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SEEN Journal ©2019
CIVA | Christians in the Visual Arts.
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ON HOUSE AND HOME

JENNIFER CRAFT

Gaston Bachelard suggests in *The Poetics of Space,* that "all really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home." What Bachelard argues there, and what many of us understand from our own phenomenological experience, is that home is our basic orientation in the world. Home is, as the popular saying goes, "where the heart is." Home is something we all desire, something we all remember, or something we all long for and continually try to make in the here and now.

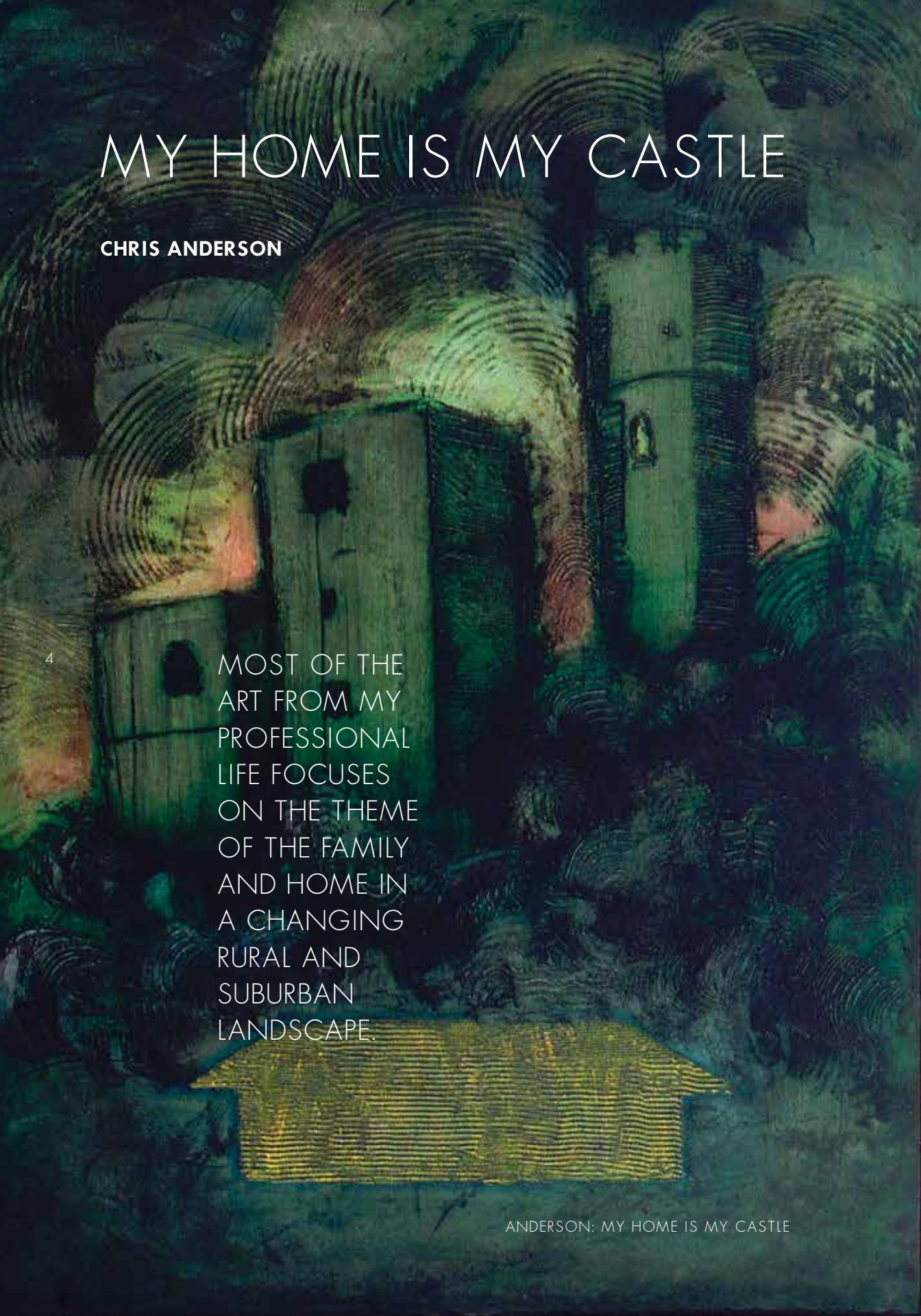
Our affection for home and our longing for experiences of it suggest something of a theological orientation as well. Our sense of home is grounded in our being creatures made for place and called to act within it (Gen. 1–2). And the pain that often accompanies our experiences of home also reflects the tensions inherent in our dwelling, the out-of-place-ness we have felt from the time of our exile from the Garden (Gen. 3). As Christians, we live in this tension of home and exile. Our sense of time is defined by our dwelling in a reality that is already but not yet. We are not yet home—we long for the new creation where God will finally make his home among mortals (Rev. 21).

The contributors to this edition of *SEEN Journal* dwell in all those meanings of house and home. We are invited to consider our holy vocation as homemakers, digging into our places with affection and love. We are led to attend to the particularities of dwelling, to the surprises within it, and to the ways that the landscape and house center us in our practical, lived experience. We see how art creates a common space for communion to occur, while radically re-training our imagination for thinking about the functions and meanings of house and home. We are invited to imagine how the house itself can be a symbol of identity and memory, but also dislocation and terror. We are reminded that home in the twenty-first century can be difficult to find, especially as we consider the realities of immigration and displacement. Home isn't merely the site of personal experience and dwelling, though, and we are also asked to consider how the church functions as home, centering our belonging as a Christian community while also sending us out into the world as participants in Christ's work of redemption.

The art, poems, and essays of this volume serve to disciple us in the creative practice of homemaking. As we dwell on the theme of house and home together, we are moved to consider our fundamental orientation for place and to discover that whatever home looks like, we are called into the practices of living in and opening up space for all of God's good creatures to dwell together in wholeness and harmony as we await our eternal home in the fullness of God's presence.

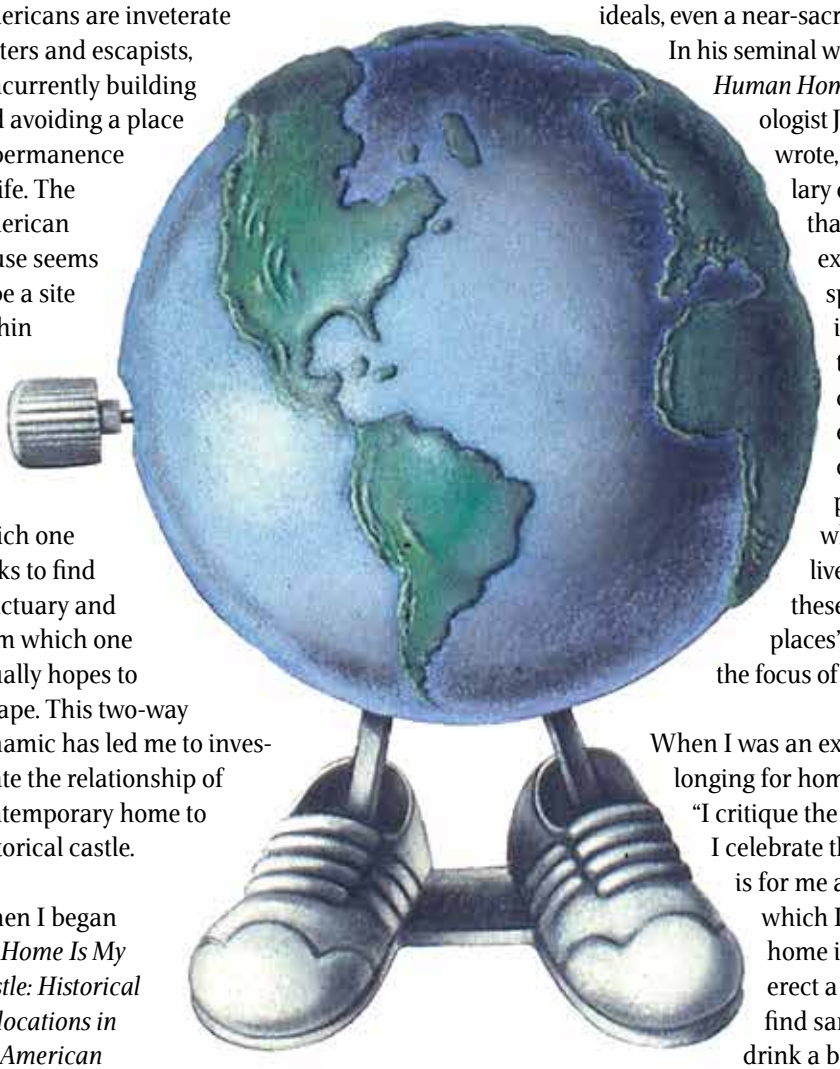
MY HOME IS MY CASTLE

CHRIS ANDERSON



MOST OF THE ART FROM MY PROFESSIONAL LIFE FOCUSES ON THE THEME OF THE FAMILY AND HOME IN A CHANGING RURAL AND SUBURBAN LANDSCAPE.

Americans are inveterate nesters and escapists, concurrently building and avoiding a place of permanence in life. The American house seems to be a site within



which one seeks to find sanctuary and from which one equally hopes to escape. This two-way dynamic has led me to investigate the relationship of contemporary home to historical castle.

When I began *My Home Is My Castle: Historical Dislocations in the American Neighborhood* and *The Schlossgeist Series,* I looked at the act of building or shaping a home as a means of making something extraordinary out of the ordinary: a castle out of the place where everyday life was lived. I saw the home as a refuge, fortress, and expression of romantic ideals, even a near-sacred site.

In his seminal work, *The Human Home,* sociologist J.A. Walker wrote, "The corollary of the belief that beauty exists only in special places is the myth that beauty cannot exist in the ordinary places in which people live." Life in these "ordinary places" became the focus of my work.

When I was an expatriate longing for home, I wrote, "I critique the culture, but I celebrate the home. It is for me a place in which I realize 'my home is my castle,' erect a fortress, find sanctuary, drink a beer, put the feet up, take the hair down, reorder the universe, find the center, give form to ideals, break bread, live in relationship, build a hearth, light a fire."

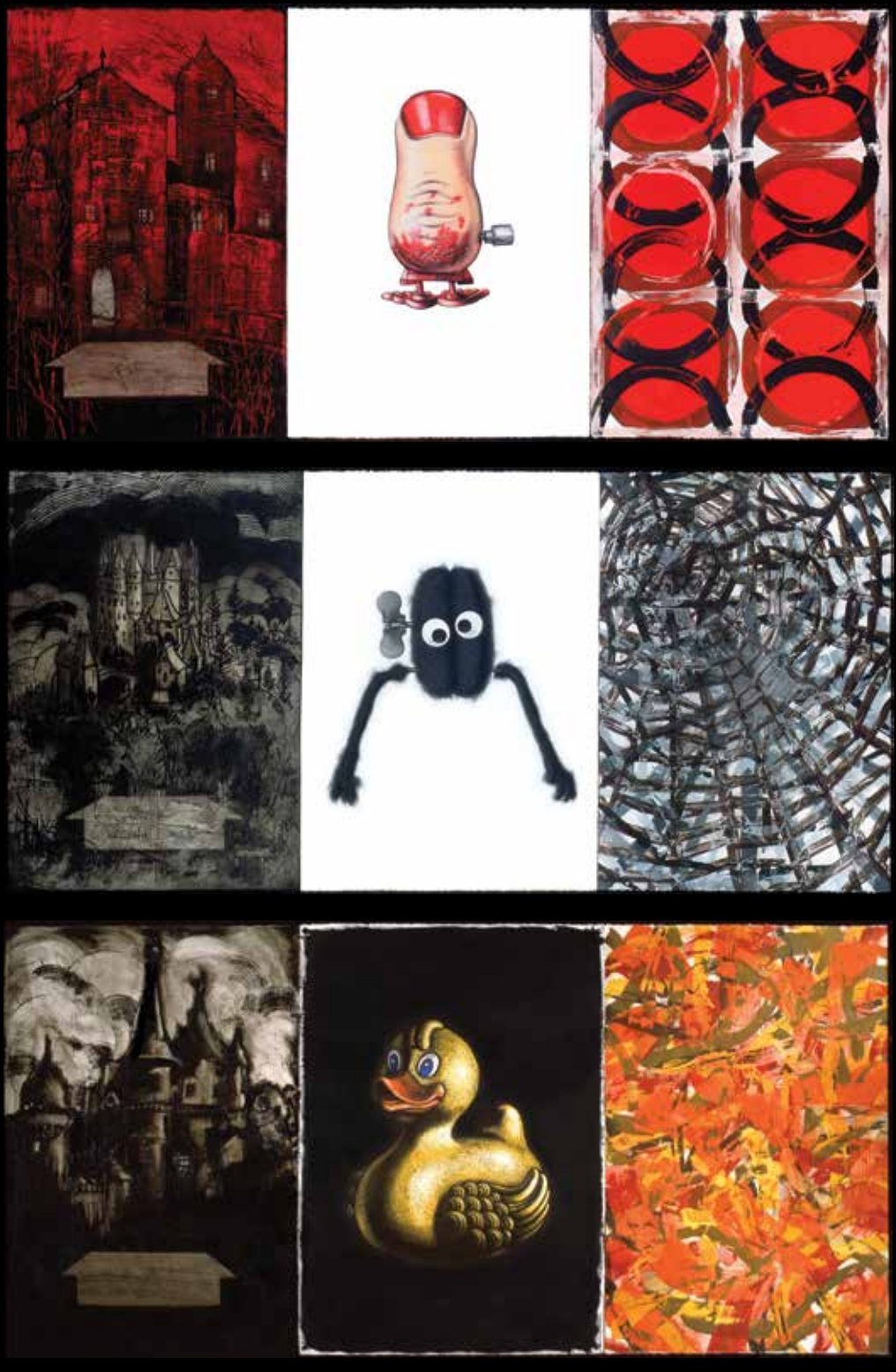
The essence of home is bound inextricably to the relationships within. Remove











the indwelling lives and a home becomes a house. Home is more than bricks and mortar, as the legend of Castle Ruin Weibertreu profoundly illustrates. German poet Thaddäus Troll tells the story: "When the German King Conrad III captured the castle in 1140 after a long siege, the women were given permission to leave and take with them only what they could carry on their backs. The loyal women staggered down the hill with their men on their backs, and the king was true to his word and let them pass." Castle Weibertreu became Ruin Weibertreu—not when King Conrad subsequently destroyed it, but when the women carried away their loved ones.

My Home Is My Castle: The Schlossgeist Series, an ongoing body of 41 x 90–inch triptychs on paper, was begun in a defunct chocolate factory in Vienna when I worked as an artist-in-residence with the Austrian Federal Ministry for Science, Research and the Arts. Each work was created in oil, raw pigment, pastel, and acrylic. In the first panels, I float anonymous suburban ranch-house shapes like icons on fields of idealized European castles in four archetypal forms: urban palace, baronial country residence, hilltop fortress, and castle ruin. In the central panels I position tiny handheld toys and windup monsters, each drawn from life larger than life. The figures stand not only as formal manifestations of the ghost stories and popular legends unique to the ancient sites, but also as totems or visual metaphors of the inner forces and early childhood memories that drive, inspire, and haunt our adult lives. In the final abstract panels of the triptychs, I attempt to externalize in color and form what is internal. We cannot see behind the walls. We understand abstractly. What do we enter into? In the midst of life, our earthly journey is unclear.

Throughout this ambiguous landscape, we erect castle walls to keep things away, to keep others at bay, to protect ourselves, to project an image of ourselves. We are relatively safe for a while, but like the other walls we build, they eventually fall. Safety and security are not guaranteed. Castles don't work to keep bad things out. Castles cannot keep out guilt, cancer, loneliness, or loss.

I spent my life erecting walls. I did such a good job of it I built fortresses within fortresses. One by one, each wall I have built has crumbled:

THE HEALTH WALL

In January a doctor stunned me with the news: "Your scans indicate the presence of a fast-growing cancer." Although this report turned out to be a false alarm, for six months I was under the shadow of a cancer watch. One of my paintings bears the unoriginal subtitle of "History Repeats Itself." History appeared to be knocking at my door again. Twenty years prior, in Berlin, after two immensely productive Fulbright years, I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Soon after, I awoke in a German hospital bed with one hundred stitches in my chest. I wondered, "Will I ever make it home again?"

THE HOME WALL

But where was home? During my first Fulbright year, I lost the TriBeCa loft where I had lived and worked for over two decades. I no longer had a home or studio in America. I was, for the first time in my life, homeless. Until then,

I had little idea how deeply my personal identity was tied up with my home. I had less idea how much my professional identity was defined by my studio.

THE PROFESSIONAL WALL

In 2017, a fire swept through the Bronx warehouse where nearly my entire inventory of paintings and drawings was stored. Over a thousand artworks were destroyed while135 firefighters battled the near four-alarm blaze. Four brave firefighters had to be hospitalized. Thank God none were killed. When the smoke cleared, my life's work, most of it anyway, was gone.

THE POSSESSIONS WALL

Four hundred people lost everything in the fire. Not only my work, but also my entire household of personal possessions—my library, family heirlooms, housewares, art collection, and other earthly treasures—was incinerated.

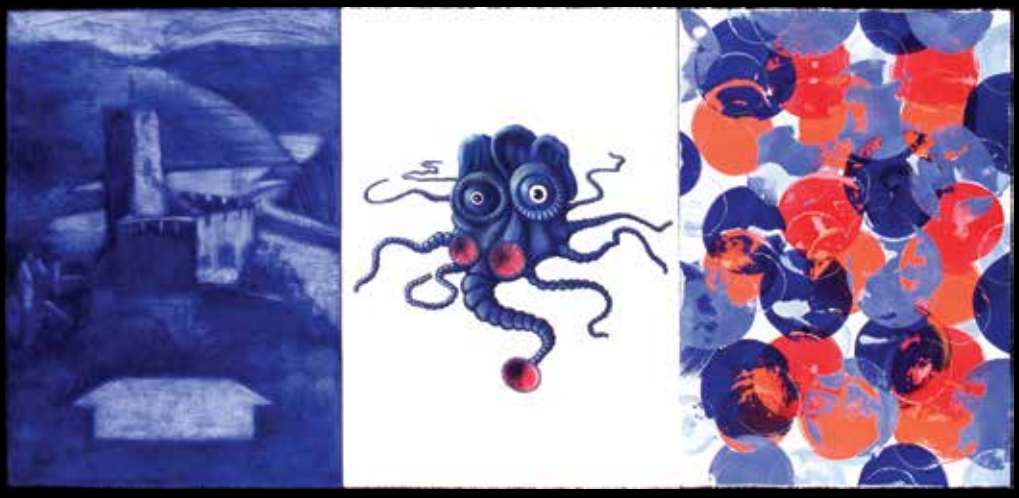
THE FAMILY WALL

Throughout the years, I made my art out of the concept of what it means, as Heidegger wrote, "to dwell," and "to dwell on earth as a mortal." For years I juggled a career of art-making around the hands-on caregiving of beloved, aging parents. I buried one brother, two fathers, and one mother. And now my remaining sibling is riddled with metastatic cancer. With each labored breath, a stone in yet another of the walls I have spent my life erecting falls to the ground. Being forced to face the reality of no permanent earthly home has allowed the real meaning of home to emerge: the love of God in Jesus Christ. All else disappears.

Now that I have fewer years ahead of me than behind me, this world seems to be merely the front porch or, in castle terms, the drawbridge to my home in heaven at the edge of the unknown in the abstract panels of my castle triptychs. Into this landscape of ambiguity God stretches out his hand. Psychologist Dorothy Martyn describes this dynamic:

> The primary theological rubric here is the corporate nature of *the invasive power of God's grace* to bisect the repetitive power of old forces. "Behold I do a new thing," sounds the prophet Isaiah as the word he hears from God. Grace is this "new thing" that does not arise simply from what has come before; it is . . . the new life from Ezekiel's valley of dry bones; it is "the presence of the God who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist" (Romans 4:17).

If we live long enough, we realize that we are not our work, our accomplishments, our home, our possessions, or even our family. We are his. Christ's blood spilled over us runs deeper than genetic ties. Theologian Lou Martyn calls this bond the "new genetic identity." Our identity is defined not by who we are or what we do, but by *to whom we belong.* And we are not alone. We are part of a larger community of faith. "[Corporeality] is related," wrote theologian Ernst Käsemann, "not to existence in isolation, but to that world in which . . . nobody, fundamentally speaking, belongs to himself alone." Dr. Timothy Keller asks the question, "Why was Christianity so radical in the first century?" Christians did not build a home or temple to house God;



Christians were the temple. "You, like living stones, are being built together into a spiritual house" (1 Peter 2:5). God inhabits us, these "living stones" in the walls of a "house not made by hands" (2 Corinthians 5:1 NASB).

In 1987, President Reagan stood before the Berlin wall and called out, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." In our own lives we know that's easier said than done. Our best intentions and good behavior are not enough. If we could change others, our world, or ourselves by choice, we would be wizards or gods. We cannot by choice alone take down our walls, but Christ can, and he has by his grace, even before we were able to cry out, "Jesus, tear down this wall."

George Bernard Shaw once said that the statistics on death are impressive. At the moment of death, every building stone, every message about home, every last vestige of home is gone forever. The deepest reality of what love is wins the day. Love is stronger than death.

As the towers of the World Trade Center came down, the messages and calls from loved ones who were about to die were not about the home. No one asked if the stove was turned off, the iron unplugged, or the door locked. No, no one thought about the house or the home. All the messages were "I love you."

In the end we can only cry, "Lord, to whom can we go? You are the one. You are our home. You are the love that conquers and wins." I cannot go to be with the healthy, loving sister or the beloved mother or father. I cannot surround myself with a lifetime of beautiful, meaningful possessions. I cannot have a retrospective with ashes. We know sorrow because we care, but He has entered into our pain and taken us out of "the sorrow unto death" and into a "godly sorrow" (2 Corinthians 7:10–11). To the world the last word is death, but to the Christian, the last word is life in Him who loved us all the way to the cross. The belief that God has a home for us is a belief that God is faithful. On a deathbed there is no place to go but to the one who has "the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). Our castle walls become the open arms of Jesus welcoming us home.

Chris Anderson is a visual artist whose work investigates the nature of the family at home or not at home in the American neighborhood. She studied at Claremont Graduate University (MFA), Scripps College (BA), Pratt Institute of Art, and Tyler School of Art in Rome, Italy, and has been awarded fellowship grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, New York Foundation for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts (CAPS), and the Fulbright Commission, as well as residency fellowships from MacDowell, Yaddo, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science, Research & the Arts, Millay, Virginia Center for the Creative Arts, EFA Studio Center, and Oberpfälzer Künstlerhaus, among others. She currently teaches at New York City College of Technology of The City University of New York.

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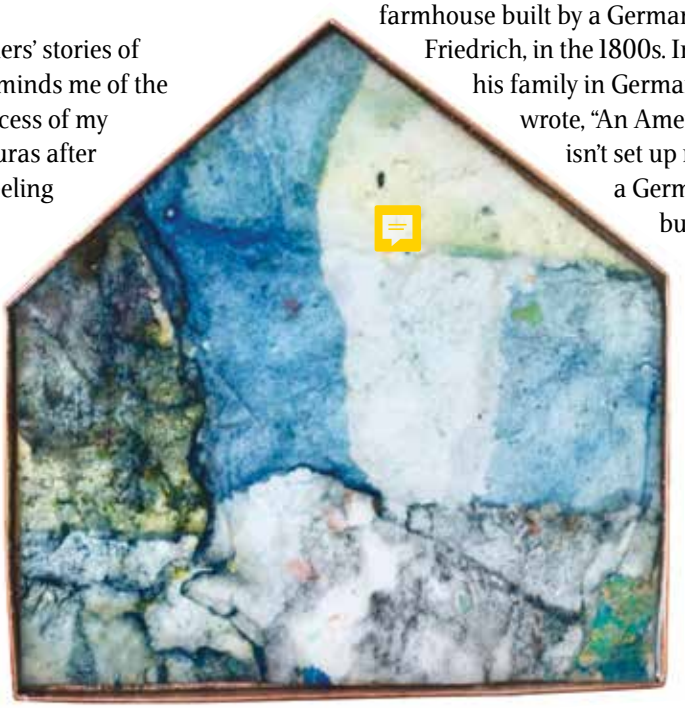
MEMORIES OF HOME

MARIA AMALIA WOOD

The stories of immigrants are deeply rooted in the memory and rich history of the United States. Theirs are stories of individuals and families who left their countries in search for another home, a place of safety, of opportunity, and of freedom. For the past twenty-five years, since I first migrated to the United States from Honduras, I've met many others who have experienced a similar journey. "You sacrifice friendships and family," said Alma, my daughter's daycare teacher, as we sat in her living room enjoying her delicious tostadas while talking about life as immigrants. Leaving our countries is letting go of our sense of place and belonging to a culture, a people, and a way of life. As we continued our conversation, Alma expressed, "It would be nice to go back, but here we have the opportunity to get ahead." Nodding in agreement, I thought about my dream of earning a college education and how pursuing it meant leaving my family and country at age seventeen.

My dream wasn't different from the millions of American citizens who attend college every year; the only difference was the home we left behind and the path we traveled to achieve it.

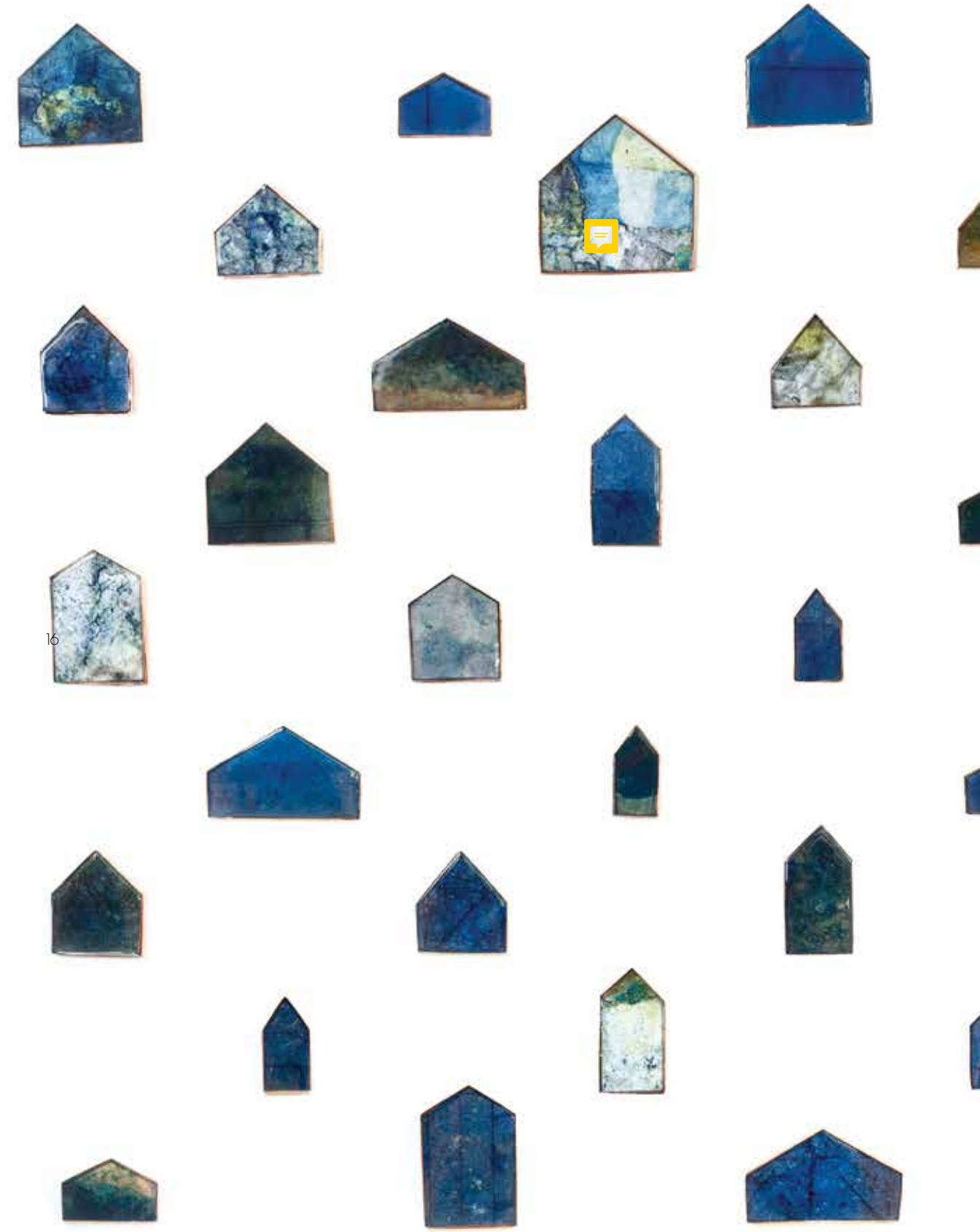
Listening to others' stories of immigration reminds me of the weathering process of my house in Honduras after we migrated. Peeling paint, cracking, chipping, oxidizing, and other wear and tear created stratified textures on the interior and exterior of the house. The walls were decaying because the only person who could take care of them, my ninety-two-year-old grandma, was also deteriorating. Home is Tita Melida, and now that she's gone, my connection to that remembered place also vanished. When I see layered surfaces that carry evidence of time and history, whatever environment I am in, I am filled with nostalgia and a deep sense of loss. As I long for my childhood home, I embrace the beginning of a new story.

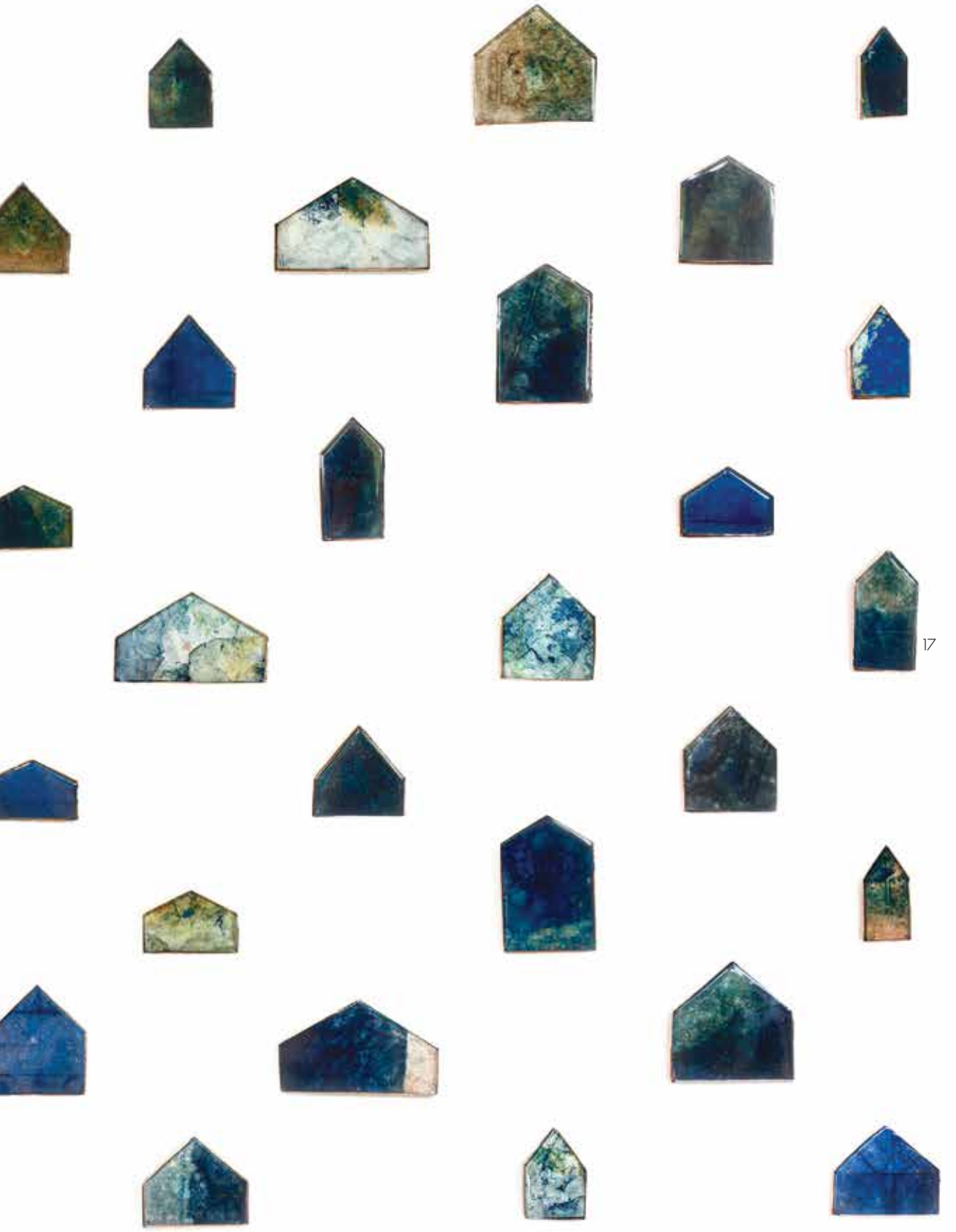


Many years after arriving in this beautiful country, with high hopes and aspirations, I found myself hiking through the Halfway Prairie Dane County Wildlife Area in Cross Plains, Wisconsin, and came across a stone farmhouse built by a German immigrant, Friedrich, in the 1800s. In a letter to his family in Germany, Friedrich wrote, "An American farmer isn't set up right away like a German, he simply builds himself a house, so that he can live, and the barn is finished right away, the sky is the roof and the ground is the floor, that's the kind I have." As a nation of immigrants, America has laid the foundation for us to start over, build new lives, and contribute to its thriving communities. Embedded in this land, roots from around the world carry everyone's story of home.

Maria Amalia Wood was born and raised in Honduras, and currently maintains a studio in Madison, Wisconsin. Using textile processes and materials, she draws upon material culture, the natural environment, and the complexities of a life lived between Central America and the Midwestern United States.

LEFT Roger Feldman, *Threshold,* 2013, Texas limestone, 29 x 19 x 15.5 feet.Laity Lodge, near Leakey, Texas





WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR: A LETTER TO MY REALTOR

MARILYN MCENTYRE

What I look for is light.
I want it to wake me, gently
through the slats in blinds.

I want it to play on ginko leaves
outside a west window
and hallow dinner plates

drying on the counter. I look
for small spaces behind
sturdy doors where I can hear

nothing but breath
and words that come
only in silence.

I want a room where two
or three can gather together
and be surprised—and wide walls

for paintings made by hands
whose work is prayer in gladness
and singleness of heart.

I need to imagine where,
in this house, music will be heard.
I want a shower made for singing.

I can't have the cabin at Walden Pond,
but I want a house that invites me
to simplicity and gratitude

every morning when the sun
invites me again out of bed
into a spacious life, small enough

to manage, large enough for
peace unimpeded, to spread and settle
on all who enter there.

HOUSEHOLD MUNDANE

KARI DUNHAM

The fold of a napkin, the way light reflects off water in a glass, half a loaf of bread sitting upright. In these I see the Lord speak. Be. And know that this is good. Be with. And know that you are Mine. Be home. And know that you know in part even as you are fully known.

For this series, I completed one painting a day for the majority of Lent in 2018. Each painting is acrylic on a 4 x 5 inch canvas and is a study of home. The group of 33 paintings was loosely a meditation on the book of Ruth. The word *hesed* is a Hebrew word repeated throughout the book of Ruth meaning loyalty and compassionate devotion. In Bethlehem, Ruth was a foreigner, and yet compassionate devotion led her to leave her native land and home and to remain with Naomi—to make a home wherever Noami called home.

This world is not our ultimate home; yet, I believe the act of making home in this world is a holy thing. Through making, we acquire relationship and connection to the place we live and the people with whom we live. Making the bed. Cooking meals for family, friends, and neighbors. Painting a bedroom in anticipation of a new baby. Planting a garden—all of these are sustained acts of making in the locality of a specific place. I just returned from visiting my dad in Maryland where he farms alfalfa and raises sheep. For him, the act of working the land is making good and transforms the land into home. For me, the act of painting ordinary objects and spaces of my physical home is making these things new. I am dwelling *with* the place I dwell *in.* As I sit, look, and see the spaces where I live and compose, mix colors, and put brush to canvas, I am deepening my embodied knowing of my spiritual home, who is Christ.

Kari Dunham is an artist and teacher living in Orange, California. In her work, she gives voice to the quiet corners and objects of the home. She studied at Laguna College of Art + Design (MFA '13) and Evangel University (BFA '06) and currently serves as an adjunct professor at Biola University, Concordia University Irvine, and Irvine Valley College. Additionally, she has written for Biola's Center for Christianity, Culture and the Arts Lent and Advent Devotionals.

CONSTRUCTIONS

JONATHAN ANDERSON

The paintings in this series conflate the construction of an image with the construction of a home. In each case, the structural framing of a half-built house is painted negatively such that its wooden studs and beams are in fact unpainted omissions in the pictorial space, revealing the bare wooden panel on which the painting is constructed. The wooden figure in each image is thus materially equivalent to the wooden ground of the painting itself; the figure reveals the ground, and the ground reveals itself as a figure. The seemingly defaced tree paintings function similarly: what at first appears to be a scribbling-out of these images is in fact a painstaking painting-around, whereby the "scribbled marks" are actually spaces where the wooden panel has been left unpainted. The tree imagery is thus effaced only by the objecthood of the actual tree on which the image has been painted.

LEFT Jonathan Anderson, *Construction (no.1)*, 2008, oil on birch panel, 17 x 21 inches
ABOVE *Construction (The Clearing)*, 2011, oil on two joined birch panels, 66 x 48 inches

This figure–ground conflation creates subtle rifts in the logic and the language of these paintings, generating at least two competing ways of seeing them. Within the logic of traditional representational painting, these negatively-painted figures present themselves as absence: unpainted voids in the pictorial space of the image. From another point of view, however, these unpainted wooden figures have a stronger material presence than the illusionistic imagery of the surrounding landscapes. Both frames of reference—painting-as-image and painting-as-object—are entirely appropriate to understanding what each painting is, but they produce conclusions that are inverse to each other.

There is more at stake here than an obscure "art about art." These conflations of figure and ground—particularly in images of homes and organic life—provide sites for extended meditations on what George Steiner calls the "covenant between word and object, the presumption that being is, to a workable degree, 'sayable.'"

Jonathan Anderson is an artist, art critic, and associate professor of art at Biola University. In addition to his studio practice, his research and writing focuses on modern and contemporary art with a particular interest in its relations to religion and theology. His writing has been published in several journals and books, including *Modern Art and the Life of a Culture: The Religious Impulses of Modernism* (InterVarsity Press, 2016), which he coauthored with theologian William Dyrness.

jonathan-anderson.com

Construction (for Cézanne), 2011, oil on birch panel, 36 x 48 inches

Construction (no.8), 2010, oil on birch panel, 36 x 90 inches

LEFT *Found*, 2012, oil on canvas, 62 x 72 inches
ABOVE *Construction (no.10)*, 2012, oil on birch panel, 48 x 60 inches

Construction (no.5), 2009, oil on birch panel, 37 x 48 inches

DISPLACED

SARA KERENS

STORIES FROM THE SYRIAN DIASPORA

In September 2015, three-year-old Alan Kurdi boarded an inflatable boat in Turkey and set out to cross the Aegean Sea towards Greece. Shortly after departing, the boat capsized. The next day, a Turkish photographer captured a photo of Alan's body, lying face-down on a beach back in Turkey. The now-infamous photo instantly became the catalyst for an unprecedented amount of change on a global level as it circulated on the front pages of the world's media. It was a singular visual representation of the news that had been previously percolating, forcing governments and people around the world to confront this tragedy.

Germany's Angela Merkel declared that her country's borders were open to those seeking refuge, and what had been an underground journey through Balkan forests became an officially sanctioned train journey. The number of people seeking that refuge skyrocketed, and we decided to follow them, documenting their stories and their travails, painting a more human picture of the refugee crisis.

Their stories and the lives they look forward to in Europe are the subject of this book. International media has already documented the journey and the crisis with a macro lens. What we hope to do instead is to shine a light on the individuals behind the story and their struggle to rebuild and move forward with their lives.

Given its proximity to the Greek islands, Izmir has been a known point of departure for refugees for decades. Yet without the attention of the world's media, news of the underground activity rarely entered the world stage. Quietly, cheap hotels opened their doors and street vendors sold life jackets.

LEAVING IZMIR

For those who decide to leave, the call from the smuggler is eagerly awaited and can come at any time. When it comes, they may only have a few hours to gather their possessions—typically no more than a backpack containing a change of clothes, a pack of cigarettes, a phone and battery pack, some legal papers, and a little food—and get ready. With so little to pack, the short notice is not a problem. The call contains instructions with a specific meeting point and time. A final trip through the streets to wrap all the possessions in water-proof plastic and the refugee finally meets their travel companions for the first time.

THE BOAT RIDE/ ARRIVING IN GREECE

Five miles south of Turkey's coast lies the Greek village of Skala Sikamineas. This fishing village has always been a destination for European and Turkish tourists looking for a good meal and a picturesque evening. Yet under the radar of international media, the fishermen have shared their waters with clandestine visitors. Since the start of the Syrian Civil War, the arriving boats full of

refugees have transformed life in this tiny village of 150 people. They arrive by the thousands every day, starting at dawn and not slowing down until nightfall. Tourism all but ceased, taking down with it the bloodline of Skala's economy.

THE FERRY TO ATHENS

The ferry from Lesbos to the mainland port of Athens takes between 10 and 15 hours, depending on the number of stops. Those who can, spend that time sleeping. Those who can't, spend that time on the deck of the ferry. They kill time smoking, exchanging stories, walking, and drinking tea in the café. A few make their way down to grab a drink in the bar—which, unfortunately for them, is located in the common area and is full of Muslim refugees for whom drinking is a sin, so they imbibe under the judgmental stares of the people around them.

LIFE AT THE CAMP

Austria, Germany, The Netherlands, Sweden, and Norway absorbed the vast majority of refugees in 2015. As their stories saturated international news media, sentiments of unease in the West were inflamed. Images of masses of people taking over train stations and blocking highways were real but over-dramatized the impact of the crisis on daily life. A tourist could travel through the heart of Amsterdam at the height of the crisis and nothing would seem out of the ordinary.

REFLECTIONS OF THE REFUGEES

"Crossing to Europe would cost him even more invaluable years of his prime. The war cost him his twenties, but that was out of his control. Going to Europe would cost him at least another three years in processing time, language lessons, building a network and ramping up in a foreign workforce, just to integrate like he had in Turkey. And what if he decides to start a family, what environment would that child grow up in? All these families leaving to Europe think they're leading their kids to a better life. I'm not so sure. I think they're wrong. If the family bond is not strong there, and the family isn't together, what else do you have in life?"

"You get to a point where you just tell yourself, I can't live like this! If I leave the house I don't know if I can come back. People kept on saying, 'Wait, wait, the war will be over soon,' but it just kept getting worse and worse, not better. That's why we decided to leave."

"I only spent 25 days in Izmir. I was mostly trying to see if I could stay living in Turkey or go to Europe. The most important aspect of the decision for me was getting a European citizenship. I could stay in Turkey for ten years and still not get a citizenship. This was a big reason for me to leave to Europe . . . I was looking ahead. In eight years, I can become a citizen of those European countries. [Ziad] understood where I was coming from, and just told me 'Twakkal 'ala allah' (Leave it to God, and go)."

"We didn't know what to do. The fighting was still going on and very intense. Snipers, rifles, guns, everything. Some bullets hit the car, so we had to leave the car. Along the highway there were stores where we thought we could take shelter from the fighting, but the stores were all closed. We had no idea what was smart to do; we weren't even thinking. As we were leaving, my mom got hit near her pelvis on the side. The bullet went through her. Around the same time, my dad was hit, too, and the bullet went through his heart. We started screaming and yelling. All of it happened so quickly."

"We've been betrayed a lot. We were betrayed by what they call the revolution. Everybody is talking about protecting human rights and minority rights, but all of them are killing Syrians. We had a great life back then, but we've lost it all."

Sara Kerens is a New York City–based photographer who, for the past ten years, has focused on fashion, travel, commercial, and documentary work. As a visual storyteller, she has photographed iconic figures from Barack Obama, to Margaret Thatcher, to Chinese civil rights activist Cheng Guangcheng, and documented a broad range of experiences from Susan Sarandon and Alan Cumming on top of the Empire State Building to the hundreds of refugees across Turkey and Europe. Her photographs illustrate the stories documented in the recently published book, *Displaced*, written and produced by Syrian-American Majd Taby.

IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK

GINGER HENRY GEYER AND JENNIFER ROUSSEAU CUMBERBATCH

Assembled in response to a bold invitation by the venerable Neill-Cochran House Museum in Austin, Texas, a contemporary art collaboration titled *If These Walls Could Talk* is in the works. The exhibition will feature a full-house installation of *trompe-l'oeil* sculptures highlighted by targeted live performances, which will run from January through April 2020. During this same time, UT Austin students will, for the first time, be researching the House's dependency (that's museum-speak for an out-building upon which the big house is dependent), built by slaves in 1856. What follows is a conversation between Ginger Geyer and Jennifer Cumberbatch. Both seminary graduates, Ginger is a sculptor, and Jennifer is an actor and pastor.

GG: The concept of a full-house immersion with my quixotic porcelain pieces surreptitiously placed among the room furnishings has long been a dream of mine. I've attempted this with studio open houses at my home and always hoped to do it in a bungalow as a fundraiser for a community desiring an art house. I'd never thought a historical southern mansion was even a possibility, but when NCHM Director Rowena Dasch gave me a tour one day and offered me an exhibition in the back room, before long we envisioned some seventy sculptures hidden in plain sight throughout the house. Then she mentioned the back structure, a small, two-story, rock house where there had once been a carriage house, a kitchen, a latrine, and a barn nearby. This inconspicuous rock house turns out to be the only extant slave dwelling in Austin and, along with the big house, they are the ninth and tenth oldest structures in the city.

JC: I grew up in a couple of houses of this vintage. When I was in elementary school, we lived in a two-story antebellum house in North Carolina. It had massive white columns, a big porch, pedestal sinks, lots of built-in bookcases, and a coal-fueled furnace in the basement. There was also a crystal chandelier that I almost shattered while practicing my jumps for cheerleading! We moved to Cincinnati into a three-story Victorian home with oak floors, a fireplace in every room, and a mahogany banister that curved into a marble floor foyer. There was a Romeo and Juliet balcony off my bedroom, and the bathroom had an ornate claw-foot tub. In short, I have always been drawn to the grandeur of older homes. The Neill-Cochran House reminds me of these homes. So, my entry point into the inception of *If These Walls Could Talk* was inverted per the usual, focused on the dependency and its inner life, rather than the *big house.*

GG: Well, my childhood home was a small mid-century modern American Dream House; then we too moved into a colonial house. I've just learned that my beloved hometown in Arkansas was probably a sundown town. Growing up in such a homogenous place, I've taken a shamefully slow path to "wokeness." I may start a club for Guilty White Ladies.

LEFT Neill-Cochran House Museum, Austin Texas, front porch
ABOVE Ginger Henry Geyer, *Topsy-Turvy,* 2019, glazed porcelain, 4.5 x 14 x 9 inches. Adaptations from Harriet Powers's two *Bible Quilts,* key images of *Cain Killing Abel,* and *Moses with the Serpent.*

JC: Ha! Your spiritual and artistic honing, alongside a big dose of curiosity and humility, has led you to explore the impact of white privilege and the dynamics inherent to the experience of historically marginalized people of color. So, your long-time dream of wanting to house your art in a home setting became infused with ideas about house and home and the *oikos* thereof—the curious intersection of the two.

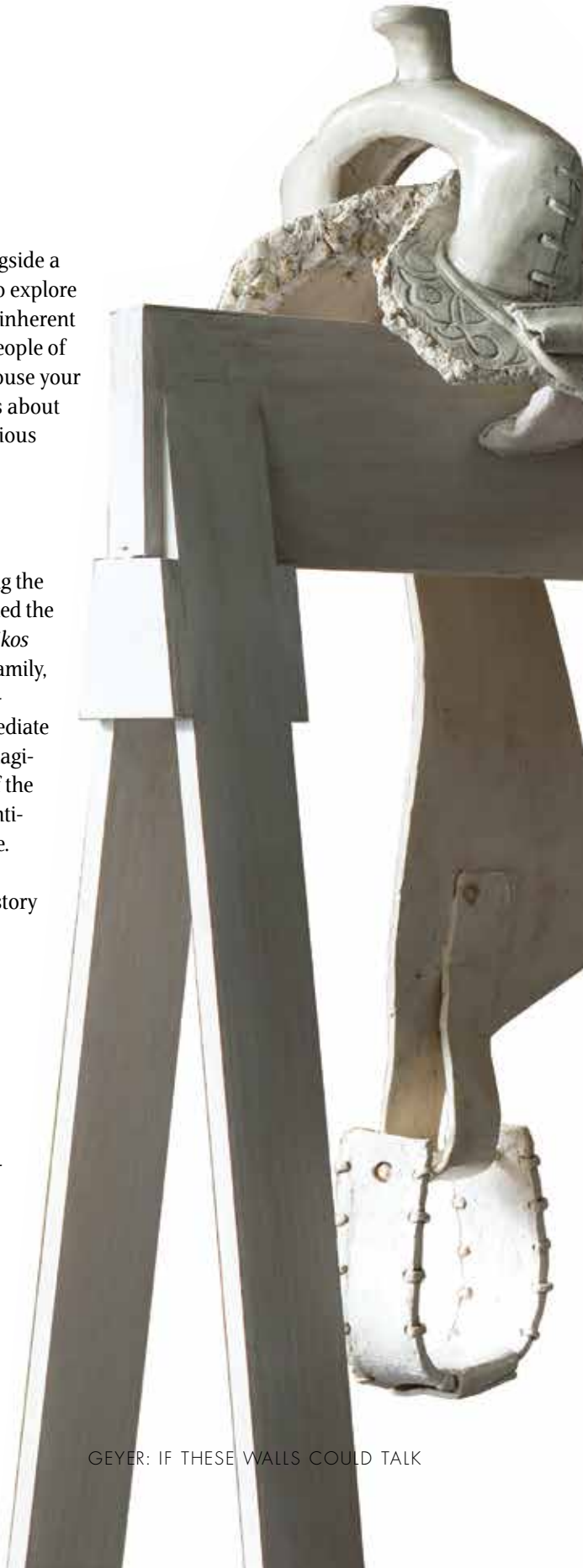
GG: Explain the concept of *oikos*?

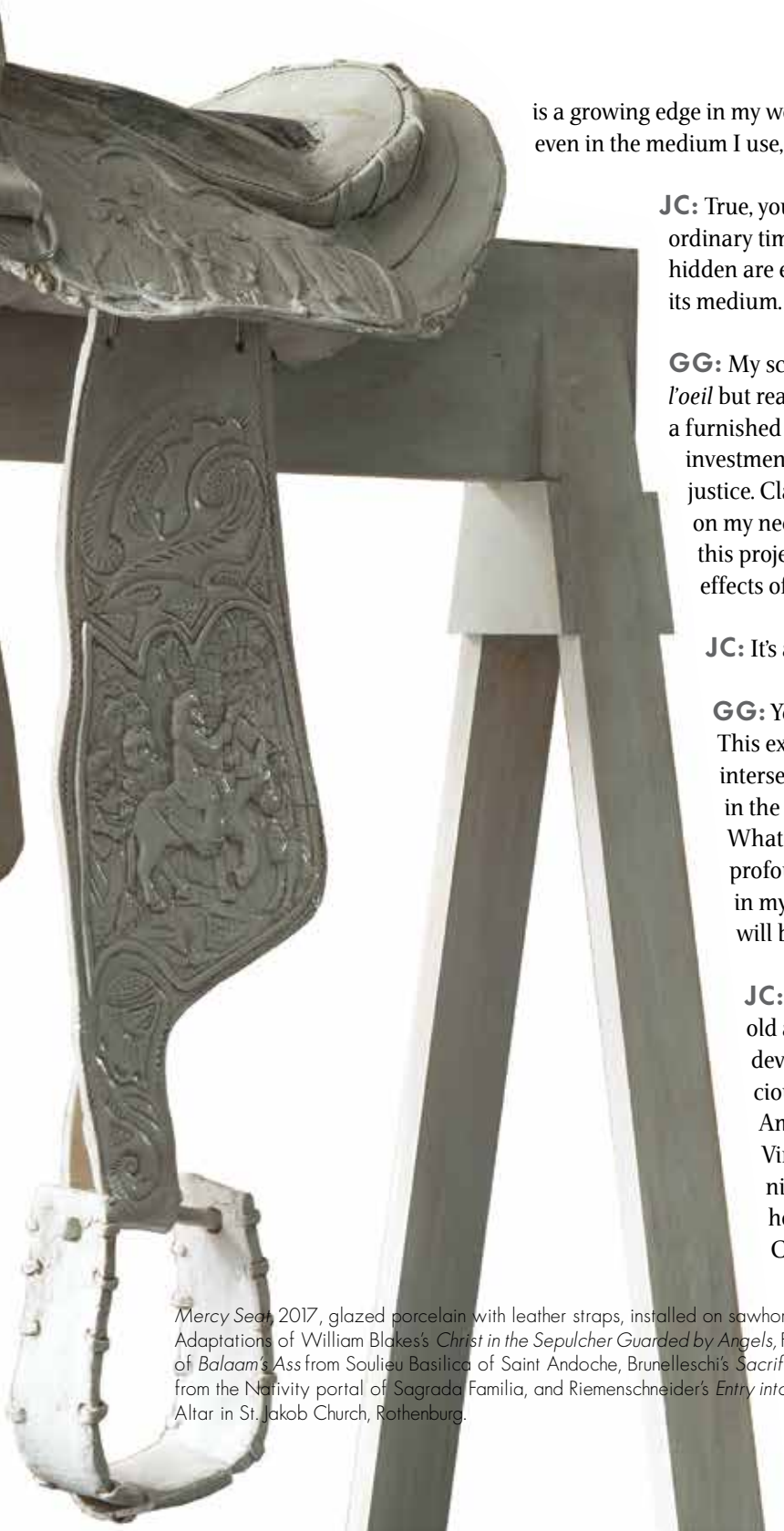
JC: It's the Greek term for a set of rules governing the household in ancient times—the rules that dictated the interactions of masters, mistresses, and slaves. *Oikos* refers to three related but distinct concepts: the family, the family's property, and the house. This encompassed the head of the *oikos*, along with his immediate family and his slaves. From the beginning, my imagination swelled with stories about the inner life of the slaves, servants, and white occupants and their intimate intersections among the rooms of the house.

GG: This project keeps evolving—the more history we uncover, the more we sharpen each other's perspective. It seems so incompatible to have my quirky art in this stately home, a monument to privilege, and predicated on the sale of five enslaved human beings. As Gaston Bachelard said in *The Poetics of Space*, "everything comes alive when contradictions accumulate."

JC: Yes, incongruities and paradoxes abound—for instance, me a black woman doing a show in a house owned by the Texas chapter of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America. Really?

GG: The concept of white fragility—the defensiveness of white people when challenged to engage in cross-racial dialogue—





is a growing edge in my work. And fragility has resonance even in the medium I use, this persnickety porcelain.

JC: True, your exploration of domesticity, ordinary time, real and fake, the seen and hidden are embodied both in your art *and* its medium.

GG: My sculptures are not quite *trompe l'oeil* but realistic enough to be disguised in a furnished room. Below the surface is an investment of art history, theology, and justice. Clay's fragility provides a check on my need to control results. Much like this project, we never know the ultimate effects of what we send out there.

JC: It's a faith venture.

GG: Yes, and a bit of foolhardiness. This exhibition is a celebration of the intersection of the sacred and secular in the heart of this house and home. What is at first glance trivial becomes profound. The majority of the pieces in my *Chlora's Dream House* book will be in this show.

JC: I know Chlora, your 11-year-old alter ego. And I've had fun developing her equally precocious running buddy, an African American 11-year-old, Ruby Virginia. Ruby is the fictional niece of Eddie Mae, the real housekeeper of the Neill Cochran House for 32 years.

Mercy Seat, 2017, glazed porcelain with leather straps, installed on sawhorse: 43 x 29 x 21 inches. Adaptations of William Blakes's *Christ in the Sepulcher Guarded by Angels,* French Romanesque capital carving of *Balaam's Ass* from Soulieu Basilica of Saint Andoche, Brunelleschi's *Sacrifice of Isaac,* Gaudi's *Flight into Egypt* from the Nativity portal of Sagrada Familia, and Riemenschneider's *Entry into Jerusalem* from the Holy Blood Altar in St. Jakob Church, Rothenburg.

Eddie Mae showed up in our research of the house, and it turns out she lived on the same street where my daughter now lives.

GG: Eddie Mae wagged a heavy vacuum cleaner up and down the staircase. I've created a porcelain vacuum cleaner that will sit on an Oriental rug in the parlor, as if Eddie Mae just stepped away for a minute.

JC: *If These Walls Could Talk* and its focus on the hidden and the seen, main characters and supporting cast, is all about the God who sees and God's redemptive work that is inclusive; there are no bit players, and everyone in the *oikos* is favored—grace-filled and seen.

GG: It is kind of an upstairs/downstairs tale, but with a twist. What you first see when you walk into the entryway is the curving stairway. And beside it stands a hat rack.

JC: . . . holding Aretha Franklin's grandly bowed hat that she wore to President Obama's inauguration. That porcelain hat of yours evokes widespread love for The Queen of Soul. I love that the undercarriage of the bow contains your rendition of Faith Ringgold's *Mama Can Sing*. And that her *Daddy Can Blow* is hidden inside. This porcelain hat nestled in the bosom of the antebellum house reminds us of the Negro spiritual songs nestled in the bosom of the enslaved, laden with the hope of freedom and of Aretha belting out her soulful rendition of *My Country, 'Tis of Thee* on the front steps of the United States Capitol Building, when Barack Hussien Obama, a Black man, was sworn in as the 44th president of the United States.

GG: I titled that hat *Make America Sing Again*.

JC: It evokes Paul Laurence Dunbar's *When Malindy Sings*.

GG: Which you plan to perform right there in the entryway. There's a long velvet antique couch for visitors right beside the hat rack. I'm going to put four cushions on it, my *Couch Potatoes, Not . . .* all of potato-associated people who were anything but slouches: children of the Irish, hard-working harvesters, Van Gogh's *Potato Eaters*, and George Washington Carver, the black botanist renowned for his experiments with peanuts and sweet-potatoes.

JC: Yes, he was credited with saving the Southern agricultural economy by suggesting crop rotation, using peanuts to replenish the soil depleted by cotton. Oh, and, by the way, I do make a mean sweet-potato torte!

GG: Yes, you have elevated that humble pie to a fine art. We hope to have a big pie party at the house with a group called "Peace Through Pie." And coffee to go with a coffee pot I'm making for Martin Luther King, Jr. It'll have Moses' burning bush on it . . .

JC: . . . to exemplify MLK's midnight call from God to press on with the Civil Rights movement. We will put that coffee pot on an old kitchen table where stories can be collected. I hope diverse people will sit down and talk about their own experiences with race and wrestle with the current resurgence of nationalism and the misguided sense of supremacy of one group of people over another.

GG: My black and white *Polarities* piece, two paint cans with a colorful Jackson Pollock splashed in between, is a fitting springboard

LEFT *Make America Sing Again,* 2018, glazed porcelain with mother of pearl and white gold, 9 x 11 x 9.5 inches. Adaptation of Faith Ringgold's *Mama Can Sing & Papa Can Blow.*
ABOVE *Second Amendment Meets Second Commandment,* 2019, glazed porcelain with gold, installed on wooden stand: 14 x 19 x 14 inches. Adaptation of Gustave Dore's *Moses Breaking the Tables of the Law.*


BLACK

for this discussion. I hope to install these paint cans in the dependency, where the enslaved construction workers probably took a break, where we imagine slaves lived and domestic servants took respite too. My big old scarecrow may be re-appropriated into a Jim Crow omen there. Other items used by servants will be in that room, which contains a set kettle—a large built-in vessel heated by fire. The hot water was used daily for laundry and bathing so that room must have been a sweat box. But today it'd also be a great place for discussion groups to meet.

JC: That rock house in particular harbors specters of America's divided past, forcing the the audience to see the hidden life of this antebellum setting. It is a past that challenges the high ideals of American democracy which have been taken for granted. *If These Walls Could Talk* addresses such a time as this, when ideas once thought buried or eradicated, have been exhumed.

I am feverishly researching the bill of sales of slaves, archives, census, etc. to find the names of at least one of the slaves in this drama. I want to honor each one by calling out their names and adding their story to the stories of the other named occupants of the house.

GG: In one upstairs room, they've peeled back the wall to show the construction techniques used by those slaves. Oh, if *those* walls could talk. This place is much more than a backdrop for my sculpture and your sketches. Adjacent to that room are three bedrooms—in the master's, I'll place a room service tray with breakfast and a newspaper. And a shoe-shine kit called *Rise and Shine*. That's where you'll perform your historic-fiction monologue *The Shoeshine Man*—or maybe upstairs in the dependency bedroom. I call it the upper room—fitting because *Rise and Shine* also holds my rendition of the Transfiguration of Jesus on the mountaintop. Lesser quality materials received the same quality of craftsmanship in the upper room as in the big house. I imagine the artistry of quilt-making and braiding was on display there, so in the upper room my old *Patchwork Hospitality* quilt will be on the bed and there may be a rag rug of porcelain, with red-lining woven into it. And toys—including the Topsy-Turvy doll I just finished.

JC: That's an interesting piece. I wondered whether these dolls originated with the story of the slave girl, Topsy in abolitionist Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. These are the rag dolls with one body and two heads, one black and one white?

GG: Doll historians speculate that the two heads were a ruse, to allow enslaved little black girls to play with Black dolls that resembled themselves, all the while training them to grow up and take care of White babies. Forbidden to play with black dolls, if the mistress interrupted, they could flip the skirt to hide the black doll and show the white head.

LEFT *Rise and Shine*, 2018, glazed porcelain with gold and white gold, installed, 21 x 30 x 20 inches. Adaptation of Kuba wooden pigment box carving, *Icon of the Transfiguration* by Theophanies the Great, Romare Bearden's *Sunrise and Moonrise with Maudelle Sleet*, and Horace Pippin's *Holy Mountain III*.

JR: Talk about the seen and the hidden in the house and home! My family narrative indicates the possible presence of a story similar to Hagar's, wherein our African ancestral gene pool was forced to accommodate some European influx. The preacher/pastor in me sees the connection between the Egyptian slave Hagar and those little girls with their dolls, who grew up to bear or take care of their master's children. Hagar's story is one where the ostensible main characters imposed their will on that of the extras, the props, the slaves in their grand narrative, to manifest the master's and mistress's own desire. The tricky thing about this perspective is that one could stray to the assumption that God is complicit in this human abuse of power and influence. But God reveals God's self to Hagar, a slave girl, as *The God Who Sees.* God's response to Hagar's dilemma is the assurance that she and her son Ishmael, along with Abraham and Sarah, are woven into God's great purpose for redemption. That's fascinating and gratifying to me, the descendant of slaves. The slave girl, property of the favored, and pawn in their misguided attempts to move the hand of God on their behalf, gets a personal revelation of who God is. God sees her powerless situation and then opens her eyes to see God's provision—a well full of water. Being seen and heard is a basic human need. We must uncover the hidden, make it seen, because in doing so we more clearly see who we are and who we can become.

GG: I've been thinking about making a Lincoln Log cabin, a porcelain dollhouse. Maybe it'll be a house for Hagar.

JC: A Lincoln Log cabin for a slave girl? Nice double entendre. Ultimately, the incarnation as revealed in Jesus is the climax of God's promise to both the master and the slave,

as in Jesus all nations and tribes are seen and provided for by a loving inclusive God. Yes, truly the Church universal is the household—house and home—of the living God … now I'm tempted to preach.

GG: Go ahead! Maybe I'll also add a water bucket for Hagar. God showing Hagar the well connects us to Jesus and the woman at the well. There had to be a well out back of the Neill-Cochran house, but it is long gone.

JC: Actually, there were two cisterns, one still in residence underneath the house.

GG: I'll put Hagar's bucket next to the set kettle in the dependency. It is fun how your prep for preaching inspires me to connect my art with the house. Back in the big house, we'll install the family Bible on a fine desk in the French parlor. The Presbyterian pastor, Rev. Rose, who once lived there might get a sermon out of that.

JC: In my mind's eye, I can see both Rev. Rose and Rev. Jacob Fontaine preaching. Fontaine lived only two blocks away. He left the all-white Baptist congregation, as Black folks were relegated to the balcony, and formed three Black congregations plus the St. John Regular Baptist Association of Texas, which just celebrated its 152nd year!

GG: Inclusion and redemption, at the heart of the gospel, woven into my art and your performances. My

LEFT *Bodegon for Frito Pie,* 2017, glazed porcelain with white gold, installed 8 x 30 x 30 inches. Adaptations of *Virgin of Guadalupe* by Miguel Cabrera, *Dance of Resurrection—the Mayan god of Maize,* and *Montezuma* attributed to Antonio Rodriguez.
ABOVE *Polarities,* 2016, glazed porcelain, installed 9.75 x 17 x 36 inches. Adaptations of Jackson Pollock's *Blue Poles,* Piero della Francesca's *Victory of Constantine over Maxentius,* and 14th c. manuscript *History of the Tatars, The Battle of Homs.*

Chlora character has always addressed the care for the least among us, and how we entitled folks so often garble that up with our good intentions—or, worse yet, ignore it altogether.

GG: Maybe it's time we expose some stereotypes and clichés and allow people to see them for what they are, reconsider, and repent. What about my ensemble of Frito pie on the antebellum dining table, replete with the Virgin of Guadalupe and a fondue pot melt-down of a Velveeta Statue of Liberty?

JC: That's an incredible piece and a poignant commentary on xenophobia. I think it shows the exuberant abundance of Latinx or Hispanic influence, but it doesn't pound you over the head with it. Brain science confirms that the human brain doesn't like to be challenged head on.

GG: I have a fear monger on a box of Alphabits, spooning in his hate, word by word. But in the accompanying cereal bowl, letters floating in the milk spell "Fear Not."

GEYER: IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK

JC: "Fear Not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy."

GG: For sure. *Beats All I Ever Saw.*

JC: Appropriate title for your mixer and its hot pink red velvet cake batter. The makers of Adam's extract and food coloring started their business right across the street from Neill-Cochran House. Fascinating neighborhood, just a line of peach trees separated it from Wheatville, a neighborhood founded and named after James Wheat, a former slave. It was one of the first freedmen communities west of the Mississippi.

GG: If we find an underwriter, we'll have a bus tour of the area, pointing out what remains of the freedmen communities, and ending up at the NC house. We'll have shoebox lunches on the bus.

JC: The shoeboxes are designed to be a souvenir of the exhibit and evoke the memory of how Black folks, forbidden to eat in restaurants during the Jim Crow era, packed sumptuous meals for their travel below the Mason Dixon Line.

We may dine on my Cumberbatch's sweet tater torte at the end, during my culminating performance on the front porch. It'll be right there between those imposing twenty-six-foot Grecian columns. I am working up *The Ghost of Robert E. Lee*, a play based on Mary Cochran Bohls's admission that Black people claimed to have seen the ghost of the general on the balcony of the house at night. The ghost would ride his white horse up the stairs and right out there.

GG: And my white porcelain saddle would represent this—although the museum staff vehemently insists this is a myth. It is a fact that the house was a hospital for Union soldiers, at the time called federal soldiers, escorted into town by General Custer. Some of their bodies have been found buried on the property. I'm working on a new piece that'll evoke General Custer—the most famous visitor to the house. I'm pretending he left a proper calling card.

JC: Custer received the white flag of surrender from the emissary of Lee at Appomattox and was promptly assigned to Austin to keep the peace. Texas history embodies so much of America's original sins: Indian/Native American genocide, Black slavery, Mexican discrimination. Your family Bible with a hollowed-out space for a gun will be a good conversation starter around this dubious legacy.

GG: It is titled *Second Amendment Meets the Second Commandment.* The misuse of Scriptures through the ages to justify atrocities and racism has always bugged me. But Scripture rightly used is transformational. Jesus' words in Lincoln's speech, resonate today, "A house divided against itself cannot stand."

LEFT *Horror Vacuui*, 2011, glazed porcelain with acrylic, installed 42 x 17 x 30 inches. Adaptations of Sandro Botticelli's *Primavera*, Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres' *Turkish Bath*, Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon*, The Byzantine fresco of *Harrowing of Hell* from Chora Museum, the *Ballard Ottoman Prayer Carpet*, and *Baptistry Basin of St. Louis* by Mohammed Ibn al-Zayn.

JC: I imagine the NC house faced that dilemma. Its architecture and homelife represents the themes that accompany the American narrative. The crafted glass door and European classically appointed parlors and dining rooms are reflective of nineteenth-century bourgeoisie and their social status. On this Greek Revivalist stage, the American themes of Texas independence, individualism, capitalism, democracy, the ascendance of the middle class, the pioneer spirit, the ideas of the confederacy, reconstruction, the industrial revolution, and modernity all play out.

GG: This house echoes so many stories illustrated in my art. Its first occupants were blind students, and it was the original Texas School for the Blind. I have porcelain binoculars for that. And its hospital legacy fits the narrative of my Good Samaritan Dr. Kit—Yankees and Rebels in the same house. Love your enemy, and pass the Band-Aids.

The house metaphor is so rich. Lots of contemporary artists have dealt with it, most notably Rachael Whiteread, Du Ho Suh, Louise Bourgeois, Andrea Zittel, Mike Kelly, and Theaster Gates. And all the classics we studied in seminary, especially

GEYER: IF THESE WALLS COULD TALK

St. Teresa of Ávila's *Interior Castle,* used houses and rooms to symbolize spiritual development, the growth of the soul.

JC: "Wisdom has built her house." "In my father's house there are many mansions," our bodies being the temple of the Holy Spirit, a dwelling place, a home where God and Jesus share fellowship with us around the supper table. We become Bethel—the House of God.

GG: I like the concept of house as a memory palace—that is a mnemonic trick used since ancient times. Memories one wishes to recall are transformed into objects and placed in a sequence of rooms, with an imaginative walk-through, commenting on what is encountered.

JC: A memory palace is not unlike what we are creating here, but how many people go to the trouble of outfitting an entire house with porcelain replicas?

GG: Well, my white privilege has allowed me to do that.

JC: White fragility, beware! Yep, the human spirit is fragile as porcelain.

GG: Well, if something breaks, we can always have Chlora and Ruby Virginia make shard mosaics. They're very redemptive, you know.

NOTE: *If These Walls Could Talk* is a labor of love, hosted by the Neill-Cochran House Museum and underwritten by the artists. Anybody inclined to support this effort can make a tax-deductible donation through our umbrella sponsor, *Women and Their Work,* a non-profit art gallery. Go to GingerGeyer.com for a link.

LEFT *Leap Frogging out of the Melting Pot,* 2017, glazed porcelain with white gold, installed 12 x 17 x 17 inches. Adaptations of Jasper Johns's *Ventriloquist,* the *Statue of Liberty, Crouching Frogs,* Mixtec .
ABOVE *Presence is Fire,* 2011, glazed porcelain, installed 17 x 27 x 19 inches. Inspired by Rene Magritte's *Time Transfixed,* with adaptations of two cantors from tomb sculptures of *Mourners* from the Court of Burgundy, and *Three Hebrews in the Fiery Furnace,* from the Catacombs of Priscilla.

REBUILDING HOSPITALITY

THOMAS MULLER

Like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
—1 Peter 2:5

A MEETING IN THE FRANCISCAN BASILICA OF FLORENCE (1979)

Forty years ago, in the fall of 1979, a group of artists and interested persons from Italy and Central and Northern Europe met at the Franciscan Basilica of Santa Croce in Florence to discuss spirituality and art as paths of human expression, growth, and understanding that could fruitfully be joined together into one enterprise. The impulse: to explore the possibility of creating a study and research center where art could be practiced and spirituality explored. The moving desire: to provide persons from all walks of life the opportunity to discover, develop, and deepen their own creative and spiritual gifts and capacities, to learn from each other, and to celebrate the variety of gifts each person brings into the world, both as creator and seeker.

. . . STONE BY STONE

The Santa Croce participants arrived from a variety of professional and personal backgrounds—working artists, monastics, academics, students, and professionals—all interested in the transforming possibilities of the arts combined with spiritual practices. Binding them together was a shared belief in the interconnection between spirituality and art and the need to provide a common space so that their fruitful interplay might benefit those interested in human potential and growth. The shared understanding was that creativity and spirituality are essential to each person and mustn't be relegated to a professional class nor considered solely the realm of those who are especially called or chosen.

The meeting concluded with the decision to search for a place where these ideas could be developed further and become a center for people to covene from various cultural backgrounds to cultivate the arts and reflective spiritual practices. It was noted that the location in Italy would provide a physical and metaphorical meeting place between the Northern and Southern European cultural streams in their respective creative and spiritual dimensions.

FLORENTINE RENAISSANCE

No accident that the meeting took place in Florence, the search for a center involved the surrounding Florentine hillside. The Renaissance impulse, as manifested in Florence around the fifteenth century, was fundamentally important to the initiative that brought about Santa Maria as a place of encounter, spiritual research, artistic work, and creative labor. The Renaissance as expression of a renewed interest in the world as it concretely appears is a foundational reference point. The Renaissance also reflects a

renewed understanding of the human individual as a creator—created in the image and likeness of a creator God, called to be creative.

The work of artists such as Giotto, Masaccio, Lorenzo Ghiberti, Fra Angelico, Ghirlandaio, Donatello, Verrocchio, Brunelleschi, Raffael, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and others who created art in Florence continue to be reference points to which we return again and again, both as works of immense beauty and profound expressions of a spirituality rooted in the knowledge of Christ's presence and action in the world. Beyond the visual arts, the Florentine Renaissance also provides us with written reflections on the centrality of the creative process, the sacredness of life, and the calling of each person to express the gifts of God in a fully lived life. Pico della Mirandola's *On the Dignity of Man*, as well as Giordano Bruno's and others' work, provides insights and encouragement for the human journey in light of biblical wisdom and the teachings and example of Jesus.

SEARCHING FOR THE RIGHT PLACE (1980–1983)

The search for a location focused on proximity to the city of Florence, for easy access to the rich cultural resources of the Renaissance—both for inspiration and enjoyment—and to experience sufficient silence and space for reflection, creative work, encounter, and recreation. The place had to provide space both for the practice of various arts and individual and small-group lodging—to be a supportive environment for artists and their work as well as for community and retreat.

For centuries, Tuscany, Florence, and the surrounding hillside have been coveted for culturally interested initiatives. Finding a place wasn't easy—especially for a group with no particular financial resources. Nevertheless, after a two-year search, an abandoned property was located that seemed to perfectly fit the requirements and, as a fixer-upper, was also affordable. The Santa Croce group raised funds among their families and friends, and in 1983, one member of the group bought Santa Maria a Ferrano in the name of a non-profit organization to be established soon afterwards in Germany.

The newly found place consisted of a Romanesque stone church, a surrounding farm house, and 18 acres of land 20 miles east of Florence, located at 2,000 feet above sea-level, overlooking the Arno River valley. Half a mile down the lay sits the hamlet of Ferrano with its own church, San Pietro, its parish priest, and a few elderly families.

SANTA MARIA A FERRANO (1983–2005)

The church of Santa Maria a Ferrano, built of beautifully hewn, large, locally quarried stone (*pietra dura*), retains its original architectural state from about a thousand years ago: a simple, single nave, Romanesque church. It features two windows on its north side, most likely added during the sixteenth century, and another special feature, added most likely in the early 1500s: a partially preserved fresco depicting Mary, mother of God, nursing the Jesus child, flanked on the left and right by two saints and overhead by two smaller-sized angels.

Surrounding the church on its southern and western sides is a stone farm house, originally providing shelter to animals, storage space for forage and grain, and living quarters for the farmer's family. The house was probably constructed in the late sixteenth century, after the original religious community had left. To the south of the main house is also a small side building, most likely intended for agricultural gear. About two acres of open fields with scattered acorn, oak, and occasional fruit trees enclose the architectural complex. A further 16 acres of formerly terraced, agricultural land and a small chestnut forest complete the property.

From what we can surmise from its location, architectural features, and sparse available documents, Santa Maria was probably founded around 1050 as a self-sustaining religious community. The land and perhaps even the means for construction most likely had been given to the community by a local feudal lord, who had received the property for services rendered to a king or other overlord. This was common practice in earlier times and was intended to settle and develop land that otherwise had little value for the owner. The religious community—in all probability from Florence—brought with them cultural assets usually lacking in the countryside: some reading and writing skills, basic medical knowledge, advanced agricultural technique, understanding of plants and animal husbandry, and of course religious practice, pastoral care, and spiritual nourishment.

Santa Maria very likely served as the center of an otherwise scattered community of share-croppers that worked for the owner of the land under a regime called *mezzadria*, a "halving" system in which the land was cultivated by farmers who received a portion of the produce for their labor. They had no rights and were able to keep only that part of the fruits of the land that the owner determined to be their "half." At any time, they could see their portion reduced, be sent away without notice, or drafted for warfare or other unpaid labor. The *mezzadro* and his family maintained no rights. This medieval system of land ownership and labor was abolished in Italy only in 1974 but lasted in Tuscany for quite a number of years beyond that.

Santa Maria over the centuries had a number of different owners; until the twentieth century, all were ecclesial entities: parishes or nearby larger, more important monastic communities. It ultimately belonged to the local parish of San Pietro di Ferrano before it

was sold in 1970 to a private buyer, and the church was deconsecrated. The last farmer worked for the parish priest and left Santa Maria in 1962. By that time the buildings were probably already partially in disrepair, the church turned into a sheep stall, and part of the land abandoned. The older people in Ferrano still remember the last *mezzadro*. Some had worked the land together with him. One, Adriana—now over 90—was actually born in Santa Maria. Her mother was cutting barley in the fields above the church when her water broke, and she was brought into the house to give birth.

FIRST RENOVATIONS (1983–1986)

Students of the Alanus Art Academy in Germany were the first arrivals to rebuild Santa Maria. At first, they came during semester breaks to clear the buildings and the surrounding grounds of thorny overgrowth and rubble. Some returned over the next years for longer periods of time, bringing with them tools, materials, and a strong desire to give new life to an age-old place of hospitality, prayer, and work. Without their intervention, it would have taken only another decade for the site to turn into a pile of disordered stones. Their mission was to turn into reality what in Santa Croce had been articulated as a desire and need: to create a place where art and spirituality could join hands to encourage all to deepen their humanity and engagement in the world.

The roof of the church had to be completely rebuilt, part of the stone apsis replaced, and the flooring redone. The main house required similar repairs. Wherever possible, the original building materials were reused and historically correct methods of construction employed. Besides the church, which was erected a thousand years ago by expert craftsmen, the buildings were typical, rural constructions, built by farmers with whatever material was available to them on site. Like the original construction, the reconstruction relied heavily on manual labor, the ingenuity of the persons working together, and a sense of common cause and community. Life during the rebuilding period was extremely simple, with communal sleeping quarters and most everything occurring outside. Meals were celebrations of community and abundance, always wonderfully prepared by exquisite cooks!

The first workshops in sculpture, painting, and voice were held during the initial years while the rebuilding was still taking place. As the summer academy for the arts developed, shared responsibilities of constructing and care-taking the buildings and grounds was built into the program, always with a goal of presenting hospitality to the next group of students and guests.

The people of Ferrano watched the rebuilding of Santa Maria with enthusiasm, bringing food, stories, advice, and also practical help. Most of them were older and had lived and worked under the old "halving" system of land labor. Seeing young people restore a place they had known since childhood and had fallen into disrepair was a renewal for them as well. Relationships grew. As the stones were reassembled, friendships were built. This was true also for the nearby small town of Diacceto, where members of the Tinti family who own the local coffee shop and guest house provided great assistance and encouragement to Santa Maria.

It took about three years to return the buildings to habitable spaces and begin offering them to artists and other guests. Improvements to the house and grounds continued on a smaller scale and as funds and helping hands were available. A vegetable garden was planted, and first flower beds began to appear.

WORKSHOPS AND COURSES

From 1986 onward, the first public workshops in sculpture, painting, and Renaissance studies, with a special focus on the work of Michelangelo Buonarroti, were offered, along with retreats related to contemporary spirituality. Responsibilities for housekeeping, gardening, and whatever was necessary to maintain a functional and welcoming house were shared among course participants and guests. Waldorf schools, with their particular attention to manual capacity, creativity, and the individuality of the person, soon found their way to Santa Maria for two-week periods of stone carving and studies of Florentine art. Initially, most groups came from northern Europe, Germany in particular. Over the years, however, Santa Maria has welcomed people come from all continents of the world to discover its beauty, hospitality, and silence.

A NEW BEGINNING (2005–2019)

In 2005, the German association that had managed and directed Santa Maria up to that point asked me to take over the care of Santa Maria. My experience as a sculptor, art educator, and priest in the Episcopal Church, alongside my ability to communicate in Italian, seemed a good fit for the task. In 2007, the German foundation that had acquired Santa Maria by that time proposed the property be donated to an Italian entity. A non-profit was founded in 2008 and a year later received Santa Maria as a gift from the foundation. This way the property returned into the responsibility of persons resident in Italy and Tuscany, thirty years after the idea was born at Santa Croce.

In recent years additional restoration projects have been undertaken to complete the work that was begun in the 1980s, including structural work on the church and the house's foundation, installation of a heating system and a new septic system, renovation of bathrooms and kitchen, and the rebuilding of a small side building. The surrounding grounds have also received much care and attention so that today the premises are surrounded by flowers and aromatic plants, including rosemary, thyme, lavender, and more.

SANTA MARIA TODAY

Santa Maria's governing board has set out to deepen engagement with the surrounding territory, offering new courses for Italians and co-hosting events with local organizations. The guiding principle of the new beginning was "deep roots and wide branches," a commitment to the local community with unreserved openness to the world and a clear commitment to the way of the Gospel. Morning meditation, Bible reading, and dialog about its meaning for our lives and the world, have become daily bread at Santa Maria.

In 2016, the church was re-consecrated by the Bishop of the Episcopal Churches in Europe. Santa Maria's sanctuary provides a perfect place for music, and over the years many gifted artists have shared their talents here. Such events have included arranged and impromptu concerts, art exhibitions, poetry readings, and theater productions—most often followed by simple receptions that engender warm conversation and future collaborations.

All who visit Santa Maria are considered both guests and caretakers, invited to take on a share of responsibility so that Santa Maria will truly become a home for them. Just as the church and the buildings enclosing it were reconstructed "stone by stone," likewise every person who contributes to the rebuilding of Santa Maria becomes a "living stone" of a place that welcomes friends and strangers alike.

Thomas Muller is priest in the Episcopal Church and graduate of Yale University, Alanus Art Academy in Germany, and Episcopal Divinity School, where he received degrees in Italian literature, art/art pedagogy and theology, respectively. He leads retreats, teaches both religion and art, and, since 2005, has directed Santa Maria a Ferrano Retreat Center for Art and Spirituality in Tuscany, Italy.

COLLECTING HOUSE AND HOME: A CONVERSATION WITH JOHN WIELAND

JENNIFER ALLEN CRAFT AND BRANDON CRAFT

> [O]*ur house is our corner of the world.*
> *-Gaston Bachelard*

Housed in a 37,000-square-foot warehouse on Atlanta's west side lies a hidden gem. The wareHOUSE features an impressive collection of modern and contemporary art related to one central theme: house and home. With artists ranging from local Southern artists like William Christenberry and Radcliffe Bailey to internationally renowned artists like Ai Weiwei and Katharina Fritsch, the collection reveals an existential and yet supremely practical concern for all of us. How are we influenced by the places in which we live? How do our houses structure our imagination and memory? What does it mean to dwell and truly belong somewhere? How does our home reflect our desires and hopes, our daydreams and doubts? How does housing reflect justice and beauty, or injustice and brokenness? These are questions that one is pressed to consider when viewing the wareHOUSE collection.

John Wieland has spent years collecting pieces on the theme, which began as background art for the offices of his

homebuilding company in Atlanta in the 1980s. His interest in art spawned from his childhood spent visiting the art museums of Chicago and Cleveland, and for the people he employed at his building company, art proved to be a similar creative impetus. Mr. Wieland says:

> It seemed to me that the art was a creative stimulus for what we did in our business, so . . . the Howard Finster *Bible House* was in the lobby of our Gwinnett office. I think that to be creative you have to be surrounded by creativity. It's hard to be creative in a vacuum.

A recurring theme of our conversation throughout the gallery visit was the power of art to re-adjust our imagining of home. Central to this re-imagining is the way that home is associated with sense of place. The narrative arc of Mr. Wieland's collection process follows a trajectory from local to global interests. Having begun with southern landscapes and transitioning to artists from the Southeast more generally, the collection now includes many globally renowned artists. Reflecting on this orientation toward place, Wieland explains:

> We really wanted something that resonated with the people who worked for us. This Gregory Crewdson over here [referring to *Untitled (Temple Street),* 2006] is such an interesting photograph which he staged. Because you look at it and you start asking questions like "The tires tracks in the snow—who lives there?" You get a little closer, and you see a woman looking out the window. "What is she looking at? What is she thinking about?" When we build homes, we need to be thinking about the process and thinking about the people who are going to be living in the homes. You know, most people build homes because that's just what they do. They just build them along a street and move along to the next street. We like to think we are doing more than building homes. We're making a place.

Marjan Teeuwen, *Destroyed House Gaza 3,* 2017 Archival pigment print, 43 x 78 inches

Deeply social themes and realities are reflected in building, but houses are also deeply personal for people. Wieland reflects:

> I think the best pieces are the ones that tell the stories and ask the questions and provoke your thought process. What was the artist trying to communicate, and what do we take away from it? . . . We like the collection so much because almost everybody can come in and enjoy it and relate to some aspect of the pieces. I think when they leave, the thought of home is more meaningful to them because they have seen it interpreted in so many ways.

The gallery is centered around several key themes related to house and home, including the relationship between the house and automobile, memory, disaster, famous houses, ruins, and the last room he showed us, "gabled to the front." The gallery also boasts a diverse range of artistic media. For example, we find sculpture (see Robert Gober's *Half Stone House,* 1979–80 or Wolfgang Laib's *Wachshaus*, 1991), painting (Jennifer Bartlett's *At Sands Point #50*, 1986), photography (Gregory Crewdson's *Untitled* (*House Fire*), 2004, and Martha Rosler's *House Beautiful: Bringing the War Home* Series, 1967–72), and mixed media (Radcliffe Bailey's *Seven Steps East*, 1993) throughout the space.

While Wieland didn't originally set out to acquire such a large collection on the theme of home, when his main business offices closed, he moved the art housed in the offices to the warehouse and has since been more intentional about his collecting process. For instance, Wieland illustrated the dynamics of collecting with reference to Joel Shapiro's *Untitled* (*House*) in bronze:

> The Joel Shapiro is a really good example of what happens. I bought that Joel Shapiro, I'd have to go look, 25–30 years ago. And there was a fair amount of his house work coming to market occasionally, but I haven't seen a Joel Shapiro house at auction in five or

six years because it disappears into museums and private collections. So, one of the things we learned over time is that if you are going to collect, you really need to be opportunistic—in terms of buying what you can afford. I can tell you about some wonderful pieces I couldn't afford which have multiplied in value. But then you also have to come to the point where not everything that has a house in it is something that you need to own. Really what we're trying to do now is only buy what we would call museum quality pieces, whereas early on we were not as discriminating. We have either sold or given away essentially all our non-house pieces, and we are trying to broaden our collection to represent diversity on the part of the artists and to have a large international component.

And the goal over the next year is to turn everything into a not-for-profit gallery and adopt regular hours so that people may come in. The west side of Atlanta is really starting to redevelop. We know we're getting trendy because 500 feet up the road there's a brewery.

As the collection expands, the stories of home represented expand with it. Wieland reflects:

Right now, the collection is of a size that we are looking for unique pieces that tell a story. We just bought a piece

LEFT Robert Gober, *Half Stone House,* 1979—80, wood, metal, stone, concrete, plastic, screen, paper, paint and linoleum, 41 x 32 x 42 inches ©Robert Gober, Courtesy Matthew Marks Gallery
ABOVE Hans Op de Beeck, *A House by the Sea,* 2010, balsawood, mdf, plywood, styrafoam, polystrene, paint, glue paste, furniure and light 86.625 x 126 x 74.875 inches ©Hans Op de Beeck, Courtesy of Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York.

> by a photographer named Dawoud Bey. This series of photographs [reflects images] he took of homes that were part of the underground railway. The underground railway is the mid-nineteenth century, but these are the homes today. He researched it all, and it is interesting how they have morphed, how they are a part of history, and how they tell their story. It really tells a story about the tragedy of war, the tragedy of segregation. That's the thing. It's more than just a photograph.

For Wieland, housing is not simply about utility, but also reflects a strong sense of social and spiritual values. He says:

> Home is such an important part of our lives that no matter your faith tradition, it's enriched by your home experience, [whether] we believe in Jesus as the Messiah, or whether you're Muslim or Jewish or Hindu (and, in fact, I think other traditions are much more expressive in their homes than Christians are in terms of icons, candles, and menorahs). . . . Your faith and your home are locked together. The stronger your faith, the stronger your home experience is, the better the experience with your kids, your parents, your community. . . . We spend at least a third to half of our time at home. It's just a part of us. I think in many cases that's why an artist gravitates to and does a house piece. That may be why they're interested in doing a house piece: faith and housing run parallel.

And art can truly expand on this richness, hospitality, and meaning related to a sense of home. Wieland continues:

> I think over the decades of doing this and sharing this with a great group of people who work for me that what we're doing here (with the visual arts) creates a richness that makes you appreciate home more. You see all the various ways it can be represented and manipulated. I think the Levitown photographs taken in the snow (Martin Hyers and Will Mebane) is a great expression of how people have lived in the neighborhood.

Walking through each space, we were struck by the ways in which artists can manipulate our sense of reality and meaning in the image of a house. I'm reminded of Gaston Bachelard's reflections on the home in *The Poetics of Space*, where he argues that spaces of the childhood home form our imagination and ways of engaging with the world. "By remembering 'houses' and 'rooms'," Bachelard argues, "we learn to 'abide' within ourselves."[1] Many works, such as Hans Op De Beeck's *House by the Sea,* 2010, or Elger Esser's *St. Briare, Frankreich*, 1999, call us with Romantic sensibilities into a dream-like dwelling in the landscape. Others, such as Marjan Teeuwen's *Destroyed House, Gaza 3,* 2017, cause us to reflect on the loss of home by war and political injustice. Others still invite us to reflect on the placeless-ness of many ways of living in America today, such as Edward Burtynsky's *Verona Walk, Naples, Florida, USA*, 2012. Each artist draws us further into a reflection on what it means to inhabit place, to invite people into place, or exclude them from it. They cause us to remember our own homes of the past, or to consider the ways that we live responsibly today, the ways that we cultivate beauty and practice hospitality. Many of the images in Wieland's collection reflect the reality of a short-lived theme or subject in an artist's oeuvre—one house image among their wider work. For others, the house proves more prevalent—an image that seems to permeate their imagination over time. Across all of them, though, we witness the ways that the simple image of a house reveals much more. We begin to understand, as Bachelard suggests, that "all really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home."[2] As these artists invite us into their imagining of home, they introduce us further to ourselves.

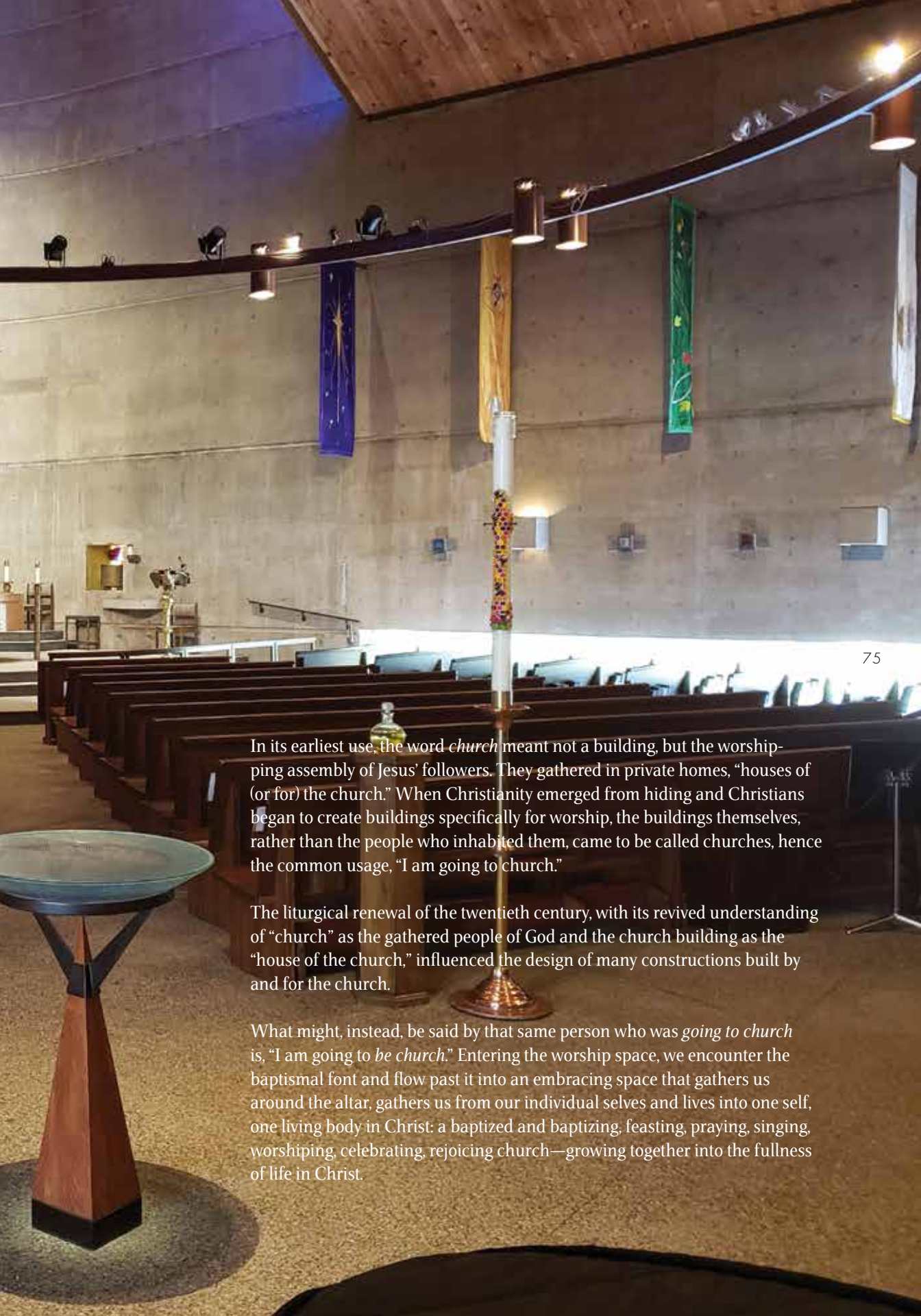
Jennifer Allen Craft is newly appointed to the CIVA board and also serves as Associate Professor of Theology and Humanities at Point University in West Point, Georgia. One of her primary research interests is the relationship between art and sense of place, a topic on which she has recently published *Placemaking and the Arts: Cultivating the Christian Life* (IVP Academic, 2018). Brandon Craft is a forester and lifelong art appreciator who spends much of his time collecting objects from the woods—animal bones, turkey feathers, bird nests, and the like—that find their way into various spaces and artistic arrangements of their home and yard. Brandon and Jennifer make their home together in Valley, Alabama.

1 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space* (Boston, Beacon Press, 1958), xxxvii.
2 Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space,* 5.

LEFT Radcliffe Bailey, *Seven Steps East,* 1993, mixed media on wood, 92.5 x 114 inches

ADORNING THE HOUSE OF THE CHURCH

JANET CAMPBELL



In its earliest use, the word *church* meant not a building, but the worshipping assembly of Jesus' followers. They gathered in private homes, "houses of (or for) the church." When Christianity emerged from hiding and Christians began to create buildings specifically for worship, the buildings themselves, rather than the people who inhabited them, came to be called churches, hence the common usage, "I am going to church."

The liturgical renewal of the twentieth century, with its revived understanding of "church" as the gathered people of God and the church building as the "house of the church," influenced the design of many constructions built by and for the church.

What might, instead, be said by that same person who was *going to church* is, "I am going to *be church*." Entering the worship space, we encounter the baptismal font and flow past it into an embracing space that gathers us around the altar, gathers us from our individual selves and lives into one self, one living body in Christ: a baptized and baptizing, feasting, praying, singing, worshiping, celebrating, rejoicing church—growing together into the fullness of life in Christ.

But we do not stay "at home." We are sent out to serve, to be the caring, healing, sharing, justice- and peace-making, courageous, self-offering Body of Christ. We come in to be strengthened in Christ to go out—to be the mind, heart, eyes, ears, and hands of Christ in our neighborhood, community, and world. The church's house and its appointments and adornments must support this purpose of gathering, forming and transforming, and sending.

THIS PARTICULAR HOUSE OF THE CHURCH

Christ Church's house, completed in 1969, is an extraordinary work of architectural art in the brutalist style (from the French *béton brut:* raw concrete). Designed by Paul Thiry, the rugged, soaring sanctuary combines ordinary materials native to the Pacific Northwest—concrete, stone, wood, metal, and glass—to create an extraordinary space for worship, an austere space evoking no one particular time or place.

Evident to all who enter, its purpose is to draw us into encounter with Mystery, with the Eternal, the Holy One who is both within and beyond all time and place. Towering straight and curved poured-concrete walls, subtle asymmetries, ingeniously located stained glass windows, the play of direct and reflected colored light on the concrete, the massive marble altar seemingly floating in space, the huge bronze cross suspended over it—all invite awe, wonder, exploration, and discovery. It's quite possible to worship here for years and still not completely know the building: in effect a concrete, stone, wood, metal, and glass metaphor for the pilgrimage of faith.

ADORNING THIS HOUSE OF THE CHURCH

The austere worship space itself is a work of sculptural art, the primary given within which the liturgical visual arts imagination works. Other givens include the principal places of liturgical action (font, altar, ambo, assembly), the primary symbols of our faith (cross, Paschal candle, water, oil, bread, wine) the seasons, feasts and fasts of the liturgical year, and our particular liturgical style.

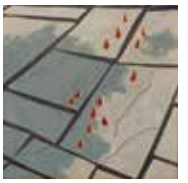
In the context of these givens, what materials, symbols, objects, designs, styles have a "weight" worthy of the Divine, the assembled Body of Christ, the space? The invitation to the visual artist is to respect the austerity and size of the building, creating works that are of appropriate scale, in harmony with its purpose, and in creative conversation with its particularities.

Some of the liturgical art permanently installed in the worship space was commissioned by parishioners as thanksgiving or memorial gifts and created by local professional artists using materials consonant with those of the space itself.

Several years after the dedication of the building, organ builder John Brombaugh was commissioned to create an instrument of a stature and quality equal to that of the space. Situated along a side wall rather than in a loft above and behind the assembly (as is the case in more traditional church buildings), the organ, dedicated in 1979, is itself a part of the assembly and a permanent major work of visual art.

LEFT The Easter Vigil fire has been lit in the courtyard and the assembly, sharing its light, follows the Paschal candle into the house of Christ Church.
ABOVE *Organ,* John Brombaugh & Company, 1979, white oak, western red cedar, metal alloys, bone, ebony.




A Stations of the Cross series by CIVA member Jean Tudor surround the sanctuary at Christ Church. Jean writes: "I kept the design on each simple, since they are rather small. I wanted them to be somewhat "readable" from the pews--simple enough to be recognized as to what each represented. I used the Tau form of the cross in the ones that actually have the cross in them. I carried the crown of thorns motif throughout several of the pieces, wanting the feeling of surrounding pain and grief to be maintained.


LENT
SEASON of REPENTANCE & RENEWAL
CHRIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH
WWW.CCPTACOMA.ORG

THE GROWTH OF A MINISTRY

Gray concrete walls invite bright colors and soft fabrics. For the dedication of the building, a set of six banners symbolizing various aspects of Christian faith and life were designed, fabricated and installed along the wall above the reflecting pool window. This year, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the dedication, the LVA Group and other parishioners created a new set of banners to replace the originals, which had begun to show their age. The designs echo the seasonal ambo hangings.

From the very beginning of its life in this house, our community has been blessed by an abundance of gifts for ministry in the liturgical visual arts. Initially there was no organized liturgical visual arts ministry, but the combination of this astonishing building and the wonderfully creative people who gather here for worship has given rise to many projects over the years. Ideas would spring up, and if energy coalesced around them, projects were undertaken. These have included marking the seasons of the church year:

- ***Advent***—a six-foot diameter horizontal evergreen wreath. The sequential lighting of its four candles marks the progression of Advent's four Sundays. On Christmas Eve, the wreath blooms in Christmas whites
- ***Epiphany***—a silver, white, and gold "chandelier" of ribbons catches and spreads Epiphany's growing light
- ***Lent***—a crown of thorns, the same size as the Advent wreath, of bare, thorny branches woven together
- ***The Day of Pentecost***—a red and gold mobile of "tongues of flame"

The crowning season of the church calendar, The Great Fifty Days of Easter require special attention and adornment:

- ***The Paschal Candle***—as the principle symbol of the resurrection, this must be of a size appropriate to the space in which it resides and dressed with appropriate symbols. Each year a new blank candle is adorned by a parishioner or group chosen for that ministry. Adornments have included colored paper mosaics, needlework, translucent colored tissue paper layered with gesso. The 2019 candle refers to the "bee" text from the great hymn-prayer of the Easter Vigil, the Exsultet: adorning the candle that "is fed by the melting wax which [God's] servants, the bees, have made for the substance of this candle."
- ***Easter Gospel Banners***—a group of parishioners designed and created banner-size "illuminated" gospel pages for each Sunday in Easter across the three-year lectionary cycle. These processional gospel pages replace the gospel book during the Great Fifty Days—resurrection news is just too big to be contained in a book!
- ***Holy Whimsy***—decorated eggs, flying and perching birds. Easter's joy invites celebratory playfulness, such as decorated eggs of marble, pottery, porcelain, glass, wood, increasing across the season with the gradual addition of birds of wood, pottery, fabric, and feathers as the Day of Pentecost nears.

The faith community finds meaning in the rhythm of returning to the familiar season by season. Yet additional ways to involve more of the congregation have also presented themselves over the years.

LEFT Deborah Hickey-Tiernan, *Paschal Candle*, 2019 Fabric honeycomb, handmade bees, hand-forged nails
ABOVE: Various, *Easter Gospel Banners*, 2007–10, Fabric, vinyl, paper, hand-painting, hand-lettering, digital rendering

LOVE

- ***The Advent Jesse Tree Project***—to bring into the assembly the various symbols of the expected Messiah and to engage our children in marking the passage of Advent Sundays every year, the LVA Group and the Worship Committee created a Jesse Tree. Each Sunday before the liturgy begins, children hang six more symbols on the tree. At the afternoon Christmas Eve service for families with children, one child is chosen to hang the symbol of the Nativity after the proclamation of the Gospel.
- ***An Occasional Surprise***—on the Sunday closest to the Feast of the Epiphany, three giant Magi puppets participate in the offertory procession to the singing of We Three Kings. Each is accompanied by a parishioner carrying our offering of bread, wine, or money to the altar. Even though we know they'll be arriving, they surprise us every year.
- ***A November Communal Project***—beginning with the Commemoration of All Faithful Departed and All Saints' Sunday, we remember our dead, including them in our assembly at an Altar of Remembrance. The LVA Group prepares the altar with candles and a book of remembrance for names of departed loved ones. The community brings photographs and mementos of loved ones, including pets, throughout the month.

A WORK IN PROGRESS

The LVA group is a loose association of parishioners with imagination and gifts for enhancing our space and liturgy: visual artists of all kinds, liturgists, organizers, dreamers, catalogers, curators – professional and amateur, lay and clergy – anyone who wants to join in is welcome. The goal is for all to participate in some way in the adorning of our house. We are the stewards of the aesthetic of the worship space and the things that are in it, creators of adornments and appointments, organizers of installations and removals, caretakers of works of art, catalogers of the collection. We maintain what might be called "understood" considerations and guidelines that shape this ministry. The task of articulating and refining these guidelines involves the following considerations:

—Retaining symbols, materials, and renderings that honor and elevate
—Resisting the temptation merely to decorate
—Knowing when to adorn and when to refrain from it
—Keeping the focus on the principle places of liturgical action (font, altar, ambo, assembly) and primary symbols of faith (cross, Paschal candle, water, oil, bread, wine)
—Adding books to the parish library which speak to the value of and ways to incorporate visual liturgical art into the life of the church

Who knows what will come next in our particular journey of faith and ministry? We consider ourselves fortunate to be stewards of this amazing building that challenges and inspires us, a community that supports, encourages and works with us, and above all, the gifts God has given us for accomplishing this ministry. There is much joy and much responsibility in serving God and our community, much satisfaction of projects completed and excitement about projects yet to come. And so very much beauty in this place and in this life!

The Rev. Janet Campbell has served as Director of Liturgy and the Arts at Saint James Cathedral in Chicago, Illinois, and Saint Mark's Cathedral in Seattle, Washington. She has been Priest-in-Charge at Christ Church, Tacoma, Washington, for five years and counting.

Photography by Janet Campbell, Winfield Giddings, and Patti Moore

LEFT *The Magi*. In hiding in the LVA Group's storage room until next Epiphany.
ABOVE *Jesse Tree*. Branching tree limb, processional cross.

REMEMBERING DAL

DAVID JENNINGS

JUNE 9, 1947—
AUGUST 6, 2019

It is a symptom of our facile times that most people don't recognize the distinction between seriousness and solemnity. Dal was one of the more serious persons I knew when it came to matters of importance. Christ, Beauty, Bach, Rookmaaker, Springsteen? Check. But he was also one of the least solemn people I ever met. His humour constantly slid into conversation like a great gin poured into an unsuspecting glass of tonic water; surprising, welcome, and invigorating.

Unlike many artists, Dal was an institutionalist, supporting strongly those institutions that were purposed to glorify God, despite their many flaws. He taught me the valuable insight that in those institutions one should never confuse those that were fools for Christ and those that were just regular fools. In the various groups and committees we sat on over the next few decades, there were plenty of opportunities to make that point. Ambrose Bierce once said, in his wonderfully satirical "Devil's Dictionary" that a

cynic was someone "whose faulty vision sees things as they actually are, not as they ought to be." And superficially Dal had more than a passing resemblance to both that definition of a cynic and Ambrose Bierce's wit generally. But Dal could see things both as they actually were and how they ought to be. And despite knowing the difficulty, he worked toward

that goal of a better world. In that regard, he was more like the great medieval thinker Erasmus. As with Erasmus, Dal found himself caught in the widening gyre where those full of passionate intensity seemed intent on destroying what took so long to build. Yet despite the odds he persevered in that act of faithful presence (which, upon reflection, is like most artists).

If Dal was possessed by anything other than the Trinity, his wife, and his family (and perhaps good English beer), he was possessed by God's character of Beauty. Dal was a fine painter. Whatever courses he taught, articles he wrote, whatever service he gave to others, it was usually rooted in his desire—indeed need—to express Beauty in all its complexity. Dal had served on the board of CIVA and was friends with artists all over North America. He also was director for 16 years of Incarnation Ministries, an arts-based Christian charity and was instrumental in identifying and finding support for a myriad of artists.

Dal was no dilettante. There are those of us who have read the correct passages of von Balthazar, bought books upon books about Beauty, and generally tried, in our best moments, to harvest what has been thought and said about Christian aesthetics. Then there are the few, including Dal, who actually planted the seeds and plowed the fields at a time when talking about Beauty wasn't hip. Dal was practicing vocation while many of us were simply reading about it. Dal sacrificed and because of him, others could sacrifice less in the same pursuit. Beauty and its relationship to Goodness and Truth have been in the Christian conversation for decades. Dal lived it his entire adult life. And he was there at the beginning encouraging many, including me, to start that exploration and along the way offering sage advice. That is a gift I can never repay.

I often complain (if anyone is listening) that too many people seem to focus their time, thoughts, and donations on that which they are dying from rather than what they are supposedly living for. No one could ever say that about Dal. To the very end, he was a Christian who cared about Christ, a lover of art who cared about Beauty, and a wit who cared about the quality of his next meal and drink. He was in so many places before many of us and made each of those places more hospitable and way more fun than before he arrived.

May God be praised for the gift of Dal. May God comfort us all as we mourn that such a gift cannot remain by our side.

J. I. Packer Loves the Classics

Especially King Oliver, Jelly Roll Morton and Louis Armstrong: early jazz classics. Dr. Packer has an ear for the order and liveliness of [illegible] and a mind for the discarding and

WAYNE EASTCOTT

"I like especially this quirky little red triangle." That was Dal Schindell talking as he pointed to a section of my work in a Vancouver, Canada, exhibition. I always enjoyed talking with him about art, visual or musical. He was so casual, usually with a bit of humor, always perceptive but most importantly he was objective and so well informed. I always tried to let him be the first to see new pieces.

Dal was my best friend (and best man), the guy with whom I could talk about anything: Art, Christian faith and values, or personal life issues. Discussions with him were always wide-ranging and bore fruit. Dal took all works or ideas seriously, whether it was an icon, a Rothko, a Giotto or a Hockney; a performance, a recital or an installation; a Bach corale or a Gothic or Postmodern building. He was not part of any Art camp or philosophy. He had no "point" to push. He was curious about everything and loved much it. He and his wife Kit have one of the largest private libraries that I have seen and a growing Art collection. Add to that a Postmodern pavilion he built in his backyard.

Dal contributed much to the Christian community around intellectual/theological /aesthetic thought, especially at Regent College and, earlier, his own paintings, filled with compassion, and the "Deo Gloria" Art exhibitions and discussion groups in Vancouver. He was passionate about the melding of faith, life, and art.

Dal really was a man of the present—no obsessive regrets or frilly daydreams. He walked closely with the Lord. He was a kind of modern day prophet, encouraging, teaching, disciplining and inspiring those around him, including me, in faith-filled living coupled with a deep enjoyment of creation in all its forms. All this exhibited in a man with a quiet, internal, Christian strength. (I don't think I ever heard him raise his voice or even look angry). He truly knew when there was a time to laugh and a time to weep, a time to be born and a time to die. And he did it all, even though for us the time to die was far, far too soon.

Wayne Eastcott is one of Canada's foremost experimental printmakers, best known for intertwining technological imagery with elements of the created universe in expressive and often spiritual ways. He is also an outstanding educator who teaches printmaking. His work is found in numerous private, corporate, and public collections across Canada, including the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, the Winnipeg Art Gallery, and the National Gallery of Canada.

CIVA

TRAVELING EXHIBITION

Revealed features twenty-three works from the book, *Revealed: A Storybook Bible for Grown-Ups*. This collection of contemporary works (many created by CIVA member artists) features various printmaking techniques and covers the entire story of Redemption in all its raw, violent, and beautiful glory. A complimentary copy of the book is included with each rental. For more information, or to reserve this exhibit, visit civa.org/exhibits/traveling-exhibits.

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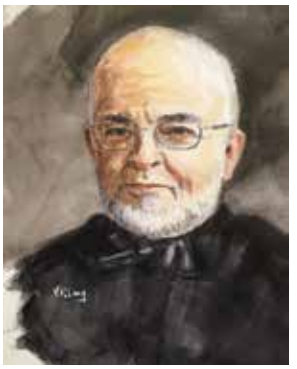

Dal Schindell

JUNE 9, 1947 - AUGUST 6, 2019

> *We who are enriched by the intersection of faith and art ought to express our gratitude for those who not only tilled the soil before we did, but also planted those seeds.*

The Board of Incarnation Ministries, a Christian arts ministry, mourns the loss of *DAL SCHINDELL*, a leader in the Christian arts movement in North America. Dal taught art and arts-ministry courses for decades, including as faculty at Regent College in Vancouver, Canada. Dal also curated Regent College's art gallery (renamed the Dal Schindell Gallery shortly before his passing). He had served as a director of CIVA and was a director of Incarnation Ministries since its inception in 2003. Dal was a mentor to many artists and those who loved the arts. His excellence, commitment, compassion and humor blessed us all.

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