



# ARTS IN MISSION CONNECTIONS

*The journal of the WEA Mission Commission*

A global writers' roundtable speaking into the challenges of world mission today

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He also is a staff member of the Mission Commission.*

*William Taylor, Editor*

## OUT OF MY HEART AND MIND

On this special double-issue of our journal This unique issue of Connections is a glorious, global cornucopia of the arts in the context of worldwide mission. There is nothing like it in the world; and thankfully, its lavish contents are not only in print but free at <http://www.weaconnections.com/>.

Even more, this gift is the foretaste of a much more extensive banquet. We are currently talking about producing a major book on arts in mission, with an expanded, in-depth coverage of this vital topic. There's more to come! The vision for an MC Arts in Mission (AiM) team came from our MC leader, Bertil Ekström. He first mentioned it to me back in 2007, which led to the convening of a small, creative team in Pattaya, Thailand, November 2008. And what can I say about our guest editors – our “newer” mission colleagues – the wonderfully creative Robin Harris (with great experience in Alaska, northern Siberia, and more recently with OM and the ICE network, <http://www.worldofworship.org/>), and philosophy prof-artist-wizard John Franklin (<http://www.imago-arts.on.ca/?> Had it not been their terribly unpaid yet enthusiastic collaboration, we would not have been able to produce this unique issue.

Thank you, Robin and John!!! And thank you, the scores of artists and writers from around the world for this extravagant gift.

### Personal reflections

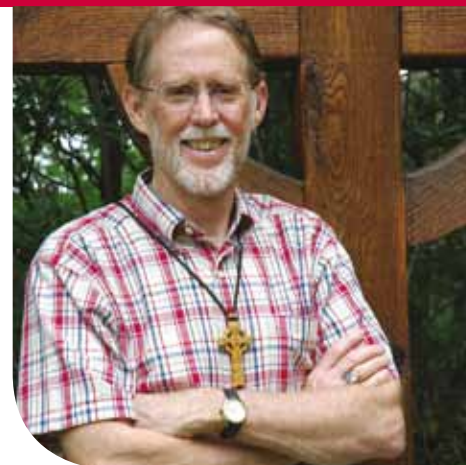
As the Spirit has directed the MC into a commitment to arts in mission, mission and arts, arts for mission, mission for the arts world, I found myself probing into my personal history to locate those first, permanent art memories. They

would converge later in my marriage, and much later in my family and world mission calling.

My first memories of “music”, other than my mother playing a pump organ in my childhood church in Turrialba, Costa Rica, are of my father playing a 33 “long play vinyl” record on a small, electric turntable box. The music was Beethoven’s “Moonlight Sonata”. It was captivating, but did not last long because my mother (Georgia farm girl) had little truck for frivolities of life and there was a task before us—the evangelization of Costa Rica. Yet my parents did pay for a few years of piano lessons in childhood for me and my older sister, Grace.

I actually studied accordion in college, good missionary-portable-loud-volume-music-making machine, with a rich Italian, Greek and German heritage. I failed the final exam (but I recently acquired another accordion!). Then I fell in love with a beautiful, red-head, classical pianist, Yvonne Christine DeAcutis. I will never forget her senior recital, Schumann’s Piano Concerto in A Minor. What musical beauty from such a remarkable 17 year old. Then I married her.

We served 17 years in Latin America, where over time she became known as la Señora Yvonne Christine DeAcutis de Taylor, “La Pianista Clásica”, with pre-evangelistic concerts in our home and Studio A of the Guatemala Christian Radio Station, TGNA. Our son, David, reports that his first artistic memories come from lying on the carpet underneath Yvonne’s grand piano while she practiced, allowing the music to pour over him. After moving to the USA, our eldest daughter, Christine, became president of her drama club, and David



took his first steps into drama, and later play-writing and production. Little did we imagine that he would serve for 8 years as arts pastor of Hope Chapel, Austin, TX.

### Back to Connections

All of these experiences converge in my own heart and mind to declare (to trumpet!) with all my strength the marvelous and unique role that the arts play in global mission. We need to grow our missional theology of arts and artists. We must affirm the special gifting and training that produce artists for the glory of God. We must open space in our churches, our mission structures, our ministries, our agencies, our training programs for a richer expression of our Triune God of arts and artists, and arts in mission-mission in arts.

In this double issue, we first set the stage and build the Biblical and theological foundations as we engage mission arts and culture. We then discuss thematic facets: music, drama, visual art and film, and we engage the church in our vision. We then pour out the cornucopia of global voices of arts in mission. What next? We consider the challenges of starting an arts ministry, and discover training centers and guidelines for programs. We conclude with resources, networks and the challenges and possibilities ahead of us. It’s a banquet. Get ready, rejoice, be nourished, go arts-missional

*Bertil Ekström serves the WEA Mission Commission  
as Executive Director.  
He is a staff member of Interact as well.*

*Bertil Ekström, Executive Director*

## FROM MY CORNER

We now focus on Arts in Mission, one of the outcomes of the new task force established at the last consultation of the Mission Commission in Pattaya, Thailand, 2008. I was raised in an ecclesiastical context and tradition where visual arts and “body language” were not encouraged as appropriate ways for a Christian to express faith. Therefore, I am amazed by the variety and richness of culturally-based expressions of biblical truths through different kinds of arts. To be fair to my church background, I recognise that some forms of art were encouraged and certainly seen as more holy than others: music, poetry and rhetoric.

Artistic creativity is a gift from the Creator and reflects the image of God in the human. The commandment to take care of God’s creation demands this capacity to produce new things in dialogue and tension between the feelings of our inner being and the outer reality in which we live. Therefore, the arts have an important therapeutic function as well as a pedagogic purpose, helping us to understand

the different dimensions of life. The Scriptures are full of artistic expressions, including the way that God’s revelation of himself has come to us through metaphors and case studies of intervention in the history of humankind.

Art is present everywhere and probably much more so than we think about. Music, dance, poetry, sculptures, paintings and drama are arts that we usually recognise. But we could add to that list many other forms, such as architecture, arrangement of gardens and flower expositions, design of clothes, and many more. What would the world and life be without art?

Art is also an important tool for the communication of the Gospel to other people and therefore has its natural place in Mission. The Arts in Mission Task Force is precisely an attempt of the Mission Commission to stimulate the involvement of Christian artists in integral mission. We want to give them space for using their gifts to reach those who do not know about Jesus. But we also want to deepen the



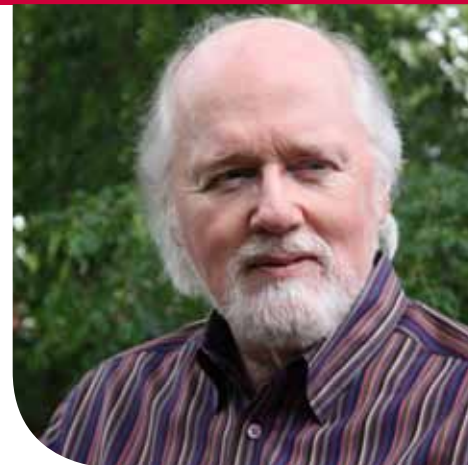
missional community’s understanding of what mission is about and how it can be communicated. The dream is to see the whole richness of the global Church engaged in the common cause of advancing the Kingdom. Thus, artists from all cultures, languages, tribes and nations are welcome to take part.

Art as Mission could be another way of phrasing this dream. Art is not just a tool for expressing faith. Art is a mission in itself—in the sense that excellent art is a way of honouring God and giving testimony to His image in us. In other words, great art fulfils part of the Creator’s purpose with our lives. Perhaps it is time for our theological seminaries to introduce courses in arts alongside homiletics. I think most of us would agree that a picture, a sculpture, a painting, a musical performance or a drama presentation can say many times more than thousands of preached words ●

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John Franklin

## ARTS IN MISSION TASKFORCE



Arts in Mission Mandate: The AiM task force exists to be a catalyst, advocating an intentional embracing of the arts as a vital arena for missional endeavours. Over the past couple of decades, there has been a resurgence of interest in the arts within Christian faith communities—not least among those in the evangelical camp. This renewed interest sends a clear signal that the aesthetic side of life can no longer be ignored. Religious understanding is not just a matter of reason attending to concepts and ideas, but is also about sensibilities and perceptions that are discerned through drama, music, dance, poetry and visual art.

Under the innovative leadership of Bertil Ekstrom and Bill Taylor, the WEA Mission Commission created a Task Force on Arts in Mission at their meeting in Pattaya, Thailand in November 2008. Over its long history, modern missions has at best been inattentive to the value of the arts for the missional task. There is no doubt that though many on the front lines readily engage the arts, there has been little sign that those in missions leadership are prepared or interested to take up the challenge to include the arts in an intentional way in the work of mission. When we consider the way in which music, dance, visual art, story and craft are woven into the fabric of indigenous cultures in the majority world, it is evident that the arts are an untapped resource for missions. During the meetings in Pattaya, a small group of eight gathered to look at what might be done to give the arts a more significant role in the

world of missions. There was ready agreement that art is an important means of communication and it is a common thread in all cultures. We noted too that acknowledging and engaging indigenous art is a gesture of respect and bridge building across our cultural differences. It was evident to our small group that there is much that could be done through the arts that would strengthen and enrich the work of mission around the world. We were well aware that much is already happening in arts and mission, while conscious that there is great promise in more intentional arts awareness among mission practitioners. Among the things the task force will take up in the days ahead are the following:

- Map organizations, training centres, churches, para church organizations and networks in which art and mission come together
- Articulate a biblical and theological foundation for the arts
- Survey the current level of mission involvement with the arts
- Provide resources and recommendations for national mission movements, mission agencies and training institutions
- Generate conversations on arts and mission through consultations and presence at mission gatherings

The Task Force held a strategic planning meeting in the spring of 2009 to give some shape to how we will proceed in the months ahead. Bill Taylor invited us or perhaps better challenged us to take on a special issue of Connections that would focus

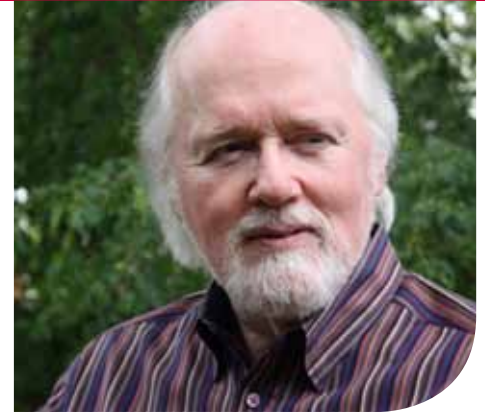
on Arts in Mission. This double issue is the result of a concerted effort to draw on resources from around the globe to inform, inspire and encourage the readers of this magazine on the matter of arts in mission. Our hope is that we might set in motion a fresh consideration of the way in which the arts can uniquely convey the themes of hope and healing as well as serve as a catalyst for justice, peace and renewed articulation of the age old message of the gospel.

What you will read in these pages will give you a glimpse into the ways in which the arts can be significant for the missional task. Every effort has been made to bring you a rich diversity of examples from around the globe and to tell stories and share ideas that will inspire you to see new possibilities in the places where you seek to bear witness to the gospel. This is just a beginning and we are all too aware of what has been left out. It is our desire that this double issue will be a resource not just for the moment but over the next few years. We hope that many of you in the WEA Mission Commission community and beyond will assist us by letting us know what you or others are doing to engage the arts in mission. If you have comments or suggestions, contacts or ideas we invite you to be in touch ●

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## Arts and the Missional Task John Franklin

# PRACTISING HOSPITALITY

Living as we do in a global community, we regularly encounter deep cultural differences, deep religious differences, and great divergences in our social practices. We also experience the attendant fears and insecurities that accompany these differences. In our pluralistic world, we are told that the way to deal with these differences, to diffuse them, is to practice tolerance. My sense is that tolerance has been politicized—it is now merely a social practice designed to keep us civil in our social relationships. Tolerance is not necessarily a bad thing, but I think it is overrated and possibly bad counsel. I venture a perspective on this “virtue” that may well be controversial. I suggest that tolerance—at least the version we are sold in our current culture—is not a Christian virtue.

Ralph Wood, professor of Theology and Literature at Baylor University, wrote an essay on G.K. Chesterton and his view of tolerance that I stumbled upon.<sup>1</sup> G.K. Chesterton, a Christian writer of the early twentieth century, was capable of holding a strong opinion and was not hesitant to express it. Chesterton says, “Modern toleration is really a tyranny. It is a tyranny because it is a silence. To say that I must not deny my opponent’s faith is to say I must not discuss it.” Chesterton described toleration as “the virtue of a man without convictions.”

Nevertheless, tolerance has become a dominating “virtue” in contemporary society. What should be the Christian’s

response? The virtue to be invoked as a Christian alternative to tolerance is hospitality. The decisive difference between these two is nicely stated, if perhaps oversimplified, by Ralph Wood, when he writes: “Tolerance somewhat condescendingly declares that we will “put up with” others even when their views and habits are ones we do not like. Hospitality by contrast offers to “put them up” and allows us to make even our enemies our guests and thus our potential friends” (p.56).

Hospitality as a Christian virtue has been both neglected and trivialized. This is a term we need to rehabilitate—to invest with new meaning and bring back to the heart of our Christian living. Hospitality is a gift we need to rediscover and a practice we need to cultivate. If you think for a moment about what God has done for humanity, you will see that hospitality is a central feature of the Gospel. We are adopted, made friends of God, beneficiaries of grace, comforted and guided by the Holy Spirit, promised life eternal and sustained by divine love. Surely hospitality should be at the heart of Christian mission.

So how might all this fit with art? Art at its best reaches into the deep places of our humanity. We are often drawn to art in ways that we are unable to explain. Because of its power to move us and to inspire us, art is capable of bridging our differences. This capacity is one feature of the hospitable nature of art.

On the other hand, in the West we are aware that the term “mission” and its practical outworking fall into the category of “politically incorrect.” Mission is seen as coercive, imperialistic, culturally insensitive and disrespectful of others. In short a moral failure. One cannot escape the threads of truth in these claims, but neither can one escape the clarion call of the Christian faith to affirm the universality of the Good News and its missional character. So how do we do mission that is invitational, not coercive; vulnerable, not imperialistic; culturally sensitive, not insensitive; and fully respectful of others.

Might art serve to diffuse the cultural shock so common in our missional work? Could the arts soften the hard edges of our sometimes preachy style? Could the arts provide openings for exploring the big questions of human existence—which are essentially theological questions, questions with spiritual import? Art is certainly capable of bridging our differences and helping us to see what we as human beings hold in common.

It has been typical of some who engage in mission to think of others in merely objective terms—and to consider souls not whole persons. Perhaps artistry can serve to bring us to attend to the whole person. The sensual nature of the arts makes it hard to ignore the bodily

<sup>1</sup> Ralph Wood, "Hospitality as the Gift Greater than Tolerance: G. K. Chesterton's *The Ball and the Cross*," from *The Dialogue of Cultures: A Conference Sponsored by the University of Notre Dame, December 1, 2007*. <sup>2</sup> Calvin Seerveld, *Bearing Fresh Olive Leaves*, Carlisle, UK: Piquant Books, 2000. <sup>3</sup> Said tells this story under the title *Bonding Across Cultural Boundaries*

reality of who we are as image bearers of God. Moreover, the arts provide a reminder that we are creatures of sign and symbol embedded in culture with diverse means for understanding ourselves and our world. The arts speak to our need to move beyond prose and to step into the world of the poetic, of image, metaphor, drama, movement—all ways of communication expressing more than we can say. Much could be said about the healing power of art, of its therapeutic value, or its connection with the spiritual and its capacity to deepen our understanding of the truth, or to enrich our experience of liturgy and life.

These are preliminary thoughts on the connection between art and mission—I set them out to signal the growing interest in generating conversation on how art and mission might work together. Calvin Seerveld suggests that just as the dove, in coming to Noah "bearing fresh olive leaves," was a sign of hope and newness, perhaps our artistry will be a similar sign in an uncertain world.<sup>2</sup>

I close with a story about a Palestinian academic and an Israeli musician. Edward Said, a Palestinian, taught comparative literature at Columbia University and Daniel Barenboim, an Israeli pianist and conductor, is one of the most accomplished musicians in the world. They had a chance meeting in the lobby of a London hotel in 1993. Said, who recognized Barenboim, makes clear that it was difficult for him as an Arab to approach this Israeli musician, but he made his move quickly. He writes, "Some immediate but forcefully profound recognition passed from one to the other of us, as it so fortunately but so rarely does in life."<sup>3</sup> There began a deep friendship that lasted until Said's death in 2003. Through his connection with Said, Barenboim was invited by the President of Birzeit University to give a recital. This was the first ever recital at the University and the first by an Israeli in Palestine. Said writes, "...everything that evening was utterly transformed, as all of us ...mentally scrambled to grasp what new and unprecedented thing had quite amazingly transpired."

An ongoing story comes out of this relationship. In August 1999, Barenboim, Said, and cellist Yo-Yo Ma convened a carefully selected group of seventy-eight Arab and Israeli musicians, aged eighteen to twenty-five. This led to the forming of the West–Eastern Divan Orchestra, which travels the world making music with its mix of Palestinian and Israeli members from many countries. The social, cultural and religious differences are somehow transcended in the commitment to making music together. In this they express a unity that seems so elusive and even impossible in the ordinary political oppositions between these two cultures. Art created a situation in which tolerance, merely giving over each group to their own opinions, was transcended. Hospitality, which must ensue as they labor together in their music, is a result ●

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*Pastor Ed Lapiz founded Kalob Philippine Music and Dance Ministry to research, teach, and promote the use of indigenous arts in Christian worship.*

## WHERE EVERY NATION HAS A CONTRIBUTION

*Ed Lapiz*

Christianity came to the Philippines together with colonization. Catholicism came with the Spanish Conquest in the sixteenth century, and Protestantism came with American occupation

of the country in 1899. Successful evangelization was often measured by the destruction of indigenous culture. The God of the Bible was presented as a Western deity who could only



be pleased with Western cultural

expressions—in architecture, language, or music. Liturgy had to conform to Western aesthetics. Indigenous culture was judged as demonic in a way that was very colonialist and oppressive.

Many Christianized Filipinos have regarded their own heritage as something that has to be forgotten and destroyed. Our people have been led to believe that Western Christianity is the only “correct” brand of faith, while it has been culturally destructive to our identity and heritage. Kaloob Philippine Music and Dance Ministry began with a vision to what we call “cultural redemption.” For fifteen years we have been researching Philippine arts, especially those that could be used in Christian liturgy, such as music, dance, and ritual.

### **Mining the Cultural Heritage**

Filipino society is about eighty percent Roman Catholic; the rest belong to Protestantism, Islam, and indigenous religions. Not much pre-colonial written history exists, as indigenous culture is told in lore, song, dance, and ritual. Therefore, we believe that the stories and the values and the spirit of our people are enshrined in the performing arts. Hence, the preservation and adaptive reuse of our cultural heritage is an important component of identity and nation-building.

Filipinos who have been evangelized have a choice: to be “good” Christians (which means Westernized) but “bad” Filipinos as they abandon their cultural heritage, or to do what we at Kaloob do and advocate—study elements of indigenous culture, filter them through Scripture, salvage everything that

does not directly contradict the spirit of Scripture, and then rededicate and reuse them in Christian liturgy. We have studied and collected hundreds of indigenous songs and dance, filtering anything offensive to biblical sensitivities. In our experience, ninety percent of indigenous artistic expression could be used in Christian worship without offending Christian theology.

Everything Kaloob does is founded on solid anthropological research that gives birth to two types of presentations. One we call a “prayformance,” indigenous music and dance in the context of Christian worship. These are no longer authentic original forms as they are refashioned for the needs of the liturgy. The other presentation is performance for the sake of artistic expression and cultural preservation. We perform Philippine dances as faithfully as possible in their original format. We are gratified that hard work has earned us a respectable niche among the country’s outstanding dance companies.

### **Chants and Dances**

We would like the church to be the sanctuary, not the cemetery, of indigenous culture. And this can happen if the church not only stops rejecting indigenous culture, but actually uses indigenous expressions in contemporary Christian worship. On the other hand, we do not wish to bring the church back to the cave. That is why we contemporize to make songs and rituals work within the context of the church today. We are thus able to fashion a Philippine Christianity that is firmly rooted in our traditions, decidedly relevant to our context, and steadfastly biblical.

For fifteen years, our main church of nearly 6000 has used Philippine music and dance as part of Sunday worship. We have many satellite churches around the country and some around the world that, in various degrees, are also using similar cultural expressions. But this doesn’t mean we reject modern or Western culture. We also like to make harmonious fusions, rooted in our heritage but also citizens of the world and part of the global church.

We also envision contributing elements of Philippine arts to the global church, enriching of the body of Christ through rituals, songs, and dances that express faith and spirituality in the context of our culture. Of course, we’d like to see all the other nations of the world do this as well.

### **Pioneers and Diplomats**

In the past, conservative elements of the church were suspicious and rejected us, believing our work was syncretism. Many were conditioned to think that anything indigenous could only be of the devil, and that sacred culture and arts could only come from the West.

Now, major churches in the Philippines have, in varying degrees, embraced our approach. Many Christian missions based in the Philippines bring visitors from abroad to our church so they can see how Philippine instruments and dances are used in worship. Some of the churches that used to be suspicious and unkind are actually now proud of us.

I cannot prescribe our technique or method to anyone; we have just been doing the best we could in our context



and within our limits. But here are a few things we have learned that may help others avoid some unnecessary setbacks:

Don't be overzealous. You always need the support of the church leaders. Talk first to the pastors, not to the music and dance leaders, because there could be a wide chasm between their theologies, and if the pastor doesn't like it, nothing will go.

Don't try to make changes too fast, because many conservative believers think there is only one way to approach God. We have to respect them also. We must not carelessly alienate people.

Build on it. Don't fashion yourself as the enemy of the status quo.

Be diplomatic. Artists have to be diplomats, because you need lots of space and support.

### A Global Church

Everything in the earth is the Lord's. So to reject the creative input of other cultures is to reject the God of creation who made the people of the world different. "Our God is not a God of sameness but a God of variety," as Monte Ohia of the World Christian Gathering of Indigenous Peoples loved to emphasize. We want to decolonize

Christianity and to welcome the Spirit of Christ to each culture, allowing all tribes and all nations and all languages to be able to worship God in variety.

The arts are very wonderful and powerful tools to set the oppressed peoples of the world free—free to be themselves, free from an inferiority complex. Jesus accepted those who fell through the cracks, those who were rejected by society. It's time for the church to embrace the cultures of the world, to uphold a global Christian church, where every nation has a contribution ●

*Dr. Colin Harbinson has been involved in the arts, education, and missions for forty years. He pioneered arts in mission at YWAM and has partnered with several other global agencies to develop the arts within a mission context. Colin was the artistic director of historic cultural exchanges with Russia, Bulgaria, and China; he chaired the Redeeming the Arts Issue Group for the Lausanne movement; and is currently the International Director of StoneWorks—a Belhaven University global arts initiative.*

*Colin Harbinson*

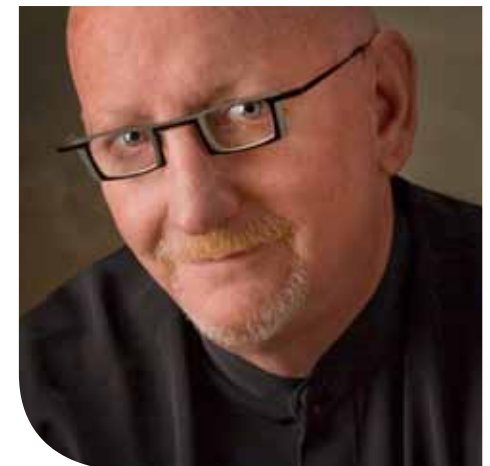
## ART AS AUTHENTIC WITNESS

In mid-sixties Britain, when "Beatlemania" was all the rage and contemporary Christian music was in its infancy, a rock group called The Witnesses emerged onto the scene. I was the drummer in the band. The name defined our identity and our mission. We were making and playing music to the glory of God. It was our response to the commission given by Christ on a mountain east of Jerusalem—to be His witnesses to "the ends of the earth."

Since that day, witnessing to our faith in Christ has been deeply embedded in the theology and mission of the Church. Yet our understanding and outworking

of this important concept is often flawed. Every Christian, including the artist, is called to be a witness. What does it mean to be a witness for Christ? Should artists witness through their art? What makes a work of art an authentic witness?

The mandate to take the message of the gospel to "the ends of the earth" was initially carried out through oral stories, passed down from those who had actually witnessed them. Witness is bifocal in its connotation: it involves knowing and making known. A witness is one who has information or knowledge and can therefore bring to light or confirm something.



In the context of Christian mission, to witness is to announce the good news of the gospel. The apostles Peter and John declared, "We cannot stop speaking of what we have seen and heard." For believers, these two components are inseparable. We are compelled to make known\_ to others what we ourselves know. This is authentic witness.

<sup>1</sup> Neil Postman, *The End of Education* (New York 1995), p. 84. <sup>2</sup> Frank Whiting, *An Introduction to the Theatre* (New York 1978), p. 105.

On another mountain, in an earlier time, the divine lawmaker gave a commandment that is fundamental to any ordered society. He declared, “You shall not bear false witness.” If authenticity is the hallmark of true witness, false witness occurs when witness is inauthentic. This includes testifying to what we do not know or adding to what we do know.

The most powerful testimony to the truth of the gospel is the witness of the community life of the Church and the daily lives of its members. Too often there is a “disconnect” between verbal and behavioral witness, leading to accusations of hypocrisy and a lack of integrity. To give the impression of always “having it together” is to deny ourselves the possibility of authentic witness, however spiritual we may think we appear.

In an age when things are often not what they seem, truth is elusive. When words are parsed, visual images manipulated, and spin doctors practice with surgical skill, authentic witness can be a lonely voice crying in the wilderness of the non-contextual sound bite. Neil Postman writes in *The End of Education*,

To use language to lie and to blur distinctions, to say more than you know or can know, to take the name of the truth in vain—these are offenses against a moral order, and they can, incidentally, be committed with excellent pronunciation or with impeccable grammar and spelling.<sup>1</sup>

The issue of authentic witness must be confronted in the world of the arts. In

his “Ode on a Grecian Urn,” the English poet John Keats declares,

Beauty is truth, truth beauty, that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to  
know.

This beautifully constructed language disguises a distortion and in the process disqualifies its own view of reality. A lie can be beautiful. The form can be executed with the highest level of technical excellence and artistry and the meaning still be a lie, a distortion. When art is a true witness there will be an inner witness to the truth of the artwork. To use T.S. Eliot’s phrase, it will have a “ring of truth” to it\_\_\_\_.

In the rush of daily life, we look at many things, but “see” very little. Frank Whiting captures this lack of awareness when he writes, “Most of our lives drift along in a hubbub of the trivial, the confused, and the habitual, our vision numbed by the blind staggers of conformity.” He goes on to describe those eye-opening moments of revelation when “the trivial, confused, and habitual disappear and an awareness of meaning and beauty sweeps over us.” He concludes, “It is with moments such as these that great art deals.”<sup>2</sup>

These “moments” can be so striking that there is a compulsion to express or recreate what has been witnessed. When a fragment of life comes into focus, artists seek to capture it on a canvas, in a dance, through a theatrical work, in a musical expression, or in a literary form. As they show their work, they hope others will “witness” something of what they have “seen.”

One function of art is to make the familiar appear unfamiliar. This progression from familiar to unfamiliar would appear on the surface to contradict the idea of authentic witness. How can transforming something into what it is not help us to see its true nature? Picasso informs the question by the use of paradox when he describes art as a lie that tells the truth. G. K. Chesterton further points out that the role of paradox is to stand truth on its head. As we engage any subject at hand from a different vantage point, it invites us to “see” with fresh eyes and receive new insight.

Brush strokes, movements or gestures, theatrical sets, or musical scores in and of themselves do not constitute reality. They offer windows through which we can observe some aspect of life or human experience. When the actors leave the stage and the theatre goes dark, we are not under any illusion that what we saw was real. Art by its nature has to do with the imagination. When combined with artistic skill and insight, it can have a profound impact on those who engage it. As has been rightly observed, the purpose of a work of the imagination is not to take us away from reality, but to make reality real. When this happens, art is acting as an authentic witness.

The biblical narrative is authentic. It is a true witness of human nature at its best and at its worst. It tells of personal success and personal failure. It does not try to cover up or excuse the depravity of humankind. It never glorifies the sin and the rebellion that it exposes. Rather, it shows God’s broken heart over His Creation and points to

the possibility of restoration through Christ.

For art to be a truthful witness, it must engage all of life—the good and the bad. It should be an honest exploration of the human condition set within a redemptive and transcendent framework. To compromise or distort the truth for misguided motives, political correctness, personal recognition, or

economic necessity is to be a false witness.

In the end, all evidence must be weighed and judged, including that of the artist and the artwork. As Christians, we are called to be witnesses in our lives and in our art. For a work of art to be a true witness it must be deeply authentic in its portrayal of life as we experience it, yet thoroughly biblical in the breadth of its vision and worldview.

As artists, we must embrace God's command and Christ's commission to be faithful witnesses of what we have seen and heard ●

(Colin Harbinson is International Director for StoneWorks, "Forming Artists to Reform Culture" <http://Stoneworks-arts.org> (from Creative Spirit 2003)

*Roberta R. King, Ph.D., is associate professor of communication and ethnomusicology in Fuller Seminary's School of Intercultural Studies where she oversees and teaches in the Global Christian Worship/Ethnomusicology program. Dr. King's mission experience includes twenty-two years in Africa, based in Nairobi, Kenya at Daystar University and serving with WorldVenture across the continent. She specializes in cross-cultural Christian music communication and is currently doing research in the Middle East and Southeast Asia*

*Challenges and Possibilities for Music and the Arts in Mission*

## CHRIST PLAYS IN TEN THOUSAND PLACES

*Roberta R. King*

What are the challenges and possibilities for employing culturally appropriate arts for kingdom purposes in the twenty-first century? In the late twentieth century, the initial groundwork for communicating the Gospel through music and the arts became an emerging approach to cross-cultural work. Setting Scripture to song in culturally relevant musical styles, contextualizing the Gospel appropriate for oral societies, and multicultural worship found a place within worship and witness of the worldwide Church. Recognized as a valid arena for effective ministry, the work is off to a running start. Yet, once culturally appropriate art forms have been identified, recognized, and accepted within a Christian community, what is the overall strategy for continued implementation

of the arts in mission? How can the arts play transformational roles in worship, evangelism, discipleship, and leadership development? This article poses five challenges for incorporating music and the arts into the ministries of the church, mission organizations, educational institutions, and mission-training programs. They serve as a response to the *missio deo* as cited

in the psalms to "declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples" (Ps. 96:3) so that "all nations will come and worship before him" (Ps. 86:9).

### **Challenge 1: "Think Global, Act Local"**

Globalization raises issues of culture contact. What happens to cultural music and related arts when people



*"Afrizo, from Daystar University in Nairobi, Kenya leads worship and interconnects with Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California."*





*"Crowds gather to witness the 100th anniversary of the first Adventist missionaries' arrival in PNG. What are the heart musics of PNG?"*

meet and interact with one another? New configurations and fusions of music are emerging as a reflection of interactive cultural exchanges. Ethnomusicologists note that ". . . there are no completely isolated musical communities any longer; something connects all musical production and permits music to be simultaneously global and local: global in its production, distribution, and consumption by audiences, while local in its performance aesthetic and situatedness in a coherent cultural milieu" (Wade 2004:129). In light of this, it is important to consider and ask how people are making music and arts meaningful and useful in their lives. Are churches and missions seeking to make the Good News understandable within specific cultural contexts and multi-cultural congregations? Or are we simply employing music and art without any relevant cultural grounding and thus missing out on significantly impacting a people's perception of and devotion to Jesus Christ. Our approach must be strategically intentional.

**Challenge 2: Pursue Authenticity and Meaningful Communication**

Authenticity strives for "faithfulness to one's essential nature" (Wade 2004:142). It fosters meaningful



*"Nyarafolo-Senufo believers in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa in the process of studying the Scriptures and composing an oral translation for their people."*

development of a community's expressive arts in ways that allow people to remain connected to their families and life situations. They are not forced to leave their societies, rather they can remain connected and influential within them. Theologically, it allows Christ to dwell among a people (Jn 1:14) within their particular cultural context, wherein he can be fully embraced without forcing foreign cultural patterns upon people. This facilitates meaningful communication of the Gospel and applies to all groupings of people, including modern, postmodern, tribal societies, and differing generations. Thus, a major challenge is to identify and work within peoples' heart musics, "those musical systems that a person learns as a child, youth, and/or as an adult and that most fully express his or her emotions" (see [www.worldofworship.org](http://www.worldofworship.org)).

**Challenge 3: Develop Comprehensive Artistic Translations of the Gospel**

As Andrew Walls notes, the Christian faith is infinitely translatable, including non-written modes (Walls 1996:26-42). It is very encouraging to see newly composed worship songs arising from among the nations. Yet, we have just barely begun to translate the Scriptures and the Christian faith into culturally



*"A Classical Arab Music Ensemble with Muslim Sheik and Orthodox Priest in Beirut, Lebanon, draws together both Muslims and Christians in celebration of the 'Annunciation.'"*

appropriate musical and artistic forms. Two areas that require specific attention are those of orality and church planting. More than seventy percent of the world's population does not read. Chronological Bible storying and setting the Scriptures to song requires systematic development of songs for oral communication of the Gospel (see King 1999). For example, the Bible Society in Ghana is working on a full oral translation of the New Testament based on Ghanaian music systems. Second, songs and their use in the life of the church invite a systematic approach to multiple stages in the church planting and development process (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Composing Songs and Church Planting

(Adapted from King 1999:151-155)

The topics of newly composed songs should address various needs located within the different stages of the church-planting continuum. For example, unreached peoples need songs that help them become acquainted with Jesus Christ, while established churches need songs that take them deeper in their walk with the Lord and foster theological growth.

**Challenge 4: Expand the Role of Music and the Arts in Mission and**



*"Doctor of Missiology students in Ethnomusicology at Fuller Seminary of varying heritages learn about the Hawaiian Ukulele, and its role in building community within society."*

### Ministry

The functions and uses of music vary from culture to culture. The challenge before us is to not only adapt or create new musical styles for worship and witness but to research the music culture of a people, especially in relation to how music functions and is used within a people's context. This implies considering new ways to incorporate song into worship and witness. In Kampala, Uganda, worship leaders are working on composing songs for elements of the Anglican liturgy that are usually read, such as the Gloria. On the other hand, an unexplored musical role is in embedded in the eoko Maasai song form, a call-and-response format that facilitates education, dialogue and dealing with controversial topics.

### Challenge 5: Explore Larger Global Issues: Peace, Justice, and Interfaith Relations

Finally, in an interconnected, post-9/11 world, there are new calls for seeking justice for the 'other.' Indeed, in the same Psalm that calls us to "Sing to the Lord a new song all the earth" (Ps. 96:1), the psalmist speaks of how the Lord will judge the peoples with equity and in righteousness (Ps 96:10, 13). World religions are no longer located only in the country of their origin.

*For further reading:*

*Hiebert, Paul G. Anthropological Insights for Missionaries.*

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*Lederach, John Paul. The Moral Imagination: The Art and Soul of Building Peace.*

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*New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.*

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Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and others are now living in local communities worldwide. The study of cultural music and the arts (the discipline of ethnomusicology) provides new platforms for expanding ministry and vision. In the arena of peace building, for example, scholars are realizing that the arts can access the imagination in ways that interfaith dialogue perhaps does not (see Lederach 2005). That is, music and the arts afford people spaces for rising above violence and imagining possibilities for living together in spite of their differences. In my most recent research, funded through the Luce Foundation, we are exploring "Songs of Peace and Reconciliation among Muslims and Christians." We are discovering that by bringing together musicians and musicologists, both Muslims and Christians, from the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and North America, that engaging in respectful performance with one another provides opportunity to explore our human longings to know God/Allah. Further, we are learning that common music and art traditions provide multiple opportunities to honor and respect one another, and to listen to each other. For the Christian witness and worshiper, such musical involvement creates spaces to practice living Christ-like in a

pluralistic world.

What, then, are the implications of these challenges for the church and her mission? On the most basic level, local churches around the world should intentionally welcome and embrace cultural art forms, giving voice to the peoples within their congregations. Second, mission organizations will benefit greatly by making room for artists and ethnomusicologists to play significant roles on their mission teams. They need to provide space for them to work creatively toward meaningful reflection on God and his work within a people's particular cultural context. The goal is to foster allegiance and commitment to Jesus Christ through culturally appropriate arts. Finally, educational institutions can no longer afford to view music and the arts as peripheral sub-disciplines without theological and missional implications. Integrating the study of cultural music and art into the curriculum expands the impact of the church in a global world. For, no people or society is without its own unique expressive music and art, vehicles that offer a profound means wherein "Christ plays in ten thousand places" (Gerard Manly Hopkins in Peterson 2005:108) ●



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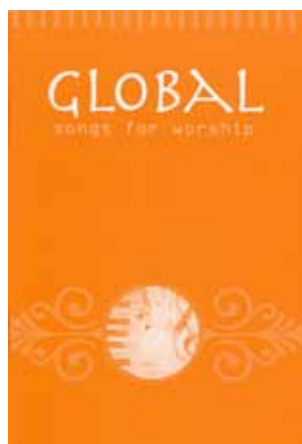
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*Brian Schrag holds an MA in Intercultural Studies-Ethnomusicology and a PhD. in Ethnomusicology. He is head of SIL International's Ethnomusicology and Arts Group and coordinates and teaches in the World Arts program at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics ([www.gial.edu](http://www.gial.edu)). He worked as an arts consultant in Central Africa for seven years and currently serves as Vice President of Education and Training for the International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE).*

*Brian Schrag*

## WHY LOCAL ARTS ARE CENTRAL TO MISSION

We could see that our tires would never touch the dirt on the other side of the bridge. The truck's wheels were spaced further apart than the rotting logs of the bridge, so the sixty or so Congolese pastors and I got out and began to walk to the church conference twelve miles up the road. We were in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where my family and I had come to help start a project to translate the Bible into the Mono language. At each village we passed, mothers, fathers, and children whom I had never met yelled out the name our local pastor had given me, "Gyaregbo! Gyaregbo!" They ran up to shake my hand and laugh and ask me to play and sing the one Mono song I had learned on the kundi, an eight-stringed harp. I felt like a politician running for office. The non-Mono pastors looked on in wonder: "They

really love you a lot!"

When we reached the pastors conference, I gave my report on our activities in the northwest region of DR Congo. As part of the report, I performed the same song, to great applause. Even people who didn't know Mono asked me to play it again. And again. And again. Another pastor remarked, "They sure love you." But why? Why do they love me so much here? Then this thought struck me: "They love you because they think you love them." My interest and involvement in Mono music served as a clear statement of respect and affection.

Christians communicating Truth cross-culturally have often misunderstood and undervalued local artistic forms like Mono song. In response, SIL's

*Neil R. Coulter has lived in Papua New Guinea since 2002. He is an ethnomusicology consultant with SIL International. His primary research interest is music shift: the changing balance of available music styles in small language communities.*

*Neil R. Coulter*

## BOOK REVIEW

Midian, Andrew.

*The Value of Indigenous Music in the Life and Ministry of the Church: The United Church in the Duke of York Islands. Apwitihi: Studies in Papua New Guinea Musics, 6. Boroko: Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, 1999. xxxvii, 92 pp.*

*"I was struggling to reconcile these two traditions [of hymnody and chorus]. . . . At that time there was a continuous tension (as still exists today in some churches) about the place of the chorus and the guitar in the church. These two traditions of religious music were fighting against each other, reflecting*



Ethnomusicology and Arts Group has developed programs to train people to advocate for local arts, researching and recognizing the crucial roles of communication and identity formation bound up in these forms. Our goal is to spark the emergence of enduring traditions of Scripture-infused song composition, drama, dance, story telling, chanting, visual and other locally thriving arts, traditions that help communities respond to the spiritual, social, and physical challenges they face. We'd love to have you join in this fresh, rigorous approach to the arts ●

See [www.ijfm.org/PDFs\\_IJFM/24\\_4\\_PDFs/199\\_Schrag.pdf](http://www.ijfm.org/PDFs_IJFM/24_4_PDFs/199_Schrag.pdf) for an expanded version of this article.

*what was happening within the life of the church itself" (xxix-xxx). Andrew Midian could be describing the church in many parts of the world. But he's talking about his own experience as a young Christian in Papua New Guinea's Duke of York Islands. His response to this church music conflict*

is to shift from a focus on outward forms in order to concentrate on what makes local music styles meaningful. In his short but excellent book, Midian challenges his readers with a vision for revitalized, indigenous worship: worship that is “free, alive, creative, and emotional . . . rooted in the musical concepts of the people” and reflective of “the powerfulness, the creativity, and the activity of God and the Holy Spirit” (75).

Midian’s first chapter describes the traditional society and music of the Duke of York Islands. Everyday life was religious, with frequent interactions between people and spirits. In 1875, Christianity entered the area, via the Methodist Church. Island residents were intrigued by the missionaries’ hymn singing, and especially the use of harmony, which had not been a part of their traditional songs.

But though the hymns and choruses were accepted in the church, Midian says that the foreign musical system and lyrical content were a problem. “The indigenous people became victims of singing the music and experiences of other people; they sing of what doesn’t really concern them. Therefore, the message contained in the hymns doesn’t affect their daily lives because there is no direct connection with them

or their way of life” (49-50). Midian saw spiritual decay resulting when church members became bound by inherited church traditions and stopped responding creatively to God. In the second half of the book he shares his ideas for creating indigenous Christian worship—an answer to this breakdown in communication and creative expression.

For Midian, effective gospel communication includes two steps. First, the church identifies itself with the society, using familiar cultural expressions. Then, as the gospel identifies with the culture, the culture is transformed into Christ-likeness. In places where missionaries have disregarded, rather than identified with, local artistic traditions, cultural transformation is difficult. In the Duke of York, early missionaries didn’t consider using indigenous music styles; hymnody was the sole music for the church. But the traditional musics had been a pathway for reaching out toward ultimate truth. The song styles that accompanied this spiritual yearning might have been directed toward Jesus Christ once he was revealed as the source of truth. That missed opportunity has led to the contemporary conflict over imported musical styles.

In response to that conflict, Midian

recommends redeeming indigenous music traditions, putting them to work for worship and evangelism. He suggests finding the “anchor points” in a culture’s music as church members begin to develop indigenous worship. Anchor points are broad underlying concepts that make traditional music meaningful and relevant—not specific tunes or types of instruments, or other things that change with time and preference. Midian’s anchor points for indigenous Duke of York church music include that the music be:

- social and corporate
- historical
- unity music
- sacramental music
- ritualistic
- theological

These concepts—explained in Chapter 3—made traditional music relevant; they must now shape and inform church music. Midian’s proposal looks beyond popularity, beyond the external components of music performance, and even beyond the theoretical structure of music styles. His vision of indigenous worship looks to the deeper, cultural issues that explain how music is meaningful in a community. This vision is specific to the Duke of York Islands, but it needs to resound throughout the global Christian church ●

*Dr. Gordon T. Smith,  
President reSource Leadership International  
Canada*

*Gordon T. Smith*

## THE ARTS AND THE MINISTRY OF EVANGELISM



For many years I have had a particular interest in conversion narratives, autobiographical reflections on the journey to faith in Christ. The conversion narrative as a genre was particularly prominent in the rise of evangelicalism in the eighteenth century. In recent years it has found new life as an increasing number of conversion theorists are affirming the potential significance of such a narrative to help make sense of the experience of divine grace.

As I have read these narratives, I have been continually struck by a number of things. That conversion is complex, as often as not occurring over a number of years. That in such a narrative, a number of people and factors might play a part, and yet all are but part of the work of the Spirit in drawing a person to Christ (some plant, some water and some harvest, to use the image from Paul in 1 Cor 3:6). That a typical conversion narrative will at some point reference the role of the Scriptures and the church in mediating the grace of God to a new believer. That rites of initiation are not incidental to this process of coming to faith. And something else that caught my attention: the actual or potential role of the arts.

I am thinking, for example, of the young

French philosopher and activist, Simone Weil. Typical of so many, her journey to faith took place over a number of years. She speaks of the impact of visiting a Portuguese village during a religious festival. But among the turning points, the most profound impact upon her came from two notable sources. The first, was the encounter with religious art on her visit to Italy and, in particular, the beauty of the Pentecost liturgy at St. Paul's in Rome. She wrote to a friend: "Nothing is more beautiful than the texts of the Catholic liturgy."

And then the following year she was struck by the beauty of the Holy Week liturgy at a Benedictine abbey in France and while there was deeply attracted to the celebration of the Eucharist. During this week she was also reading the poetry of George Herbert. She mentions in particular his poem, "Love bade me welcome . . ." of which she was later to say that it brought her "into Christ's presence." And she came to the conclusion that "the name of God and the name of Christ have been more and more irresistibly mingled in my thoughts."

There were significant conversation partners along the way for Simone Weil. And yet, one cannot read her narrative and not be struck by the impact of the arts—the beauty of religious art, the power of liturgy, and the grace

that comes through an exquisite piece of poetry. On the latter, I remember immediately thinking: in this conversion narrative, George Herbert—seventeenth century Welsh poet and Anglican priest—was the evangelist! A young twentieth century woman who so needed assurance that God, in Christ, loved her was graced by the witness of artists—including a poet—each long dead, but still a living witness to the grace of God through their work.

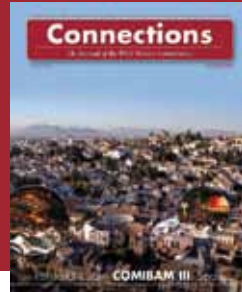
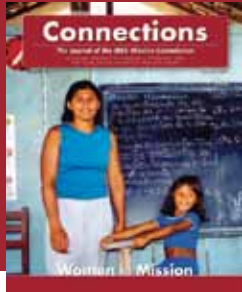
Now I take note of the role of the arts in each conversation narrative I read; and in using conversion narratives as an assignment in the courses I teach, I urge students to be aware of how the work of an artist raised their awareness of the love and goodness and power of God, in Christ. And, I am reminded that we need to urge artists to do their work and do it well; they do not need to fall prey to pragmatism or short-sightedness. They can do their work and trust God that indeed, in the journey to faith, some plant and some water and some harvest. And the work of the artist, perhaps long after the artist has died, may be pivotal in someone's journey to faith, just as it was for Simone Weil ●



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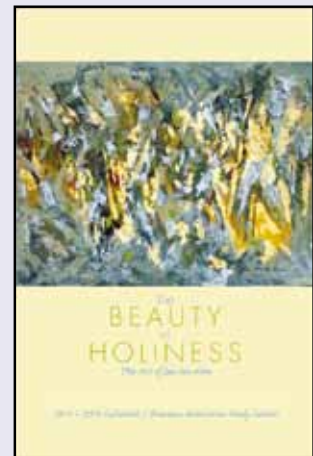
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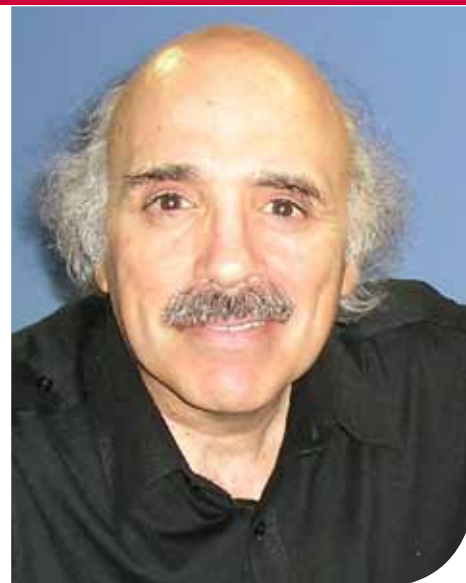
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Fifty Years of Music Missions

Frank Fortunato

FROM STREAMS TO GUSHING RIVERS

The Jordanian woman walked up after the meeting to thank the visiting music team from several nations for including an Arabic song as part of their music presentation. "That was one of our favorite Arabic melodies," she stated. "Now tell me, in what language were you singing?" One small, faltering early effort at music missions! Music missionaries were well-meaning in their efforts like this, adding the token local song, oblivious of the deplorable pronunciation. Others never even bothered learning local melodies, as they compared other music systems to their own and mistakenly found theirs superior. So they did what seemed right to them. They translated their Western songs, taught Western notation, imported pianos and organs and much more. Though not always appropriate, the early efforts were for the most part sincere.

By the early sixties, Western pop started to blanket the airwaves, confirming that the world tilted Westward musically. Groups like Youth for Christ sought to capture the moment, sending music teams to urban centers abroad, cloaking the Gospel in Western song. Those YFC efforts then spawned a wave of music missions. Other groups like the Continental Singers sent out hundreds of talented short-term singers and instrumentalists. People never tired of the ever-attractive sounds of Western pop. Unknown numbers came to Christ.

Then a new stream started trickling. As music missionaries began to study the uniqueness and intricacies of non-Western music, the focus started shifting to promote indigenous music. In Papua New Guinea, Wycliffe linguist and professional musician, Vida Chenoweth, released a landmark study with tools to help missionary musicians analyze local music. Using her tools, she facilitated the launching of the first worship songs among the Usarufa people. Following in her footsteps, Wycliffe music missionary Tom Avery accomplished something similar with the Canela tribe in Brazil. Soon, musicians from various mission agencies were organizing songwriting events, empowering locals to use their own melodies, rhythms and instruments for Christian worship. Streams of indigenous music began to flow.

In the eighties, various international agencies like YWAM and OM began adding European translations of their favorite worship songs into outreaches and international gatherings. By the late eighties, the second Lausanne Congress took the bold step of preparing an international songbook with original ethnic songs from the nations. David Peacock followed suit, compiling World Praise song collections for the global gatherings of the Baptist Alliance. The gigantic Urbana conferences began to add African, Asian and Latin songs to their

convention worship times. A trickle of global song was turning into a surging stream.

Christian institutions, such as Wheaton College, started offering degrees in ethnomusicology to prepare music missionaries to become bi-musical, as translators were expected to become bi-lingual. John Benham began a graduate course to further train the growing army of music missionaries. Soon Roberta King at Fuller and others elsewhere sprouted studies at various institutions. At one time, almost one-hundred trained music missionaries went out with the International Mission Board. Those completing graduate theses and dissertations started researching the growing ethnic and global music movements. While far from a tidal wave, music missions was sprouting new growth.

In the nineties, the AD2000 Movement started the global Worship and Arts Network, the first of its kind among global movements to encourage indigenous worship expressions. SIL developed a journal devoted mostly to ethnic music. Music missionary Dave Hall created the term ethnodoxology to define ethnic and global worship. Brian Schrag at SIL published a set of music tools and techniques to help



missionaries. Across the Body of Christ people were discovering how indigenous heart music, not borrowed music, best ignited heart worship. Typical of the excitement was a report of how an indigenous worship recording in Ghana spread like wildfire, even among those heavily resistant to the Gospel.

In 1996, the US Center for World Missions released a landmark issue of their journal, *Mission Frontiers*, addressing worship and mission—another huge milestone in the music missions movement. Several new ministries trace their roots to that one journal issue, including Heart Sounds International, a ministry devoted to releasing professional indigenous worship recordings, particularly in restricted parts of the world.

Into the new century, new streams began with increased focus on oral approaches to mission. Vernacular music, chants, rhythms, drama and dance could carry timeless biblical stories right into the hearts of people everywhere. The riveting biblical stories accompanied by local music and rhythms made the truths feel at home, not from elsewhere. The International Orality Network and the Mission Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance called for the creation of task forces to encourage ongoing efforts in music and the arts. The Lausanne Movement released *Redeeming the Arts*, the Restoration of the Arts to God's Creational Intention, one of the most comprehensive documents ever compiled on the arts in mission. The river was surging with more and more energy.

The time was ripe for GCoMMs, Global Consultations on Music and Missions. Three such events took place with practitioners sharing a dizzying array of case studies, tools and techniques. At the first Consultation, Paul Neeley and Robin Harris launched the International Council of Ethnodoxologists, a network that, within a few years, grew rapidly into a global fellowship of associates serving in dozens of nations and one-hundred agencies. Along the way they developed a huge online resource for ethnic and global worship.

Into the present, two new streams define the latest stirrings. The first stream sets music missions into the larger milieu of the arts. This is in keeping with the growing awareness that many of the world's cultures don't isolate music from other artistic expressions. SIL started retooling their music missionaries to become arts consultants. Colin Harbinson started Stoneworks, to disciple musicians and artists and to encourage the arts in the marketplace, the church, the academy, and in mission.

The second stream connects music missions to social justice. Caedmon's Call toured India and wrote songs about atrocities toward the Dalits. They recruited two OM Dalit musicians to join their tour and raise awareness and funding for these oppressed people in India. Others, like Switchfoot, Third Day and Jars of Clay took up the baton for social causes in their music. Christian musicians from the UK and the USA now regularly address poverty, HIV/AIDS and disease in their concerts. But beyond talking about it, they go the extra mile(s), to slums, participating in

short-term missions.

Borrowing from the writer of Hebrews: "What more shall (we) say? (We) do not have time to tell about..." all that happens that does not require "foreign" music missionaries: the thousands of songs in China birthed by three untrained Chinese women; Marcos Witt's stunning recordings that have touched the far reaches of the Latin world; tribal groups deep in the Himalayas who developed incredibly beautiful song and dance, totally untouched by the outside world; the 2,000 women and children in South Africa that spent six weeks in unbroken singing before the police finally gave in and reversed the decision to send their husbands and fathers to starvation and death in Transkei.

"We do not have time to tell about" the rich singing of ancient melodies that sustained Orthodox believers to endure persecution and hardship, of Tuvan people weeping to hear the sounds of Christians using throat singing for the first time, of North Korean believers holding hands and singing hymns at the moment of their martyrdom...

It is likely that most of the current remains subterranean as music in the nations prompted by the Spirit goes mostly unheralded and unreported and awaits eternity to unfold. We anticipate the mighty surge of Revelation 19:6—that "great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters," singing, exclaiming, dancing, in great artistic diversity: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns." •

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## Exploring the intersections of form and meaning CONTEXTUALIZATION *Robin P. Harris*



One of the most contentious questions faced by those involved in the arts in mission is this: “How can we know when the use of a particular form of music or art is syncretism<sup>1</sup> and when it is an appropriate biblical contextualization<sup>2</sup> of our faith? This article will propose that the presence or absence of syncretism can only be determined by what meanings are in the minds of people as they use the artistic form<sup>3</sup> under question. Are they seeking to blend materialistic, animistic, or other pagan meanings with biblical meanings?

### Steps for Contextualization of Local Forms

One of the most challenging tasks for the local church is to determine which cultural forms will be effective for expressing biblical truth in their local context. Missiologist Paul Hiebert proposed four steps for critical contextualization (1985) that offer guidance in this task. Hiebert’s proposal, which can be adapted in various ways to fit the context, underscores the importance of helping people to think about the meanings that they attach to various forms. The proposal does not, however, maintain that those meanings are unchangeable—just that they must be discovered and dealt with in a conscious way.

- 1) Gather information from and with locals about the forms and their various meanings, as well as the functions of those forms in the local culture;
- 2) Study biblical teachings and principles that relate to the forms in question;
- 3) Evaluate the local forms in light of the

related biblical teachings; and  
4) Encourage local people, based on what they have learned in this process, to make their own decisions about whether they should accept, reject, or alter the forms in order to create an appropriate, contextualized Christian practice.

It is important to note that final cultural decisions are not the responsibility of outsiders, whether they be visitors, missionaries, or para-church agencies. Hiebert says,

To involve the people in evaluating their own culture draws upon their strength. They know their old culture better than the missionary and are in a better position to critique it... Moreover, they will grow spiritually by learning to apply scriptural teachings to their own lives (1985:187).

Hiebert summarizes the process of critical contextualization as one of studying the forms “with regard to the meanings and places they have within their cultural setting and then [evaluating them] in the light of biblical norms” (1985: 183-192). It’s important to note that the focus is on the ascribed meanings in the minds of local Christians rather than those of the missionary. With those steps in mind, what are some of the relevant biblical norms that need to be discussed in relation to the use of cultural forms in Christian worship and practice?

### The Importance of the Mind and Heart

Harold Best, in his book *Unceasing Worship*, writes about the importance of the mind and heart in worship: “There is a fine but absolutely clarified line between authentic and idolatrous worship. The line is not drawn by the things that we use but by what our mind and heart choose to make of them” (2003: 171).

A key biblical passage dealing with cultural forms and the attitude of the heart is Romans 14, where Paul speaks about various cultural practices that were the controversial issues of the day—eating certain foods and observing certain religious days as special. The crux of the issue is addressed in Rom. 14:14, “...nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean” (NASB). This places the answers for cultural issues right where they belong—in the heart of the worshiper. If the worshiper can use the cultural form to worship the one true God with a pure heart and conscience, then he or she is free to use the form; the form itself is neutral.

What often happens, however, is that a person who cannot use a cultural form with a clear conscience thinks the problem is inherent in the form itself, not in his own associations. As a result he condemns those who are able to use the form in worship to God with a clean conscience. Romans 14:1-5 clearly sta-

*1 Used here to mean an inappropriate mixing of Christianity with paganism or another religion. 2 Defined here as the wise use of culture and local context to express some aspect of biblical Christianity. 3 Although the term “form” has a broader meaning, I use it here to mean a cultural expression such as a type of song, ritual, poem, dance, visual art, or other artistic expression.*

tes that in these debatable cultural matters, each worshiper answers to God for the attitude of his own heart:

One man has faith that he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats vegetables only. Let not him who eats regard with contempt him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats, for God has accepted him. Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls... Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind (NASB, emphasis mine).

Note that the one who cannot use the form with a clear conscience is described as the “weaker brother”—so this is not an encouragement for him to complacently remain in his weak state! This weaker brother should hope for future growth and should pray for grace from God to become stronger in these matters. Until then, he must obey his

conscience (Rom. 14:14), while understanding that the issue is his heart; it is an issue of weakness, rather than a problem with the form itself.

The stronger brother is warned as well. He must not “regard with contempt” the brother who cannot eat with a clear conscience. Barry Liesch, in *The New Worship: Straight Talk on Music and the Church*, gives a helpful summary of Paul’s teaching regarding these situations:

These cultural, Christian Jews, says Paul, need acceptance too and should not be looked down on for not acting on the freedom they have in Christ. Paul looks evenhandedly at both the “weak” and the “strong” in disputable matters, attempting to avoid attitudes of snobbery and exclusivity (2004: 191).

Liesch proposes that though the music/meat analogy is not specifically men-

tioned by Paul, it is fair to apply it in this case because for Jews, the question of meat offered to idols was based on “the issue of bad associations, a central issue relative to music.... [i.e.] bad associations (i.e., meat with idolatry) don’t spoil the goodness of the materials” (2004: 194 emphasis mine). Best sums it up concisely: “Once a culture is transformed by Christ, its artistic dialects and processes can remain as they are even while bearing new fruit. The changes that might occur—radical or ordinary—will then come from within” (2003: 178). The case studies in this issue of *Connections* demonstrate a rapidly growing understanding of how various cultural artistic forms can reflect biblical truth and God’s glory. For those of us involved in guiding others through the contextualization process, let us commit to wisely serving local believers as they explore the artistic forms available to them in the expression of their faith ●

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*Using Indigenous Drama Forms to Communicate Christ* Dr. Julisa Rowe  
**ETHNODRAMATOLOGY**

The group of teenagers excitedly busied themselves with the task of coating their faces with thick, white pancake makeup. The dust from passing cars swirled around them as they jockeyed for position in front of the van's side mirrors, attempting to get a full view of their faces in order to draw on the markings of a mime with a shared black pencil. Satisfied that everything was in order they gathered in a circle and prayed about the mime performance they were about to give in this church as a part of their short-term mission trip to Mexico. Then they took their places, ready to enter on cue and win the Mexicans to Christ through their dramatic performance—they had been praying and preparing for this for weeks.

The church filled rapidly—church members and curious bystanders—all eager to see what fancy program the Americans would present to them. The church members, particularly, were looking forward to a clear presentation of the gospel that would affirm their beliefs and encourage them to witness to their neighbors. People shifted expectantly as the music began—the strains of Dvorak's "New World Symphony"—and then the performers entered. A blanket of silence settled on the audience, followed almost immediately by gasps of horror and incoherent mutterings. Then one family stood up and walked out, followed by another, until soon most of the church had exited in disgust. Someone stopped the music and the performers

stood on the stage in shock. What had happened? The pastor came forward, taking the team leader to one side. "We were looking forward to a presentation about our Christos," he said. "How dare you bring a pagan celebration about the Day of the Dead into our church?!"

It was an innocent mistake on the part of the short-term team; they were only following the prescribed makeup for mimes—black costume, and white face with black markings. However, Mexico celebrates the Day of the Dead, a day that commemorates the dead, by dressing up in black costumes and painting their faces white to represent skeletons. The Mexican church did not understand the conventions of mime and instead equated what they saw with the nearest cultural equivalent—the Day of the Dead—an entirely inappropriate thing for an evangelistic team to present!

Not all performances in other cultures run into such overt quandaries, but this story highlights the problem that exists when groups from one culture attempt to perform drama in a culture not their own. If the missionary presents a drama that has impressed them in their home country, but has not checked for cultural differences of expression and content, then a situation could arise whereby the drama offends the host culture or, at the very least, makes no impact on the heart of the people. Too often, no attention is given to the cultural context in which a performance takes place, nor is attention given to

the signals within a performance that may conflict with the surrounding culture. This problem is extended when the national church imitates the methods and techniques used by their Western counterparts. They are taught that drama is of the type seen in the West and so set about creating drama performances based on that model. They end up with a foreign product that needs to be explained to their audience. Wouldn't it be easier to start from the audience's own cultural forms?

The application of basic missiological principles to the field of drama is helpful in determining how to effectively and appropriately incorporate the dramatic arts into church and mission strategy across cultures. This approach is called ethnodramatology; simply put, it is the study of the drama forms and expressions of every culture, and how its worldview shapes the drama of that culture. Drama is essentially communication and, whether the stated goal is for entertainment, philosophy, propaganda or "art for art's sake," every drama communicates something about the world in which the artist lives and the nature of the audience and its struggles, and offers some response or reflection. To understand why drama differs in each culture, one needs to understand why cultures differ and how those differences then affect the form and content of drama.

Culture is made of many layers—personal, environmental, historical experience (individual and collective), economic, social and ideological authorities, behavioral level and its twelve levels of language, or signal systems, (verbal, written, numeric, pictorial, artifactual, audio, kinesic, optical, tactile, spatial, temporal, olfactory)—and an analysis of these layers contribute to an ethnodramatological approach.

**The questions below give a starting point for analysis:**

1. What is the environment of the culture and how does it affect the performance and staging of drama?
2. What is the history of the culture?



*Kenyan Drama*

What is the history of drama in the culture? How do they correspond?

3. What is the prevailing economic structure of the culture? How do economics affect life in the culture? How do they affect the drama (what can be performed and why, who can attend, who can perform, etc.)?

4. What is the social structure of the culture? How does society affect drama? (Who can perform, who can attend, what is the role of the audience, etc.?)

5. What is the culture's ideology? How does this affect what drama can be performed?

6. How are the signal systems manifested in this culture? How are they manifested in drama performance?



*Kenyans Acting*

7. What are the behavior patterns of the culture? How are these reflected in the drama?

8. Are there different categories of drama in the culture? What are their functions and place in the culture?

As these questions are answered, dramas can be developed that reflect the heart of the people and effectively communicate Christ to them in a manner they can understand. There is no such thing as a universal language, but with careful attention to culturally-based signal systems, you can get closer to a more universal understanding of your message, dramatic or otherwise ●



*Playback for bitok*

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*Celebrating Cultural Uniqueness*

*John Alderson*

## ETHNODRAMATOLOGY

“By their performances shall ye know them” wrote the late renowned cultural anthropologist Victor Turner, known for his groundbreaking work on symbolism, rituals, social drama, and theater (Schechner and Appel, p. 1). His words, I believe, should also apply to all who participate in *missio dei* and the performing arts. It is a call to awaken us to the challenge of knowing those to whom we minister—by understanding their performances whilst celebrating their culture and discovering effective ways to communicate the Gospel through existing indigenous art forms. Ethnodramatology, the study of cultural performances and expressions, provides the means by which to fulfill this challenge.

An example is the work of Allan Eubank, who has worked with Thai dance-drama culture (Likay), for over forty years (Eubank, 2004). Early on, Eubank was challenged to understand Thai culture: “One day Lamut told me, ‘You stand up and preach and the villagers do not understand. It is not their culture. [...] Let me get my friends and tell Bible stories in Thai fashion by using Likay. People will see that God’s truth fits our culture and will believe’” (p. 20). Although Eubank does not use the term ethnodramatology, his story follows the principles of intentional observation, purposeful engagement, and collaborative celebration, which is the heart of ethnodramatology.

Every culture contains rituals, as noted by Hiebert, Shaw and Tienou: “Humans give expression to their deep beliefs,

feelings, and morality in their rituals” (1999, p. 290). People are compelled to perform and express their beliefs, communicating and reaffirming cultural values, for “with no living rituals people are in danger of cultural amnesia, and becoming a people without a history and without meaning” (p. 293). Every society has its own distinctive culture; complex in nature as it is constructed of both surface and deep levels. Surface levels are to be understood as “the patterning of human behavior,” whereas deep levels “are the assumptions we call worldview,” which influence social behavior (Kraft, 1996, p. 31). Thus, all cultural expressions are likened to a magnifying glass through which one observes a cultural worldview.

Art in particular, regardless of the medium, is experienced by both the artist and by the audience. Thus, it simultaneously communicates worldview on several levels: socially and symbolically both verbally and non-verbally. Turner elaborates, when speaking about social dramas that, Each culture, each person within it, uses the entire sensory repertoire to convey messages: manual gesticulations, facial expressions, bodily postures, rapid, heavy, or light breathing, tears, at the individual level; stylized gestures, dance patterns, prescribed silences, synchronic movements such as marching, the moves and “plays” of games, sports, and rituals, at the cultural level. (1982, p. 9)

Each expression, each “unit of description and analysis” (p. 9) then, is an oppor-

tunity to focus the magnifying glass on different aspects of worldview revealing internal belief systems. Furthermore, each different kind of performance adjusts the magnifying glass, so as to see the deep structures from a different point of view. Patterns and structures begin to evolve, revealing responses to questions such as, “Who are we?”; “Where did we come from?”; “Who controls the universe or nature?” and so forth. The nature of the performance sheds light and the people believe that they will receive an answer: rain for their crops, healing, removal or placation of evil spirits.

Similarly, ethnodramatology employs performance principles as methods of engagement with which to access and gain the artistic vocabulary needed to create future presentations of the Gospel. Beyond noting and understanding gestures and choreography, efforts need to be made to understand sacred (performance) places, audience/performer interactions, preparation of performance/performer, transition of knowledge, just to note a few (Schechner and Appel, 1990). Societies that are immersed in ritual and tradition are conditioned to believe that different rituals or ceremonies follow a prepared pattern. Thus, such preparations need to be taken into account when presenting the Gospel or creating various Christian disciplines such as worship, prayer, fasting, and communion if they are to be understood, accepted, incorporated, and followed. This is paramount, as religious beliefs “cannot survive without corporate activities” to the point that



those “that do not find outward expression in social systems cannot be passed on to the young and soon die” (Hiebert, Shaw, and Tiéno, p. 43). Christianity must have cultural expression if it is to be fully embraced and passed on. These expressions must attempt to answer the questions, such as stated earlier, that still exist within the heart of humanity.

It is understood that “God, as transcendent and absolute, completely beyond and outside of any culture . . . chooses the cultural milieu in which we are immersed as the arena of his interaction

with us” (Kraft, 2001, p. 27). There is not one culture or society that can fully experience God or express Christianity, but each society must establish unique experiences and collaborative celebrations of their relationship with God through their culture. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that sin does not destroy culture, but distorts it from God’s original intention (Harbinson, 1998). Thus, the Spirit of God initiates and maintains the redemption and transformational process affecting both deep and surface levels of culture in order to restore God’s original purpose—a myriad of cultural forms of worship (Rev 7:9).

Ethnodramatology, with its principles of observation, engagement, and celebration, provides cross-cultural workers with insights to help them understand indigenous rituals and expressions, and the belief systems behind them; as well as, a unique appreciation of cultural expressions, while developing avenues of cross-cultural communication. This builds a platform for cultural restoration through the more effective presentation of the Gospel, utilizing existing indigenous forms, which in turn, celebrates cultural uniqueness ●



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## HOW THE ARTS ARE A VALUABLE RESOURCE FOR MISSIONAL WORK

Jen G

In the atmosphere of missions and the visual arts, there is a perceived need for product and an unrecognized value of the facilitative/creative process. It seems that the moment we try to quantify what we see in the area of the arts and missions, we lose sight of the value of arts in a missional context. The unlocking of imagination and the value of process and restoration is one of the fundamental and basic needs in communities where individuality and creativity is suppressed and discouraged. This makes arts ministry in the context of least-reached or creative access countries a challenge as far as encouraging those from the

*Art work by N.African underground church member*



outside to support and or value the art of creativity.

Working amongst people who have limited resources, but a deep visual heritage that goes back thousands of years, can be a curious assignment. Within this context, and with much prayer, my national colleagues and I have seen time and time again that there is a desperate need for the unlocking of imagination and creation of safe places that facilitate hope. Cultures dominated by fundamental religion or gender abuse have lost any desire to create. They are numb and have lost the ability to imagine.

It is so important to provide safe places where young and old have permission to dream and imagine without the fear of judgement or comparison. Often times, in a product driven outreach, there is a strong drive toward a final culminating exhibition or other form of display where some are excluded because of their abilities. At times we minister to expatriate workers in country and at other times to those who are a part of an intricate network of underground churches. Both groups are looking for new ways of seeing and of helping others to imagine hope. We have seen this to be a great source of encouragement for those who have experienced multiple traumatic events and oppression in their country. In one of our workshops with the underground church in North Africa, I met a young man who had been a part of a leadership training program,

but had yet to find any voice or healing from his past. He was from a rural Muslim community and had never had the chance to even experiment with art materials. However, he not only found that he was comfortable with this form of medium to tell his story, but also that he was able to begin the process of healing and unlock past hurtful memories.

The opportunity to bring art and art as therapy to street children, also in a Muslim context, has been a brilliant way of building bridges and encouraging relationships within the community. Simply a place where kids feel like they can be and have something to offer, brings a new level of healing to an otherwise forgotten marginalized people group. As we partner with other artists in this North African country, we observed people in the community gain an interest in children who had been forgotten. Those who were working with these children in a secular context saw a new level of cooperation between themselves and the Christian community. Because the arts were not overtly evangelistic, we saw less governmental restrictions and more people helped and encouraged. Another aspect of a process-focused outreach is helping missionaries who are already on the ground. Some have been working diligently for many years and others have come to the region only to find that the going is tough. Some have experienced traumatic events or, for example, have stayed through wars and/or experienced



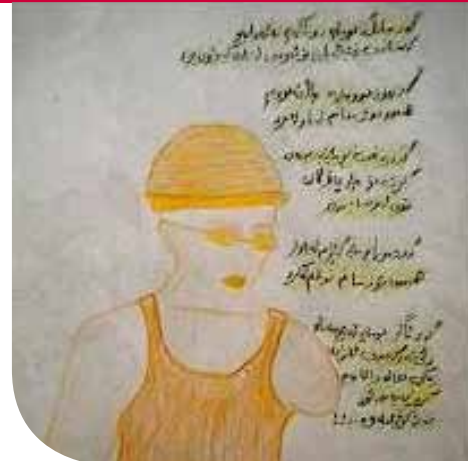
*A group of Middle Eastern child care workers*

violence and chose to stay in the country. They are looking for ways to process their own trauma and ways to think creatively in order to continue to minister in their communities. We have seen tremendous times of healing and visual awakening through a series of personal and group art activities. Some of the projects focus on a deeper, personal relationship with the



*Street kids at the drop in center*

Lord and encouraging one another in community. Participants are also asked to create what they consider to be a “safe place.” This helps them to both envision a place where they can minister to other people and a place where they can go to restore their own soul. While debriefing after creating a piece of artwork, we have found participants able to begin to imagine



*Art work done by a child in trauma, whose mother set herself on fire*

and hope again.

Finally, creative visual processing helps missionaries and national church leaders to see the community in a more holistic perspective—emotional, spiritual and relational. This gives us a further ability to imagine and to experience something of the creative heart of God in a missional context ●



## International Council of Ethnodoxologists

... a network for culturally-appropriate Christian worship

# ICE

ethnodoxology=peoples+praise

The ICE network exists to encourage and equip Christ-followers in every culture to express their faith through their own **heart music** and other **arts**.

We facilitate online **networking** and provide **resources** for the development of culturally appropriate Christian worship, utilizing insights from ethnomusicology, missiology, worship studies and the arts.

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*Dr. Dianne B. Collard*

## A PLEA FOR FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION

“I, as a member of the body of Christ, ask your forgiveness on behalf of the Protestant church for the alienation and abuse towards artists of faith in the past five hundred years, as well as today.”

This is my plea whenever I meet with artists around the world. It was my heartfelt message at the recent Europe Art Summit at Schloss Mittersill in Austria. But why should I, a non-artist, do such a thing?

It all began in 1992, following the murder of our eldest son in California. We were missionaries living in Vienna, Austria. I was thrown into a long journey of grief and despair; healing and hope; and ultimately, forgiveness and reconciliation. In the midst of the darkest days of grief, I found solace only in the art museums and galleries of Vienna. It was the awakening of the Word through beauty, line, color, and design as God reminded me of His power as Creator and Sustainer of the universe. Healing began as I worshipped God, the original artist, made evident through the basic elements of creativity.

In the years following this profound experience, I struggled to understand why visual art had not been a part of my previous church life. As I talked with artists of faith, I heard of their alienation by much of the Protestant, evangelical church. I wept as I listened to their stories of rejection of their creative gift. I was grieved that the Body of Christ should have pushed away the gifted purveyors of beauty, light and truth. I wondered why this has happened and pursued this question through years of

study, which ultimately culminated as the topic of my doctoral research.

I’ve talked with dozens of artists from countries on four continents who have echoed the same sentiment, “Why doesn’t my church value my creative gift?” I’ll share only a few examples. One German artist couple had been told, “Music can be used in the church, but your visual art is merely worldly.” A celebrated Spanish artist had been willing to do some decorative art in the church sanctuary, only to have his paintings of Jesus as the Good Shepherd painted over because “images weren’t allowed in the church.” A Brazilian artist has been instructed that her passion for painting and her desire to learn theology was antithetical and could not be reconciled—she had to give up one or the other. An American artist who had painted an abstract expression of joy and celebration of God and hung it in the narthex of the church received a call from the pastor with the ultimatum that because he and some of the elders had perceived “erotic images” in this painting, neither she nor the painting were welcomed in the church anymore. I could continue with such stories of pain. Artists have rightly perceived rejection and felt alienated for a good reason.

My research found that the answers to the questions of “Why?” and “How?” visual art is rejected in the Protestant, (“free”) evangelical church was rooted in the sixteenth century Protestant Reformation. Over seventy percent of the pastors interviewed indicated that their avoidance of visual art in the church



was directly related to the iconoclastic theology and tradition that comes from Swiss, post-Reformational teachings. Most leaders interviewed had never questioned this tradition or the background theology until confronted by my research interviews and questionnaires. Secondly, they indicated that even if they decided to embrace visual art in the ministries of the church and wanted to encourage artists—they simply had no idea how to do it.

Whatever the history of such a schism, God calls artists to forgive those who have perpetuated this visual anorexia in the church and caused so many of the artists to feel alienated. He commands that we “forgive as He has forgiven us in Jesus Christ.” Such forgiveness is unconditional, undeserved, total and complete.

I’m also committed to reconciliation between the church and artists of faith. God is using the creativity of His people to reach the world with the Gospel message and calls us to participate in His transformation of the culture around us. Artists will lead the way in this transformation. It is not the time to continue the centuries-old debates and reactionary theology. It is a time to work together—artists and non-artists—to declare the Good News through all of God’s creative gifts.

For this reason, I say to all artists who have been hurt by the organized church, “I’m so sorry. Please forgive...” ●

## FILM

*Rev. Dr. John Gilman is President and Founder of Dayspring International. For the past thirty-one years Dayspring International has been the distributor of Daya Sagar in India. As importantly, Dayspring through film team evangelism has shared the Gospel in thousands of Indian villages. For the past ten years Dayspring has been in strategic alliance with Operation Mobilisation of India working among the Dalits. [www.dayspringinternational.org](http://www.dayspringinternational.org)*

## Film as Evangelism in the Indian Context

Dr. John Gilman

# THEY'RE KILLING AN INNOCENT MAN!

"Stop!"

The taxi driver could speak little English, but he knew what I meant.

What I had just seen on that sultry afternoon in a noisy, palm-leaved village near India's Bay of Bengal brought my life to an abrupt halt.

Before me was a larger-than-life billboard with a scene I never expected to see. With a crown of thorns piercing His brow, blood flowing down His face, struggling to carry a huge wooden cross there was Jesus. Behind Him were the faces of what seemed like millions of Indian people.

The billboard was promoting a major motion picture on the life of Christ. Daya Sagar (pronounced DIE-uh-SAW-guh) in Hindi means "Oceans of Mercy."

"O Lord," I cried, "have I come halfway around the world to bring the message of Jesus through motion pictures—only to find it's already been done?"

It was 1979. It had become my dream and burden to produce a culturally relevant film on the life of Jesus in the Indian context. I had resigned my position in Christian television and had immersed myself in learning the Indian film industry, attempting to formulate a strategy. The cinema was jammed that night. As I sat waiting, my mind was awash with questions. Was I going to see a perversion of the Gospel? How could a secular film in a Hindu dominated industry tell the story of Jesus?

The lights in the theater dimmed, and the projector flooded the screen with the production. From the beginning, I kept asking my missionary friend and interpreter, "Is it biblical? Are they telling the real story?"

"Oh, it is good. It's really good," he kept assuring me.

Someone had done their homework; the all-Indian cast through Indian dress, native language, cultural idiom, music and dance, was telling the Gospel story and making it come alive. God was going to send His only Son to earth. He was to be incarnate—born of a virgin.

The audience was totally absorbed. Jesus was more than an actor on the screen. They loved Him and identified with Him.

The crowd in the theater was noisy and interactive. They talked back to the screen and to each other. They cheered when Jesus drove the money-changers out of the temple. When He healed the blind man and the leper, they broke into applause.

For 3,000 years, the caste system has kept hundreds of millions of people under the oppressive label of "untouchable." Jesus was now confronting the unspeakable oppression and segregation of that malady.

This was a powerful and compelling production. When Jesus was crucified,



people all across the theater began to shout, "They're killing an innocent man!" In shock and despair, many wept openly.

When Christ rose from the dead, the audience whistled and clapped their hands. They were wild with happiness when they saw that Jesus was alive. This was orality in its purest form...storytelling at its best. The depth of the communication exceeds our capacity to expand propositional truth.

When the nearly three-hour production ended with Christ's ascension, I sat paralyzed. Finally I turned to my friend and said, "This is the most powerful tool of evangelism I have ever seen." I was now obsessed with finding out more.

The next few days would alter the course of my life and forever impact evangelism throughout India. It was a quest to obtain the rights and take this film into every village.

Fast forward to the first village film show. While my long-range plans did not call for a Western presence, I had to be there. At this point I couldn't even be sure if the model would work. But as the team of nationals and I made final preparations, huge black swirling clouds caught my eye. They were headed directly our way. Within minutes the palm trees were bending, and I thought the makeshift screen

of sewn bed sheets would rip from the bamboo poles. "Please, Lord, stop the rain!" But the storm continued to build. The crowd was building fast. First 500. Then 1,000. The huge screen itself was a big attraction for the village.

At 8:00 p.m. I turned to my friend and said, "How many people are here?" "It looks like about twenty-five hundred," he said, smiling broadly.

But then, big, hot drops of rain began falling from the dense, blackened sky. I looked up and said, "In the name of Jesus..."

The raindrops stopped the moment the projector began.

Would their reaction be the same as those in the theater? Would they laugh and cry and be deeply moved by the story? For the next three hours I was overwhelmed by the emotions of the

people...the tears of sorrow, the sighs, the smiles of joy, and the agonizing cries as Christ was crucified.

They got it! The huge crowd identified with Jesus from the beginning to end. I stood there in the darkness, praising God for what had happened. Hundreds responded.

The ensuing years have been marked by extraordinary challenges as we have worked to preserve this precious asset and assure its continued availability to churches and missions agencies, allowing the scene of that first film showing to be repeated in villages, schools, hospitals and prisons. Our records indicate that over the thirty years of Dayspring's ministry the film has been viewed by more than one-hundred and fifty million people with more than twelve million deciding to follow Jesus. Additi-

onally there are more than five-hundred churches and missions agencies that utilize the film in their evangelism efforts. And hundreds and thousands continue to respond. For the past nearly ten years, amidst social upheaval among the Dalits (formerly "untouchables"), this culturally contextualized film, now available in fourteen major Indian languages, has been catalytic in the significant church growth among these oppressed people. The response is the same some thirty years later as it was at that first film showing. Into thousands of years of injustice, Jesus, through the medium of film, comes... to preach good news to the poor... to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor (Luke 4:18-19) ●

*Clyde Taber leads the Visual Story Network, a coalition launched to expand a global movement of visual story for the kingdom of God. From 2000 – 2006 he led the development of innovative media initiatives for the JESUS Film Project including "Magdalena: Released from Shame," the Damah Film Festival, "JESUS: Fact or Fiction?" "the\_Oracle," and the Creativity Summit. Prior to this he directed campus ministry in Paris, France and coordinated the campus work of Campus Crusade for Christ throughout North Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia.*

## the Gospel in a Visual World CONTEXTUALIZATION

Clyde Taber

The dust settled, most of the crowd now dispersed. The weathered man leaned in asking the pastor with sadness in his voice "Does your God love widows?" "Yes, he loves widows," replied the pastor. "Does Your God love orphans?" he asked. "Yes, he loves orphans as well." The man shifted his weight to his cane, keeping his eyes fixed on the pastor, "Among our many gods, we do not have one like this; I

must know this God of yours." This man in India had just watched the "Widow and the Oil," a ten minute dramatic recreation of Elisha and the widow, from the book of 2 Kings. Though this visual story, produced and used by Crown Financial Ministries, was intended to teach Christians about God's provision, it opened this man's heart to the God of the Bible. In an effort to more effectively teach biblical

stewardship to illiterate people in third-world countries, Crown created a six-part series of biblical short films called, "God Provides." Crown stepped boldly into the new wave of communication, the wave of visual story.

### Historic Opportunity for the Church

We live in a transitional time in the history of the Church when a great opportunity exists to preach, print and



portray. For 1500 years, preaching was the primary means by which the Church communicated its message. For the last 500 years, print media has accelerated the spread of the gospel. We are now able to visually portray Christ and His kingdom. This is the third wave of communicating with the world around us.

As the world grows more media-saturated and sophisticated, young people and adults are becoming more visually oriented. The heart language of a growing number of people worldwide is visual story. Every day, four out of five people on this planet are molded by visual story. The orality movement ([www.oralbible.org](http://www.oralbible.org)) is addressing the need to contextualize the gospel among those that are illiterate or functionally illiterate. A new movement to contextualize the gospel among the world's population that is "visually literate" (able to interpret meaning from an image) is urgently needed. The Visual Story Network is helping to ignite this movement ([www.visualstorynetwork.com](http://www.visualstorynetwork.com)).

One of the greatest gaps in the global outreach of the Church is the lack of culturally-relevant visual media. Through film, television, computers, and cell phones, stories are being told on large and small screens. This deluge of stories is captivating the hearts of men, women, youth and children, and raises the question, who will shape the stories that shape the hearts of people around the world? The destiny of a generation depends on the answer.

It is critical that God's people connect and communicate with the lost through

"kingdom" visual stories. A "kingdom" visual story combines narrative and visual media to communicate the message of Jesus and His kingdom. They may be as direct as the JESUS film, or stories that stimulate thought and reflection. The truth of creation, fall, and redemption revealed in Scripture and expressed in everyday life is the missing message in the stories shaping the lives of billions of people.

The Church is beginning to awake to the possibilities of communicating in visual story. The JESUS film has been viewed by billions of people, churches in America and Africa are developing films that speak to real life issues from a biblical perspective, and Christian television networks are beginning to broadcast content beyond preaching alone. Much more, however, remains to be done. The following three concerns must be urgently addressed by the global Church.

**1. Local churches must learn to create visual stories.** Culturally-specific, locally-produced visual media should be available in every language of the world as technology and distribution become more affordable. It should become common for leaders in churches and parachurch organizations to consider a visual component to sermons, outreach programs and discipleship material. Increasingly, this media must be story-driven, and not limited to "talking heads."

**2. New models of evangelism and discipleship using visual media must be developed.** As more visual story content becomes available, the Church must find ways to use the content to effectively reach and teach.

**3. The gap between creative and**

### **missional Christians must be bridged.**

Historically, the Protestant Church has not embraced the artist in its midst. The body of Christ must identify, encourage, and equip emerging visual storytellers. As a result, faith-based storytelling will be innovative rather than merely copying the example of the host culture.

### **Conclusion**

It will be impossible to fulfill the Great Commission if we do not learn to speak the language of visual story. When my wife and I arrived in France as young missionaries, we understood the success of our ministry would depend greatly on our ability to learn French. In many countries, church services are televised, but this is essentially a model of "preaching to the choir." We must learn the art of story and new forms of visual communication that speak to the teenager surfing the web as well as the Bedouin tribesman whose most prized possession is his cell phone.

If God's people invest time, energy and resources into contextualizing the Gospel in a visual world, the Church's ability to communicate visually should be equal to or better than that of the local culture. Messages of the kingdom will not be limited to a subculture, but permeate and leaven the host culture. Believers will be prepared to give a visual answer to everyone who asks about the reason for their hope. Within a generation, it will be possible for every person on earth to have the opportunity to encounter the truth of Jesus and His kingdom every day ●

*Bill Harris has served as a missionary church planter, videographer, administrator and educator for over twenty-five years.*

## CHALLENGES & POSSIBILITIES

# Becoming Partners in Ministry THE CHURCH PLANTER AND ARTIST

Bill Harris



When I moved with my family to Russia, I felt what fledgling, cross-cultural church planters the world over feel—stripped naked. Gone was the culturally familiar and I shivered to wrap myself with insulating layers of homeland trappings. I wanted to reach out in an alien land; I just didn't want it to be too alien.

I began to study the language and watched my fellow expatriate missionaries in the same struggle. Though shackled to translators in the urgency of "getting on with the work," we all pressed forward to share the Gospel as best we could. Through translators, we taught and we sang our favorite spiritual songs, freshly translated into the local tongue. The Gospel we served up was attractive mostly to bi-lingual people who wanted to compare the sermon translation and to some others with a taste for the exotic. Our church did not spread much beyond that.

Years later when I moved to Saint Petersburg, I found dozens of new church plants in progress, almost all of which were culturally familiar to me (as a Westerner); one of them had so institutionalized the translated sermon that they used two pulpits. Many easily recognizable Western praise choruses such as "Lord I Lift Your Name On High" could be heard in almost every church I visited and underscored the non-Russian origins of the young evangelical churches. This foreignness marked them as "sects" and thus seriously hindered the spread of the Gospel.

Today, despite twenty years of missionary service and tremendous Western investment by evangelical churches, only .5 percent of all Russians identify themselves as evangelical Christians. The Russian Orthodox Church depicts all this foreign-flavored effort as an "invasion" by Western "sects"—pointing repeatedly to the obviously Western artistic trappings missionaries are importing. As Russia grows increasingly nationalistic, the more foreign church plants are meeting greater local resistance. Through importing Western music and arts, expatriate church planters have armed their detractors with all the ammunition needed to raise significant barriers. Highly visible cultural markers have helped opponents of Western intrusion to rally, including passing laws that limit evangelical access to public halls and block missionaries from receiving visas.

### **There is a better way.**

In a few fledgling church plants among the Sakha (Siberia), I have seen missionaries encourage local artists to examine their own culture and decide for themselves which elements of their indigenous arts might be appropriate to bring into worship services. Some of those churches use the round dance (a call and response song with slow steps). Some include the Sakha language in prayer and even play the khomus (the national instrument of the Sakha). To expatriates, the khomus (jaw harp) may seem an awkward choice for church music, but it viscerally underscores that this evangelical church

is Sakha and that God accepts Sakha worshippers.

Where before, Sakha people were dismissive of the Gospel as a foreign religion, now they are showing renewed interest. Why? Because their heart music, dance, instruments and costumes are appearing in churches and festivals, celebrating Jesus Christ and a life of union with Him.

Fellow church planters, we should challenge our local believers to contextualize the Gospel themselves rather than let them expect us to make the cultural decisions. Our best role is to faithfully preach the Gospel; instruct local believers how to live surrendered lives to the teachings of Scripture and how to walk with a clean conscience in a life that is submitted to the indwelling Holy Spirit. If we do that, local believers can be trusted to find God-honoring solutions as they prayerfully consider what elements of their culture they will bring into the church. To the degree we resist the temptation to control the end result, to that degree the Gospel will spread without your cultural baggage. That's how we as foreigners can safely insure that the church is scripturally grounded and still feel like a local church rather than one made in our image.

How should we church planters look at local artists? Local artists have a far deeper understanding of what local art forms mean to local people. They can

more skillfully contextualize the Gospel, taking full advantage of their dance, drama, and storytelling approaches. Spirit-filled, scripturally grounded, locally led church plants can be trusted to depict the Gospel in culturally familiar terms and nourish the hearts of growing believers with spiritual truth embedded in familiar forms. They are fabulous allies to our ministries; let's not neglect them! What about expatriate (guest) artists? If you as the church planter want to use them to draw a crowd, fine. Ask these guests to encourage local Christian artists to write new songs, paint new pictures, create new stories, etc. If they are willing, guest artists can be

wonderful catalysts for encouraging change. However, if you use the guest artist primarily as a spokesman for spreading the Gospel, the message will be associated with the foreign container it comes in. It's okay to hold concerts that feature foreigners, but please bridge to local preachers and artists. That way the Gospel has the opportunity to be seen and heard as a culturally local, familiar feeling message that goes to the heart.

Likewise, guest foreigners frequently have access to universities and government offices inaccessible to local artists. By coming as honored guests and proactively including local

Christians, guest artists can serve as bridges for local Christians, creating networking opportunities that last long after a visit. Be a bridge builder!

Finally, I encourage my fellow church planters to avoid planting churches we feel comfortable in. Engage your local Christian artists to decorate the church walls, to sing, dance, and preach in ways alien to us as expatriates but that resonate with the hearts of local people. To the degree our church plants look, sound, and feel local, we will feel like a foreigners in our own ministry. That's a sure sign we're doing something very right! ●

## CHURCH, MISSION & ARTS

*David Taylor was the Arts Minister at Hope Chapel in Austin, Texas, for 12 years. Born and raised in Guatemala City, he studied at the University of Texas, Georgetown University, the University of Würzburg and Regent College in Canada, where he received degrees in theology (M.A.) and biblical studies (Th.M.). He edited the book *For the Beauty of the Church: Casting a Vision for the Arts* (Baker Books, 2010). He has written for *Books & Culture*, *CIVA Seen*, *Christianity Today*, *Q*, *The Living Church* and *The Christian Vision Project*. His artistic interests include playwriting, modern dance and film. He and his wife Phaedra currently live in North Carolina, where he is pursuing doctoral studies at Duke University.*

David Taylor



## PASTOR & ARTIST

*“Other people, in other times and places, had some robust institutions to shore them up: witness the Church, the clan, ritual, tradition. It’s easy to imagine that artists doubted their calling less when working in the service of God than when working in the service of self.”*

~ David Bayles and Ted Orland  
in *Art and Fear*

Let me begin with three assumptions I hold about the church and the arts.

- I believe the church is the redemptive society through which God seeks to bring about the healing of the world.
  - I believe artists play a crucial role in the church and through the church to the world.
  - I believe pastors play a strategic role in enabling artists to attain their calling.
- In this essay, I want to offer a few thoughts

to pastors that might help them in their shepherding of the artists under their care.

### What is a “successful” artist?

I work with a lot of different kinds of artists, all ages, all stages of life—musicians and modern dancers, calligraphers and filmmakers. About twenty percent of these succeed as artists. It is a baffling figure, one out five. Why? Why is the attrition rate so high? A lot of it has to do with people's habits. As a pastor I get to watch the qualities and circumstances that make one artist thrive and another bog down in repeated failure. As a shepherd, I recognize that I am implicated in that twenty percent statistic. Conversely, I have a responsibility by God's grace to help them succeed. Yet to do this well I must ask the prior question: What does it mean for an

artist to succeed? It means this: a successful artist is one who flourishes in a manner consonant with his or her nature and calling. But let me sharpen this definition. A successful artist is one who has a clearly defined a) vision, b) intention and c) method for accomplishing his or her calling. Here I am borrowing from Dallas Willard's ideas, which he develops in his book *Renovation of the Heart*. In artistic terms, for an artist to succeed she must see, as best as possible, her final destination, intend to arrive there, and devise an appropriate method for traveling hence. In this essay I will focus on vision and intention.



**A Vision**

What artists need first is a vision. They need to see the kind of artist they want to become: “Whom do I want to grow up and be like? Evita or Susan Boyle? A stay-at-home-dad painter or a Picasso? What is my truest, fullest self as an artist?” Now there are two fundamental things that shape an artist’s vision: their nature and their ambition. The first answers the question: How much of an artist can I become? The second answers the question: How much of an artist do I want to become?

**My Nature**

By nature I am both free and un-free to pursue my art. For example, if I love singing but do not have a good musical ear, I am free to sing as loudly as I wish in church (for surely God loves a joyful noise) but I am not free to pursue a career as a music composer (surely again God gave us common sense). Personally, I love to write plays. I’ve written everything from a satire on the advertising industry to a historical fiction on Adam and Eve. But at the tender age of 37, I am not under any illusion that I have the natural ability to create storylines like William Shakespeare. So I have to humbly recognize my writerly

limitations, even while I push myself to keep growing as a writer. As pastors, we want to help artists in this process of self-knowledge. We want to walk with them as they discover the contours of their nature. Some things they will discover immediately, other things over time. Mostly, they have to try things out.

**My Ambition**

Here the question is how much of an artist do I want to become. If I have the aptitude for filmmaking, how much passion do I have to make it happen? Am I content making high-quality videos for my church, or do I want to become an A-list director in Bollywood? We as pastors need to help artists gauge their level of ambition so we can help them rightly evaluate a successful effort. How badly do they want it? What are they willing to sacrifice to achieve their goals? But ambition is not simply a raw force inside the human spirit. It is a social thing. It is here enflamed, there eaten away by the people in our lives. As pastors, we need to encourage artists to get into a community which will encourage them and keep them accountable.

**Intention**

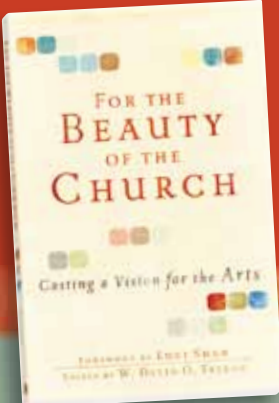
Willard writes further: “Projects of perso-

nal transformation rarely if ever succeed by accident, drift, or imposition.” This observation is as true of all human work as it is painfully obvious. Watson and Crick did not discover the Double Helix by waiting for it to be discovered; they searched for it, assiduously, methodically, and against many disappointing results.

To put it aphoristically: Whatever it is that you want, you have to want it. Artists need to intend to make art, not to wait for it to happen. They cannot allow the circumstances of their lives to rule them. The circumstances must be respected, but they need not rule them. We are not victims. God’s power is vested in us—Christ-blessed, Spirit-sanctified, under the sovereignty of the Father—to bring forth a vast array of artistic work.

**Choice and Power**

As pastors, we can help artists choose to pursue the vision God has given them. Every day they must choose and re-choose to do the things that they have committed themselves to. If my notion of success is to be a Sub-35-Minute 10K Runner Human Being, then I must choose a lifestyle consonant with that vision. It will be true that I will often



*Casting A Vision FOR THE Arts*


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have to choose the “good” despite my downward-dragging feelings. A sound vision propels me beyond the pain. As pastors, we want to keep reminding artists that God gives grace to those in need. But they need to respond and cooperate with that grace; it isn’t a passive grace.

### Trust and Obey

Is this easy? Often no. And the reasons lie in the subterranean regions of the heart. Artists will not intend to become all that they are meant to become if they do not believe it matters. If they do not

trust God with all that they are, they will not act. If they do not trust that what they are doing is important, they will not suffer the trials that test their resolve. By observing our behavior day to day, week to week, we can discover what we really believe about God or about ourselves or others. This is when pastors need to pray for their artists. We must encourage them continually to give themselves over to the love of Christ and to the fellowship of his followers, who by the power of the Spirit become the means of God’s redemption in their lives. It is only in the context of an authentically lo-

ving, self-sacrificing community that any of this—art, life, calling, relationship—will have a chance to flourish.

### Conclusion

Our privilege as pastors is to shepherd artists through this work of deep identity formation. God calls us to encourage the artists under our care. Whether they achieve public renown or they serve the church in quiet ways, we will be doing our part to cooperate with God’s work in the artistic renewal of the world ●

*Rob L. Hewell is Associate Professor at Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Arkansas, where he also serves as chair of the Department of Church Music. He holds degrees from Midwestern State University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and San Francisco Theological Seminary.*

## How Art that “Makes Sense” May Miss the Point FOOLISHNESS

Rob L. Hewell

Is it merely a tricky turn of phrase, or does Paul’s identification of the gospel as foolishness make a necessary point about how the gospel of Christ is communicated? Never one lacking for appropriate words to make his point, Paul’s language in his first letter to Christ-followers at Corinth is best taken at face value. “The message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing,” he writes; what the world may perceive to be foolishness is salvation to those who believe. (1 Cor. 1.18,21 NRSV).

Indigenous artistic representations of the gospel are highly valued in missiological practice. We are wise to consider the power of art. Its vibrancy

as a tool for communication is well documented. Art has the ability to speak directly to a culture—both from within and even from without that culture. Indigenous art that makes the gospel its theme would do well to emulate a concept drawn from Jesus’ great priestly prayer, recorded in John 17, that those who follow God’s Son would be able to be in the world without being of it.

Without a doubt, the arts can be extremely valuable in mission endeavors. Mission-hearted artists tend to trust the power of art to communicate the gospel. It is within our nature to do so. The stewardship of creative and creating gifts placed



within us by the Creator is a matter of serious concern—as it should be. We hope by some measure to help persons outside the faith to “make sense” of the message of the cross. Yet does art inherently, of its own nature, have that influence? Or does the source of that influence lie elsewhere?

While God in Christ, through Christ’s death, burial, resurrection and ascension, has made redemption possible, it could only be accomplished after first making the point that redemption was necessary. Christ

came, not to prove to the world that God could become like the world, but rather to make it plain that the world in its sin-marred state was not at all like God, or like God intended. The only way the world would ever be able to know itself for what it truly is would be to see who God truly is.

Christ consistently and constantly met people where they were. He just as consistently and constantly set himself at odds with the prevailing cultural milieus of the day. Christ did both for the sake of the world, and for the glory of his Father.

In effect, the kingdom Christ proclaimed was nothing like the kingdoms of the earth. The latter will eventually fall away, the former will prevail. Art designed to minimize the dissonance between the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world may not serve the gospel well. The gospel of the kingdom of love is good news, indeed. That does not mean, however, that the gospel is news easily communicated, or easily received. In fact, according to Paul the preaching of a crucified Christ creates stumbling for some people and, again, appears to

be foolishness to others (1 Cor. 1.23). If the wisdom of God enacted in Christ's intervention is God's foolishness beyond human insight, is not the perceived weakness of such a message also, then, stronger than human acumen? (1 Cor. 1.25)

“Playing the fool” as an intentional act is rarely if ever a credit to Christ's church or the message entrusted to it by God. We cannot and should not advocate such practices. No one would ever choose to be perceived as a fool, and we all hope that we can express the faith artistically in ways that are both wholly truthful and holy meaningful. If we operate with the instincts of Paul, however, we recognize that neither brilliant speech nor persuasive wisdom will be the source of our ability to communicate the gospel. Paul's claim that he had not relied on the force of human wisdom could be startling. Rather it was the demonstrative activity of the Spirit of God that proved persuasive in the proclamation of Jesus Christ as the crucified one. Otherwise, people might suppose their faith came from human insight rather than God's redemptive power. (1 Cor. 2.1-5)

Persons outside of the faith may, indeed, not understand art produced for the sake of the gospel, since the message it is intended to endorse appears to be folly. The meaning embedded in the art may actually be lost on people who live under the influence of the spirit of the world. The true meaning of artfully rendered gospel truth may indeed not make sense. If on the other hand our art, however wonderfully produced, makes perfect sense to the world, what then of this Godly foolishness?

If the gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1.16), then art that is faithful to that gospel need not fear being counted as foolish. In God's right-side up economy of the gospel, the world will only see its own folly when it is confronted with the foolishness of the cross. Aesthetic merit aside, art that is faithful to the cross may be weak to the looking and listening world. Yet that weakness may be the necessary quality through which the cross of Christ becomes the power of God that brings salvation. Art such as that can truly make the point of the gospel clear ●

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*Jaewoo Kim is a worship pastor at Journey of Faith Church in Dallas, TX. He is also a director of King's Region Worship Ministry, which assists Korean missionaries and church leaders in implementing worship-arts in missions*

*How about your worship?*

*Jaewoo Kim*

## THE WORLD HAS GONE LOCAL

*1 Bob Roberts Jr., *Glocalization, How Followers of Jesus Engage a Flat World*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007. 2 Bob Sjogren, *Unveiled at Last*, Seattle, WA: YWAM, 1998. 3 "Throughout history, God has always been a sender. After all, He sent us His Son, who in turn sends us." From *Sent: Living the Missional Nature of the Church*, by Ed Stetzer, Nashville, TN: LifeWay Church Resources, 2009. 4 International Council of Ethnodoxologists provide various resources through [www.worldofworship.org](http://www.worldofworship.org) 5 Visit [www.opendoorsusa.org](http://www.opendoorsusa.org) 6 [www.candler.cmory.edu/about/faculty/DAMELJ/globaltexts/Archive/Whiteman%2004%20Contextualization.htm](http://www.candler.cmory.edu/about/faculty/DAMELJ/globaltexts/Archive/Whiteman%2004%20Contextualization.htm) 7 See [www.youtube.com/user/HSIOM](http://www.youtube.com/user/HSIOM) for 50 video examples of global Christian worship.*



The Whole World Has Gone Glocal  
The word glocalization refers to integration between “local” and “global” matters. The word was developed by Japanese businessmen, but is now used among Christian leaders as they set the direction and strategies for their ministries.<sup>1</sup> Times are increasingly challenging for churches, as more neighborhoods become global communities. Due to glocalization, Christian congregations worldwide are more likely to embrace diverse cultures and people groups as part of their fellowships. Some churches may react to the changes of glocalization as a threat and try to isolate themselves in order to preserve their cultural identity. Others will embrace diverse groups of people into their church fellowships simply to grow in number, but not to share leadership roles. Some churches will hopefully see glocalization as a God-given opportunity to advance the work of mission and will gladly share their leadership roles. Unity in diversity brings greater glory to God. When Christ is recognized and celebrated by worldwide communities, people will recognize that Christ is not a God who favors a specific region or culture but a global Savior and the Lord of all.<sup>2</sup>

### **Glocal Worship in Its Direction and Design**

Glocal worship involves the missional nature of God.<sup>3</sup> Until the day when

people from every tribe, nation and tongue come to know Christ, our worship will fuel the work of missions. Whole-hearted worship by the whole world is the goal of missions. Congregations experiencing glocal worship on a regular basis will have an accurate and natural understanding of the missional character of God. They will be learning about the missional nature of God throughout the year, instead of hearing about it through sporadic mission events. This will result in a vibrant, dynamic move toward missions in the local church in general. How can a congregation learn and experience the missional nature of God in typical church services? Glocal worship can be designed by a collaborative team of pastors, artists, musicians, and missionaries, using resources provided by specialists in ethnic worship-arts.<sup>4</sup> Through glocal worship, people will be able to celebrate the decentralized presence of Jesus in diverse cultures. On a practical level, some elements to include are: prayer for the nations using updates on world news, prayer for missionaries, national church leaders and persecuted churches,<sup>5</sup> and learning and singing global worship songs. When we bring worldwide music and practices into our worship service, congregations will not always feel comfortable with those ideas and practices. However, many are

open to such innovation when done slowly and with the purpose stated clearly and often. Also, it is not always easy to draw a clear line between contextualization and syncretism. In such cases, the planning team can consult with experts in this area and practice “critical contextualization.”<sup>6</sup> Another practical suggestion is playing video clips from missionaries and churches from other parts of the world in the church service. This creates the sense that your local congregation is part of the larger Body.<sup>7</sup> Video clips are often more effective, lively and powerful than exchanging prayer and praise reports in text format. Glocalization has opened up many new possibilities, especially in the area of communications. In a glocal world, people can be connected without being in the same geographical location. Prayers, songs, and the use of media are only a few suggestions; there are many other creative approaches for worldwide Christian communities to use, according to their resources and context.

Glocal worship is not merely a method to mobilize more people into missions, but a direction of worship that reflects the current era and also the vision of a missional God. The goal of designing glocal worship is to help local congregations see the inseparable connection between Psalm 96:3, Matthew 24:14 and Revelation 7:9 ●

*Steve S. C. Moon, Ph.D. is executive director of Korea Research Institute for Mission and Pastor of Mission Education at NamSeoul Grace Church.*

## NAMSEOUL GRACE CHURCH SEOUL KOREA *Steve Sang-Cheol Moon*

*NamSeoul means South Seoul in Korean. Miral means grain of wheat in Korean.*

Three famous Korean vocalists accompanied Rev. Hong Jung Kil on his journey to Vladivostok, Russia in 2003. There they visited the Korean agricultural and educational workers in that province, wishing to encourage the Korean workers and local people with a concert. Pushkin Hall was venue for this special concert. It is well known that the musical standard of the Russian audience is very high because of their rich cultural heritage. Nonetheless, many people had not experienced such a concert in a long time. The audience not only gave an exuberant standing ovation, but some of them cried after the concert.

Rev. Hong has procured opportunities with the Governor, the Chairman of the State Assembly, the Mayor, and the Admiral of the Far Eastern Fleet of Russia through such musical venues, and his Russian associates cooperate with the Korean workers in the province. NamSeoul Grace Church now sponsors a total of fifteen concerts every year in cities such as Vladivostok, Beijing, Shanghai, Chingdao, Suchow, and Tianjin. NamSeoul Grace Church has come to understand music to be an important means of communicating God's message to the world, for music creates a contact point with the local people. Visual art is also an important medium for mission at NamSeoul Grace Church. Rev. Hong and church leaders have sponsored art exhibitions for talented local painters in different parts of the world. They collect art works to exhibit in Miral Gallery, which is located in

NamSeoul Grace Church and is open to church members and community members. Over the last thirty years, Rev. Hong has regularly visited art museums and galleries whenever he travels to a foreign land. He has befriended local artists, and through these friendships sometimes leads artists to Christian faith. Some of them even began to express what they found in Christ through their art works. NamSeoul Grace Church also runs an art class for those people who want to learn to paint. The participants are rediscovering themselves through artistic activities and finding ways to create points-of-contact with neighbours. NamSeoul Grace Church has a relatively small church building; thus, Sunday services are held at the gymnasium of Miral School, a special education school that Rev. Hong and church members established. In the Miral complex there is a gallery, a concert hall, a bakery shop, and two coffee shops. The Miral Gallery has collected nearly 1,400 art works from different parts of the world. Ceramic Palace Hall hosts about thirty concerts every year. The Miral Concerts are free, not only to church members, but also to the community. The purpose of this space, the numerous programs, and rich facilities is to serve the cause of the kingdom of God. NamSeoul Grace Church also has plans to build a separate mission center on the outskirts of Metropolitan Seoul. The mission center aims to provide housing for future retired missionaries. The first stage of development will focus on building a sanctuary for intercessors of



missionary works. Intercessors will have a venue to pray for missionaries, their countries, cities, and peoples of service with relevant information provided by field missionaries, mission researchers and networkers from around the world. The sanctuary will be surrounded by Christian art works collected from different parts of the world. The whole purpose and concept of the space will be to come "before the throne of God" with prayer, singing, and artistic expressions according to Rev. Hong (Revelation Chapters 5 and 7), who firmly believes that all genres of arts exist only to glorify God.

Preceding the missionary dimension of Christian arts is the dimension of faith confession. Rev. Hong has said that "the gospel leads us to confess the grace of salvation. 'For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved' (Romans 10:10). Firewood exists to be burned, and bells are there to be rung. Faith is reassured and is spread to others when confessed in the form of conviction of salvation, personal testimony, personal evangelism, and artistic expressions. With the God-given talents we possess, we are called to praise the glory of God. Arts cross not only cultures but also generations, as demonstrated through Rembrandt's works. More often than not, artistic expressions of faith will radiate God's glory beautifully as time passes." ●

Sanjay K. Buwal, Let's start to realize



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*Sandra Van Opstal served as worship director of Urbana'09 and is a second-generation Latina who is passionate about people of different cultures coming together to experience God's presence. She spent nine years as an IntersVarsity campus staff at Northwestern University. She continues to live in Chicago with her husband as she directs IntersVarsity's Chicago Urban Program.*

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*Steve Hoke serves with Church Resource Ministries (CRM), a mission agency focused on leader development and servant-stewardship in twenty-five nations. As a life-long worshipper, he continues to trace the joyful integration of individual and corporate worship with Abba's heart for the nations. He lives with his wife in Fort Collins, CO.*

*steve.hoke@crmladers.org*



*Steve Hoke and Sandra Van Opstal*

## WORSHIPPING JESUS THE LORD OF THE UNIVERSES

Impressed by the sheer magnitude of planning and orchestrating a richly variegated multicultural worship for over 18,000 participants at the recent Urbana Student Missionary Convention, I sought out Sandra Van Opstal, worship director, for her perspective on multi-cultural worship and missions.

**Sandra, share with us a little of your background and personal journey into worship.**

As a young girl I often sang special music, and found I really connected to God when I sang. I kept getting very positive feedback from others that my singing helped them connect with God.

**What is the connection between**

**diversity and worship within the multicultural Body of Christ; between missionaries being comfortable with and advocates of diversity as servant-messengers in varied cultures around the world?**

First, worship itself is diverse. The variety and range of God's creativity is seen and expressed in the vast range of human approaches to worship. Our music, our instruments, our words, our songs, our liturgies display incredibly different facets of God's character and acts.

When we speak of corporate worship, we must understand that worship is interwoven with one's own culture. Most people cannot articulate their own preference, and thus have trouble

gaining a broader perspective on how worship is experienced in each culture. It's critical for missionaries to understand their own preferences in order to genuinely help cultures in which they wish to plant fresh expressions of the church. They need to know where they are coming from before they can help new believers create culturally relevant forms of worship in their culture and language.

**What's the connection between worship and missions?**

Worship is that experience which helps us discover more of God. Corporate worship is a vital part of most missionaries' mobilization, because it was in worship that they encountered





God and heard him speak to them. True worshippers need to move from their own preferences for worship into the wider expression of worship expressed in God's global family. If God's church is global, obviously worship will be global and culturally distinctive. Mark Labberton's *The Dangerous Act of Worship* helped me see that we can help people experience more of God in their own worship songs before they are able to hear and see the experience of other people. I try to link people with the stories and experience of the poor and broken in other cultures by leading them in songs they know which have the same theme and words. Worship thus becomes a multi-faceted bridge into broader expressions of praise and deeper experiences of God's grace and unlimited faithfulness.

**Can you tell us about some of the richness and diversity you've experienced in your visits to churches in other countries from which we could all learn?**

Can you imagine the incredible surprise and joy in being brought into God's presence by a Thai, Nigerian, or Polish worship leader? It is not just that their style is different from ours, but also the themes they draw out, the rhythm of their worship, the form of their songs, and the environment they create. Worshiping with others deepens our experience of God himself!

**How might preparation and training experiences for prospective cross-cultural servants be enhanced with a broader or deeper paradigm or vision of worship in the Spirit?**

If missionaries are to plant fresh expressions of the Body of Christ among unreached peoples, they should be adept at discerning the heart concerns of a people. These come out in their stories, their songs, their oral narratives, their proverbs, their poetry, their music. For example, if I was going to an African oral culture where narratives were important, I would look for the Old Testament stories that connected with them and empower them to put them to song. I'd help them set their favorite stories of Jesus into memorable melodies. The ways they connect with God is as important as the instruments we use to convey the music.

Missionaries could be helped to learn how to discern a culture's values through the music, poetry and art of its people. Unfortunately, there is virtually no training in worship, much less cross-cultural sensitivity in catalyzing fresh expressions of music and song in our theological education or our missionary preparation.

**Any other closing thoughts?**

How exciting will it be to see how worship explodes around the world as the church goes global! As we see Koreans in Chile, and Brazilians in Albania, and Nigerians in Kiev, I can hardly imagine what the next season of missions will be like as cross-cultural missionaries learn to relish discovering what international worship is really all about ●





*Jo White is a Christian spiritual director who currently lives in Hamilton, New Zealand with her husband Derek. She is an artist-pastor in the community-at-large. She longs to return to Japan in order to establish a place of rest, refuge and encouragement for Japanese Christians endeavoring to live out a baptized-aesthetic. She has a lively interest in contemplative prayer gardens and art installations.*

Contemporary New Zealand Art Installations for Easter

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS** Jo White

New Zealand’s post-modern culture celebrates innovation and creativity with the use of limited resources. We enjoy reaching out for expressions of the new. One new Christian expression in Hamilton City (pop. 130,000) is an exhibition entitled “Stations of the Cross: Contemporary New Zealand Art Installations for Easter.” The Spirit here blends three strands: the 2,000 year old narrative of Christ’s Easter passion and resurrection; the Stations of the Cross; and fresh ideas locally embodied by a creative Christian community.

“Stations” is created by the Stations Collective, a fluid network of friends who collaborate with the Holy Spirit each year, to pray, eat, contemplate, brainstorm, make and share art. They

come from a wide variety of Christian communities across the region. “Stations” started exhibiting in a small suburban church, and then moved into a large community black-box theatre on the main street. Three years later, in an act of God-inspired bravery, our artistic director dared to ask if we could install “Stations” in the jewel of our city’s crown: the five-acre, public, Paradise Garden Collection. The challenge was set: a weeklong exhibition of art installations in a garden setting, regardless of weather—packed in, put up and packed out every night for eight consecutive nights—a massive opportunity for sacrificial community building!!



From October through February, would-be artists gather to eat, pray, meditate on Scripture, and brainstorm. Collectively, ideas for each station are sifted and refined, and then allocated. The actual art making requires recruitment of the next layer of the collective: welders, builders, plumbers, graphic designers, printers, musicians, video technicians, and





others. Churches pray and advertise, and signage is posted city-wide. During the week before Easter, the next layer of community emerges: barristas and coffee machines, lighting and sound people with endless extension cords, front desk staff with cashbox and stamps, car park security wardens and torches, and many, many go-fers wearing a card around their neck identifying them as “Stations people.” Prayer, intense work and baptized imaginations are at work!

What does the general public experience? Often, a long line, but always a warm welcome; a guide’s explanation of the history of stations and a basic overview of the Easter narrative; an invitation to enter into a contemplative journey. They then set off with a torch and an exhibition guide detailing each station’s narrative

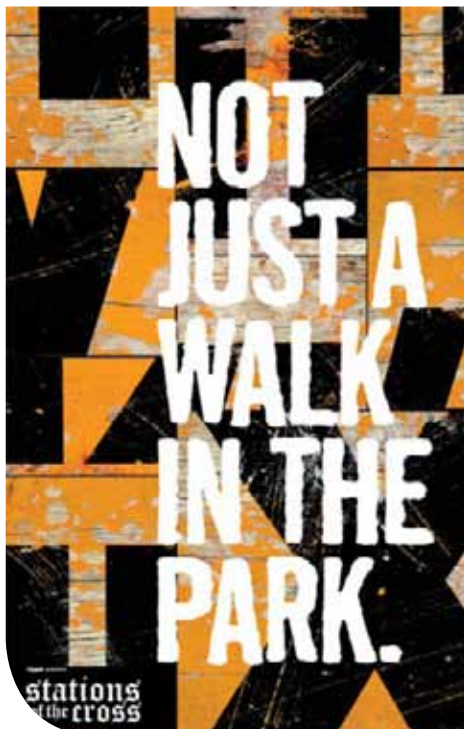
reference and core verse, title and dimensions of art work, materials used, and an artist statement.

Every Easter a new, highly contextualized expression of Christ’s passion and resurrection is installed. Participants encounter a diverse range of contemplative and interactive experiences: an invitation to partake in a meal of coconut juice and coconut flesh (The Last Supper); an invitation to walk a labyrinth, journeying with Jesus into the centre with their pain (The Garden of Gethsemane); an encounter with a twelve foot high tree made of cow bones (The Crucifixion); a cellist mournfully playing a prostrate cello wrapped in muslin cloth (the Tomb); a walk through a tunnel of rose-scented organza curtains that ask them “Why are you crying? Who are you looking for?” (The Resurrection). At

the completion of their journey, people can sit down with a complimentary hot beverage and write down their reflections on the three stations which impacted them most.

What are the outcomes? A community who is soaking in a yearly meditation on Christ’s passion for them. Cooperation beyond church lines. A growing appreciation for—and participation in—the creative process. An event on the city’s art calendar. Memorable visual and embodied Easter experiences. A sacrificial generosity. The joy of participating in something bigger than us. This is art as mission in New Zealand ●

For further information see [www.stations.org.nz](http://www.stations.org.nz)



## GLOBAL VOICES ENGAGING THE ARTS IN MISSION

*Miriam Adeney, Ph.D., is an anthropologist, Associate Professor of Global Ministries at Seattle Pacific University, and Teaching Fellow at Regent College. She is the author of seven books, including *God's Foreign Policy: Practical Ways to Help the World's Poor* and *Kingdom without Borders: The Untold Story of Global Christianity and Daughters of Islam: Building Bridges with Muslim Women*. Miriam teaches modules on five continents, including workshops on "Writing for Publication."*

### Splashes of God's Creativity

Miriam Adeney

## SONGS LIKE TROPICAL FISH

When God made the earth, he could  
have finished it,  
But he didn't.  
He gave us the challenge of raw  
materials, not the satisfaction of perfect,  
finished things.  
He left the music unsung, and the  
dramas unplayed.  
He left the poetry undreamed  
In order that men and women might not  
become bored  
But engaged in stimulating, creative  
activities  
That keep them thinking, experimenting,  
and experiencing  
All the joys of achievement. <sup>1</sup>

God imagines. Colors, smells, billions  
of unique snowflakes, billions of weird  
personalities. And fish. Whenever I go  
to Southeast Asia for work, I add an  
afternoon of snorkeling if I can. Sinking  
into the sea, feeling the warm water  
close over my head, I glide beside coral  
polyps undulating gently in the current.  
Lavender fish swim by. Then iridescent  
blue ones. Then black and white fish  
with gold spots.

Surrounded by swirling colors, my heart  
expands in worship to the Creator.

But the parade doesn't stop. Black  
fish flow past. White. Yellow. Eels  
wiggle. Spiny sea urchins and blue  
starfish clasp the rocks below. I feel  
overwhelmed. What is the point of such  
lavish diversity? It's too much.  
Then I see the point: God's delight.

God values variety. And God gifts us  
with imagination, puts us in a world of  
raw materials, and watches to see what  
we will create.

### With Sitar and Two-Stringed Violin: Local Songs

Christians everywhere create songs.  
From Brazil to China to Turkey to  
Borneo, there is an explosion of  
Christian music. Barnabas Mam is a  
Cambodian who has composed 400  
Christian songs using local instruments  
like the sitar, a two-stringed violin, and a  
wooden box and stick.

All his songs are based on Scripture.  
Many emphasize God's mercy. When  
Barnabas created a child's dedication  
song, he used the tune from a lullaby  
that parents have sung to their children  
for hundreds of years. When he created  
a funeral song entitled "We Will Be with  
God Forever: Human Life Is Worth More  
Than Flowers," it calmed a deathbed  
quarrel between Buddhist and Christian  
mourners and led one Buddhist to faith  
in Christ.

When Barnabas created a Christmas  
song, he asked permission to play  
it over the loudspeaker in the village  
where he was sleeping on a bale of  
straw on Christmas Eve. The next  
morning the village elders approached,  
bearing fruit and rice. "We were so  
delighted to hear that Christ is not  
American or French," they exclaimed,  
"but He is the Son of God who came



even for Cambodians". <sup>2</sup>

Each musical tradition is a world in  
itself, with distinctive intonations,  
instrumentations, and repertoires  
of metaphors and stylistic devices.  
The International Council of  
Ethnodoxologists, "a network for  
culturally-appropriate Christian  
worship," sponsors events to  
encourage more artists like Barnabas.

### Sighs of the Slaves: Worldviews in Song

Whether intended or not, a piece of  
art communicates a worldview. Pain,  
human dignity, struggle for justice,  
sacrificial love, mystery, or chaos are  
some of the themes we see in art.

African-American spirituals illustrate  
this. Born in the hell of slavery, these  
songs have been called America's most  
significant contribution to world music.  
Some scholars have viewed spirituals  
as white Christianity imposed on  
slaves who mixed it with bits of African  
music and poetry. But more careful  
study reveals a worldview that enabled  
slaves to respond to their oppression  
proactively. "As the name 'spiritual'  
implies, these songs are ultimately  
expressions of a transforming inner  
experience that brings to the human  
spirit new discernment and hope,"

1. A.A. Stockdale, "God Left the Challenge in the Earth," *His*, December 1964, p.20. 2. Barnabas Mam as told to Bruce Hutchinson, "Communicating the Gospel through Story and Song in Cambodia," in *Communicating Christ through Story and Song: Orality in Buddhist Contexts*, ed. Paul De Neui (Pasadena, CA.: William Carey, 2008), pp.203-36. 3. Paul Jewett, "America's First Black Christians and Their Songs," *Bulletin of Systematic Theology III* (Pasadena, CA.: Fuller Theological Seminary, 1983), p. 14. 4. Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), p.100. 5. Jewett, "America's First Black Christians," p.12.

according to theologian Paul Jewett. "This is what enabled the slaves by faith to transcend the loss of outward freedom and remain inwardly free. Because of this inner freedom, they could be truly human even as slaves. Even though they were treated as 'niggers,' these early black Christians knew they were not niggers but rather children of God. Even though they were treated as things, they knew they were not things but persons. Ultimately this faith in themselves was rooted in their faith in God".<sup>3</sup>

That is not all. They expected God to get involved. God rescued the Hebrew slaves from the Egyptians. He protected the prophet Daniel from the lions. He liberated Daniel's three friends from the fiery furnace. Surely a loving God would not merely free folks in other eras. Surely that was not reserved for heaven. God would transform their condition in this world too. In his essay, "Religion as a Cultural System," anthropologist Clifford Geertz suggests that religion may help people

transcend circumstances when they reach limits in three areas: limits of analysis, limits of endurance, and limits of moral insight.<sup>4</sup> That is what spirituals did. While blues, another African-American musical genre, presented a poignant analysis of the human condition, and specifically of the way white people treated black people, spirituals went further to affirm a God who loves his world. Therefore the slaves were not niggers. Therefore they looked for concrete liberation: "Let my people go!" Therefore they sang. They transcended the limits of their endurance by tapping into an alternate worldview.

"In this light, when one looks at the words of the spirituals with their celebration of freedom and deliverance, so far from saying that the black singers borrowed their thoughts from white Christianity, one might better say that the slaves redeemed the Christianity which their masters had profaned".<sup>5</sup>

### My Grandmother: Uses of Song

What good are songs? Like tropical fish, songs shimmer through our lives, causing us to tremble and then praise God for his gift of creativity. Songs teach. Songs help us remember. Songs keep messages accurate, because rhythm and melody, like writing, stabilize texts. Songs help us party—and also help us cry. Songs witness. Songs worship.

My father's father was a preacher. "Daddy, did you become a Christian because of your dad's preaching?" I asked one day.

"No," he answered, "I think it was because of my mother's singing."

His mother died of tuberculosis while he was in his teens. Before that, she was in and out of TB hospitals, while giving birth to seven children. Yet somehow she found the strength to sing.

If she had not,  
where would I be today? ●



Sanjay K. Biswal, Possibilities



Stephan Prakash Eicher

*Somehow the pigeons find a foothold in the city, on precarious ledges, hidden in nooks and crannies. Like-wise the poor. And in the process they cling to their dignity in the most depraving of conditions. We welcome the pigeons, in fact feed them. Yet the poor we forcibly drive out from our cities. Our attempts to 'modernize,' 'beautify,' and build a 'world-class city' results in the poor being displaced to the city's edges and their street-level livelihoods declared illegal. If we recognize their inherent dignity and sanctity would we not build a city friendly to both pigeon and poor?*



*"When we dare to speak from the depths of our heart to the friends God gives us, we will gradually find new freedom and courage to live our own sorrows and joys to the full." (Henri Nouwen)*

*Adella Thompson*

## ARTIST STATEMENT

Photography gives me joy, the sound of a pressed shutter button brings hope, and a printed image in my hand makes my heart smile. I've held a camera since I was very young and hope to always hold one. It is the Lord who gives me sight through a viewfinder, and it's His very Spirit who compels me to push the shutter. Light and shadows, reflected light, refracted light, diffused light—all from natural sources—draw me, with my camera, into the process of taking a picture.

With each picture I take, I hope to discover something within a person, a location, or an event which makes

an almost supernatural shift from being mortal or tangible to an image on a printed piece of paper. An image reflects or represents something that's alive. Within itself it doesn't contain life, but an image is able to produce a sense of life if it evokes a memory, engages an emotion, or stirs a reaction.

When I see these images of Africa, I hear voices and sounds, music and singing. I smell Africa, and I remember the people—their eyes and their smiles, their tears and their scars and also the light, shadows, and hope which surround them. I seek not to invade,



but participate in what's happening around me and appears through the lens. It's the Story behind the images which gives them life.

I chase the light and find Hope ●

Adella Thompson

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Isaiah 30:21

Give without remembering, take without forgetting

Laus Deo



**Genocide Site, Ntarama, Rwanda.**

*The genocide sites throughout Rwanda are all kept intact, with skeletal remains unburied. In this Catholic Church site where over 5,000 were killed, someone - I presumed a loved one - took the time to wrap his or her beloved's head with a head scarf. When asked how he was able to cope with the death of more than 20 family members, one person told me: "We learn to forgive, because we must. But we never forget, for if we forget, then this will happen again. We forgive, but we never forget."*



**Jinja Uganda**

*I turned around and saw this young girl, dressed in a confection of ruffles, braced behind a cross-shaped barricade. I held my breath, took the shot, and prayed the Lord would protect this roll of film. Notice the nails...*



**Outside Jinja, Uganda**

*"Thumbs Up" seems to be a common sign, even in Uganda, for "everything's good." The tour director kept yelling for me to get in the van, but I had to get a few more shots. This might be one of my favorites. I'm glad I ignored him.*

## CHALLENGES & POSSIBILITIES

*The Reverend Byron Spradlin is President of Artists in Christian Testimony Intl (A.C.T. Intl), a mission and ministry-sending agency empowering music and arts ministry specialists for culturally sensitive worship, evangelism, and church planting ministries worldwide*

*Byron Spradlin*

# WORSHIP AND THE ARTS IN MINISTRY AND MISSIONS

Key Dynamics in How God Is Shaping Ministry for the New Millennium  
Reverend Byron Spradlin

Contextual worship and artistic expression are absolutely important in life and Christian ministry, especially in light of the way God is shaping ministry for the new millennium. We must, therefore, aggressively pursue efforts to release into world evangelization the new breed of arts ministry specialists that God is raising up.

### **Why is worship a central issue for world evangelization?**

At its heart, worship is first a repeated, real, and substantial encounter with God. Every culture and subculture expresses itself through indigenous metaphors, symbols, and signal systems. With respect to mission, if we are successful in penetrating a culture or subculture with the gospel, then one of the clear objectives is that the newly established Christian community will grow in worshiping God in their own heart-languages and cultural styles. Though in every culture there are both generalists and specialists involved in human expression, it is the “human expression specialists”—what I term the “arts ministry specialists”—who lead the ministry team into culturally meaningful contact with the target community and who facilitate the believing community in its corporate expressions of worship (ceremonies, liturgy, pageants, visual or movement expression, architecture, music, storytelling). We should see the strategic link between the development

and deployment of spiritually mature arts ministry specialists and the winning and releasing of these worshipers[2] into worshiping God and declaring His salvation to their own people in their own heart expressions and cultural styles.

### **Why are arts ministry specialists needed in the cause of world evangelization?**

Without artistic expression, without these specialists God has endowed to lead us into culturally relevant expression, we humans could not, in our natural world and with our limited minds, grasp the divine or the mysterious realities of life, both seen and unseen. For instance, how can we adequately express love without artistic expression? How can we worship without it?

When it comes to the activity of worship, worship must make sense to us in the context of our culture if it is to have meaning at all. Worship demands more than just propositions of fact. It requires symbols and metaphors and rituals that help us connect with the invisible realities of God Himself. This is the sort of worship that moves us to press toward the edges of our human capacity to express. We must move beyond the languages of the head into the languages of the heart. And that realm is the realm of artistic expression.

### **What can be done to deploy contextual worship and arts ministry specialists for the task of**

### **evangelization?**

Start, or increase, proactive efforts to draw worship and arts ministry specialists in as part of your strategy and implementation of staff and teams. There are many of these creative Kingdom servants who are feeling God’s tug on their life and are ready to respond to your mentorship and guidance.<sup>3</sup> Identify them, involve them and deploy them.

Redefine artistic expression in your own mind and heart. Move away from an elitist, Western, post-1500s humanistic definition of the arts towards a more biblical view of artistic expression that affirms us as His creative image bearers and our artistry as an integral part of life.

Redefine worship as encounter and engagement with God that produces responsive contextualized expression in corporate worship and in lifestyle worship.

Re-recognize the need to disciple and deploy creative Kingdom servants and arts ministry specialists into the heart of your mission strategy, plans, budgets, and teams.

Recommit to identify national believers who manifest God-given aptitudes in creative capacity, release them for ministry leadership, and then follow their lead with regard to what contextual expressions you employ.

Prayerfully look at your own ministry with fresh eyes, scanning for the people and the contextualized worship and arts strategies already present among your own people and projects.

Identify fruitful arts ministry specialists

you know, those with solid ministry track records and solid artistic abilities, theological and biblical depth. Support them in getting biblical and theological upgrades (in creative ways) that will give them the credibility your system needs to draw these specialists to the center of your ministry strategies and teams.

**Conclusion**

What does this mean for us as

mission and ministry leaders today? Pause, look around, and pray. Take note of what God is doing, and who He’s raising up to join you and the other types of mission and ministry specialists with the task of world evangelization we all take so seriously. You will see God’s hand of blessing winning worshipers from every people, tongue, and tribe as you include this new breed of specialists—worship and

arts ministry specialists—all for His glory and praise now, and into the new millennium ●

*James R. Krabill is Senior Executive for Global Ministries at Mennonite Mission Network. For fourteen years he served in West Africa, primarily the Ivory Coast. Dr. Krabill has lectured or taught courses in over a dozen countries and is the author of several books, including as a contributing author in Music in the Life of the African Church with Roberta King (lead author), Jean Kidula and Thomas Oduro (2008). He serves on the board of the International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE).*

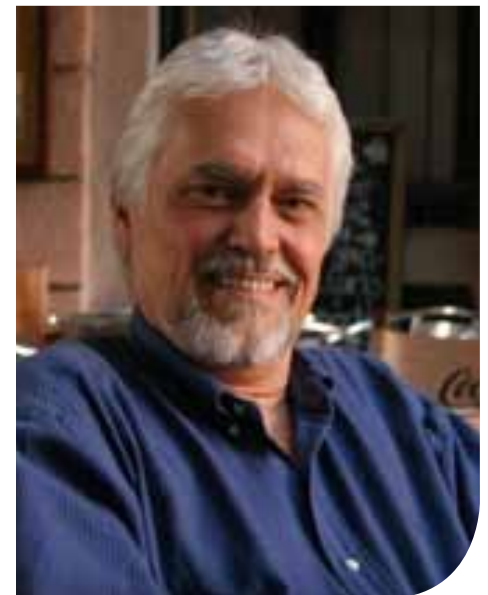
**CHALLENGES & POSSIBILITIES**

*A Mission Administrator’s Plea for Ministry Training in Ethno-Arts*  
**THESE PEOPLE AREN’T REALLY CHRISTIAN, ARE THEY?**  
 James R. Krabill

In the early 1980s I lived with my family and served as a Bible teacher in the village of Yocoboue among the Dida people of Ivory Coast. We were invited there by the Harrist Church—an indigenous movement born of the remarkable 1913-15 preaching ministry of William Wade Harris, a prophet-evangelist from neighboring Liberia. Harris’ preaching tour lasted only eighteen months. But during that time he traversed the coastal regions of Ivory Coast from west to east and half-way back again, calling everyone he met to faith in the one true God as known in Jesus and baptizing an estimated 100-200,000 people who responded to his invitation.

Once baptized, new believers were told by Harris to return to their villages and there to pray and sing songs to the God who had saved them. When asked what kind of songs they should sing, Harris encouraged them to take traditional “praise songs,” composed and used in honor of village chiefs, and to rework the words to bring glory to God, “the Chief of all the chiefs in the world.”

Musicians went promptly to work and have been writing and singing their own worship songs ever since. During my first three years in Yocoboue, I recorded no less than five hundred indigenous hymns, composed by local villagers and passed down in worship services for



four generations. During the Christmas holidays of 1984, we hosted a delegation of North Americans visiting Ivory Coast. We were thrilled to share with them a Harrist Christmas Eve worship service, beginning soon after sundown and continuing on until midnight. The service was conducted as usual in the Dida language and featured Scripture readings, prayers and over thirty indigenous musical selections recounting the events of Jesus’ birth. One hymn proclaimed:





Since the Reformation, Protestantism has shied away from the arts, often out of a fear of idolatry. But many Christians are now rediscovering their creativity, realizing we are designed to create, to mirror the One who is the greatest Creator. Others lament Christianity's feeble influence on the broader culture. Where once all the great Western artists, writers and musicians were Christian, what passes for Christian art, literature and music now is often soft and sentimental. Being made in the image of God includes a call to create. Being called into the world includes a necessity to thoughtfully engage the culture.

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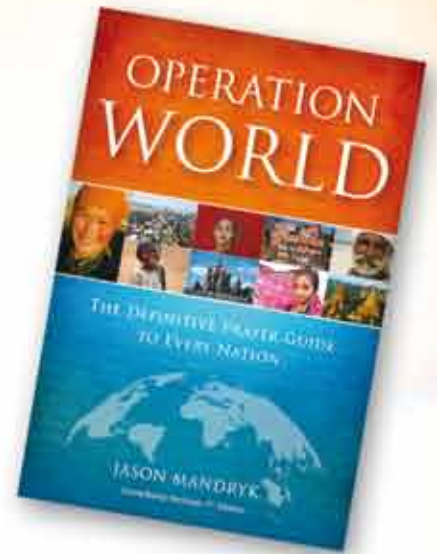
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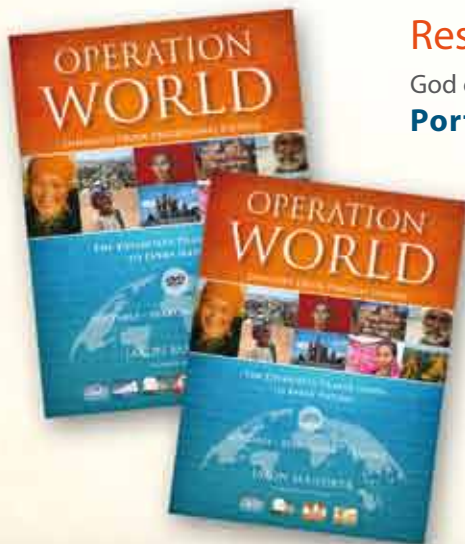


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Wise men came to Bethlehem  
And entered the courtyard of King  
Herod.  
There they asked Herod,  
“Where has the King of the Jews been  
born?”  
A star descended over Bethlehem.  
The wise men said,  
“Come, let us go worship Jesus.”

At the end of the service, we filed out  
of the church building in a musical  
procession and began preparing  
for the customary song-and-dance  
celebration that would accompany the  
Head Preacher back to his home on the  
other side of the village. As we waited  
for other congregants to join us in the  
church courtyard, one member of the  
visiting delegation leaned over to me  
and whispered, “These people aren’t  
really Christian, are they?”  
“What do you mean?” I asked, taken  
aback by this reaction.  
“Well, I have been going to Christmas

Eve services for almost sixty years now,  
and I didn’t recognize a single song  
these people sang all night!”

These words have stuck with me  
for now nearly twenty-five years.  
And, sadly, I’ve heard them echoed  
on occasion since then in modified  
versions when, for example, a worship  
leader with expertise in Western music  
told me she felt called by God to travel  
around the world and “teach people  
how to sing.” Or when a participant at  
a gathering of international Christians  
exclaimed how wonderful it was  
that “we have truly become a global  
worshiping community,” when in  
reality virtually every song sung at the  
gathering was composed somewhere  
between southern California and  
Nashville, Tennessee.

We do not promote and facilitate  
the creation of culturally-appropriate  
worship in the languages and artistic

expressions of local media because it  
is the latest trendy or politically correct  
thing to do. We do so ... because  
God does! The commitment to ethno-  
arts in Christian mission and worship  
is ultimately a commitment to nothing  
less than the Incarnation itself—this  
act of God we celebrate as the most  
important event in human history and  
one which demonstrates in clear terms  
God’s own choice to communicate  
Good News by taking on human form  
in a particular time, place, and culture,  
and “pitching his tent” among us (John  
1:18).

“As the Father sent me,” Jesus told  
his disciples, “so I send you.” Do we  
believe these words still apply to Jesus’  
disciples today? If so, then we will  
want to do mission in the way Jesus  
first modeled it and with the passion  
Paul later imitated it, by “becoming all  
things to all people so that by all means  
possible, some will be saved” (1 Cor. 9:  
22) ●

*Jean has a Ph.D. in Ethnomusicology and is an accomplished musician in a wide variety of styles. She is a professor of ethnomusicology at the University of Georgia in Athens, GA. She is the author of numerous scholarly articles on topics in Kenyan music and history, as well as a co-author of the recently-published volume Music in the Life of the African Church. She has served as music director at churches in both Nairobi and the United States and is on the Board of the International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE).*

## Worship Leader in East Africa    Jean Ngoya Kidula

# FANUELI SEDEKIA

I first met Fanueli Sedekia in 1999  
at a seminar I coordinated in Nairobi  
for worship leaders from Kenya and  
Tanzania. Sedekia was invited to  
assist me with the singing sessions,  
together with his colleague Forgen

Joel. Though I was in charge of the  
two-week seminar, I met several times  
a day with Sedekia and Forgen to  
evaluate the different teaching, learning,  
and sharing sessions. Sedekia worked  
at a Christian bookstore in his native

Tanzanian town of Arusha, but was  
already well known amongst his peers  
as a worship leader. Sedekia felt called  
into full-time Christian ministry, and two  
or so years later, music became his  
primary vocation. He was musically at

heart Tanzanian, but in practice, globally fused with aspects of Ron Kenoly and Kirk Franklin. In January of 2009, Sedekia went to be with the Lord. He was in Israel of all places, with a team of Christians from Tanzania. His funeral was held in the largest football field in Arusha because the crowd was too large to fit anywhere else. Sedekia was a composer, arranger, translator, performer and recording artist whose work reached or resonated with many hearts. Technically, he was referred to as Mwimbaji was Injili (a singer of the Gospel). His most well known songs were classified as “Nyimbo za kutukuza katika ibada” loosely translated as “Songs of praise/ for glorifying [God] during worship.” These songs, mostly in Kiswahili, set in a variety of contemporary popular styles to reach diverse musical preferences,

focused on God’s attributes. The songs also bore witness to how humankind was transformed by encounters with and the worship of God. Some favorite songs had lyrics such as “Ninani Kama wewe, Mwenye Nguvu kama wewe, Mwenye Enzi kama wewe, Hakuna mwingine kama wewe bwana” (Who is like you Lord, Who is like you in power, Who is like you in glory, There is no one like you Lord). Although he was already well known for his good voice and leadership abilities, when Sedekia realized that he would pursue full-time Christian music ministry, he set out to improve his skills as a musician. After a rather short but intense immersion, he even began to accompany himself rather effectively on the keyboard. He trained himself by listening to other local and global musicians, without

losing his primary “mission field.” In an amazing show of togetherness and unity, Sedekia and others in Arusha frequently invited musicians, worship leaders, and pastors to equip their church congregations and artists in the knowledge of God’s Word as well as in technical and artistic skills. Sedekia also held workshops and lead worship sessions in Tanzania, neighboring East African countries, and other parts of the world. My understanding of Christian ministry is that it is a local and a global calling—to people familiar to us, and to those we might never meet on earth. The recording industry and the Internet bears witness to the musical legacy of Sedekia’s calling ●

*Ian Collinge Ethnomusicologist Ian Collinge did fieldwork in the Himalayas and coordinated a multi-arts DVD project. Ian and his wife Helen have launched Resonance, an arts ministry of WEC International, training others to help believers around the world develop music and arts that resonate in their own cultures: <http://www.wec-int.org.uk/resonance>.*

*James Lhomi Songwriter and church elder James Lhomi, of the Lhomi Tibetan ethnic group in Nepal, plays Tibetan instruments and writes songs, articles and poetry. His music and arts ministry, Lareso, has impact across the Himalayas. He has produced three Tibetan worship albums, Repentance, Serenity and Eternity. <http://www.lareso.nepalchurch.com>.*

*Ian Collinge and James Lhomi*

## THE AUDIENCE FEELS IT IS THEIR OWN

Tibetan Christians use indigenous arts to express their faith: songs, dance, paintings and literature. This interview features the pioneering vision of James Lhomi, missionary, songwriter, musician, poet and author from the Lhomi people, a Tibetan group of over 10,000 from North East Nepal, India and Tibet. A Bible translator for the Lhomi says of James, “his musical talents have been crucial for the development of the Lhomi Church.”

**Ian:**

James, where did you learn music, dance, and poetry?

**James:**

I grew up in a village learning dance and song. After turning to Jesus, I met Tibetan believers and was impressed by their songs. We had no Lhomi Christian songs then, but I started teaching myself dramnyen (lute) and wrote a few songs. I have now written more

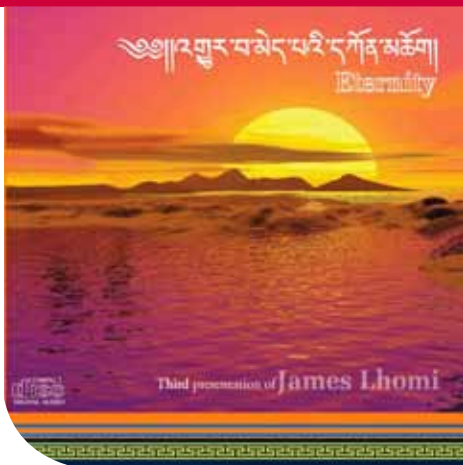


than sixty Lhomi songs. Working with Nepal Every Home for Christ, I learned about literature and wrote poems, short stories and articles. I collected books of poems, proverbs, riddles and dramas.

**Ian:**

How did you choose the instruments





and styles for your three Tibetan Christian albums?

**James:**

I chose a village style and Tibetan instruments (lute, dulcimer, fiddle, drum and flute) because these are our instruments and the audience feels that it is their own culture.

**Ian:**

What response have you had from Tibetan ethnic groups?

**James:**

Praise God! When they find the Christian message expressed in their own forms it really touches them. At first, my idea was to use songs to reach just the Lhomi, but other Tibetan groups liked these songs and now they sing them in their own languages. Non-Christians also like them! For example, friends in a village out West heard my songs and asked a local believer to translate them.

Then he started writing songs himself.

**Ian:**

You started a ministry called Lareso. What is your purpose behind this?

**James:**

Lareso is dedicated to raising up young worship leaders in countries across the Himalayas, to encourage them to use their indigenous music, arts and literature to reach their own people and to promote good culture both in the church and in the community.

For our people, my vision is to teach Tibetan music in schools and to reduce illiteracy. I have collected 587 proverbs, written 28 poems and a biography and prepared some lyrical poetry. The Lhomi Church can help people learn their own language through written and audio media. We are hoping that such education will transform people's lives holistically.

**Ian:**

Finally, what advice would you give to other Christian artists about the potential that their arts can have to advance the mission of Christ's Church?

**James:**

Tibetan ethnic churches are still first and second generation so our main role is lovingly telling the truth of God in people's own heart language and music. Using arts from the local cultural context can be effective for them to understand the message of Jesus Christ.

**Conclusion**

James' vision to serve the Lhomi through the arts is inspiring. At the same time, he is influencing believers in cultures across the Himalayas. Such artists help transform lives and communities now and for eternity ●

*Bagly Arsenio: citizen of the Republic of the Philippines, graduate of Alliance Graduate School in Community Development, email: bagly.arsenio@gmail.com; and Glenn Stallsmith: USA citizen residing in the Philippines, Ethnomusicologist with SIL International, email: glenn\_stallsmith@sil.org*

*Bagly Arsenio and Glenn Stallsmith*

**PRESERVING CULTURAL TRADITIONS FOR OUTREACH**

The Kalanguya people often fall "in-between the cracks" of standard classifications of major ethnolinguistic groups of the Philippines. The Kalanguya appear on no travel guides for exotic cultural experiences in the northern Philippines.

The Department of Tourism does not promote their cultural products or encourage visits to their homelands. Even the National Commission for Indigenous People lumps the Kalanguya in with the nearby Ifugao. Therefore, any efforts to



preserve Kalanguya language or cultural practices will have to be driven by insi-

ders. This is precisely what happened when several Kalanguya people formed a touring performance troupe to the preserve their ancestors' traditions.

Bronze gong ensembles used to play a central role in the music of the Kalanguya. Traditionally, the sounding of the gongs was a sacred activity; no one could strike or even hold a gong without a specific reason. Traditional beliefs held that spirits would be offended by mishandling the gongs, often evoking a spirit-world response that could result in sickness. The gongs were usually played at feasts, called canao, and were always accompanied by ritual dancing. In keeping with the spiritual meanings of the ritual celebrations, domesticated animals such as pigs, cows, and water buffalo were butchered as gifts to the personal spirits.

At present, the traditional rituals are no longer practiced by the Kalanguya. Now the gongs and their accompanying dances may happen at other events like weddings, political gatherings, reunions, and celebrations of thanksgiving. Using the gong music outside of the original cultural functions is not acceptable to everyone. Some dislike how the traditional music forms are increasingly performed as entertainment. Of course, not all Kalanguya Christians are open to the continued use of these traditional forms, even in the new contexts. For many older believers, the sounds of the gongs are associated with beliefs that they no longer hold.

It is probably not a surprise that members of the younger generation formed a traditional dance troupe. The group performs popular songs in English and

Filipino, but they also enact traditional Kalanguya ritual songs and dances. Their performances are designed to communicate meaningfully to all generations of Kalanguya—both the young people who are increasingly influenced by national and international media, and the elderly who still remember the original ritual contexts of the traditional music and dances. By integrating the cultural dances and imitating some of the rituals done by earlier generations, the choir tries to affirm Kalanguya practices and heritage. At the same time, the dramatic portrayals of traditional healing rituals provide a stark contrast with what they now experience through freedom in Christ. The performances of this group are not only living records of the past—they also serve as a clear call to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ ●

*Joyce Scott worked as a missionary in Kenya for twenty-eight years; her last twelve were with twelve language groups, encouraging the composition of indigenous songs for worship, evangelization and Scripture teaching.*

*Scott, a founding member of the International Council of Ethnodoxologists, has consulted on indigenous music in eight African countries and lectured in Inter-Cultural Music for Ministry at several universities and Bible colleges. Her latest book, *Moving Into African Music* (PreText Publishers, 2009) helps missionaries use music in their ministry.*

*How the Knowledge of Indigenous "Heart Songs" of African People Can Bring Peace in Disturbing Situations*

*Joyce H. Scott*

**LOCAL ARTS BRING PEACE TO HURTING PEOPLE**

When I returned to Cape Town after many years in Kenya, I wanted to learn something of the language of the Xhosa people. So I helped at a clinic for chronic diseases in one of the African communities of the Western Cape. As the patients waited to see the doctor,

they would sing their indigenous songs and I recorded and learned many of them.

Those were violent and troubled times in South Africa and sometimes when the patients came in there was a



mood of heaviness and grief. Another tragedy—an assassination or house burning—brought bewilderment or despair. I served coffee as usual and

listened to the stories as well as I could with my limited knowledge of Xhosa, silently praying for wisdom to select a song which could touch that particular pain. Then I would begin to sing it.

Soon the others joined—one never sings alone in Africa!—and slowly the meaning of the words would settle in their hearts. Then one or two would stand up and move, clapping in their complex rhythms. Even the arthritic and hypertensive would get up and slowly dance! Then someone would raise their voice and preach the message of peace from the words of the song. By the time the song had been sung over and over and touched their souls, the whole atmosphere would be changed from despair to hope again.

I could not have done that preaching with my limited grasp of Xhosa. But I

could start the process that allowed the Spirit of God to work through the songs and bring peace and strength to hurting people.

One day at that clinic, a woman whom I had not seen before came in and sat down amongst the other patients. Their usual buzz of conversation continued. Suddenly the stranger uttered a very loud guttural shout—“Rwaaaah!” I nearly dropped my cup of coffee in fright. What was this? Minutes later it happened again—a deep roar that gave me goosebumps. Was she psychologically disturbed? I knew that was possible. But it could be demonic.

The next time the bloodcurdling cry came, I felt certain it was evil. I began to sing a song of worship to Jesus Christ. All the patients, except the affected woman, sang with me. Over and over in true Xhosa style, we sang

the praise of Jesus the healer, the Holy One whose death on the Cross set us free from the powers of darkness.

There were no more terrible cries.

When all the patients had seen the doctor and gone home, I asked the nurse if she knew the troubled woman. “Oh yes,” she said, “she has been so much involved in spirit manipulation that the evil spirits are now tormenting her! But they could not come near her while we praised and worshipped our holy Lord Jesus!”

I believe that anyone working cross-culturally in an African community—on this continent or in its diaspora—needs to recognize the power of the indigenous “heart music” of her people, and be ready to use it ●

## ARTS LINK

### A woman of noble character

A. joined a team of artists traveling to North Africa. Outreach took place on a university campus, in a market town. For two weeks, the artists produced artwork that celebrated the city, then exhibited their art at the university.

A. produced a series of photographs entitled “The Woman of Noble Character” and “Wisdom Personified” (Proverbs), copying the Arabic

Scriptures for each image. She clothed a team member in traditional dress, photographing her in the marketplace, gates, colonnades, and fortified walls.

These photographs were the talk of the show, sparking conversations about truth, piety and God’s view of women. Guests stopped to examine the verses, perhaps their first encounter with the Bible.

Five hundred North Africans came and engaged with the artwork. A. testified through tears, “For years, I have prayed about three things: missions, Muslims, art. Tonight they have come together. For the first time in years, I feel my artwork has meaning.” ●



*Brian Schrag holds an MA in Intercultural Studies–Ethnomusicology and a PhD. in Ethnomusicology. He is head of SIL International’s Ethnomusicology and Arts Group and coordinates and teaches in the World Arts program at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics (www.gial.edu). He worked as an arts consultant in Central Africa for seven years and currently serves as Vice President of Education and Training for the International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE).*

**CHALLENGES & POSSIBILITIES**

*Brian Schrag*



# THE ABC OF WORLD ARTS ADVOCACY

**The Extinction Crisis**

During a song-writing workshop I led in Cameroon in 2005, I asked the six city-raised participants how many knew one of their traditional music styles well enough to compose in them. The number: zero. If losses continue at current levels, fifty percent of plant species and perhaps ninety percent of the world’s approximately 6,900 languages will disappear by the end of the twenty-first century (Wilson 2001; Krauss 1992). I’m not aware of parallel counts of artistic forms of communication like storytelling, singing, dancing, and carving. However, my experiences with composers like those above and many other stories I hear show that spoken and performed forms of communication are affected by many of the same social trends (see Aubert 2007: 55-56). The picture is grim: young people in ethnolinguistic communities are often not learning to sing their parents’ songs, and the unique, God-marked systems that produce them are fading at a precipitous rate.

Forces arrayed against local art forms are formidable: Urbanization that weakens ties between language speakers and their home cultures; globalized communication media that relegate local art forms to one choice among millions (Kidula 2008:54); media industries that relentlessly press their favored art forms into new markets (Kaemmer 2008:403); churches with long traditions of using foreign arts that create an unwelcoming environment for artists from their

local communities; short and long term Christian missionaries that promote the Euroamerican Praise and Worship church music tradition all over the world (Agawu 2003:6).

Of course, I’m painting a one-sided picture: artistic repertoires and rituals in geographically and culturally diverse churches engender invaluable bonds of unity; fusions of art forms from different cultures are wonderful to experience and often result in new traditions; cell phone and Internet technologies are allowing more and more people in remote areas to record and propagate their traditions; and everything dies eventually. But the rate of artistic tradition loss is so high, and there are so few trends supporting local artists, that I’m stating my case boldly.

**ABCs**

In the late 1980s, Uganda’s government responded to growing rates of HIV/AIDS with the effective, controversial ABC program. To avoid contracting AIDS, educators counseled Ugandans to **A**bstain from sex outside of marriage, **B**e faithful to their partners, and use **C**ondoms if necessary.

I here propose a parallel approach to the Kingdom’s artistic forms of communication, and hope to convince as many people as possible to practice one or more of its elements. I define heritage artistic traditions as an ethnolinguistic community’s art forms that have been

around longer, are more localized geographically, and with which they identify more closely than other traditions.

**A**bstain from promoting non-heritage traditions

- Affirm and learn to enjoy all kinds of artistic performance, but graciously deflect invitations and activities that promote non-heritage traditions.

**B**e faithful to heritage traditions

- Consistently communicate to all stakeholders your intention to invest in heritage artistic traditions, and intentionally plan co-creation activities with their artists.

**C**o-create with Contemporary performance traditions only when necessary

- When the situation requires deep interaction with and sparking of popular, urban performance genres, do it with gusto. Then get back to your primary work with traditional artists.

**Who do we encourage?**

Choosing which artistic traditions to encourage in complex social situations is not easy, so I have a few rules of thumb I follow. In short, I favor advocating for artists involved in traditions that are more

- rural, rather than urban
- old, rather than new
- geographically concentrated, rather than diffuse
- tied to ethnolinguistic identity, rather than to individual, regional, national, or

global identities

- ripe for church use, rather than requiring force to pick from the tree
- fragile, rather than robust

I am not devaluing urban, new, or national art forms—these also reflect God’s creativity—but I am trying to promote arts that have few champions. And remember: these aren’t merely ideas or systems, but human beings whose artistic voices are being silenced. Here are the names of a few artists that I and my colleagues know who are involved in redeeming their at-risk artistic traditions for God’s kingdom: Punayima Kanyama (kundi-accompanied songs, Mono language, Democratic Republic of Congo); Ferdinand Doumtsop (dances and songs, Ngiemboon language,

Cameroon); DeLaura Saunders (dance songs, Choctaw language, United States); Aidyn Kurmanov (epic song poems, Altai language, Central Asia); Maria Kononova (poetry and song texts, Sakha language, Siberia); Patrick Mang’esoy (bukantiit-accompanied songs, Sabaot language, Kenya).

These people are deepening their communities’ worship of God and providing Scripture-inspired solutions to moral, social, and physical crises threatening their families. And they’re doing it using some of the most outrageously penetrating and memorable forms of communication on Earth. Let’s help them thrive.

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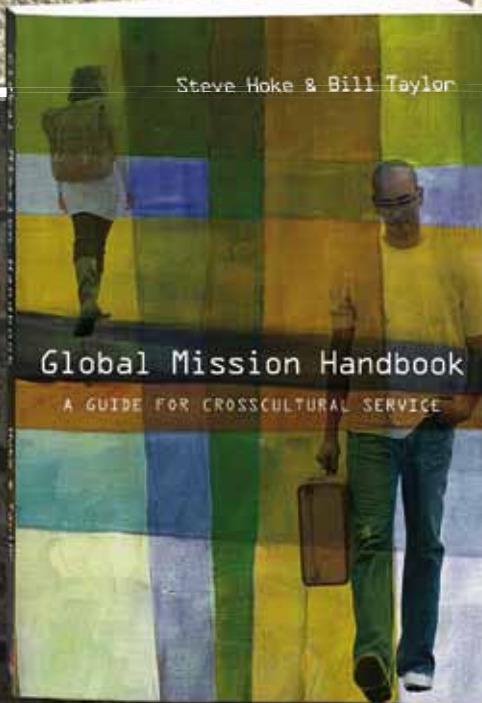
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*Joyce and Neil Coulter lived in the Alamblak community in Papua New Guinea from 2003 through 2006. They worked with music and literacy projects, including teaching, recording, and vernacular language publications.*

## Freedom Through Authentic Alamblak Worship

# LIDIA

*Joyce and Neil Coulter*

In worship, we see beauty even in hard situations. Lidia, an Alamblak woman from Papua New Guinea, exemplifies this. Her beauty is clearer because of the hardships she has known. She lived through Japanese and Allied occupations during World War II; her first husband would sell her as a prostitute; her second husband took two other wives and does not care for Lidia. Now an old woman, Lidia suffers daily from physical aches and the unrelenting sun and humidity of her village home. But her beauty—the beauty of a gentle spirit and a Christ-centered life—is clear to everyone who knows her.

We met Lidia during our first visit to the Alamblak area, in 2003. Alamblak church leaders invited us to lead a course about music in the Bible: teaching what the Bible says about music in everyday life, and considering which local music styles might be appropriate for Christian worship. About one-hundred people attended, including Lidia. They decided that reform—a song style featuring vocals and kundu drum—could be used for praising God. Within a week, several people had composed new Christian reform songs: authentic Alamblak Christian worship, created entirely by Alamblak people.

Lyrics described God's love, the life and work of Jesus, and various Bible stories. Lidia was one of those first composers.

It wasn't the first time that Lidia had been eager to try something new. When the first missionary came to the area in 1970, Lidia was among the first to believe his message: God is more powerful than the spirits. At that time, spirits were literally killing the Alamblak people with sickness. People turned to God and were healed; God's power was obvious. Lidia was baptized and helped spread the gospel message. Enduring her unbelieving husband's persecution, she eventually won him to the Lord before he died.

Many other Alamblak people also believed, but that first joyful acceptance of the gospel gave way to an increasingly legalistic church. As local Christians evaluated their culture, many felt uncomfortable with past traditions—including indigenous arts, such as music. Church became separate from Alamblak culture. Worshipers heard English and Tok Pisin (Papua New Guinea's trade language), but rarely Alamblak, and local music styles were never heard within the church walls. But Alamblak music had been the

soundtrack of Lidia's life: from birth, she had heard these songs, and from the time she could walk she had participated in the rhythmic, grass-skirt-swinging dance that accompanies the singing. She knew that some songs—those glorifying the killing of enemies, for example—were wrong. But other songs didn't seem to dishonor God at all. She and others continued the all-night singing events that mark joyful times in the community—but she lived with guilt, wondering if perhaps God wasn't pleased with these songs.

Lidia's double life—enduring the introduced songs in church services while still enjoying Alamblak music outside of church—continued until she saw from biblical examples that God cares about Alamblak music; he hears any spoken or musical language. No longer must Lidia separate her Alamblak and Christian identities. She and other Alamblak believers are now free to express their faith using the music styles that are so meaningful to them. And the beauty of a free, creative Christian life is obvious when we see Lidia, palm frond in hand, singing loudly and dancing with other Alamblak believers at a nighttime celebration ●

*Greg Kernaghan has served with Operation Mobilization (OM) since 1978 in various capacities. Eleven years with OM ships Logos and Doulos and nine years based in Finland taught him to look beyond labels and methodologies to discover moments wherein God connects with people. Since 1995, Greg has been part of an international communications team for OM whose purpose is to help truly great stories to tell themselves. His favorite airport is Toronto because that means he's home again.*



Two stories

Greg Kernaghan

## TRANSMITTING TRUTH WITH WHAT'S IN HAND

### Estonia, 1990

When a nation is in upheaval, almost anything is possible—one of those times where it pays to act first and think later. In July of 1990, Estonia was mere weeks away from independence. A colleague living in Ireland, visiting me in Finland, was a passionate and masterful evangelist, especially when using a sketch board in open-air meetings (creating simple block letters and images in a brief message and invitation). With only the name of a city and a pastor's phone number in hand, we hopped a ferry from Helsinki to Tallinn and boarded a southbound train to see what would happen. No agenda, no schedule, no worries!

The pastor provided a young translator and together we would preach on busy streets, drawing huge crowds for whom the Gospel was both good and news. After a few days in one place, we hopped a train at random and would get off in one small village after another: a peculiar sight as an American, a Canadian and their funny drawings went from one muddy street to the next to proclaim the Gospel. In most places, the entire village would come to watch and listen.

After two sketch board messages in one village, we ran out of paper—in a country where little was available even in cities. Now what? Without hesitation, one man ran into his simple house and began tearing off long

strips of wallpaper from the rooms. Likely this was the original paper and would never be replaced. With pride he said, "Here: keep teaching us." Which we did, although our hands were shaking somewhat as the enormity of his conviction hit us: bare walls for a moment of God's Word was a trade he made without hesitation.

I believe it was a special season in Eastern Europe, and that the simplest visual portrayal of God's truth resonated with a people who had been denied that truth for generations. I would love to redecorate that family's house!

### Mozambique, 2006

So much of what Christians in the developed world consider mandatory—ostentatious church buildings, big-ticket conferences, "essential" tools and trappings—seems not only irrelevant but absurd in southeast Africa. There is no time or place in Mozambique for anything "extra." Yet God is here, as expected, in the unexpected.

I counted it a rare privilege to spend a week in the heart of the country, far removed from concepts like roads, electricity, clocks or world headlines. One day, we arrived in Nigula Ile for a pastors' conference. This "village" was nothing more than a handful of buildings where several footpaths converged, and on those paths some pastors walked for thirty kilometers or more in the African heat and sun

to attend. Needless to say, they had expectations!

So...what would you say to them? As we gathered under a huge mango tree—the best church structure I had ever seen—I sought words of encouragement and wisdom in the midst of my weakness: they were teaching me so much. After forty minutes, it was time for lunch. As I sat down, one pastor stood up and immediately broke into that captivating African style where one person calls out and the others respond in harmony. Forget lunch; just keep singing, please!

I asked the translator what they were singing, and his answer was unexpected. "This is an oral culture; few if any of these men can read," he explained. "They will compare notes, so to speak, of what you have taught, and then 'pack' the teaching into a song which all will learn. Then they can sing this song as they walk the long journey home, after which they will unpack the teaching and give it to their people over the next weeks."

Do we really think that our seminaries and hermeneutics, our mega-conferences and an embarrassment of resources can hold a flame to this kind of purity and connectivity? God has given them music and verse—their own—and a passion to use them for His glory. We should be their humble students ●

*Eric Jones has served with SIL International since 1994. He received an MA in Linguistics from the University of Texas Arlington and later pursued courses in ethnomusicology. Currently, he is engaged in various adventures of appreciation and friendship, collecting and publishing folklore with minority communities to celebrate their rich artistic expressions.*

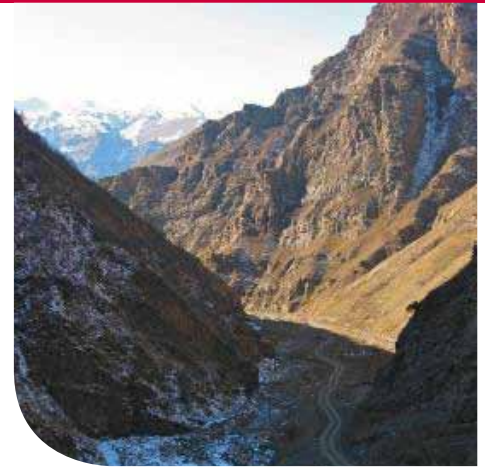
Eric Jones

## GIVING BACK A TREASURE

Kurban eagerly took the second disc, sliding it into the inner pocket of his old gray coat to keep it safe. “Do you have any more copies?” he asked me, with his eyes lit up like a kid in a candy shop. After I handed him two more discs, the 64-year old musician quickly scurried off to deliver his treasured objects to some friends in his village. It was November, in a snow laced region of the Caucasus Mountains. I had made a special visit to a few remote villages, to follow through on a promise I had made a year earlier to return with an edited video recording of several of the local traditional songs which a colleague and I had videotaped during a folklore expedition. At the time we did the recording, none of the local musicians really believed that I would give them anything back. Their skepticism ran deep, and barely hid their sense of resentment. But that reaction wasn’t really a surprise to me. Others in the past had come to their homeland, claiming to have an interest in the people, and had filmed or recorded nuggets of their culture, only to disappear and never return with anything the local community could see or touch. Some had come with better intentions—intending to give something of value to the people, but failed to connect with what the communities themselves appreciate. Now here I was, standing in the village with a stack of DVDs, wondering if my feeble attempts at giving back to the people would be received any better.

To my delight, the reaction among the villagers was palpable. After receiving and viewing the DVD (many people here still have no running water piped into their homes, yet most have DVD players!), a great deal of warmth and openness was expressed. I was one of their “sons”—a welcome relative in their homes. It was even better than I had hoped. We had taken an interest in their songs and their stories, honoring their traditions and celebrating their creativity. Their cultural self-esteem, normally quite low in a world that largely ignores them, was lifted, even if only for a moment. And now they were interested in us.

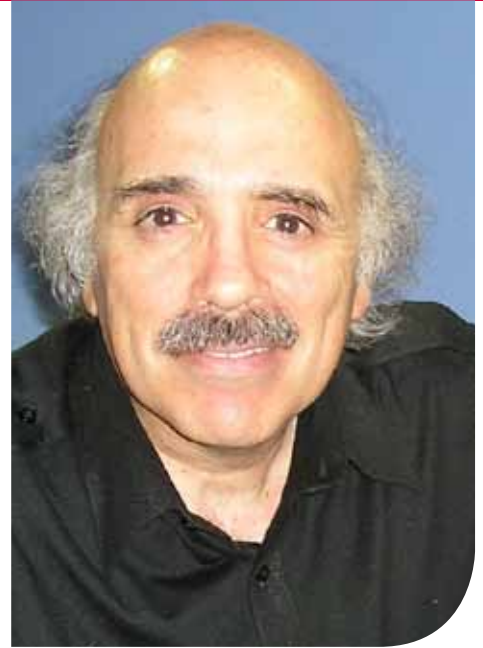
I have come to appreciate how local art distills the essence of a people—their values, longings, dreams, fears, sufferings and celebrations. Art is not only a window into a soul, but a treasure of a people. When we really take time to get to know the art of a people, and not simply to analyze it or to use it for own purposes, but to celebrate it with them and help reflect it back, we engage in an act of love. In a time when many people like Kurban are experiencing deep skepticism and subtle or overt manipulation by others, it seems especially important for us to consider what cultural treasures are buried within others which we can “give back” to show God’s appreciative gaze ●



Kaai: “Wonderment”, Relations with God, Series



*Frank Fortunato has an MA in ethnomusicology and is OM's International Music Director, coordinating Heart Sounds International, a ministry promoting indigenous worship through seminars, songwriting events, and recordings, mostly in the restricted parts of the world. He is involved in teaching on global worship music as well as leading worship at a local church. In 2006, he co-edited All the World is Singing: Glorifying God Through the Worship Music of the Nations. He is the Vice President of the International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE).*



## STORIES FROM THE HSI ARCHIVES

*Frank Fortunato*

# DINKA WORSHIP: KEEPING STRONG IN THE MIDST OF PERSECUTION

The door was closed and fans switched off . . . the tiny room instantly became an oven. A large set of drums recently moved into the room now serving as a recording studio had drastically reduced available floor space. Undaunted, eighteen Sudanese Dinka choir members managed to squeeze in. Once the drumming and singing began, the choir became oblivious to their surroundings: the recording equipment; the four strangers from Heart Sounds International (HSI) busy audiotaping, videotaping, and snapping photos. Hour after hour, the Dinka sang medley after medley, and though drenched in perspiration, they sang with vigorous abandon, taking only short breaks to cool down, get a drink, or munch a sandwich. The choir knew their songs well, and most were recorded in one take. In all, thirty-three songs and almost eighty minutes of worship music were recorded in one day.

The African nation of Sudan has suffered unspeakably. Of all the people

groups undergoing persecution, none has been more devastated than the Dinka. These were the very people whose children had been abducted and sold into slavery, whose women had been raped, houses burned, and crops and cattle destroyed. Through their worship, God had kept these people strong in times of difficulty and persecution. There was an abandonment and joy in the singing that the HSI team witnessed that day.

On the final medley, some of the teenage girls could not resist adding their local dance steps and began moving about the cramped studio. Soon the older women joined in with their swaying. Before we knew what was happening, all the ladies joyously circled the tiny room, while the men jumped vigorously in place. A delightful pandemonium erupted as the choir praised, danced and marched, oblivious to cables, stands, mics, whatever. One engineer quickly put down his digital camera and rushed through the circle

to grab the microphone stands lest they fall over as the choir continued in their exuberant, abandoned worship. In the aftermath, we videotaped the leader and, through translation, asked him the meanings of the songs. They spoke of their difficult situation in life, but also expressed hope, faith, joy, and trust in the Lord.

We realized afresh that we vividly experienced the theme that drives all we do in Heart Sounds International: "Every people should worship our awesome God in an awesome way that reflects their own culture." ●

Excerpted from *All the World is Singing—Glorifying God through the Worship Music of the Nations* Copyright © 2006 Authentic Media, by Frank Fortunato, Paul Neeley, Carol Brinneman

# BREATHTAKING MOMENT IN MONGOLIA

*Frank Fortunato*

The Soviets were gone from Mongolia. New freedoms had arrived. Church planters wisely moved in quickly. To get new converts worshipping in the

churches, they brought with them what they had readily available—Western worship songs. Eventually, more worship songs were needed for

the fledgling churches. Heart Sounds International heard about the need. Soon Paul Neeley and I were invited to Ulaan Bataar to facilitate the writing of

new scriptural songs by local musicians. At the time, Mongolian believers were not only young in the Lord but young in age. While the song writing would yield more Western-oriented songs played with guitar, at least they would not be awkward translations from elsewhere. On our way to an appointment, Paul and I heard our host talk about a pastor-musician (a great combo anywhere on the planet) who had mastered Mongolian instruments and traditional Mongolian melodies. With urgency in his voice, Neeley abruptly told us we needed to visit the pastor. I countered that it was a good idea. For tomorrow. We were already late for our appointment. Paul insisted: "We need to get to him, NOW!" So the cab made the detour and we knocked on the door of Pastor Dugermāa. We shared our desire for the song writing event to tap deeply into the Mongolian song styles.

When he grasped where this was heading, he showed up at the event with a car-load of local instruments in his entourage. Neeley asked the musicians present to think about the ways that Mongolians used different melodies on different occasions. He then encouraged investing these song genres with biblical lyrics. The teams went to work. We were stunned to discover they use totally different ways of shaping poetry. Rather than rhyming the ends of phrases, they alliterate the opening sounds of phrases. Throughout the week, new lyrics were honed and grafted into traditional melodic forms adapted to the lyrics. And then it happened. Something breathtaking. A week later, at a new song concert, Pastor Dugermāa and friends offered Mongolian song forms, enriched with the words of eternal praise, to the Lord. The audience was

ecstatic. Effort was needed to mine deeply into the rich cultural soil of a nation that had experienced seventy-five years of Soviet domination, which had caked the culture with foreign elements. Something new, yet familiar, resulted. These were fresh songs, but with a recognizable ring to them. The concert included something rarely used by believers—throat singing. While many of us thought it sounded strange for a voice to produce more than one pitch at the same time, to the locals it was a familiar and sweet sound. Repeated visits to Mongolia yielded more new song concerts. Neeley and I watched a movement of worship emerge. A worship makeover was happening—God raised up a prepared pastor-musician to ignite biblically appropriate and culturally relevant heart worship ●

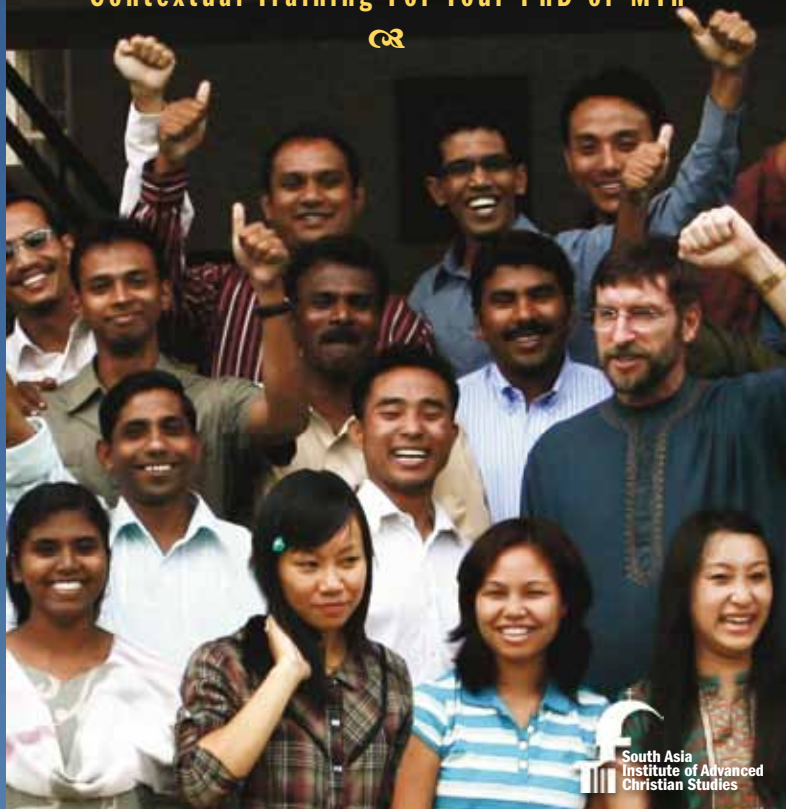
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*Stefan Eicher is the director of Reflection Art Gallery and Studios, and an Indian by birth and citizenship. He shares a concern for social justice with his wife Neeru, a lawyer working with human rights. Together they have two children Ashish and Anjali. More artwork and activities can be seen at [www.reflectionart.com](http://www.reflectionart.com).*

*Stefan Eicher*

## THE ART OF DISCIPLING A NATION

Dowry is the price you pay to get your daughter married in India. This price is the amount of money, the fridge, the car, even the house the groom's family may demand, often leading to life-long debt. Sometimes the price you pay is your daughter's life, when in-laws seek revenge for unpaid dowry.

What does dowry have to do with art? Dowry is one of the cultural roots for the fact that over the last twenty years, ten million women have gone missing in India due to the modern practice of female foeticide. In 2008 a group of eighteen artists spent a week holed up in a two-storey house in the heart of New Delhi examining the roots to violence against women in India, and wrestled with a Kingdom response. Their goals were to encourage each other in their art-making, to deepen their understanding of the issue, and to share the resulting artwork with a mainstream Delhi audience. Yet above and beyond this was a larger goal, perhaps the largest goal possible: to see a nation disciplined. In parts of India where dowry is rampant, traditional practices combine with modern capitalism to create a carefully calibrated system determining the value of a human being, measured by standards of wealth, education, caste, gender, etc. The discipling of a nation requires more than just seeing a nation evangelized and more churches planted. Discipling a nation requires bringing truth to bear on how a society determines an individual's worth—whether woman or man. Why is this understanding of mission

so critical? Even though dowry is a punishable offence in India, in the South Indian district that boasts the highest giving towards indigenous Indian missions, to get your daughter married to a Christian doctor can easily cost \$100,000, to a Christian engineer \$60,000, to a Master of Theology seminary graduate \$30,000. If the church is not discipling the nation, as Darrow Miller of the Disciple Nations Alliance has pointed out, the nation will disciple the church.

And it is in this urgent task of discipling a nation that we believe art has a special place, a profound role in disseminating ideas and both shaping and creating culture. "Woman This Is Your Story" was the art exhibition we held four months after our workshop on violence against women. The Health Minister of New Delhi was our chief guest and a major newspaper ran an article. We held the exhibition at Reflection Art Gallery and Studios, the space we had set up in the heart of Delhi that year. Five years of annual week-long workshops on issues such as religious violence, the dignity of the destitute, and India's growing disparity between rich and poor had sparked in us a burning desire: to expand into the whole year the deep satisfaction of creating art in community on matters close to God's heart, and to share that art with others. We called the gallery and studios "reflection" because of our desire to share beauty and facilitate deeper thinking, but also because reflection is the source of human dignity—being made in God's image.



The gallery and studio is, simply put, an attempt to create spaces: theological and professional space for artists to grow in faith and calling, physical space for artists to meet and create art which affirms life and human dignity, and public space for art to be accessible to a larger audience. The back of the space has two studio rooms where we make art that is a biblical reflection on current issues or general topics of life. We do this by running, among other things, month-long artist residencies, a weekly "Creative Friday" drop-in and the annual week-long "Creative Conscience" workshop. The resulting art is shown in the gallery up front, along with art by artists who themselves are marginalized by the gallery system. In addition to making art about social issues, we take art to those affected by the issues, doing art workshops with the destitute, street kids, young people living in slums, or at-risk girls. Having survived so far on the donations of friends, we have started teaching art classes and renting art out to businesses to become more sustainable.

When we started the artist residency, we ran into a problem: none of the Christian artists we knew had the time to set aside a month to paint, pointing to the glaring fact that none were professional artists! We opened the residency up to friends of other faiths and discovered



a remarkable opportunity to engage non-Christian artists in examining belief systems that lie at the roots of issues and produce Kingdom art: Non-Christians producing “Christian” art!

But the fact remains that Christian artists who strike any chord of familiarity are from an older generation. Names such as Frank Wesley, P Solomon Raj, or Jyoti Sahi, are either artists who have passed away or known mainly in particular ecumenical circles. In the early nineties, New Zealand missionary Kathleen Nicholls held a series of consultations leading to the formation of a “Christian Artists Association.” It has since become inactive due, among other things, to a lack of funding. In

September 2007, along with forty participants and several art ministries, we organized a three-day “Artist Think Tank.” To avoid mistakes of the past we chose to de-institutionalize our efforts. With tremendous excitement, a star-fish network was launched. Funds were collected by the participants to create a user-driven website, yet three years later the network lies dormant and the website unused.

How does one disciple a nation through art? Two years of running Reflection Art Gallery and Studios has both thrilled and sobered us. Our sense of having come alive is mirrored in the impact we see in others, particularly the lives of individual artists, both Christian and

non-Christian. We are a model for both church and society, and yet a marginal one. We recognize the need for organizational platforms such as networks and incubational spaces like ours, yet more fundamental to the task of discipling a nation is the need for professional Christ-following artists, fully engaged in the mainstream: Individuals clearly called by God, anchored in a biblical worldview, who have won the right to be seen and heard through incredibly hard work and finely-honed skills and have proven themselves in the market. It will be a generation of these artists, whose life-work holds a mirror to society, which will play its profound role in a nation reflecting God’s intentions for all of life ●

*Trevor Sampson*

## RESTORING THE SOUND IN CAPE TOWN

“Restoring the Sound” is a project that was birthed by Trevor Sampson, a professional gospel singer, songwriter, producer and recording engineer from Cape Town, South Africa. Trevor’s vision is to empower young people who are vulnerable to the difficult circumstances in which they find themselves.

Since Trevor grew up in a township, he understands the challenges and difficulties of township life. He says, “Many youngsters, even after being exposed to good role models, fall prey to the strong influence of gangsterism and its lifestyle. As many of these kids grow up in dysfunctional families, the

need to belong is great and most gangs fulfill that need. In the gangs, these kids learn street survival skills of all sorts. Power and control play a big role in the process, so at a very early age most of these children find themselves clashing with the law. The arts—and music in particular—play a major part in our culture and therefore are a powerful communicative tool for these kids.”

Trevor’s intention is to equip young people with musical instruments collected through his networks in organizations abroad, teaching them how to use these instruments in order to better themselves, and in so doing,



better their community. The goals of his work with young people are:

- To restore the sounds of Africa in their grass roots forms, starting in the various regions of Southern Africa,
- To identify talent in children from disadvantaged communities. These can be children from as young as five years of age, but also older.
- To train and impart skills for the purpose of meeting felt needs through community-based projects.

*1 Ko-zong means Zong mountain. Many years ago Kuo speakers from Chad who name their villages after mountains migrated there. Today after many generations, they speak mainly the related language Karang. 2 During our sabbatical year I had left copies of the Gospel of Luke in nineteen different locations. The Karang revisers, of whom one is Saw-in, were to review the first edition and have revisions ready for us when we came back. In general they did a great job. As a side issue I asked them to write Scripture songs too – this is where Saw-in put most of his efforts. 3 These monster crickets are annoying creatures that dig tunnels in the ground and only come to the entrance at night to start their ear piercing mating call. If you try to locate them they quickly zip back into their burrows. If one is next to your house, you can't sleep. Banana, our cat, would eat them for us. With a flashlight and shovel we would go out at 7PM and dig out the foot-deep-tunnels and Banana waited until the antennae were in sight then pounce. It was a regular ritual to guarantee a good night sleep.*

- To capture the musical works of art in each community on CD, DVD, and electronic book forms. This will be a platform for the future betterment of community and further growth for the artists.
- To display that which they discover in their projects through special celebratory days and events.
- To start a fund in which a proportion of profit from sales is channeled to the relevant community.

- To generate funding to further the empowerment of the local artists (e.g., bursaries, purchasing of instruments and equipment, teaching materials and funding for future projects).
- To create a long-term structure within the community whereby new talent can be developed.
- To educate the aspiring artist regarding their rights and responsibilities for their works and to ensure that all intellectual property is registered in

- the composer/author's name with the proper legal entities acting on their behalf.
- To see dignity, hope, joy—everything that comes with a good artistic heritage—restored to the people of the community ●

For more information, see [www.restoringthesound.com](http://www.restoringthesound.com).  
Article contributed by the International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE)

*Bob and Yezmin Ulfers, SIL, Cameroon*

## ONE FOR EACH CHAPTER

I was driving to the village of Kozong<sup>1</sup> with my laptop as the sun sunk below the horizon. I thought about all the hidden talent I missed along the way. The Karang people don't flaunt their talents or abilities. Unity, conformity, respect for elders, and peace between brothers—these are much more important. Only in spending time with an individual do you begin to appreciate his/her gifts.

Today, Mr. Saw-in had prepared some songs for me to record and what a treasure I found!<sup>2</sup> The night crickets were beginning their orchestra and flying ants were swarming that night. The whole village and all its flying insects buzzed around the light of my laptop and headlamp. My sweaty arms were oiled down with insect repellent as I picked confused bugs out from my keyboard.

Children were talking, feet shuffling on the sandy ground, adults greeting each other, and me, dogs barked on the street—it was noisy.

"I need a police-man," I said as I spotted a likely candidate. "You must make sure that nobody talks, shuffles their feet, or even coughs. If a baby starts crying, signal the mother to start nursing..." I went down the list of normal distractions including shutting up the thumb-size crickets that buzz so loud that it gives you a headache.<sup>3</sup> Then I had to warn the young newly appointed officer not to rebuke people verbally but only with hand signals.

Everything was now ready. Saw-in had his note book with lyrics out, head lamp on (I lent him this for the night) and I asked him, "How many songs have you prepared?" In the past, the revisers would come up with one or two Scripture songs that contained a verse or two of Scripture. So Saw-in astonished me when he said, "Twenty-four, one for each chapter of mbete Luku."

I was stunned. Twenty-four Scripture songs! I looked at the battery power

on the computer and quickly came to a conclusion, "I will have to come back another day to finish recording your songs, but we can get twelve today."

That was an amazing night. Despite the war I was fighting against extraneous noises and kamikaze bugs that aimed at my Toshiba screen, it was a night I will cherish forever. Song after song was direct Scripture; parables, teachings, miracles, and even one about the Zezu's lineage with all those names! And they were all good.

I looked at Saw-in as the flying ants swarmed around his headlamp as he sang out new melody after new melody—twenty-four, all in his head. I thanked God for this gift and before leaving that night told everyone that God was starting a new thing among them. By making his word song in their hearts he would be replacing the old with the new (2 Cor 5:17), fear with peace and hate with love. Saw-in said, "It is true!" He was already experiencing it in his own heart ●

# DANCE LINK



A division of OM Arts, Dance Link takes short-term trips to many countries around the world. In India recently, girls rescued from the sex trade learned to find emotional healing and hope through dance. One girl commented, "The more I learn about Jesus, the



more I want to." Her friend, upon being encouraged to "listen for the voice of Jesus" (from John 10), felt sleepy and distracted, but as we showed her how to "listen" as she danced, she heard him say, "You belong to me now. Stay awake,



listen and learn." Both girls are now believers in Christ.

The Dance Link team uses dance as a non-threatening, fun way to lead the lost to Jesus' feet ●

# Wanted.

- Art Teachers
- Creative Pros
- Directors
- Dramatists
- Editors
- Graphic Designers
- Journalists
- Photographers
- Producers
- Social Media Specialists
- Storytellers
- Videographers
- Web Designers
- Writers

"I never knew I could use my creative gifts to serve in mission."

— Laura L., SIM USA Intern

abuse

addiction

change

child labor

corruption

disease

drugs

famine

fatula

forgiveness

freedom

HIV/AIDS

hope

injustice

justice

malaria

natural disaster

oppression

orphans

outcast

pain

persecution

poverty

prostitution

redemption

rescue

salvation

trafficking

unclean water

victory

war

Serving in Mission

for over 120 years

Media Productions

sim.org



*Bernard was born in Montreal. He has been painting since 1978. After finishing his studies at Cégep Saint-Larent (in Fine Arts), he worked for a time designing commercial signposts. From 1998 to 2002, he was in charge of hiring all the protestant pastoral animators for the 3300 schools of the province of Quebec. Today, besides being a graphic artist for Christian Direction, he works in the art studio at the St. James Drop-in Centre, and enjoys his time connecting with Montreal's less fortunate. Bernard is married to Nathalie, and they have four children.*

*Bernard Racicot*

**ART** *English*

Art (from Latin ars, artis "skill, trade, technical skill") is a human activity or the product of this activity that consists of arranging diverse elements by deliberately using senses, emotions and the intellect.

Definitions of this concept have varied through times and places and none are universally accepted. Thus, artistic expressions and their products have always been classified differently under cultures, authors or institutions. Art at the St. James Drop-In takes on many faces. Every day, painting, handicraft and music are part of the art workshop at the St. James Drop-In centre. By using art, we are seeking to have significant relationships with people suffering in our society. I am

not naive. My world is totally different than theirs. Obviously, I don't live in the street and through my family life I am enjoying a relative social and emotional balance. The societal gap between me and those suffering is enormous. Even if I try to identify myself to their reality and to understand them—and to a certain degree I believe I can—there is a whole dimension of hidden and repressed emotions that are begging to come out and express themselves in one way or another.

Through the workshop, we have the privilege of participating with them in unique encounters that reconcile our different worlds. We don't always achieve this by talking, but by looking at each other, by pausing with silence,



by exchanging smiles, by expressing emotions and spending time together creating something that surpasses our imagination—connivance in art. Art bridges the gap between us. There is a mysterious quality about art that can surprisingly reach into places that allows us to learn much more about others and ourselves.

"Through art, we are at times visited – unconsciously, mysteriously – by revelations that no reasoning, as tight as it can be, could produce." – Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Nobel Prize in literature  
[www.bernardracicot.ca](http://www.bernardracicot.ca)  
[www.stjamescentre.ca/](http://www.stjamescentre.ca/)  
[www.direction.ca](http://www.direction.ca) ●



*Bern & Chris*



*Chris Reid*



*Daguy et toiles*

Bernard est né à Montréal. Fait de la peinture depuis qu'il a 14 ans. Après ses études en art au Cégep Saint-Laurent, il travaille dans l'industrie des enseignes commerciales jusqu'en 1992. En 1993, il débute à Direction Chrétienne où il fonde le Centre Accroche pour aider les jeunes à l'école. De 1998 à 2002, il est responsable de l'animation religieuse dans les 3300 écoles de la province en partenariat avec le gouvernement du Québec. Aujourd'hui, en plus d'être graphiste à Direction Chrétienne, il travaille à l'atelier d'art du centre de jour St-James à Montréal où il œuvre auprès des sans-abri. Bernard est marié à Nathalie est père de quatre enfants.

Bernard Racicot

## ART Français

L'Art (du latin Ars, artis « habileté, métier, connaissance technique ») est une activité humaine, ou le produit de cette activité, consistant à arranger entre eux divers éléments en s'adressant délibérément aux sens, aux émotions et à l'intellect.

Les définitions de ce concept varient selon les époques et les lieux, et aucune d'entre elles n'est universellement acceptée. C'est pourquoi les produits et pratiques artistiques ont toujours été classés diversement selon les cultures, les auteurs et les institutions.

L'art à St-James se manifeste de plusieurs façons. La peinture, le bricolage et la musique font partie du

quotidien à l'atelier d'art du centre de jour. Nous cherchons, à travers cette plateforme, créer des liens significatifs avec ceux qui souffrent dans notre société. Je veux pas me conter des histoires. Ma réalité est complètement différente. C'est évident. Je ne vis pas dans la rue et à travers ma vie familiale, je vis un équilibre affectif et social relatif. L'écart sociétal est énorme. J'ai beau vouloir m'identifier à leur réalité et essayer de comprendre et j'y arrive jusqu'à certain point, il y a un univers de sentiments cachés et refoulés qui ne demandent qu'à être exprimés d'une manière ou l'autre.

Dans l'atelier d'art, nous avons le privilège de participer avec eux à des



rencontres uniques qui unissent nos univers. C'est pas toujours des mots. Ce sont des regards, des silences, des sourires, des émotions et des moments passés ensemble à réaliser quelque chose qui va au delà de ce que nous imaginons. La complicité dans l'art. C'est là où nos univers s'unissent. Le mystérieux de l'art peut pénétrer à des endroits surprenants qui nous donnent d'apprendre beaucoup sur les autres et sur nous.

« Par l'art, nous sommes quelquefois visités - obscurément, furtivement - par des révélations qu'aucun raisonnement, si serré soit-il, ne pourrait faire naître. » Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Prix Nobel de littérature ●



Dessin telier



Vivian

*Héber Negrão tem mestrado em Etnomusicologia pela Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais e é membro do Conselho Internacional de Etnodoxologia. Atualmente está concluindo o curso de Missiologia no Instituto Missionário Palavra da Vida no norte do Brasil. Héber Negrão has a Masters degree in Ethnomusicology from the Federal University of Minas Gerais and is a member of the International Council of Ethnodoxologists. He is finishing his studies in Missiology at the Word of Life Missionary Institute in the North of Brazil.*



*Héber Negrão*

## DE NOITE ESTÁ COMIGO A SUA CANÇÃO

Visitei a tribo dos índios Parakanã no norte do Brasil em uma viagem que fiz como o objetivo de pesquisar a sua música e incentivá-los a utilizá-la para cantar para Deus e auxiliar no processo de tradução da Bíblia. Fui convidado por Gino e Tati Silva que são tradutores da Bíblia, missionários da ALEM, e na época estavam iniciando o trabalho no livro de Atos. O trabalho que desenvolvi incluiu palestras sobre bases bíblicas para composição de músicas de louvor a Deus, entrevistas com alguns cantores da aldeia e gravação de músicas que eles mesmos já haviam composto. O povo parakanã é muito amigável e alegre. Eles têm uma prática musical forte e gostam muito de cantar, tocar flautas e dançar. A maneira como eles aprendem suas músicas é diferente da que conhecemos. Eles recebem suas músicas através de sonhos e as ensinam para a comunidade nas várias festas durante o ano. Visitei duas aldeias onde conheci Xaperia e Kawore, dois índios que já têm composto várias canções para Deus no estilo nativo. Uma vez sabendo que os Parakanã recebiam suas músicas através dos son-

hos decidi enfatizar essa característica nas palestras e nas conversas que tive com eles. Com a ajuda de um amigo observei que o livro de Apocalipse relata visões de João e neste relato contém várias músicas. Expliquei aos índios que as visões eram como um sonho, e assim, mostrei a eles que na Bíblia também havia pessoas que sonharam com músicas, e colocaram essas músicas num livro. Quando eles souberam disso ficaram animados para criar suas próprias canções bíblicas. Ainda mais empolgante foram os versículos bíblicos encontrados para reafirmar esse ponto. O Salmo 42:8 diz: “Conceda-me o Senhor o seu fiel amor de dia; de noite esteja comigo a sua canção” (NVI). Vibrei de empolgação quando li esse texto. A própria Bíblia diz que Deus nos dá uma canção à noite. Isso é completamente compreensível e aceitável para os Parakanã. Esta era uma mensagem com um elevadíssimo nível de significância para aquele povo. Quando eu falei que no “Livro da Fala de Deus” dizia que Deus nos dava uma canção de noite eles ficaram muito contentes.

Em outra ocasião conversei com Kawore e Xaperia e li alguns salmos que falavam da natureza louvando ao Senhor. Então, começamos a imaginar como seriam as árvores cantando de alegria ao Senhor (SI 96). Depois falamos dos rios batendo palmas (SI 98) e perguntei como seria o rio Xingu batendo palmas pra Deus. Um deles imaginou que era quando as ondas quebravam sonoramente nas pedras formando uma espuma branca. Isso me deixou maravilhado. Eles estavam interagindo com a mensagem da Palavra de Deus, e tudo isso estava comunicando como todas as coisas criadas cantam para Deus, cantam de alegria. Antes de retornar eles me disseram que agora sabiam que era importante criar músicas de louvor ao Senhor porque a Bíblia diz isso. Eles mostraram interesse em fazer novas canções baseadas na Bíblia, começando pelo livro de Atos ●

*Paul Nethercott, EAM missionary to Japan*

*A Vision to Impact Japan Through Redemptive Films*

## FILM AS A MISSION: “BRINGING LIGHT TO DARK PLACES”

Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12 (NIV)

As a Western missionary in Japan since 1987, it has become painfully obvious that we must try new approaches to reaching Japanese for Christ. Is it not

our mission to express the timeless beauty and truth of the Gospel in ways that connect with the culture of Japan? The vision of Studio Re: is to “impact



the culture of Japan through redemptive films.” We produce films in a variety of genres that portray a Christian worldview and pose crucial questions. These films seek to affect and change the shape of contemporary Japanese culture and its inhabitants by assuming a biblical paradigm; offering redemption instead of separation, hope instead of resignation, design instead of chaos. It is a sowing ministry that prepares the minds and hearts of the Japanese to become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our strategy is to:

- Make award-winning films that have heart, hope, hook, and humanity
- Encourage and equip emerging filmmakers
- Establish mutually beneficial collaborative relationships

#### **Q. What does “impacting culture,” mean?**

A. Enough people are changed to notice a culture-wide effect on worldview, attitude, and/or behavior.

#### **Q. Can films impact culture?**

A. Many films have influenced the world. “Sister Act,” a Hollywood film, is one of the main reasons Black Gospel music became popular in Japan; many Japanese have come to Christ as a result.

#### **Q. Are your films evangelistic?**

A. If “evangelistic” means a singular point in time when a person makes a decision – “NO.” However, if evangelism is conceptualized as a process – “YES.”

#### **Q. Why are your films narratives?**

A. The Bible is mostly narrative (stories, poetry, song) for a reason—good storytelling is memorable and it changes us; film is an ideal medium for telling stories.

#### **Q. Are your films making a difference in Japan?**

A. In the process of making films, emerging filmmakers are being developed who are “salt and light” in the Japanese culture. In the long run, investing in people is going to make a difference. Jitensha (Bicycle), a

Japanese film shot on location in Tokyo in collaboration with Biola University, has gained international recognition from film festivals. While it is impossible to know how God is using our films, we see positive signs and we are committed to moving ahead with our vision.

#### **Q. How do you fund your films?**

A. We use mission funding from North America. We utilize: volunteers, the Internet, digital technology, and rented or borrowed equipment to make films at low cost. Collaboration is also important.

As I reflect on the first two years of Studio Re., the biggest challenge to moving our vision forward is my struggle with fear—fear of failure, criticism and the rejection that comes with it. My struggle with fear drives me to ask daily for the courage to follow Jesus so that I will “never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” ●

“Studio Re.” Web Site: [www.studio-re.com](http://www.studio-re.com)

*J. Nathan Corbitt*

## ARTISTS RESPONDING TO CRISIS AND SERVING FOR DEVELOPMENT

Never underestimate the power of a scribble and a good story. In the wake of a tsunami, the after-shock of an earthquake, or the muddy mess of a flood, children who are traumatized by these events can be empowered with the opportunity to draw, tell their stories, dance their anxiety, and act out their thoughts. The results are a strengthened

resilience, hope and healing. But how does this work?

When crisis and catastrophe occur, children are often unable to process their fear, grief, and trauma with words. The creative arts provide a vehicle through which children can express pain, trauma, and abuse by tapping

into their psyche without the use of verbal language. The creative arts affect human physiology as well as emotional status and can heal and restore the human spirit.

Music, dance, drama, and visual arts:

- Help create physically and psychologically safe spaces for children



*Mask Jacmel*

- Help people seek beauty even in the worst of situations (aesthetic nourishment)
- Provide opportunities to re-imagine circumstances
- Are non-verbal and bypass cognitive defenses
- Help resolve conflicts and problems
- Help manage and structure behavior through providing experiences of success
- Reduce stress
- Increase self-esteem and self-awareness
- Provide non-verbal outlets for emotions associated with traumatic experiences
- Promote positive changes in moods and emotional states
- Promote active and positive participant involvement in treatment
- Enhance feelings of control, confidence, and empowerment
- Promote positive physiological changes such as lower blood pressure, reduced heart rate, and relaxed muscle tension
- Provide a space for emotional intimacy with peers, families, caregivers, and meaningful time spent together

In 1997, Dr. Vivian Nix-Early and I co-founded BuildaBridge International. BuildaBridge's mission is to bring hope and healing through the transformative power of the creative arts to the most vulnerable of children in the toughest places of the world; and, to engage



*Habitation LeClerq*

creative artists in service to others. Our goal is to provide needed holistic development through direct service and training in arts-based intervention. We want to meet the needs of the most vulnerable populations and to assist local organizations in sustainable development through local arts resource development. Since our beginning, we have worked to prepare and engage artists in what we now call Arts Relief and Development. By relief we mean a trauma-informed response to crisis through art-making experiences with kids. This may mean engaging creative art therapists, but it can also include artists who empathically engage art-making as a healing process. Ours is not a first response, as the needs are too basic for art-making, but arts relief is a powerful second response, especially in meeting the needs of children for safe spaces—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. By development, we seek to build the capacity of local organizations and artists to meet the needs of the children in their own communities over a long-term basis.

We have slowly developed relationships with local organizations in Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East. We have conducted trainings, short-term projects, and internship placements in twenty countries. These service or ministry alliances require basic development of trust, good communication, sharing of resources, and

organization. As a primarily volunteer organization working with local volunteer organizations and congregations where resources are limited, planning and managing expectations are very important.

Based on our ten previous years of learning—sometimes by trial and error—we have developed a curriculum and training program to help artists serve the needs of children while catalyzing and enhancing the long-term work of local groups. It has not been an easy. While simultaneously developing local alliances, we have been enlisting and training artists into a group we call Artists in Call who would be ready to respond to requests for arts relief, and long term arts-based community development. Is it working? The results have been promising.

In 2007 we began a project called Diaspora of Hope, where trained artists from anywhere in the world join forces with local artists to conduct one-week catalytic children's' arts camps on the theme of hope. We began with one camp in Guatemala. This year, we will assist Arts for Hope camps in five US locations and five international locations. We have witnessed, and are documenting, remarkable changes in the children, increased ministry strength in local organizations, and a deepened commitment by artists to be involved alleviating poverty through arts-based development. More local artists are

*These are of a mural project in Mathare Valley in Nairobi. In our 2008 Diaspora of Hope project with the Inspiration Centre, the children were asked to do a series of murals on hope. The one image is "the world as it is". It shows the violence and flood that occurred months before our arrival and subsequent work with local artists and the Centre staff. The second image, "the world as it could be" asked the children to imagine a Nairobi as they would like to see it. So I have two images without children, and two images with children. The one has a child pretending to jump in the city pool.*

involved, even taking leadership. Long-term development is working—we are on a ten-year plan. Short-term relief is more problematic.

Immediately following the earthquake in Haiti, we put out a call for artists to help. Almost immediately, over eighty creative art therapists, art educators, and students responded to help. We then asked these artists for a simple registration and thirty-eight followed through. At the same time, we contacted ten organizations working in Haiti. The response was the same from all. "We are dealing with basic human needs in a chaotic and catastrophic situation, let's begin to plan for the next wave of needs." The next wave of needs include creating child-safe places, training teachers and local workers in arts and trauma, assisting work teams, and providing programming for children.

Two-months following the earthquake, we are still in a planning and training mode with local organizations dealing with a horrendous and devastating crisis. What are we learning about artists and response to a crisis? What challenges do we face?

First, in communicating with international and local organizations, we have a responsibility to educate regarding the value and transformative power of the arts. There is often not an understanding of this value and process. Many see the arts as entertainment (which does have value)—or something kids do for fun. Artists in local countries are often not understood or valued—their status is often very low in the culture and they can be viewed as people on the fringes of society, even unreliable and unpredictable.

Second, people who first respond to a crisis are highly motivated to do something "now." Motivation may wane even within a few short weeks. Maintaining contact, providing information, encouraging further training and preparation, and, in general, motivating for long-term help is important.

Third, networking and planning between individual schedules, group schedules, and organizational needs and resources takes capacity and resources. In our situation, we are focusing on alliances with only a few organizations who

understand the real power of the arts in their context and who have the capacity to collaborate.

Lastly, it takes a special kind of artist mentor to volunteer in any "tough place." He or she has to have training and experience for living and working in difficult, even dangerous, environments, creativity in working with a scarcity of artistic resources, second language skills, ability to raise personal support, and especially the desire and commitment to cooperate with local leadership—knowing that whatever plans are set into place will surely change.

The scribble and story have power for children when a capable artist mentor has the desire and ear to listen. Artists are an untapped resource in meeting the psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs of children living in poverty and suffering from crisis. We are most encouraged by the responsiveness, preparations, and commitment to a call for this work. Will you join us, and others, seeking goodness and peace in the toughest places of our world? ●





*Titulaire d'un diplôme d'étude musical et d'une licence en Théologie, Roch Ntankeh est Secrétaire Général des Chantres unis du Cameroun, et actif dans la musique chrétienne depuis plus de dix ans. Il est Pasteur, Conducteur de louange, Enseignant/ Formateur musical, Président Fondateur d'un ministère visant la restauration et le développement de la musique traditionnelle dans l'église selon le concept de l'ethnodoxologie.*

**CHALLENGES & POSSIBILITIES**

Français

Roch Ntankeh

**LA NECESSITE DE DEVELOPPER LES RYTHMES TRADITIONNELS**



Face à la modernisation grandissante en Afrique et particulièrement au Cameroun; et devant la réalité selon laquelle beaucoup qui y naissent aujourd'hui ne sont pas si différents des autres nés en occident, c'est certainement avec raison qu'on pourrait se demander s'il est vraiment nécessaire de s'investir dans la louange et l'adoration « ethnique » que j'appelle volontiers l'ethnodoxologie? De plus dans un contexte fortement influencé par la musique moderne occidentale, où la nouvelle génération a perdu ses réalités socio culturelles au profit de celles de l'occident, on peut se dire à quoi bon s'investir dans un domaine comme celui-là en Afrique? Pourquoi ne pas s'attacher à ce qui existe déjà et qui est très bien développé et structuré?

Seulement, lorsqu'on vit certaines expériences comme moi il y a quelques années alors que j'enseignais la musique aux jeunes de divers âges dans un collège de mon pays, on se rend compte que le défi est grand. En effet, selon le programme de cours, je devais enseigner essentiellement

la théorie de la musique et le solfège. Mais ayant la liberté de le varier, j'y introduisis l'étude de la musique africaine. Pour cela, je fis une évaluation au début du cours afin de connaître le niveau de connaissance des élèves concernant la musique africaine. À la question citez trois de vos chansons préférées, la majorité me donnait des chansons européennes ou américaines. Seuls quelques-uns connaissaient des musiques africaines. À la question citez cinq instruments traditionnels et cinq rythmes de votre village, même pas le cinquième sur un total de 500 jeunes dans 8 salles de classes différentes ne fut en mesure de répondre aisément. Fait surprenant, lors des corrections et tout au long du déroulement des cours, je vis que les élèves exprimaient un intérêt particulier pour ce que j'enseignais sur la musique africaine. Mêmes les collègues et l'administration de l'établissement s'étaient rendu compte de cet intérêt. Avant moi, les cours de musique étaient très bouillants, contrairement aux miens parce que les élèves y trouvaient une originalité et surtout se reconnaissaient, s'identifiaient dans les

rythmes traditionnels enseignés. Ceci me poussa à affirmer que malgré le dur travail, l'investissement que cela demande, les sacrifices à consentir pour arriver au but, les critiques et même parfois l'ingratitude et le dénigrement autour de nous, c'est une nécessité, voire un besoin de travailler pour le développement des musiques dites « traditionnelles ou locales (ethnique) ».

Notre mission en tant que chrétien, c'est d'aller et de faire de toutes les nations des disciples. Pour cela, nous utiliserons forcément un langage pour faire passer notre message. Parce que le langage est l'ensemble des signes codifiés, utilisés dans la transmission d'un message, nous pensons que la musique traditionnelle en est un, bien plus, c'est un langage qui parle directement au cœur. Et par conséquent, efficace pour l'évangélisation des miens ●

*Laurie Williams is a writer in the Washington D.C. area. She served as research assistant for the Taking It to the Streets book project, and earned her Masters degree in Urban Economic Development from Eastern University. A second-generation Haitian, she currently directs an organization focused on education in Jacmel, Haiti.*

*Laurie Williams*

## HAITI'S UNFADING SONG

A sharp contrast from the images and reports that often paint a bleak picture of Haiti, art has been a redeeming force in the world's perception of this Caribbean nation. The explosion of color, rhythmic sounds, and expressive movements found in Haitian art is unmatched and celebrated internationally. Among its many losses, Haiti's artistic community also suffered this year: the destruction of historic art, the sudden passing of talented artists, and the amputation of numerous musicians, to name a few. Haiti's vibrant art, the voice for the unsung soul of its people, seemed to have been abruptly silenced on January 12. Yet as heavy dust filled the air that day,

a familiar sound in Port-au-Prince also took over: music. "I walked into the street and every person walking was singing a different song, some type of hymn," explains Nathalie "Talie" Cerin, a young Haitian musician who, like several artists in the city, was scheduled to record that fateful afternoon. Even in her state of shock, the Kreyol Soul singer was amazed at the reaction of the people around her. "It speaks to the faith of the Haitian people, but it also speaks to the power of music itself," she remarked. As was documented by the media, outdoor concerts and worship services, which began in the aftermath of the earthquake, continued through Carnival



season and have yet to cease. Music seems to provide a much needed therapeutic outlet that Haitians have always relied on in the past. For this reason, the vocalist strongly believes Haiti needs its art and its artists, more than ever before, to facilitate the extensive healing journey ahead. And although many may question if Haiti's artistic voice will ever regain its strength, Cerin is unwavering in her assurance: "No earthquake can break that." ●

### BEGINNING AN ARTS MINISTRY

*A Divine Tapestry of Convergence*

*Bill Drake*

## OM ARTS INTERNATIONAL

The story of OM Arts International and how God has birthed an arts movement in a major missions organization is one of timeliness, opportunity, and convergence.

Operation Mobilization began employing some artistic expressions in their outreaches in the early 1960s and continued to explore ways of ministering through the performing arts in the 1970s, especially in their ships ministry and in India. By the late 1980s, OM's evangelism ministries in the UK, Belgium and Austria excelled in puppetry,

illusion, music and mime respectively, using art on the streets, in schools, and in the marketplace to draw crowds, stimulate conversations, and gain inroads into culture by engaging in appropriate artistic expressions that resonated with the local people. However, with a few exceptions, arts outreach tended to be seasonal (summer), and was employed by a fair number of well-intentioned amateurs, as well as mostly being confined to certain European countries where the leadership in that country was favorable to the arts.

In the early 1990s, there was an influx into OM of professional artists. Although randomly scattered throughout the OM world, these artists began to make a significant impact. Visual artists based in Vienna were designing and illustrating books for distribution behind the former Iron Curtain. A jazz fusion team based in Vienna saw Bible studies from their concerts started, leading to the planting of a local church. Mime artists in Belgium were using mime on the street, in churches, and in conferences. Touring musicians based in England began to travel the world presenting the Gospel

through Western music and compelling visuals. Workers in Istanbul started a booking agency for Christian rock bands to tour across Turkey and beyond. An ethnodoxologist found ways to engage indigenous peoples with the Gospel presented in culturally relevant ways.

Through processes that can only be attributed to God’s providence, the majority of these professional artists and their arts ministries relocated to OM USA by the early 2000s. Some were involved in recruitment, some fund-raising and mentoring, and one of them—a professionally trained dancer—began cleaning toilets for the hospitality ministry while awaiting acceptance and opportunities to express her calling through dance ministry. But all of them had maintained an international focus, bringing teams of artists to many different countries of

the world, and effectually presenting the Gospel through artistic expression. Coupled with this was a proactive approach to helping artists find a place to “be” artists in a missional context, do higher profile work exhibiting, engaging in cultural exchange, teaching workshops, whilst facilitating intentional creative space for musicians, visual artists, and dancers. OM USA, noticing the convergence and seeing that something significant was happening in their midst, reorganized the arts ministries into one department and eventually birthed them into their own international ministry: OM Arts International.

The result has been stunning. In the first two years of its existence, OM Arts International has taken 135 people on 39 short-term arts outreaches in over 25 countries, and has helped place six

artists on the field longer term. OM Arts continues to strategize with OM fields worldwide to discover ways of bringing artists for the short term and also place them long term into missions. OM Arts currently has over 25 short-term and six long-term placements for artists.

Employing the arts, and by raising up and supporting missionary Artists, OM Arts continues to:  
 Articulate God’s heart for the world

- Resource the Church for creative communication
- Train Christian artists for mission and ministry
- Serve the creative arts and artists around the world.

[www.arts.om.org](http://www.arts.om.org)    [info@arts.om.org](mailto:info@arts.om.org) ●

*Art Santos serves the Lord with Wycliffe International. He describes his role as that of a catalyst who facilitates the flow of resources by developing cooperative partnerships. He first got involved in orality in 2004. Two years later, he became part of the Executive Committee of the International Orality Network.*

## INITIATING AN ETHNOARTS NETWORK

*Art Santos*

Several missions leaders held strategic discussions about EthnoArts in November 2009 during the Ethné09 global network conference in Bogota, Colombia. This is the story of how the Lord encouraged the development of the informal group Asociación Latinoamericano De EtnoArtes (ALDEA) during those consultations.

The term "EthnoArts" was selected during the development of this strategy group and has been defined as the study of indigenous artistic expressions (either endemic or adopted) by each ethné or people group to know, worship, and testify about the True God. Music, drama, narratives, poetry, dance, song, and visual arts are examples of EthnoArt forms.

The EthnoArts strategic discussion group is now developing into the establishment of a strategic working group. It is my hope and prayer that by sharing this development, you, the reader, who wishes to “enlarge your border,” might benefit from the lessons I have learned.

### **The Need for a Champion.**

In July 2008, I met with a few key leaders of the global missions forum



that is Ethne and proposed to have an Orality strategy group for the purpose of convincing Ethne to Ethne to consider the use of Arts and Music and other oral methods in their agenda.

During the course of our conversations, I positioned the use of Orality/ EthnoArts as a communication strategy. I did this because I have noticed whenever missions executives heard the phrase "Ethnomusicology," their almost immediate unspoken reaction was, "I agree that is important, but only for musicians." In my mind, positioning EthnoArts as a "**communication strategy**" may have a better chance of influence and involvement from the wider missions community.

### **Build a Team.**

Following this meeting, the Ethne Steering Committee essentially told me, "We agree with what you are saying, but give us a proposal." And so I did.

I wrote the International Orality Network to obtain the names of a few Orality-trained people. All of them needed to be able to speak Spanish, which was the conference language. ION gave me four names, and I have maintained my communication with these people to this day. I first "met" my team by email. Building relationship remotely was not easy. But I thought that it should be attempted because this was an essential step. So I got to know about their families, we sent pictures to each other, and we prayed for each other.

### **Develop a Facilitation Plan.**

I worked with these four people for over a year—using email, phone calls, and exchanging large files—to put together a strategy group facilitation plan. Also, before we executed the ethnoarts conversations, we arrived at the venue two days earlier to continue to build our team and fine-tune the facilitation plan. Having a good facilitation plan ensures that conversations are guided, the objectives of the meeting are achieved, and the conversations kept within the time allotted.

### **Soak it in Prayer.**

Many a reader is already convinced of how the Lord hears and answers prayer. But I would like to emphasize that plenty of advice is sought in all that I attempt to initiate—and all initiatives are brought to the Throne of Grace. Everything we do for His Kingdom is actually His ministry—He just chooses to use us. The decision to soak in prayer all our preparations, the on-site conversations, and the post conference next steps came from my team. Only the Lord knows whether or not ALDEA will develop into an effective EthnoArts Community of Practice in Latin America.

Currently, one of the team is taking the initiative to gather a Coordination Team and determine who is really committed to ALDEA before moving on. More time is needed, as there is a strong desire to include everyone who is committed to the development of this strategic working group.

Although a Google group has been established to keep everyone connected, a real-time contact event is needed. Two of the things being considered are a Skype conference call with ALDEA's Coordination Team or a meeting during a large Latin American conference (like COMIBAM).

In the meantime, we continue to soak this in prayer. Although I am usually a skeptic, I am optimistic about the development of ALDEA into a Latin American EthnoArts Community of Practice and I continue to commit this to the Lord.

### **Summary**

The process of establishment of a strategic working group begins with one person with a passion and commitment to see it through. Then a team needs to be built that develops its own reasons for existing, ideals, and goals—a statement crafted by everyone and owned by everyone. Thirdly, a facilitation plan of guided conversations needs to be developed to encourage others to get involved. And lastly, the entire process must be soaked in prayer because only the Lord Himself can really convince people. If what you are initiating is both consistent and timely with His over-all plan, He will act ●

To join the email conversations of ALDEA, sign up at <http://www.ethne.net/ethnoarts>

*Paul Neeley is a missionary ethnomusicologist who has worked for twenty years to promote indigenous Christian music and arts in various countries. He is President of the International Council of Ethnodoxologists ([www.worldofworship.org](http://www.worldofworship.org)).*

*Jaewoo Kim is a worship pastor at Journey of Faith Church in Dallas, Texas. He is also a director of King's Region Worship Ministry, which assists Korean missionaries and church leaders in worship-arts and global outreach.*

## Equipping Ethnocentric Korean Missionaries with Culturally Appropriate Worship-Arts Skills

# KOREAN ETHNODOXOLOGY INITIATIVE

*Jaewoo Kim and Paul Neeley*

<sup>1</sup> Korea World Missions Association website: [www.kwma.org](http://www.kwma.org)

According to the Korea World Missions Association, there are 20,445 Korean missionaries in 169 nations.<sup>1</sup> Many of these missionaries are planting churches and there are growing needs for culturally appropriate worship-arts ministries. But, just as many Western missionaries in the past unintentionally brought their own culture and arts to the countries where they served, Korean missionaries, without proper training and resources, are ministering from their own ethnocentric cultural backgrounds.

The contemporary praise and worship movement that began in the West in the 1960s swept through the Korean churches during the 1980s and 1990s, having a huge spiritual and cultural influence among the younger generation in Korea. The explosive effect of this movement resulted in many worship leaders, musicians and artists in Korean churches who can be used by God for His global cause.... especially if they understand critical contextualization of worship and art forms.

In 2003, the book *Let the Nations Be Glad*, by John Piper, was translated and published in Korea. This book made the connection between worship and missions explicit, and thus provided a crucial theological basis for interdependence among Korean leaders in the fields of mission and arts. The impact has been huge and implications seem endless. However, because there

are so few specialized people and opportunities for training in this area of ethnodoxology, the power of a strategic connection between worship-arts and missions has still not been realized on a practical level.

There are several important challenges for Korean mission leaders seeking to implement culturally appropriate arts into their ministries. First, the relatively short history of Korean missions only focuses on the proclamation of the Gospel message rather than on building sustainable local churches with local leadership in a culturally appropriate context. Second, there are few institutions and inadequate infrastructure available to help Korean worship-artists get theological and practical training in utilizing and contextualizing arts in missions. Third, the typical hierarchical leadership style in Korean culture hinders creative collaboration within organizations and even on the mission field.

In order for Korean mission leaders to deal with these challenges, it is vital to teach the importance of contextualizing arts for missions in as many local churches, seminaries, and mission agencies as possible. Korean mission agencies must recruit and develop worship-arts specialists. Korean worship-arts missionaries must have their own network to foster visibility, accountability, and long-term sustainability. Finally, tested and proven models must be introduced to Korean



missionaries and churches for effective multiplication.

To help reach these goals, we have developed the Korean Ethnodoxology Initiative (KEI), working in several areas:

1. Resources: Develop more ethnodoxology resources in Korean, including some originally written in Korean, some translated materials, and some media resources. Further develop the Korean-language website [www.GlocalWorship.net](http://www.GlocalWorship.net).
2. Opportunities: Establish easy ways for Korean and Korean-American worship musicians to go on short-term trips in Asia that focus on ethnodoxology. Then they can bring their experience and insights back to their host churches and mission groups and train their own colleagues.
3. Training: Establish classes in ethnodoxology in schools, and seminars for Korean mission agencies. Help Korean and Korean-American worship leaders get a bigger picture of global Christian worship, and understand the model of being a catalyst for creation of new worship forms by local people in Kingdom work.

Korean missionaries work in almost every nation. How marvelous it will be when more of them are better equipped to make this vision a reality: All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord; they will bring glory to your name. Psalm 86:9 ●

*Robin Harris has MAs in Intercultural Studies and Ethnomusicology and is completing PhD studies in Music (Ethnomusicology) at University of Georgia Athens. She served as a missionary for a decade in northern Russia as well as a number of years in Alaska and Canada. She is currently an ethnomusicology consultant focusing on Siberian musics for Heart Sounds International (a ministry of Operation Mobilization) and serves as Executive Director for International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE).*

## Lessons Learned in the Founding of ICE

# FROM ISOLATION TO COMMUNITY

Robin P. Harris

*1 The business world would call us a community of practice — “a group of people informally bound together by shared expertise and passion for a joint enterprise... Communities of practice can drive strategy... solve problems, promote the spread of best practices, develop people’s professional skills, and help [organizations] recruit and retain talent” (E. Wenger and W. Snyder, “Communities of Practice: The Organizational Frontier,” Harvard Business Review, 2/22/2000).*

### The Need for Connections

Isolation—it sank deep into our souls while serving as missionaries in Siberia. Surprisingly, it was not because of the -40° winter temperatures, or the ice fog so thick you couldn’t see across the street; nor was it that the closest large city was over 1000 miles away. Our isolation was of another, more deeply felt kind: the absence of connection to a community who understood our passion for culturally appropriate music and arts in mission. We struggled, trying to instill this vision in the church we were planting, and especially with our expatriate co-workers. The feeling of isolation led us to believe we were the only ones around encouraging local artists. The opposition was wearing us down.

### Creating Community Through Connections

It was then that Dr. Roberta King (see her article in this issue) visited our field and talked to our co-workers about applying ethnomusicology in our context. She encouraged me to watch for opportunities that the Lord was sure to provide. And He did. The very next year, I presented a workshop at

the first Global Consultation on Music and Missions, so I decided to launch a network at that event—a network to encourage and connect people around the world who care about the culturally appropriate engagement of music and arts in mission. Eventually an outstanding board joined me, my husband, Bill, and co-founder Paul Neeley, providing stability and leadership for the fledgling network. We named it the International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE), adopting a word newly coined by music missionary Dave Hall, from the Greek roots of *ethnos* (peoples) and *doxologia* (praising).

Since its launch in 2003, the ICE community[i] has grown steadily to over 200 people from 60 countries, connecting its associates to one another worldwide. We use technology such as Google Groups (e-mail listservs) for prayer requests, news, and announcements. We are helping one another find or create needed resources and are giving one another feedback on our writing projects. We facilitate conferences and seminary courses, gathering people for training, networking, and vision-sharing. ICE has



developed the largest virtual library in the world on the topic of ethnodoxology [[www.worldofworship.org](http://www.worldofworship.org)]. We even tackle large projects together: over 50 articles in this issue are written by ICE associates all over the world and a book is planned for publication within the next few years.

### Lessons We’ve Learned

We’ve learned that we’re not alone. Isolation can lead to discouragement, but a connection to like-minded people helps us realize that others share our problems—and that together we can find effective solutions. We’ve also learned that it takes a huge amount of work and a firm commitment to keep those connections healthy and functioning smoothly. Like raising a child, it demands a lot of attention, especially in the early years. Finally, we’ve learned that the joy of an encouraging, loving, creative community is absolutely worth the effort it takes! ICE is a joyful community, facilitating the growth of an arts-in-mission movement where people are connected, partnering together for Kingdom purposes ●



*Josh Davis Proskuneco Ministries | Founder, President*

*Bringing Nations Together in Worship* Josh Davis  
**PROSKUNECO**

After this, I looked...and behold, a great multitude...from every nation, tribe, people, and language...crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne!" [Revelation 7:9,10]

It starts with a vision. Many years ago, God gave me a glimpse of nations coming together to worship Him, here on earth as it is in heaven. It is a vision, birthed in the heart of God, recorded throughout Scripture, and therefore worthy of energy, resources, and even my life! Proskuneco Ministries ([www.proskuneco.info](http://www.proskuneco.info)) was formed in 2003 because of this clear, scriptural, and powerful vision. Without such a vision, we would have given up many times by now!

It flows from who you are. I grew up in the Dominican Republic as a missionary kid. I have two cultures living (sometimes peaceably, sometimes not) inside me. Proskuneco began by uniting Spanish-speakers and English-speakers in worship. It began where we were, with who we

*"Growth Through Unity" - Kate Thomas*



knew...and grew from there. In 2009, we led worship in over twenty different languages!

It takes time. Proskuneco's first major project was "Your Kingdom Come"—a CD that subtly introduces the concept of multilingual worship to the average mono-cultural North American. Recorded in 2003, the CD is predominantly in English, but with some musical flavor from Latin America, one bi-lingual song, and one tri-lingual chorus. We have learned that baby steps, over time, are the best way to help people progress. Some of the people who were involved in our first recording are now (seven years later) regularly involved in multicultural worship and ministry, and several are even on staff with Proskuneco. Our latest CD, "With One Heart," was released in late 2009 and incorporates thirteen languages and a wide variety of musical styles.

It grows along the lines of relationships. Relationships are both important and messy. We have learned that well-meaning people can unintentionally

*Hands of "Venga Tu Reino" worshipers*



de-value the culture of another. How have we learned this? Because our friends have been brave enough to ask tough questions and confront us. Rather than running away from conflict, we have learned to lean into it, and to allow God to use it to unite His people.

Let me leave you with a tangible example of these principles. In 2004, we had the vision for "Venga Tu Reino," a mostly Spanish-language worship CD. We assembled Dominican and American worshiper friends from several different denominations for an intense week of rehearsals, worship concerts, and a studio recording. Most of them didn't know each other before that week. Since that week, however, some of the churches represented by these worshipers have partnered together in worship services, community outreaches, and have even regularly shared resources. Most encouraging, some of these Dominican worshipers caught the broader vision of multi-ethnic worship. They are learning Creole, teaching other Dominicans about Haitian culture, and are reaching

across a long-standing barrier between the two countries.

Slowly, but surely, God is bringing His people together in worship and we are allowed to see it with our own eyes! ●

*Brian Schrag holds an MA in Intercultural Studies-Ethnomusicology and a PhD. in Ethnomusicology. He is head of SIL International's Ethnomusicology and Arts Group and coordinates and teaches in the World Arts program at the Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics ([www.gial.edu](http://www.gial.edu)). He worked as an arts consultant in Central Africa for seven years and currently serves as Vice President of Education and Training for the International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE).*



*Brian Schrag*

*Research and Co-creation*

**SIL ARTS TRAINING PARTNERS**

SIL International's work includes engaging people to help artists in language communities create songs, dramas, dances, stories, poems, and visual arts that respond to their social, physical, and spiritual needs using local art forms. To develop the competencies necessary to do this, we work with training programs containing two essential components. First, we want students to learn how to research a language community's traditional art forms in their cultural context. Just as cross-cultural workers commonly learn new spoken languages, we prepare students to enter into the forms and cultural meanings of a community's artistic languages.

Second, we want students to join creative processes in communities. Students leave prepared to work alongside local artists and leaders to reflect on their artistic resources, think through issues of critical contextualization, and encourage creative output that meets the community's highest standards of artistry, participation, and scriptural fidelity. This creativity responds to the needs of local schools, churches, government, non-governmental organizations, and individuals.

The three formal training programs described below prepare students to perform research and co-creation, each with unique educational affiliations and other characteristics.

Graduate Institute of Applied Linguistics

(Dallas, Texas, USA)

Overview: Designed to prepare students with significant experience or training in any art form to perform research and co-creation in the arts in cross-cultural service. Instruction is campus-based, in English.

**Available courses:**

Linguistics and Anthropology: Introduction to Language Structure, Language and Society, Second Language and Culture Acquisition, Cultural Anthropology, Christianity Across Cultures

Arts courses: Research Methods in Performing Arts, Expressive Form Analysis, Applied Arts, Audio/Video Techniques for Fieldworkers

Arts and Language Development  
Specialization courses: World Arts Analysis, Oral Tradition and Literature, Principles of Literacy, Scripture Use Methods, Theory and Practice of Translation

**Characteristic time commitments:**

To receive a Master's degree in World Arts: 16 months

To prepare students to work as Arts Specialists with SIL, Pioneer Bible Translators, and other organizations: 12-13 months, usually from January to December

Other combinations of courses are possible

Primary instructors: Dr. Brian Schrag (PhD, Ethnomusicology), Michelle Petersen (MA, Language Development and Scripture Use)

Information: [admissions@gial.edu](mailto:admissions@gial.edu), 972.708.7343, [www.gial.org](http://www.gial.org)

European Training Programme (UK campus, Horsleys Green, England)  
Overview: A series of short intensive modules designed to help students with prior training/experience in an aspect of creative arts to develop further skills for research and co-creation in the arts. The modules are intended to be of particular value to those wanting a comprehensive approach to developing a faith-based ministry in music and/or arts anywhere in the world, seeking to extend God's Kingdom through the use of culturally-relevant art forms. "Arts" will encompass music (primarily songs or chants with communicative text, although the significance of instruments will be included); drama/mime/theatre; dance; oral arts (story telling/poetics/proverbs); and visual arts. Instruction is campus-based, in English.

**The ethnomusicology/arts modules that may be offered in any year are:**

Research Methods in Performing Arts; Applied Arts; Audio and Video Techniques; Analysis of Music (non-western); Expressive Form Analysis.

**Other available courses:**

In addition to the ethnomusicology/arts modules, ETP (UK campus)

offers courses of varying lengths in a range of disciplines as may be needed for working in language based development all over the world. These include MA-level field linguistics, translation, literacy, orthography, anthropology, sociolinguistics, language and culture acquisition, Scripture use, communication, biblical Hebrew, exegesis, project planning and implementation, multilingual education, etc. (see ETP website for full list).

#### **Training requirements and time commitments:**

The ethnomusicology/arts course can be taken as a package of modules (taught back to back), or you are welcome to take a single module as suits your needs. Our desire is that any training will be what you need at the right time. The ETP ethnomusicology/arts modules aim to parallel those offered by GIAL, but each module is taught in a concentrated time frame (from 1-3 weeks) rather than combined with other modules and spread over a semester. This reduces costs and enables participants to target specific training when they need it. Certain ethnomusicology/arts modules are required training for the SIL field role of Arts Worker (Research Methods in Performing Arts, Applied Arts,

Audio and Video Techniques) and the remaining modules are aimed at Arts Specialist/Arts Consultant levels. If you decide to embark on a field-based role with SIL, you will require some other courses to prepare you for an initial level role in language work (see options under "Other Available Courses" above).

#### **Accreditation:**

Although some of the ETP language courses count towards the MA Field Linguistics programme (validated by Middlesex University), at this point the ethnomusicology/arts course is not formally accredited. However, many universities will subsequently accept our individual modules as credit hours since a full course breakdown is provided on every certificate.

Primary instructor: Dr. Julie Taylor (PhD, Ethnomusicology), assisted by Dr. Sue Hall-Heimbecker and others.

Information: [etp\\_registrar\\_uk@sil.org](mailto:etp_registrar_uk@sil.org), tel. +44 (0) 1494 682 209, <http://www.eurotp.org/UK/Session.asp?SessionID=239>

Payap University (Chiang Mai, Thailand)  
Overview: Designed to prepare students with interest and practical experience in any art form to perform research and

co-creation in the arts in cross-cultural service. Instruction is in English.

#### **Available courses:**

Arts courses: Certificate in Applied Ethnomusicology and Arts, Certificate in Research Methods for Music and Arts, Certificate in Music and Arts Analysis Techniques

Arts and Language Development

Specialization courses: Certificate in Basic Ethnomusicology and Arts for Multilingual Education

The Arts certificate courses may also be taken as electives under the MA in Linguistics

Linguistics courses: Certificate in Foundational Linguistics, Master of Arts in Linguistics

#### **Characteristic time commitments:**

Each of the Arts certificate courses is of 4 weeks in duration

To receive a Master's degree in Linguistics with Arts electives: 2\_ - 5 years

Primary instructors: Todd and Mary Beth Saurman (MA, Ethnomusicology), Debbi Hosken (course coordinator), plus guest lecturers  
Information: [www.ic.payap.ac.th/graduate/linguistics/certificate.php](http://www.ic.payap.ac.th/graduate/linguistics/certificate.php) or [debbi\\_hosken@gmail.com](mailto:debbi_hosken@gmail.com) ●



*Roberta R. King, Ph.D., is associate professor of communication and ethnomusicology in Fuller Seminary's School of Intercultural Studies where she oversees and teaches in the Global Christian Worship/Ethnomusicology program. Dr. King's mission experience includes twenty-two years in Africa, based in Nairobi, Kenya at Daystar University and serving with WorldVenture across the continent. She specializes in cross-cultural Christian music communication and is currently doing research in the Middle East and Southeast Asia*

*Roberta R. King, Ph.D.*

## THE GLOBAL CHRISTIAN WORSHIP/ETHNOMUSICOLOGY PROGRAM

Set within the context of a leading, world-renowned school of mission and missional studies, the Global Christian Worship/Ethnomusicology focus at Fuller provides students opportunities to study, explore, research and train in effective cross-cultural ministry and mission through music and worship. We believe that music is intimately embedded in the cultural contexts of the many peoples among whom we seek to influence for the Kingdom of God. We also believe that cultural musics and related arts can play critical roles in Christian witness, church planting, Christian worship, spiritual formation, and social development. Thus, we provide a holistic approach to training students



*Fuller Seminary Global Christian Worship students presenting the Exodus Story Contextualized for an Unreached People Group in India*

in music, mission, and ministry by focusing on the intersection between the Word of God, cultural contexts, the work of the Church, and personal spiritual development. At Fuller's School of Intercultural Studies, we refer to this foundational missiological paradigm as "Word, World, Church, and Spiritual Pilgrimage." This means that students incorporate studies in missiology, ethnomusicology (music and culture), biblical studies, theology and global Christian worship and are thus equipped with skills to integrate and appropriately contextualize the Gospel in intercultural contexts.

Distinctive features include addressing questions such as:

- How do we worship and witness in global and local communities?
- What roles do the great diversity of musics and their related arts play in different communities?
- What can we learn about a people through their music culture?
- How do we communicate the Gospel effectively and appropriate through cultural musics and related arts, such as dance and drama?
- How do we utilize music and the arts to reach the 70 percent of the world's population that is non-literate?
- How do we work among peoples of differing world religions in ways that meaningfully point them to Jesus Christ?

Key courses at the MA level include:



Perspectives in Global Christian Worship, Exegeting Music Cultures, Storytelling and Song (Orality), Ethnomusicology: Theory and Analysis, and Christian Communication through Music.

We offer training and studies on four levels:

1. Certificate in Global Christian Worship: Six courses that allow students to concentrate on this area only and/or as a supplement to other areas of studies, i.e. Children-at-Risk, Islamics, Development, and Worship-Theology-and the Arts.
2. MA in Intercultural Studies: Full training in missiology with special area of study (six courses) in Global Christian Worship/Ethnomusicology.
3. DMiss (Doctor of Missiology)-Ethnomusicology: An in-service applied research degree taught in cohorts that facilitates improving and innovating new ministry and mission approaches, focusing on ethnomusicology.
4. PhD (Doctor of Philosophy): an original research degree that prepares students for a life of scholarship and equips them for teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

More information and application forms can be found at [www.fuller.edu](http://www.fuller.edu) ●

*John Benham, Ed.D. Coordinator of Ethnomusicology, Liberty University  
President, Music In World Cultures, Inc.*

## ETHNOMUSICOLOGY AT LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

*John Benham*

With its entry into the burgeoning involvement of artists in missions in the 1990s, Music In World Cultures brought together leading Christian practitioners in the field of ethnomusicology to develop a curricular model for preparation of musicians for cross-cultural ministry. From the beginning there were two primary concerns: 1) the curriculum should be one of exemplary academic integrity; and, 2) the results should provide practical application to cross-cultural ministry. In 2008, Liberty University adopted the curriculum in two formats: The Master of Arts in Ethnomusicology (42 credits) and a Specialization in Ethnomusicology (18 credits).

The curriculum provides advanced study in world music for individuals seeking career service in cross-cultural ministry. Students learn the general principles of ethnomusicology, gain an understanding of the role of an ethnomusicologist, and have the opportunity to develop an area of specialization. Courses provide a credible academic basis for students who may continue their education through doctoral studies. Curricular content includes four basic components.

- Scholarship and Research: academic readings, history and theories of application
- Skill Development: non-Western music theories, transcription and analysis of music, cultural analysis
- Performance: applied study and/or ensemble performance in ethnic music
- Application: field experience (internship), thesis or project

Liberty emphasizes the application and practice of principles of ethnomusicology from a Christian perspective, with specific preparation for cross-cultural ministry. Biblical principles are applied to the field with the intent to prepare the student in four phases of ministry.

- Pre-evangelism/evangelism: cultural analysis of worldview, storytelling with indigenous music forms
- Worship: development of indigenous music for worship in the church
- Discipleship: development of indigenous music for teaching and admonition
- Evangelism: development of indigenous music for outreach

Courses include Ethnic Music Theory, Introduction to Ethnomusicology, Field of Ethnomusicology, Anthropology

of Music, Organology (Instruments), Music, Orality & Storytelling, Worship and Culture, Resources and Materials in Ethnomusicology, Seminar(s) in Ethnic Music, Ethnic Music Performance, Transcription and Analysis of Non-Western Music, Applied Ethnomusicology, Research Methods in Ethnomusicology, Field Experience in Ethnomusicology, and Master's Thesis or Project.

In order to make the course of study accessible to the greatest number of people, the student is required to complete only four residence courses. These may be completed in one or more summers as one or two week intensive courses. All other courses may be completed online via distance education. The student, therefore, is able to apply coursework in a practical way while on site in their field location, including performance requirements, the internship and thesis or project requirements.

To further facilitate distance education studies, Liberty maintains a significant body of online resources for the student, including the Groves Encyclopedia of Music and Musicians, the Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, and Smithsonian Global Sound ●

*Jill Ford, Arts Tutor at All Nations, UK*

## ALL NATIONS

All Nations is an international cross-cultural mission training college in the UK. We recognise the importance of the creative arts in our mission training and our vision in this area is:

“To cultivate creativity, imagination, impulsion and motivation for mission through the creative arts, and affirm that the arts are “agents of change” vital to mission in the 21st Century.”

We aim to deliver relevant programmes of training for long and short term mission. We recognise that the arts are a unique and essential part of the curriculum to teach skills, competences,

flexibility, good communication and creativity.

Since 2003, our work in the creative arts has evolved and developed. We began with a series of half modules in a variety of subject areas, such as a biblical framework for the arts, performing arts, music and worship, ethnomusicology, visual arts, dance and creative evangelism. Any student could opt to complete these modules to compliment their Biblical and Intercultural Studies Programme. Those with a specific interest could make up one third of their programme with arts subjects to gain an All Nations Certificate in the Arts and Intercultural Studies. At this stage you could say it was a “pick and mix” approach, but it provided a good introduction for students to experience and enjoy the creative arts.

Due to the popularity of the modules, we developed a second year Diploma Programme and focused on specific

areas such as performing arts, music, film and postmodernism. Students wanted to know how to devise their own performance pieces and experiment as to how they could use drama as a tool to help educate communities. Many of our students are able musicians, so we developed a world worship music module to teach how to use their musical skills in a multicultural context. We often have an influx of artists, so film and postmodernism were subjects which we thought could allow them to understand aspects of contemporary Western culture.

By 2005, we had twelve arts modules available and Open University accreditation for an Arts Pathway. Students were now able to study a series of arts modules at three levels and exit with a validated BA Hons Degree in Biblical and Intercultural Studies with an Arts Pathway. This opened up the possibility of our students carrying out research in

different areas of the arts and mission, of which we have had a variety of topics covered from Turkish music, Nepali secular and sacred music, Cambodian dance and Hindi film, to name a few.

Our most recent development has been to integrate some of our arts modules in to the mainstream programme so that every student entering the first year at All Nations receives training in three areas of the creative arts. The significance of this is that all students begin their mission training with an understanding of the importance of the arts in mission.

We continue to develop our summer programmes in international dance and world worship music. We currently have a former student as our first artist-in-residence ●

If you would like to know more about the arts at All Nations, please contact: Jill Ford - Arts Programme Leader - [j.ford@allnations.ac.uk](mailto:j.ford@allnations.ac.uk)

*Mark Hileh*

## HOUGHTON COLLEGE NYS

Houghton College is initiating a new interdisciplinary Master of Arts degree in World Music, Theology and Intercultural studies for two main reasons: 1) We believe that students are increasingly interested in bringing world music perspectives to their various capacities as music educators, ministers and missionaries; indeed, the twenty-first century world strongly encourages such perspectives and may even demand them; and 2) We believe Houghton

is well placed to address this interest because of its strong programs in music (including an established graduate music program), theology and intercultural studies, as well as its long and fruitful engagement with world Christianity.

The main goal of this academically focused, interdisciplinary degree is to provide students with perspectives and abilities in global music topics

that are applicable to a wide variety of situations. For example, a student who has an undergraduate music education degree would be able to explore how connections between world music and multicultural/global issues within a Christian worldview could be brought to bear in their work as teachers (an increasingly important aspect of their work, actually). The degree meets the New York State guidelines for the required Masters



degree for Professional Certification in music education. Many of the same elements apply to those who facilitate Christian worship, especially as the Church becomes more influenced by global Christian perspectives. And the relevance seems clear for those who want to minister in other cultures. We also expect graduates of this program to help their communities with the transition to thinking about music in a broader, more global way, something likely to be critical to effective musical advocacy in this century. This, then, is not an ethnomusicology degree per se; rather it is an exploration of the relevance and applications of global musical perspectives from within a Christian worldview. The degree is structured so that

eighteen of the thirty-three required hours are devoted to understanding music in a globalized world; twelve hours are dedicated to courses in theology and intercultural studies that are relevant to global engagement; and three hours constitute the completion of an interdisciplinary thesis project. Students are also required to complete and reflect on a cross-cultural musical experience. A combination of resident and guest faculty (including Heart Sounds International global musician and Houghton alumnus Frank Fortunato) deliver unusual courses such as “Globalization and Music History,” “Applied World Music Workshop,” “Music, Spirituality and Religion Across Cultures,” “Transcription and Analysis of Diverse Musics,” “History of the

Global Christian Movement,” “Theology, Faith and Culture,” and others. Specific music courses are required, while the theology and intercultural studies components are offered more flexibly. The program is strictly a part-time endeavor. Courses are delivered in three possible configurations during May and/or June (and/or possibly July) each year: evenings, week-long intensives, and/or a combination of these. We enroll cohorts of 4-10 students for each delivery “track,” and courses are offered such that students can complete the program in that delivery track over 3, 4 or 5 years. As the program grows we may be able to offer more flexibility to students. For more information, please visit [www.houghtonglobalmusic.info](http://www.houghtonglobalmusic.info) ●

*John and Kristina Henry*

## SCHOOL OF MISSIONS ETHNO ARTS FOCUS PANAMA

Sonidos de la Selva, or Sounds of the Jungle in English, is a ministry run by the Youth With A Mission center in the Republic of Panama. For the past three years, Sonidos de la Selva has focused on encouraging the seven indigenous tribes of this beautiful tropical country to worship their True Creator in the way that He created them to worship.

Methods from applied ethnomusicology combined with a heart to release believers to sing the styles they learned from childhood—playing the flutes and drums that make them come alive—have been the basis of Sonidos de la Selva’s multiple song-writing (and even dance-writing) workshops.

Many recordings have been made and they have been an encouragement to everyone who hears them.

The program has also raised awareness in Panamanian and other Latin American missions-minded organizations about the importance of heart music and of the great potential that utilizing a people’s ethnic artistic expression has to effectively communicate the Gospel message and make Christianity something familiar, not foreign.

Seeing the great joy in these indigenous peoples’ faces when, for the first time ever, they hear their music with their

instruments, singing about their God is something to behold indeed! Following the Holy Spirit’s guidance, John and Kristina Henry, staff of Sonidos de la Selva, felt led to start a training school that would introduce practical ways of using the cultural arts to communicate Jesus to any people group.

It is called the School of Missions Ethno-Arts Focus. It is a twenty-two-week course, certified by the University of the Nations. The course includes a twelve-week lecture phase with expert teachers in Ethnomusicology, Redeeming Cultures, Oral Storytelling, Mass Media in Cross Cultural Settings, Introduction to Cultural Anthropology

and Ethnographic Methods, among other topics. The second half of the course is a ten-week practicum in which students use the practical tools they learn within the ministerial area that God has put on their hearts.

The program targets students, both young and old, who have an interest in using the arts, media, or cultural

anthropology to see the nations come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, but perhaps are not ready to commit to a full degree program or other long-term project in one of these specific areas of study. Or perhaps they simply desire practical tools that will help them make the Gospel relevant to people in their current or future ministries.

This first school launched March 15th, 2010. Look for the next course in July, 2011. A prerequisite to this course is YWAM's Discipleship Training School. For more information, please write John and Kristina Henry at [nationswillworship@gmail.com](mailto:nationswillworship@gmail.com). Please check out the website at <http://www.ywampanama.org/eng/schools/gospel.html> ●

## THE ETHNOMUSICOLOGY EMPHASIS AT MOODY BIBLE INSTITUTE

*Beth Neagle*

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*Alyce Hardee*

## BELHAVEN COLLEGE

Young Christian artists in disciplines including music, dance, theatre, and visual art are being drawn to study at Belhaven University. Not only does Belhaven place a high value on excellence in the arts, it also desires to instill in its students a biblical worldview. In all of the arts programs at Belhaven, there is a deep understanding that Christian artists are called to create honest artistic expressions that glorify God, without sacrificing the integrity of the artistic process or the quality of the work produced.

The artist's call in missions should be no different: neither the integrity of the Gospel message nor the quality of the work should be compromised. Bob Pennebaker, chair of the Visual Arts Department at Belhaven, understands the difficulty of adequately synthesizing art-making and missions, especially short-term missions, since many artistic media take time to fully develop. Pennebaker has been partnering

with Operation Mobilization (OM) to develop ways for visual artists to spend extended time in a cross-cultural environment, where they can work on their own art inspired by the local culture. As they develop relationships within the community, they can create art capable of starting an honest conversation. Students in this program take on summer assignments that allow them to do their own work while connecting with local artists in majority world settings, mounting art exhibitions, ministering to both the artists and the local community.

Belhaven University has much to offer performing artists, as well, in the area of missions. Both the Theatre and the Music Departments offer a ministry emphasis, as well as opportunities for short-term mission trips. This summer, for instance, a group of music students will be traveling to Japan. In addition, Doxa, a student-led dance ensemble, produces much-anticipated dance

concerts annually to raise support for global missionaries.

Recently, one student traveled to Haiti to work with La Clef, a ministry which uses the arts as a bridge to French-speaking cultures. The La Clef team will be working alongside churches and orphanages in rebuilding projects during the day and engaging in neighborhood arts celebrations and performances in the evenings. After graduation, this student will spend a year working with and helping to develop La Clef's permanent base in Montréal.

Excitement is growing at Belhaven about the possibilities of the arts and missions, and it is at the heart of the University to develop servant leaders who seek the Lord's calling on their life with passion, discipline and excellence. Passion is certainly the drive in all of the arts at Belhaven: passion for the medium, and passion for Christ ●

*Arts in Transformation Concentration,  
MA. in Urban Studies at Eastern University*

*Dr. Nathan  
J. Corbitt*

## UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION

What happens when universities partner with local NGO's to provide experiential based education? Answer: exciting alliances for training scholar practitioners. In keeping with Eastern's commitment to Faith, Reason and Justice, the Arts in Transformation program was designed with an interdisciplinary focus on theory—as well

as faith integration—and professional development, applied research and field-intensive community partnerships. Learning is woven into the fabric of the community. How can you effectively weave these goals for practical community experience when the tradition of academic study is often based in classroom teaching?

In 2007, Eastern formed an educational alliance with BuildaBridge International. Since 2001, BuildaBridge had provided intense training and education for engaging the arts in community service. Their practical community work with vulnerable populations in Philadelphia and around the world provided Eastern with an opportunity for a rich



program of study. The majority of the arts courses are offered through the BuildaBridge Institute in June of each year. Students meet community artists and professionals from around the world and from many related art forms. Opportunities are provided for direct service in both local and global service projects. Once the formal school year starts, creative art students share an interdisciplinary residency classroom experience with students in community development and youth leadership. Here, creative artists of all disciplines learn to work in teams, much like the real world experience of community organizations. There is much cross-fertilization of ideas.

This fifteen credit hour concentration is offered as part of the MA in Urban

Studies Program, Philadelphia. Students aren't educated so much as they experience their education. In a modified residency, students work in their specialty with artist masters and their community-or church-based arts organization in the vital effort to build relationships and a spirit of service. The program prepares artists, community and congregational leaders, social service professionals, and nonprofit organization personnel to integrate the arts effectively in education and community development.

Students engage in a field practicum, locally and internationally. Past projects have included environmental mural making in Turks and Caicos following a hurricane, assisting a local

congregation to evaluate a jewelry making project with sex workers in the Dominican Republic, and designing and implementing a new song collaboration with local US congregations. A thesis is required.

Basic arts courses include: Foundations for Arts in Transformation, Arts in Spiritual Development, Arts in Education, Arts in Social Services, Creativity and Human Development, Arts and Economic Development, Arts and Social Commentary, Culture in Community Contexts. ●

For information contact: Dr. J. Nathan Corbitt, AIT Coordinator at: ncorbitt@eastern.edu

## RESOURCES

*Reviewed by Julie Taylor*

### Bookreview

## TAKING IT TO THE STREET

*Taking It to the Streets: Using the Arts to Transform Your Community.*  
by J. Nathan Corbitt and Vivian Nix-Early  
Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2003  
Book review by Julie Taylor  
(SIL International Arts Consultant)

Taking It to the Streets focuses on using arts to minister to the "tough places" of American inner cities. The book is a particularly valuable resource for churches struggling to relate effectively to multi-ethnic urban contexts and the growing societal divide between rich and poor. Clearly, Christians need to find new approaches to creative

mission and worship, stepping out from the comfort zones of the evangelical church and discovering what "speaks" on the streets. The authors interview a number of artists who are living out their faith in marginalized communities and we glimpse how effective the accompanying affirmation of art forms can be. Whether reggae, street theatre, mime, a simple drawing or even a website, all are effective vehicles for God's redemptive message. An arts-centered ministry is also vital for education, mobilization, tolerance-building, healing and nurturing.

The perspective of "horizontal theology" (p.20) is particularly relevant, reminding us of the commandment to love our neighbour as our self (Luke 10:27). We are also challenged to consider the practical applications of a "theology of marginality" (p.48), reaching out to those who exist on the fringes of the church with art forms that speak most convincingly to their hearts. The authors create a model for social change that links stages of social response with appropriate art typologies, starting with developing human critical awareness through prophetic arts. Personal relationships and societal transformation

are then nurtured by arts of an agape nature, culminating in celebrative arts that help develop new core values and artistic traditions.

Although the authors do not extend their research beyond American city/

urban environments, I would urge readers to ponder how the core challenges for a holistic ministry in communicative arts can be applied to a wider range of contexts and nations. A tiny rural African village may seem a

world apart, yet the rejection of cultural art forms by many churches results in the same alienation that urban city dwellers sense of Western churches. A thought-provoking book, and highly recommended ●

*Bookreview*

*Reviewed by Vernon Charter*

**ALL THE WORLD IS SINGING**

*Review of All the World Is Singing: Glorifying God through the Worship Music of the Nations, Tyrone, GA: Authentic Publishing, 2006.*

All the World Is Singing is the first published collection of stories that document the power of music within the global body of Christ. The forty-five chapters in this volume contain case studies from more than thirty different countries, many of which describe how churches were planted through the medium of song and how music was the key to opening hearts to the gospel. Other stories recount the process by which new songs were “birthed,” as missionaries provided the catalyst for

their composition. Still others describe the comfort and courage that worshipping Christians have found in suffering and persecution and celebrate the ways that churches have been strengthened and empowered in their witness through the power of their own “heart music.”

Reading All the World Is Singing is a deeply inspiring and enriching experience for anyone who cares about worship and has a heart for missions. As I read these remarkable stories, I had the sense of a wonderful new chapter in church history, a “dress rehearsal” for the worship of the great company described in Revelation chapters 5 through 7, “from every nation, tribe, people and

language,” who sing the praises of the Lamb whom they will worship throughout eternity. In my estimation, this book should be required reading for every student of missions. The book includes a CD-ROM with numerous audio and video clips of musical performances. All the World Is Singing is published by Authentic Publishing and can be purchased at <http://www.worldofworship.org/marketplace/> ●

Reviewed by Vernon Charter, D.W.S. (cand) Professor of Music and Worship Arts Prairie Bible College Three Hills, Alberta, Canada T0M 2A0

*Steve Scott and John Franklin*

**SUGGESTED READING ON THE ARTS**

We hope this brief list of books on arts in church and mission will provide some resources for understanding why the arts are important for the missional task of the church. Some discuss how the arts can be engaged for cross-cultural mission and communication and open the way for culturally specific forms of Christian art in other parts of the world.

Others deal with the artist as a member of the church and the Christian community. We fully recognize that most of these works are written from a Western perspective, though we made every effort to find material from other cultural contexts.

**The Christian and Culture**

*Crouch, Andy. Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2008.*  
*Moore, T.M. Culture Matters: A Call for Consensus on Christian Cultural Engagement. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2007.*  
*Scott, Steve. Crying for a Vision and*

*Other Essays. Edited by Gord Wilson, 2nd ed. Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2007.*

*Scott, Steve. Like a House on Fire: Renewal of the Arts in a Post Modern Culture. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002.*

Crouch makes it clear that we cannot avoid culture, and it is not enough to merely critique, to passively consume, or simply copy it. Instead, we are called to recover a dynamic creativity in a way that is redemptive and provides an alternative to culture's normal patterns. Moore makes a similar case tracing cultural engagement through church history, drawing from African Bishop Augustine, Celtic art and the reformed tradition. Scott explores the possibility of genuine cultural engagement in a world increasingly shaped by Postmodernism and multiculturalism. He draws upon his own art practice and research in Europe, USA and South East Asia. Scott provides a biblically rooted exploration of current themes connecting arts, faith and culture.

- Brand, Hilary and Adrienne Chaplin. *Art and Soul: Signposts for Christians in the Arts.* Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2002.
- Rookmaaker, Hans. *Modern Art and the Death of a Culture.* Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press 2007.
- Schaeffer, Francis. *Art and the Bible: Two Essays.* 2nd ed: Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2007.
- Seerveld, Calvin. *Bearing Fresh Olive Leaves: Alternative Steps in Understanding Art,* Carlisle, England: Piquant Press, 2000.
- Spencer, William David and Aida Besancon Spencer, eds. *God through the Looking Glass: Glimpses from the Arts.*

Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1998.

- Turner, Steve. *Imagine: A Vision for Christians in the Arts.* Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2001.
  - Wolterstorff, Nicholas. *Art in Action: Towards a Christian Aesthetic.* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980.
- These are foundational for inspiring Christians to engage in more critical reflection on art and culture, rather than mere disengagement and withdrawal. They also argue for the wholehearted embrace of artistic expression, rooted in a Christian worldview. For example, Steve Turner speaks out of his own professional practice as a poet and journalist. Brand and Chaplin digest and apply some of the best ideas and teaching from these (and other) sources and point the way forward for the Christian artist in the twenty-first century.

- Begbie, Jeremy, ed. *Beholding the Glory: Incarnation through the Arts.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000.
- Bustard, Ned, ed. *It Was Good: Making Art to the Glory of God.* Baltimore, MD: Square Halo Books, 2007.
- Dyrness, William A. *Visual Faith: Art, Theology, and Worship in Dialogue.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001.
- Johnson, Todd and Dale Savidge. *Performing the Sacred: Theology and Theatre in Dialogue,* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009.

These books bring theological clarity and genuinely "missional" perspective to the ongoing discussions about the arts and cultural engagement. They also cast important light on the conversation between art, theology and worship.

### **Christian Art in History.**

Dillenberger, Jane. *Style and Content in Christian Art.* Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2005.

- Jensen, Robin, M. *Face to Face: Portraits of the Divine in Early Christianity.* Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005.
- McGregor, Neil and Erika Langmuir. *Seeing Salvation: Images of Christ in Art.* New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000.

Dillenberger helps us to understand the style and read the Christian content in some art in European history and culture. Jensen provides a valuable resource opening a window on the place of image in early Christianity McGregor and Langmuir's work 'grew out' of the phenomenally successful show at the National Gallery in London in 2000. As such it attests to the enduring power of classic art with recognizably Christian content to speak across historical and cultural barriers.

### **Church, Culture, Mission**

Eubank, Allan. *Dance Drama before the Throne.* Chiang Mai, Thailand: TCF Press, 2004.

Joan and Alan Eubank have pioneered the use of relevant art forms, such as traditional Thai drama, in their work among the people in Northern Thailand. This book narrates their vision, practice, learning and gained insights.

- Fleming, Daniel J. *Each with His Own Brush: Contemporary Christian Art in Asia and Africa.* New York: Friendship Press, fifth printing 1946.
- One of the early examples of books that talked about and provided examples of the Christian faith expressed through



local artistic traditions in other parts of the world.

- Hunter III, George, G. *The Celtic Way of Evangelism*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000.
- Jensen, Robin, M. *The Substance of Things Seen: Art, Faith, and the Christian Community*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004.
- Taylor, David O. *For the Beauty of the Church: Casting a Vision for the Arts*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2010.
- Walls, Andrew. "The Western Discovery of Non-Western Art," in *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Press, 1996.
- Zahniser, A.H Mathias. *Symbol and Ceremony*. Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1997.

These works offer insights into how the arts may be a context for the missional task of the church.

- Lehmann, Arno. *Christian Art in Asia and Africa*. St Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1969.

- Takenaka, Maseo and Ron O'Grady. *The Bible through Asian Eyes*. Auckland, NZ: Pace Publications, 1991.
- O'Grady, Ron, ed. *Christ for All People: Celebrating a World of Christian Art*. Auckland, NZ: Pace Publications, 2001.

These three volumes not only provide engaging insights into how artists visualize their faith in a "non Western" context, they also provide dynamic reproductions of some of the artwork.

**Arts, Mission and Artists**

- Corbitt, Nathan J. and Vivian Nix-Early. *Taking it to the Streets: Using the Arts to Transform Your Community*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2003.

This book deals with the role of the arts in transforming and empowering local communities. It contains essential insights for the local church as it engages in urban mission.

- Noland, Rory. *The Heart of the Artist*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999.
- McElroy, J. Scott. *Finding Divine Inspiration: Working with the Holy Spirit in Your Creativity*. Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2008.
- Luz, Manuel. *Imagine That: Discovering Your Unique Role as a Christian Artist*. Chicago: Moody Press, 2009.

These books balance some of the more academic concerns in art and culture with pastoral concerns about the artist in the local church. Noland looks at various dimensions of character formation and spiritual growth for the artist who wishes to serve the church. McElroy explores the issue of artistic creativity, inspiration and co-operation with the Holy Spirit. He does so by narrating some hard won insights from his own spiritual formation and growth as an artist and as a person. Manuel Luz combines his deep learning from some of the authors listed above with his own insights, many of them acquired "along the way" as a jazz musician and an arts pastor in a local church ●

*A. Scott Moreau and Mike O'Rear*

**MISSIONS AND THE ARTS**

It would be reasonable to assume a natural connection between the arts, mission, and the Web. Arts touch the heart and soul, nourishing and challenging us to explore our faith and our Creator in ways that connect through our cultural lenses. The Web gives creative folk an interface for posting their works and wrestling with them in public view—in ways simply unimaginable twenty years ago.

Bringing both together enables people to engage across cultural boundaries, bringing Christ to new places in new ways. In our work for *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, Mike and I put together a page of links that will help you connect to arts via the Web (<http://www.mislinks.org/practical/arts.htm>). While reading this abridgment provides a glimpse of what is available, the only way to see the richness and variety of

what Christians around the world are doing is by going to the Mission and the Arts page and checking out resources that catch your attention or interest. Think of this synopsis as a "door to" rather than a "bucket of" content. The door opens to vast worlds of the artistic imagination, all able to be harnessed for missional purposes. We offer three main categories of resources. Gateway or directory sites for the arts

are somewhat limited. The directory we found with the most significant links is the Great Commission Worship and Arts Center (<http://disciplethenations.org/>). Be forewarned—while the links are helpful and robust, the various pages of the site are among the most visually distracting you can find; if you can overlook them, you will find many helpful resources.

Arts-focused sites are those which collect various exhibits and examples. As a whole, “the arts” encompasses a broad range of classes including literary arts (e.g., poetry, prose), visual arts (e.g., painting, sculpture, photography, movies), functional arts (e.g., architecture, fashion) and performing arts (e.g., music, drama, dance, storying). We organized the resources we found into five sets: music, storying, dance/drama, visual arts and movies/videos. Each set of links offers resources for worship, outreach, personal reflection, inspiration, communication and more. For example, in the visual arts set, the “Art at OMSC” link ([www.omsc.org/art.html](http://www.omsc.org/art.html)) introduces artists who have served

in the artists-in-residence program at OMSC (Overseas Ministries Study Center in New Haven, Connecticut), offers portfolios of their works, and highlights books of their art published through OMSC.

The links in these sections offer entryways into a rich variety examples and reflection on artistic media. All of them can be used for missional purposes, ranging from development to outreach to justice. The art may challenge ungodly values or express godly ones in ways that prod or provoke those who experience them.

Journals/E-zines/Articles link to a variety of reflections on the arts through articles, essays, editorials and reviews. Altogether, these sites aggregate hundreds of helpful reflections on the various arts around the world in ways that connect to mission. One of the richest resources is the virtual library on the International Council of Ethnodoxologists page (ICE; <http://www.worldofworship.org/>); I found it easy to get lost among the rich sets of resources!

*John Franklin is Executive Director of Imago, a national initiative in support of Christians in the arts in Canada. He is based in Toronto and, before joining Imago in 1998, he taught philosophy at Tyndale College. Currently, he is an adjunct professor in theology at Tyndale Seminary and Toronto School of Theology at the University of Toronto. His special interest is in theology and the arts. He also serves as Chair of Lausanne Canada and Co-ordinator of the WEA-MC Task Force on Art in Mission.*

## STONE BY STONE WITH COLIN HARBINSON

*Review by John Franklin*

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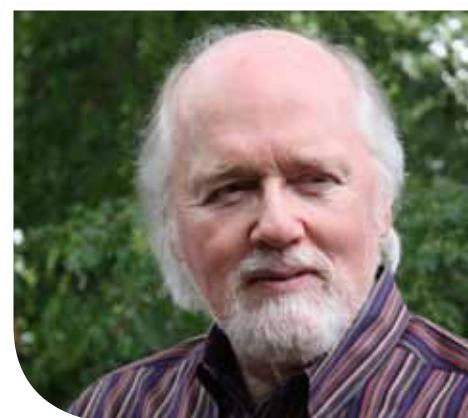
challenging us to explore our faith and our Creator in ways that connect through our cultural lenses. The Web gives creative folk an interface for

### Conclusion

The Web is, in many ways, tailored for a variety of artistic forms. As increasingly larger bandwidth becomes available, the digital quality of images, videos, music, storying and exhibits can be seen in all their richness through the medium of the Internet. While some artistic media are best seen in person (e.g., sculpture), others still can be viewed and used in powerful ways. For example, the popularity of the LifeHouse Everything skit ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyheJ480LYA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyheJ480LYA))—viewed more than 12 million times—clearly indicates it hits a chord in the hearts of many. As mission-focused artists continue to take advantage of the possibilities, we hope that our page can help you think of creative ways to harness arts for missional purposes ●

### Reference:

Moreau, A. Scott and Mike O’Rear. 2010. “Missions and the Arts.” *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 46:2 (April): 232-237.



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simply unimaginable twenty years ago. Bringing both together enables people to engage across cultural boundaries, bringing Christ to new places in new ways. In our work for Evangelical Missions Quarterly, Mike and I put together a page of links that will help you connect to arts via the Web (<http://www.mislinks.org/practical/arts.htm>).

While reading this abridgment provides a glimpse of what is available, the only

way to see the richness and variety of what Christians around the world are doing is by going to the Mission and the Arts page and checking out resources that catch your attention or interest. Think of this synopsis as a “door to” rather than a “bucket of” content. The door opens to vast worlds of the artistic imagination, all able to be harnessed for missional purposes. We offer three main categories of resources.

Gateway or directory sites for the arts are somewhat limited. The directory we found with the most significant links is the Great Commission Worship and Arts Center (<http://disciplethenations.org/>). Be forewarned—while the links are helpful and robust, the various pages of the site are among the most visually distracting you can find; if you can overlook them, you will find many helpful resources ●



## ARTS IN MISSION 2011 Training for Cross-Cultural Ministry

The last several years have seen a huge employment of the arts worldwide. Books, articles, websites, conferences and workshops all witness to this growing awareness of the importance of the arts as one of the mighty tools that God has been using. The arts build bridges and open doors to connect people across nations, cultures and languages. This has led to a growing interest among mission agencies, churches and parachurch ministries to train people to use the arts effectively, especially across cultures.

Among the groups focusing on the missional engagement of the arts has been The International Council of Ethnodoxologists. ICE has marshaled a global network spanning fifty nations and launched online resources, forums, conferences and workshops. The Summer Institute of Linguistics does in depth training of music and arts missionaries to become arts consultants and specialists on the field. Most recently the Mission Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance has started the Arts in Mission Task Force to encourage artistic endeavors in the nations. These and other groups have joined forces to launch a landmark gathering.

**ARTS IN MISSION 2011: Training for Cross-Cultural Ministry**

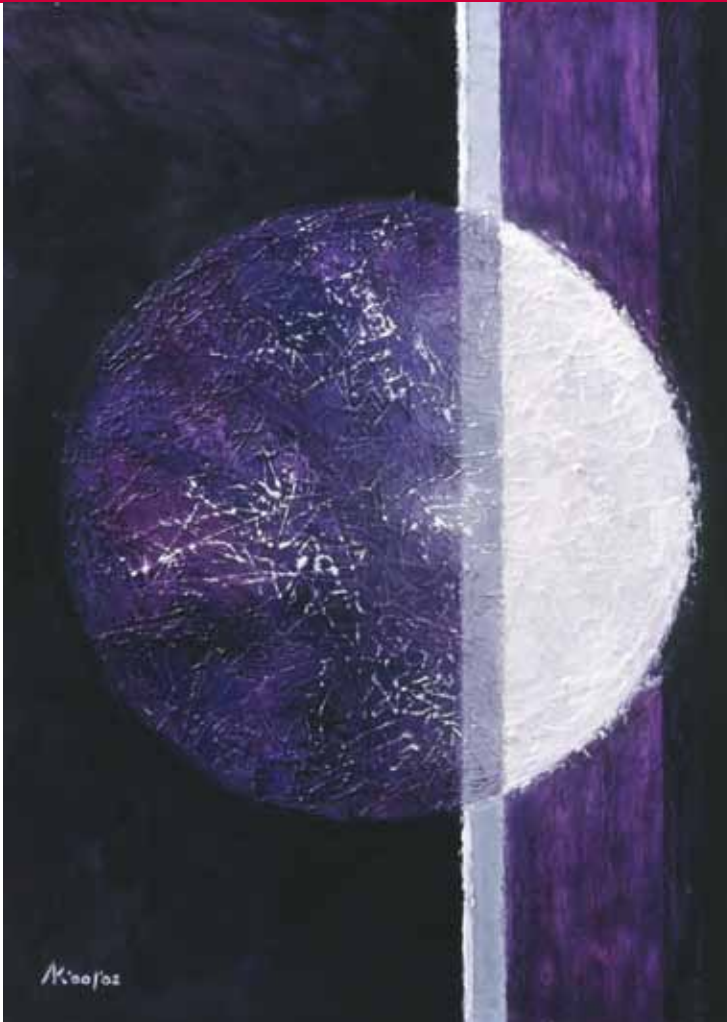
Sunday 4th Sept - Sun 11th Sept 2011

All Nations Christian College (UK)

Mark your calendars. Information will be forthcoming at [www.worldofworship.org](http://www.worldofworship.org)

# ARTS IN MISSION





## NETWORKS

## ASIAN CHRISTIAN ART ASSOCIATION

In 1978, the Asian Christian Art Association was founded to encourage the visual arts in Asian churches. At that first consultation of artists in Bali, the aims of the Association were clearly stated, as follows:

“ To encourage artists to express Christian concern through their art in an Asian context.

“ To coordinate the activities of individuals and groups in the Asian region who are working on indigenous art forms.

“ To provide a means of communication

and information.

“ To work with churches, with the Christian Conferences of Asia and with other bodies seeking to witness to Christian faith in Asia.

This association was the result of many conversations between artists and theologians in Asia. Theologians who appreciate the creative mind of the artists as expressed in their works have also inspired and helped artists in their theological reflections which are manifest in their paintings sculptures and dances. The Christian Conference

of Asia has played a significant role in facilitating the birth of this very important ecumenical association of artists in Asia, which has enriched the ecumenical movement globally.

In the last twenty years, many exhibitions have been held not only in Asian countries, but also in Europe, North America and Australia. Members have been assisted to exhibit their works nationally and internationally ● [www.asianchristianart.org](http://www.asianchristianart.org)

## and the Artist in Residence Program ART AT THE OMSC

The visionary Artist in Residence program at OMSC has enriched the local Christian and art communities in New Haven as well as in the international sacred art milieu. The program acknowledges the power of art for the missional task. In the summer of 2007, four of our former artists in residence participated in an exhibition, "The Christian Story: Five Asian Artists Today," held at MOBIA (the Museum of Biblical Art) in New York City.

With initial assistance from the Foundation for Theological Education in

Asia, this unique program is anchored by a special fund honouring the memory and sustaining the artistic vision of the late Paul T. Lauby (1925-2003). His interest in Asian Christian art and artists was well known, and he did much to encourage the development of emerging artists.

Art is one medium that Christians outside the West utilize to proclaim the Gospel without fear of condescension by those long accustomed to the idea that most good ideas, including Christian ones, flow outward from the West.

Art is a substantial part of the great reversal now taking place, joyfully bringing the Good News back to societies now jaded by outworn theologies and wearied by irrelevant, conformist "churchianity."

We invite you to look at and meditate on these vivid visual metaphors, and hope that you will find yourself refreshed by their gentle reminder that the Gospel is indeed Good News! ●  
[www.omsc.org](http://www.omsc.org)

## allnations training for mission



At allnations we have an exciting and innovative arts programme. We recognise that the arts are a unique and essential part of the curriculum to teach skills that are relevant for mission. We currently offer an Open University validated Arts Pathway on our undergraduate programme. This provides you with the opportunity to study a series of arts focused modules alongside your biblical and intercultural studies.

### Year 1

- An Introduction to the Performing Arts
- Music and Worship
- Creative Evangelism

### Year 2

- Exploring Social Issues in Performing Arts
- World Worship Music
- Visual Culture
- Arts Research Paper

### Year 3

- Performing Arts in Practice
- Ethnomusicology
- Art, Culture & Identity
- Extended Arts Project

In year 1 the modules are fully integrated in to the mainstream programme. In years 2 and 3 you can choose from the options listed. You are currently able to exit with a Diploma or BA Hons Degree with an Arts Pathway.

For further details contact us  
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Website : [www.allnations.ac.uk](http://www.allnations.ac.uk)

*Samuel E. Chiang*

## FROM SINGING TO RINGTONES

During a trip to southwest China, I learned of a real-time application of music to oral speaking societies. A few years back, the New Testament Bible translation for a specific people group in southern China had been completed. For several years they sat on the bookshelves not read, much to the despair of the translators. They asked themselves what they could do. Very recently, they applied one of the principles of orality, using music to communicate. In fact, they went back to the cultural-worldview studies and found that music is widely used amongst this people group, so they started to test the concept by setting a portion of Scripture into music. Surprising things happened. The composer of the music was standing in a train station and heard the whistling and singing of the new Scripture

song. He looked at the individual and realized this person was not from the people group with whom he worked, a group who lived eight hours away by train through very mountainous regions. As he and his team checked, they realized that these new indigenous scriptural songs had traveled very fast within a three week period and were widely accepted by this people group. Now, the translators are on their third recording of scriptural songs. By way of a backhanded compliment, the jingles were so popular locally, even the China Mobile office wanted to have one as their “ringtone.”

International Orality Network (ION) is a global network of over 200 organizations cross-pollinating innovations, knowledge, and best practices of story-telling, music, dances, drama, arts, chants and poetry



to plant holistic churches amongst the unreached. We seek to educate people about orality, across disciplines that include water, micro-finance, HIV/AIDS, farming, and church planting. Over the last decade, ION has had a Music and Arts Track at their annual consultations with seminars on a variety of arts in mission. If you are interested in the Music and Arts Task Force, you can sign up at <http://groups.google.com/group/music-arts-task-force>. For more information about ION, go to [www.internationaloralitynetwork.com](http://www.internationaloralitynetwork.com) ●

Samuel E. Chiang serves as the Global Coordinator for ION

## INT. COUNCIL OF ETHNODOXOLOGISTS

*Robin Harris*

The International Council of Ethnodoxologists (ICE) exists to encourage and equip Christ-followers in every culture to express their faith through their own heart music and other arts. To achieve that goal, ICE facilitates online networking and provides resources for the development of culturally appropriate Christian worship, utilizing insights from ethnomusicology, missiology, worship

studies and the arts. ICE is a growing network of over two-hundred people worldwide who share this vision. Because ICE associates are often physically isolated from one another, ICE connects them through conferences and email forums, challenging them to grow through certification programs and training courses, and providing the largest virtual library in the world on



the topic of ethnodoxology (ethne = peoples, doxology = praise). For more information or to join, see [www.worldofworship.org](http://www.worldofworship.org) ●



*Colin Harbinson*

## STONEWORKS

StoneWorks is a global arts initiative for cultural restoration and the recovery of the imagination in the life and mission of the church. StoneWorks exists to articulate a global vision for Christians in the arts, to clarify the biblical and theological mandate for the arts, to affirm what artists are sensing that God is doing through the arts around the world, and to call Christians to

be a part of it. StoneWorks gathers Christian arts leaders, innovators, and culture shapers in the spheres of the church, the marketplace, the academy, and missions in order to mentor and encourage them to partner together and share resources.

We envision a time when Christians engaged in the arts will be excellent

in their craft, spiritually mature in their walk, humble in their attitude, servant-hearted in motivation, moral in lifestyle, and uncompromising in their faithfulness to Christ—in every diverse cultural context of our world, exhibiting a lifestyle of creativity and beauty, pointing to the day in which the Original Artist will make “all things new.” <http://stoneworks-arts.org> ●

*Clyde Taber*

## VISUAL STORY NETWORK

The Visual Story Network [[www.visualstorynetwork.com](http://www.visualstorynetwork.com)] is a coalition of missional and creative Christians. Together we seek to fuel a global movement of visual story for the kingdom of God so every person on earth can experience life-change through Jesus. We live in a transitional time in the history of the Church. We

believe a great opportunity exists to preach, print and portray. Through this community we seek to...

1. Advocate for the need for visual story
2. Provide opportunities to connect and collaborate
3. Equip God's people to create and use visual story
4. Promote best practices and products ●



*John Franklin*

## IMAGO CANADA

Imago carries a mandate to promote, support and facilitate creative initiatives in the arts in Canada. Founded by Wilber Sutherland in 1972 as a registered charity, it has supported a wide range of individual and group artistic endeavours. At the heart of Imago's vision is the intent to bring together artists and audiences, spark creative insight and highlight excellence among emerging and established artists. It promotes unique artistic events, partners with others to sponsor

lectures on the arts, provides venues for artists to perform or show their work and to foster discussions on Christian engagement with the arts. Imago is pleased to join with other efforts in what seems to be a global movement giving attention to the arts in the context of faith. We affirm the value of human imagination and seek to facilitate thoughtful and practical new directions for the arts, shaped and guided by a biblical perspective.



Executive Director – John Franklin – [imago@rogers.com](mailto:imago@rogers.com) Toronto, Canada ●



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# STONEWORKS

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—Dick Ryan

*National Director for the Arts,  
InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA*

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## A New DVD Series on the Arts and Faith

To purchase the Stone by Stone DVD series, find out more about StoneWorks, or to connect with what God is doing through artists around the world, go to

[www.stoneworks-arts.org](http://www.stoneworks-arts.org).

