about the Fall and about Redemption has a direct impact on the value we place on training our students to embrace their dual creative call: the call to both critique and create visual beauty.

In Genesis, we learn that God created man to care for His creation but that man perverted that plan through sin. All of creation now bears the mark

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The Necessity of the Visual Aesthetic...

of that trespass; we're told in Genesis 3 that even the ground was cursed because of the sin of mankind. In light of this truth, it's tempting to assume that, since we've managed to "shipwreck the good of Eden," getting overly involved in culture is tantamount to rearranging deckchairs on the sinking Titanic.[2] Forgetting the culturally redemptive mandate we were given at the Ark, it's easy to presume a sort of "lifeboat theology" in which we see our primary task as that of rescue, rather than restoration.[3]

Equally easy is an enthusiastic but extra-biblical elevation of the merits of artistic expression. Since God created and made us creative, the thinking goes, "the arts" must be uniquely and mysteriously spiritual activities. Forgetting the destructive impact of Adam's sin on our original image, we see artistic endeavors as somehow existing above the rest of the fallen created world and thus less in need of the ongoing sanctifying grace of God.

If our thinking on art education starts with this sort of quick check-up on what we believe about both sin and redemption, we can avoid two philosophical extremes. Understanding the reality of the Fall keeps us from believing, with most of the rest of the world, that art exists in some spiritually elevated realm that will lift our students out of the morass of sin. But understanding that God is about the business of redeeming all of creation, and that He's given man distinct privileges and responsibilities within that plan of redemption, will keep us from dismissing the visual realm as something superfluous to the real business we're to be about.

Scripture resounds with the call of visual beauty. Though it is true that many references point to a beauty that is intangibly existent in God's character, we're not left without specific earthly examples to instruct us. Aside from the many references to nature's beauty, we find rich descriptions of the creation of the tabernacle and the temple[4] that are filled to bursting with God-ordained human artistic endeavors. Further, we see that these man-made visual arts are intended to move worshippers from an aesthetic to a spiritual response that expresses the delight a believer finds in God.[5]

Again and again, God's Word urges us to *see* and *assess* the visual world around us. Surely we are called to mature in our ability to see wisely just as we are called to grow up in all our other callings. Consider what is real and what is figurative in Psalm 19: we're called to figuratively "hear" the declaration of the skies, but we're to do that based on what is *really* perceived by our sense of sight! We read the book of Revelation and find that our dreaming of the future glory of the New Jerusalem is fueled by enticing *visual* description! The Christian is called to have an informed aesthetic taste because Scripture requires us, repeatedly, to consider what is lovely.

The call God places on us to love visual beauty should be enough, by itself, to argue for a robust art program in our schools. How can we love well what we're untrained to recognize? Some may argue that human awareness of beauty, as a God-given gift, needs no particular training. Yet, in that same vein of thinking, would we set aside teaching theology or logic in favor of trusting a "natural" love of truth? The abundant visual creations of man daily compete for our students' response. What will they esteem as lovely and admirable[6] if we do not train them to make biblical assessments?

If we acknowledge that we must train our students to develop thoughtful aesthetic taste, then we should also consider that in some sense they are called to mature in their ability to *create* visual beauty themselves. This proposition seems meddlesome if we think here only of professional artistic callings. God has *not* called each of us to paint canvases or sculpt marble. However there is at least a pedagogical and at best a principled reason to consider a "doing" aspect to God's creative call.

We learn to attend to what we concentrate on doing. We learn the beauty of the language of math as it's brought to our attention *and* as we struggle to express it ourselves in Euclidian theorems. We learn the relevant and cohesive nature of Scripture as we're told of those qualities *and* as we spend hours in our own exegetical studies. Likewise, we "love" the physical beauty given by our Creator God and recognize the most worthy craftsmanship of others as these things are pointed out to us *and* as we learn to see with the disciplined eye of an artist.

But even beyond these matters of pedagogy, the very fact that God has given us vocations in a physical—and visible—world should make us recognize how much each of us is called to make, arrange, order, and create in various ways every day. Dorothy Sayers is just one of many who points out that the "creativeness" of the soul is one of our most readily discernable image bearing qualities.[7] Observing this, for ourselves, and for our students, how can we

The Necessity of the Visual Aesthetic...

not desire for them a robust and thoughtful visual arts education?

In the classical model, this education need not be mysterious because it fits seamlessly and logically into the stages of learning we recognize. From the beginning of time, young artists have begun with the study of past masters and the "grammar" of copy work; imitation of the beautiful simultaneously addresses both the mental and the kinesthetic aspect of aesthetic knowledge. A dialectic transition occurs naturally, as students delve more thoroughly into the study of art history and learn to compare and contrast the works they assess, while simultaneously imitating techniques of rendering that require higher levels of logical thinking. Rhetoric students move more fully toward self-conscious interpretive choices in their own works, and grow in their ability to winsomely critique the visual culture around them through a formal study of aesthetics.

We must not be content to let Beauty be caught, rather than taught in classical Christian education. There really are only two paths open. Either we acknowledge the call to a thoughtful aesthetic so present in Scripture and so needed in culture, or we abandon that aesthetic as something beyond our calling and God's redemptive plan. Only when we thoughtfully and consistently train students who are leaders in both loving and creating visual culture will the world see the eternal triumph and interdependent nature of the True, the Good, and the Beautiful.

ENDNOTES

1. Herman Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation: The Stone Lectures for 1908-1909, Princeton Theological Seminary* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1909), 264-265.

2. Paul A. Marshall, *Heaven Is Not My Home: Learning to Live in God's Creation* (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 1998), 30-31.

3. Ibid., 31.

4. Ex. 25-30, 35-39; I Kings 6-7; I Chron. 22-27; 2 Chron. 2-4.

5. Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, Trempler Longman III, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), 83.

6. Phil. 4:8.

7. Dorothy L. Sayers, *The Mind of the Maker* (London: Continuum, 2004), 23.

A Foundation for Music Appreciation

by Gregory Wilbur, New College Franklin

When medieval scholars, theologians, and musicians wrote about music, what was their understanding and criteria of the music they heard? Is it possible that the music of the common practice period (from the baroque to the twentieth century—the last 300 years) is primarily built upon a different foundation, focus, and purpose than the previous 1500 years of music history? Classical Christian educators generally recognize the deleterious effects of the Enlightenment, humanism, Romantic movement, transcendentalism, and secularism on ideas, philosophy, theology, literature, art, and politics. However, these worldview movements are the prime influences on the vast majority of music presented for music appreciation. Learning from the past, how can educators approach music differently, understand its role and purpose, and more clearly *hear* and *comprehend* it so that students can truly appreciate music with discernment?

What Is the Purpose of Music Appreciation?

Ideally, the purpose of any educational endeavor consists of increasing in the knowledge of God, leading to right understanding and wisdom. All of the disciplines commonly associated in classical education are created by God, are consistent with the world that He has made, and are useful in gaining understanding as to the nature and character of God.

The philosophers of the ancient world and the Middle Ages were not interested in music as an idle pastime practiced in isolation. Rather, they viewed music as an integrated reflection of the divinely created order—a microcosm of the heavenly dance. Scholars, philosophers, theologians, and scientists such as Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Confucius, Augustine, Boethius, Cassiodorus, Ptolemy, Kepler, Luther, and Newton started from this perspective of the universe. Authors such as Shakespeare, Dryden, Milton, Tolkien, and Lewis assumed this concept.

Part of any education is the training of students' affections—which is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit in the process of sanctification. As such, Philippians 4:8 provides a curriculum of the heart.

As Pythagoras discovered, the most consonant and beautiful musical sounds are produced by the simplest and most elegant ratios. These same numbers, ratios, and relationships are the foundation of not only music but of much of design, maths, and nature. In fact, Vitruvius, the first century BC Roman engineer, wrote in *De architectura (Ten Books on Architecture)* that the proportions of a room or a building would look right to the eye if the dimensions used were consistent with the proportions that rule the art of music.

The ancients and medievals firmly planted the study of harmony as part of the *quadrivium* in the standard required curriculum. They recognized the connection between the specific aspects and elements of music and the cosmos—seeking to explain the orderliness of the created world in musical terms. The role of the musician or composer was to replicate the music of the spheres. This idea conforms to the creation mandate of Genesis 1 in taking dominion over the earth—in this instance particularly with regard to sound and time.

Strictly speaking, music is *sound organized in time*. This definition implies several important distinctions: music is an activity of sub-creation that requires intent; music is not random or chaotic; the organization of music complies with inherent principles of created order; music structures time; music develops over time with a beginning and an end; music moves through time to a place of completion; music constantly refers to itself in the past, present, and future.

Therefore, the purpose of music appreciation is to understand music in terms of its ability to reflect the Beauty, Goodness, and Truth of creation as a vehicle for apprehending the glory of God and knowing Him more fully. Needless to say, that is not the intent of a secular approach to music appreciation.

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A Foundation for Music Appreciation...

During the Enlightenment, the search for, and attempted replication of, cosmic order was displaced by a desire for music that appealed to individuals, was less formal, embraced natural religion, was nonmetaphysical, and progressive. It is this concept that has unfortunately prevailed to our day.

Musical Elements or How to Appreciate

Because of the order of the cosmos, balance and order resonate in the human spirit more clearly than chaos. For instance, a perfectly drawn circle has a beauty and unity that is lacking if the line gets squiggly or flattens the arc. This is also why listeners are not drawn towards atonal or chance (aleatoric) music—there is no sense of order, development, or completion. Conversely, despite the beauty of the cosmos, the Fall affects the desire to seek out those things that are true, lovely, and of good report. Consequently, it is easier to listen to music that requires no thought, that provokes immediate emotional reactions, and makes no disciplined demands. This is why educators should continually set before their students objectively good examples—whether that means music, literature, geometric proofs or dissected frogs—and provide the means to comprehend Truth and Beauty in the framework of a Christian worldview.

Melody and rhythm—representing sound and time—are the primary elements of music with harmony, tone color, structure, etc. as subsets. In addition to specifically exploring how well these elements fulfill their inherent potential and conform to God's created order, there are a few other areas to bear in mind—such as the type, or kind, of music with regard to its context and purpose, use of voices and/or instruments, and the horizontal or vertical nature of the melody and harmony.

Principles of Listening or When to Appreciate

In addition, the following principles should also govern how and when we present music for the sake of appreciation.

Firstly, music should be treated as music and not as a soundtrack or literary narrative. The same issue exists in art appreciation—the subject of a painting often takes precedence over the idiomatic elements of the work such as use of color, contrast, balance, perspective, brush strokes, etc. Likewise, educators turn music into a background for narrative expression (draw a picture of what this music sounds like to you) instead of the more difficult labor of teaching the elements of music. The most sensual music is not always the best music—which is why Tchaikovsky is not as good of a composer as Brahms.

Secondly, listening to music must be an active and not passive activity. Students should know how to use musical scores or portions of scores and how to sing or play instruments. In learning a piece of music, they should taste the music from the inside out by playing or singing parts of the melody to actively connect with the notes and their relationships.

Thirdly, the elements of music should be built up over time. There is no reason for students not to enjoy and savor and dissect good melody over the period of several years of study. This will create a vocabulary, or grammar, of music to be used later on. Without this foundation, students are easily lost in a great work of music as if they had been thrown into *Hamlet* without the benefit of learning parts of speech so that the sentences are nonsensical.

Fourthly, music can be, and should be, connected to the rest of the student's studies either historically or thematically. Thematic connections can provide a touch point between various disciplines. For example, when reading the book of Exodus, also study *Israel in Egypt* by G.F. Handel for an aural representation of the plagues on the Egyptians and deliverance of God's people.

In addition, when studying the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, what better time is there to dive into the parts of the mass (all Biblical texts), the development and codification of plainsong chant, the rise of polyphony, and the glorious liturgical music of Machaut, Dufay, Josquin, Palestrina, Tallis and Byrd? Consequently, as students learn about the ideas and philosophies of the day, they can see how these ideas were practically worked out in the music and art of its day.

And this leads, fifthly, to making sure that the music included for appreciation extends beyond the common practice period to include such types as liturgical music, chant, vocal polyphony, and folk music as well as others.

With a primary focus on melody, young students can quickly engage with good music through learning to sing (preferably by means of solfège) and through studying chant, folk songs, and other beautiful melodies. The time to inculcate students with an integrated love of music and song is when they are young.

As students get older and have mastered foundations of music,

A Foundation for Music Appreciation...

then the thematic and historic study of music, as mentioned above, readily connects music to their other studies. This also enables the exploration of music history in the context in which it occurred.

With regard to frequency, as an integrated and necessary part of the curriculum, music should be returned to its rightful place of equality with the other disciplines. Music appreciation, music making, reading skills, and theory should form a regular part of the daily class schedule—or at least as frequently as math, science, or Latin.

Guide for Selection or What to Appreciate

God calls His people to worship Him in Spirit and Truth and to do so skillfully. In cultivating worshippers, instruction in music—in order to worship skillfully and with discernment—becomes as necessary as teaching someone to read that they may understand God's Word. Music orders the mind, strengthens the heart, and soothes the spirit. As such, music has historically held a prominent and integrated role in curricula. Music instruction is not enrichment, extracurricular, or optional but a core component of the path to wisdom.

—Gregory Wilbur, Statement on Philosophy of Music Education

Part of any education is the training of students' affections—which is ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit in the process of sanctification. As such, Philippians 4:8 provides a curriculum of the heart. When we replace the idea of music appreciation with cultural enrichment, the study of music becomes a far different thing. Training affections to apprehend the reflected Beauty, Goodness, and Truth of God's creation moves students to the point of thinking about and understanding God's nature and character.

We must not lightly ignore the wisdom of the church fathers and medieval scholastics—the democracy of the dead—with regard to the seven integrated liberal arts. This approach to understanding music fashioned 1000 years of plainsong and developed composers such as Palestrina, Schütz, Handel, and Bach.

The end goal of music appreciation, and music studies in general, is to develop discerning and active worshippers. Students will always hear music around them, but giving them the tools to actually *listen* and evaluate what they hear reveals the bounty and goodness of our Creator who has given such wonderful gifts to His children. Consequently, as our hearts respond in worship, we should desire to only bring the best as a sacrifice of praise—that includes music as ordained by God, not what we prefer. This desire can only be achieved by submitting ourselves to the tutelage of God's instruction in His Word and the manifestation of His glory in His creation in order to truly understand and appreciate music aright.

NOTE: This article is an excerpt from a paper detailing more specifics about music appreciation that will be presented at the Classical Christian Fine Arts Symposium in Lancaster, PA, in March 2010.

From the Dark Woods to the Light

by G. Tyler Fischer

Selva obscura . . . so begins one of the greatest books. It begins in a dark woods with a lost, middle-aged man. How lost was he? He was so lost that it would have been fruitless to preach the gospel to him. He was not listening. He had lost sight of the Truth. This man was the poet Dante. As he is confronted by his sin and finds himself powerless in the dark woods, he has one thing in his favor: others are looking out for him. Others are sending him help.

Who would you send to win the heart of a man lost in darkness? A preacher? A theologian? A saintly man or woman? He would not have listened! God does not send a philosopher or a minister to Dante, instead He sends a pagan artist—another poet who stirs the heart of the wayward Christian to long for more—to long for true beauty. As Dante languishes in the woods he sees a ghost and he cries out for help. The shade turns out to be the poet Virgil—the greatest of Latin poets. Virgil is one of the greatest characters of *The Comedy*. He symbolizes human reason and serves as Dante's guide bringing him almost to Heaven. In the poem, he also is simply what he is. Virgil is a poet and his poetry calls Dante to again look up—above himself and

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From the Dark Woods...

his fortunes (which are headed toward exile and despair). This upward glance eventually leads Dante to see the love that "moves the Sun and the other stars."

For millennia this power in the West has been in the hands of Christian painters, poets, and musicians. Their art has been imperfect—as all art is—but it has consistently unveiled and inspired generations to follow after Christ, to embrace His symbols and people, and to love life.

The Dark Woods We Now Inhabit

Today, we find ourselves in a similar shadowy forest, one in which it would be easy to give way to hopelessness. Our culture races toward death and destruction. Christians seem to be along for the ride as horrors like abortion, homosexual marriage, and euthanasia whip by like stops on a Manhattan express train. Our situation is worse than Dante's. What poets or artists are coming to help us begin the trek to heaven? What help would Pollock, Schönberg, Kurt Cobain, or Thomas Kinkade give?

Today, fine arts still contain great power, but this power pulls people away from Christ. They shape our tastes, our discourse, and our vision of the future. For millennia this power in the West has been in the hands of Christian painters, poets, and musicians. Their art has been imperfect—as all art is—but it has consistently unveiled and inspired generations to follow after Christ, to embrace His symbols and people, and to love life. Today, this power is mainly in the hands of pagan artists. The art and music they produce—instead of calling us to long for Truth, Beauty and Goodness—too often drives us deeper into despair, further into the dark woods. Our culture suffers because Christian art is often a ghetto.

The Place of the Arts in a Secular Post-Christian Culture

As our culture has turned from Christ, it has looked to the arts to supply it with meaning and hope and has unwittingly made the fine arts into a high-brow quasi-religion for the sophisticated. In a righteous culture, art reflects and glories in God's Truth. It borrows its symbolism from Him. It reflects His meaning. It presses us toward reality—which is His reality (even when, like Virgil, it cannot grasp all of His Truth). Modern pagans long to find Truth without Christ. This, of course, will not happen. Christ is the center of all Truth and Wisdom. No center can hold without Him. This attempt is displayed throughout history—from the ridiculous to the high handed. One example of this neo-pagan attempt to use the arts can be seen in the art and music produced by painters and musicians of the French Revolution. Jacques Louis David painted powerful works like *The Oath of Horatii* and The *Death of Marat*. These paintings demonstrate great talent and they have an end. The end, however, is not Truth because the leaders of the French Revolution rejected Christ and Christianity. David's purpose was to win the hearts and minds of the people to embrace a new vision of reality without Christ. His work brilliantly stirs up the romantic sentiments of the people calling them to support the new radical, "enlightened," revolutionary state. This power eventually asks people to carry their fellow men off to the guillotine. Later, Hitler tapped the power of artists and musicians to bolster Nazi ideology and dehumanize his victims and enemies. Today, every ideology under the sun uses the arts to subtly draw us into their philosophy drawing us towards their ends. Unbelieving artists continue to use it to their best advantage to produce songs, films, music, and marketing jingles that sway our hearts and siphon off our money. Sadly, Christians have too often rejected the arts unnecessarily or used the arts ineptly, hardening hearts rather than softening them. We could call this reaction fight or flight.

The Christian Reaction: Fight and Flight

The first popular Christian reaction is *flight*—running away from the arts wherever we find them. This reaction is understandable. Many times, debased examples of modern art make our stomachs turn—and it should. This response fails to grasp the nature of the battle or the power of rhetoric. We never tend to run far enough away.[1] We

From the Dark Woods...

somehow imagine that our children will be protected from wicked art when we engage with a culture immersed in it and produce no winsome art of our own. Too often the tastes and ideas dearest to our children are not a result of family worship, but instead are carried by images, tunes, and lyrics from Hollywood or New York. We have paid a devastating price for our incompetent retreat.[2] We fail to remember that our rejection of the arts does not cause them to lose their power to win the hearts of our children and to subtly form or "reform" their worldview. Running away has not protected us or them.

Our *fight* has been as wretched as our *flight*. When we attempt to engage culture and produce art of our own, the results have too often garnered laughter—and deserved it. Too often modern evangelical Christians, when they have used art, use it *only* to convey the gospel message. Our films—like our services—end with thin, shallow altar calls. Our music gets shunted off into genres that begin with the adjective "Christian." We have our own Grammy Awards (Doves), our own art galleries, and our own films. We effectively wall ourselves off from culture, create art as if unbelievers were going to come and engage it, and then we go and watch it over and over because we want to prove the popularity of our niche group. Sadly, when the adjective is Christian, and it has to do with art and music, typically the synonym is "less talented."[3] We too often unthinkingly adopt the forms of our popular secular opponents and simply reduce the talent levels and wonder why our children eventually cannot taste the difference between our worldview and the world's. Both *flight* and *fight* have failed.

The Classical Christian Reaction: Marginalizing Art

While classical Christian thinkers have sought to engage the culture and to retrain our tastes, the results have not been stellar. This fact was brought home to me at the 2008 ACCS Conference in a workshop presented by New Saint Andrew's Fellow of History, Chris Schlect.[4] The workshop unveiled data garnered from people who had been involved in classical Christian education for more than five years. Its findings varied greatly concerning the humanities, math and science, and the fine arts. Concerning the humanities, classical Christian folks knew why they were teaching it and had strong and committed convictions concerning whatever curricular choices they had made. When it came to math and science, classical Christian folks did not know why they were doing what they were doing (i.e., they did not know how the study of math and science fit into the broader aims of classical Christian education), but we justified whatever we did by pointing out that our standardized test scores were better than those of other schools.[5] When it came to the fine arts the results were even more shocking. We not only did not know why we were doing what we were doing, we also did not see the work as essential to our mission as classical Christian schools. We sharpen our rhetorical knives to write great speeches hoping, of course, to hone our skills of winsome persuasion, but then we shun some of the most important and culturally powerful rhetoric. We wonder why our speeches fall on deaf ears. From these chilling findings, the need for a clearer vision for the fine arts in classical Christian schools should be evident—a fearless, forward-looking vision committed to a classical Christian methodology and to Christ's supremacy over all of life.

The Need for a Path Forward

The poet Dante traveled with Virgil through Hell and over the Mountain of Suffering before his vision was clarified before the face of God. We also have a long way to go, but the following is my outline for some of the *sine qua non* commitments that we need to have as we approach the fine arts.

We must approach the fine arts in a manner that is true to our classical Christian methodology. Our method of education can be applied in all fields including the visual arts and music. We need to discipline our students' tastes and abilities to both appreciate and produce excellent art and music. We start doing this by teaching the basics, showing relationships, and by finally teaching them to critique and create art. Any methodology that pulls us away from the skills of observation and analysis which eventually result in persuasion and production should be set aside.

Also, we must find a path that brings all art to kneel before Christ, recognizing that He is Lord over *all* of life. Christ's glory is especially seen in the gospel. Christ's dominion, however, is over *all* of life and over all creation. We can create art that celebrates all of creation. This means that the themes of our music and art need not be stilted or bent toward some false dichotomy between the sacred and the secular. God made the world. It is now horribly fallen (our art and music must recognize this or be exposed as syrupy and unrealistic), but it still bears the marks of its Creator. It will bear His glory. Our art, our

From the Dark Woods...

music must celebrate all of this.

Our vision must also be fearless and forward looking. It must be fearless because if Christ is Lord of all, then there is nothing—not in the arts, not in science, not in history—that cannot be explored. All Truth is His. Our path forward must not be, cannot be, a recapitulation or hope of returning to a simpler and more sentimental time. This does not mean that everything from the Victorian era or classical period was bad—so much was laudable, excellent, and is still enjoyable today. The truth is that we *cannot* go back to those eras.[6] Everything that we produce in hopes of reaching back to those times is anachronistic—it simply does not fit with our time. We can build on the insights of former times, but the most interesting truth is on the edge. We have to use the insights of the past and the present to build art and music that speaks to and challenges our age with timeless truths.

But how can we be fearless and forward thinking if we are lost in a dark woods? If we are to find a good path forward we must do so by pooling the wisdom that we have and by beginning with hopeless impracticality.

Toward the Light

When we find out that we do not know all that we should there is a temptation to press for the practical. This is a terrible and often irreparable mistake. Once practical track is laid and everyone starts building their lesson plans, things get harder to change—sometimes much harder. First, before we get practical, we need to get impractical—we need to get philosophical. We should find a time to get our best philosophical minds together—minds who both appreciate classical Christian education and have thought through how their implications should play out in a curriculum. We need to watch them wrestle with the ideal and be balanced by each others' criticism. We need to get our philosophy straight before we attack the practical.

Many of you might already be trying to pool as much wisdom to expand your vision for the fine arts. Keep at it. Our progress in this area is critical, I believe, if we want to push back against the present rip tide of our culture's artistic nihilism. Dante's curriculum was a long path (ours will be too). It took him to the center of the earth; it took him to the Earthly Paradise; it brought him past all the planets and the stars to see the Love that moves them all. It began with the beauty that he saw in the face of a young girl and the wonder that he experienced in the poetry of a Virgil.

ENDNOTES

1. That is, of course, with apologies to my Amish friends here in Lancaster County.

2. The statistics are breath-taking, but the trend has been going on for a while. The children of evangelicals simply are not buying the faith of their parents. Here are a few online sources: http://www.youthministry.com/?q=node/5029, http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/16-teensnext-gen/147-most-twentysomethings-put-christianity-on-the-shelf-following-spiritually-active-teen-years.

3. This, of course, is not true of all Christian artists, painters, or poets. I have found, however, when I have the privilege of interacting with excellent Christian artists and musicians, they readily admit that as they interact with other artists they have to work harder to be taken seriously because the name "Christian" is attached to them.

4. At the time of the publication of this material you could listen to Mr. Schlect's talk online at: http://www.wordmp3.com/details.aspx?id=8329.

5. If you find this horrifying, you should. As I have reflected on the findings (and quite frankly my own thinking), I am struck by the fact that sometimes we can juxtapose arrogance and ignorance (submitting to standards in one area that we would abjectly reject in another related area simply because it favors us). This is a deadly combination and it cries out for some more thinking, discussion, and listening to our best minds when it comes to our approach to math and science. Were we to apply these standards to our judgments about the fine arts (i.e., whatever standard garners the respect of the world defines our goals and objectives) the results would be disastrous.

6. James Jordan's work has blessed me by pointing this out. Many of us are prone to the mistake of the audience of the Hebrews. We want to go back. We must, however, press forward to what God is doing today. For more on this, see Jordan's *Through New Eyes* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1999).

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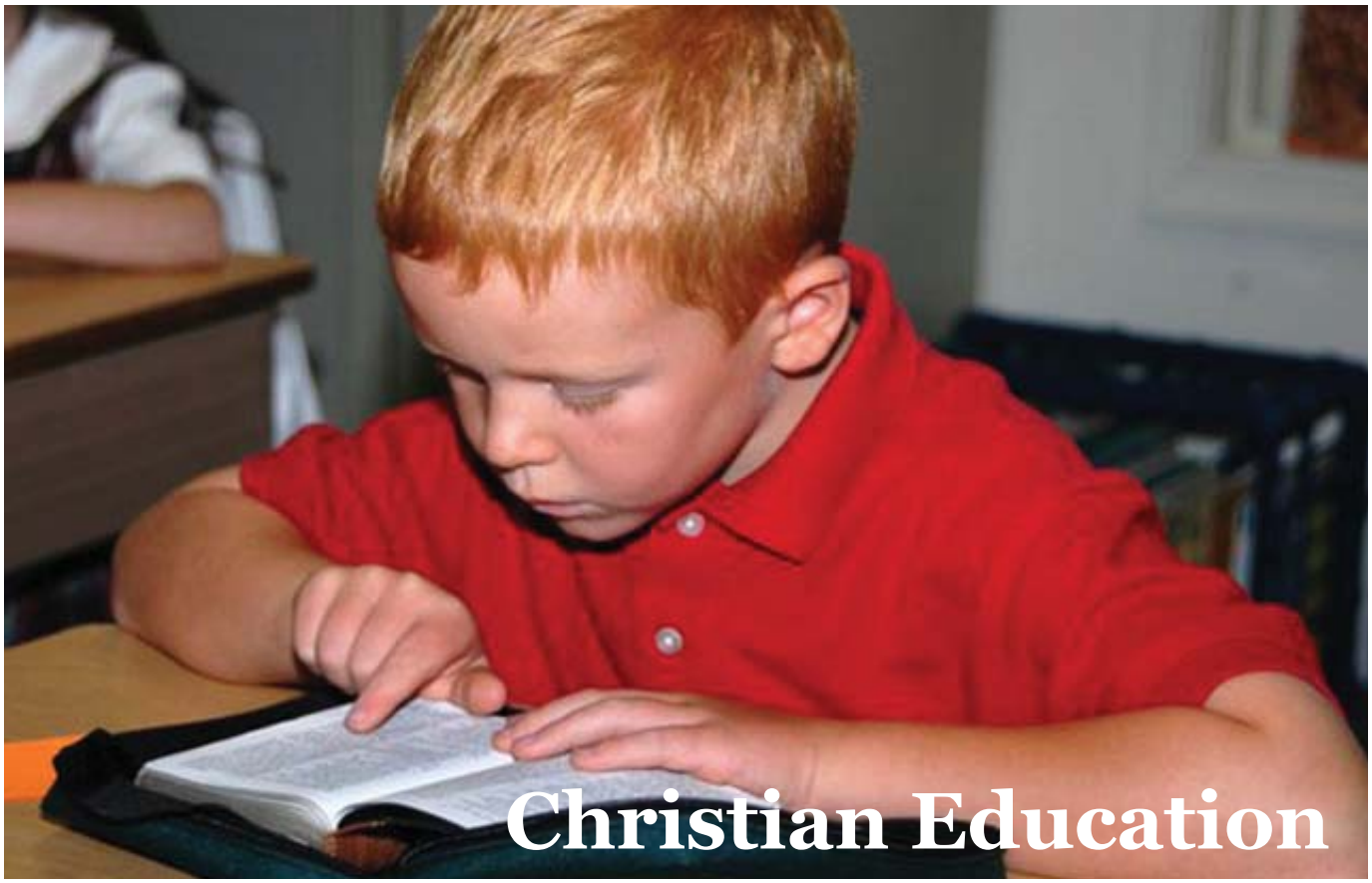

Christian Education

We address "Christian" first because we are first, and foremost, Christian schools. Our understanding of all things, including all things pertaining to education, is shaped by Christian truth. Thus, to acquire a sufficient understanding of classical education, one must first be able to view it from a Christian perspective.

The ACCS Confession of Faith defines the scope and elements of Christian truth individuals or organizations must affirm to be considered for membership in the ACCS. We see no need to add a second definition here as the Confession is sufficient. However, we do want to emphasize certain principles inherent in the Confession of Faith as they relate to education:

Sovereignty

God is sovereign. He possesses absolute authority over all things. He has created all things, sustains all things, and governs all things.

Antithesis

To provide a God-centered and truly Christian education, it is necessary to break completely free from the educational philosophies that surround us. We must build from the ground up, with the Scriptures as the foundation, both our educational philosophies and the framework in which we understand and present all subject matter.

Worldview

The Christian worldview is the "lens" through which we see, understand, and teach all things. It is antithetical to all other worldviews and thus requires that we present all ideas and concepts as part of a larger whole defined by Christian truth.

Neutrality

Because God is sovereign over all of His creation, there is no aspect of creation that does not reflect His glory and truth; hence, there is no place, subject, or issue that is neutral and that does not point to the Creator of all.

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