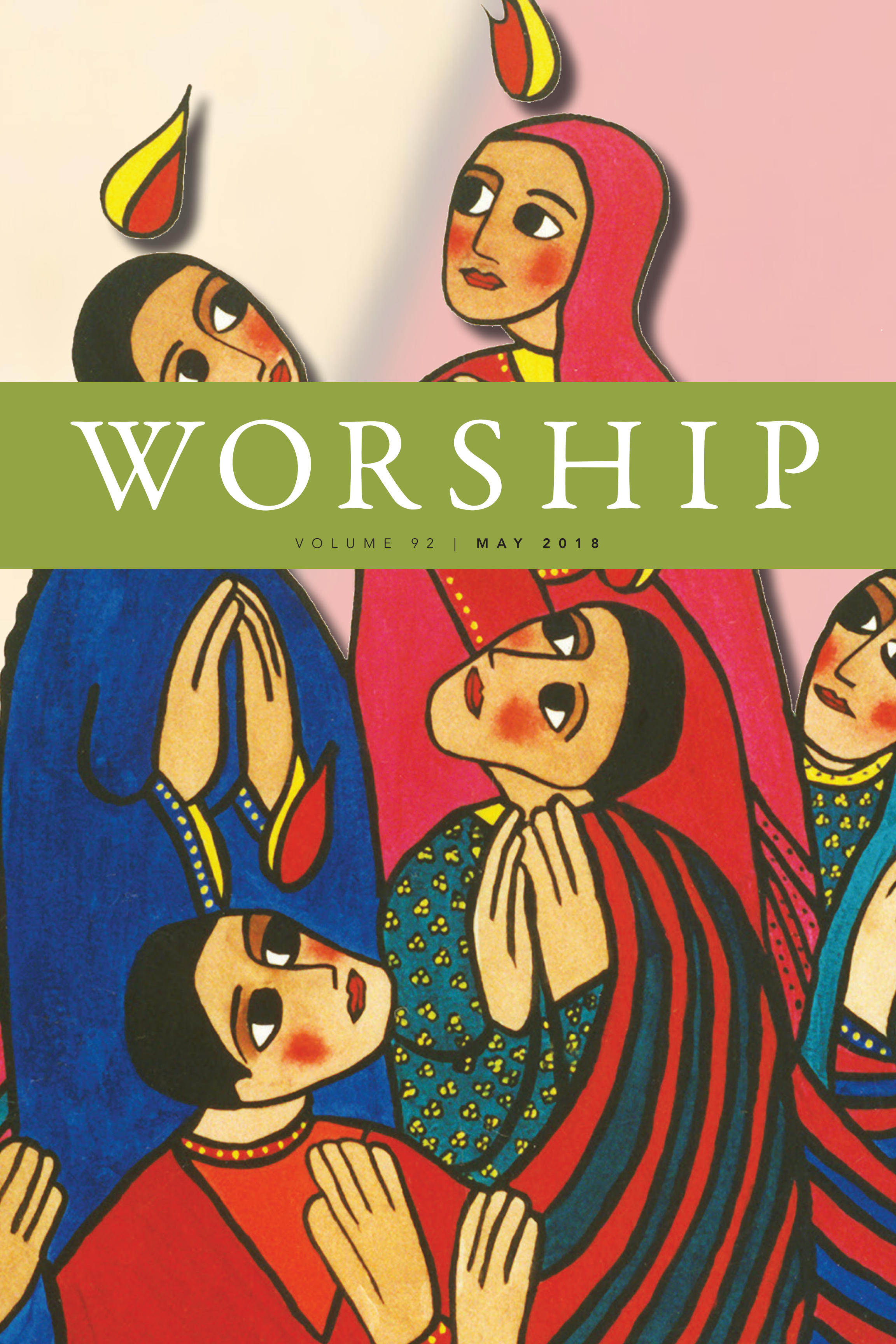


WORSHIP

VOLUME 92 | **MAY 2018**

CONTENTS

The Amen Corner

JOHN D. WITVLIET

The Mysteries of Liturgical Sincerity

196

Essays

STEPHEN R. SHAVER

A Eucharistic Origins Story
Part 1: The Breaking of the Loaf

204

HENRY L. NOVELLO

The Sexual Abuse of Minors in the Church:
Reform through the Practice of Lament

222

GEORGE B. WILSON

Notes From an Unknown Disciple

241

EILEEN D. CROWLEY

Liturgical Media Art: Past, Present, and Future

249

MICHAEL MARCHAL

Lessons from the Experience of Adult Initiation
for the Confirmation of Teens

269

Book Reviews

278

EILEEN D. CROWLEY

Liturgical Media Art

Past, Present, and Future

The year was 1888. The place: an Anglican parish in a working class town in the English borough of Lancashire. As reported in the *Newberry House Magazine*, "A Monthly Review for Churchmen and Churchwomen," most of the town's men worked in the nearby coal mines and iron works. According to the rector who wrote the report, the Reverend Mr. Wickham, these men well supported the nine taverns and bars in town. However, he lamented, "The Church-going men are few." When the Reverend asked them, "Why don't I see you men in our services?" they replied simply, "no clothes," "can't read," "can't hear."[1]

This 19th-century tech-savvy Anglican priest decided to try an experiment at his church. It was a technique that he had experienced a year before. He had attended a service during which, as he described it, "the deaf might at least partially join; (and) the man who was 'no scholar' would not proclaim his ignorance by appearing with no book."[2] The service integrated scripture-themed images projected from a magic lantern.

Because this was an Anglican church and the experiment required darkness for the projection, Rev. Wickham's choice of service was easy—an evening preaching service.

---

[1] W. A. Wickham, "Lantern Services," *The Newberry House Magazine* 4, no. 3 (January–June, 1891): 269.

[2] W. A. Wickham, "Lantern Services," *The Newberry House Magazine* 4, no. 3 (January–June, 1891): 269.

The magic lantern. *Photo: GettyImages.*

With help, the rector stretched a 12-foot by 12-foot square sheet of white fabric over a wooden frame to create a projection screen.[3] He rigged the screen to hang in the opening of the rood screen that separated the chancel from the nave, that is, the opening between the choir area and the main section of the church. He even went to the bother of tilting the screen at just the right angle, so that the images would be most clear and undistorted in relationship to the light coming from the projector on a table below, 24 feet away in the center aisle.

Drawn by the prospect of the novelty of images being projected in church, one night people from the town gathered in the darkened church—even the men. The bell rang for the start of the service. The organist played a voluntary. Vested in cassock and surplice, Rev. Wickham processed down the center aisle and then went to the side of the projector. Up on the screen appeared the lyrics of a well-known hymn. All sang "very heartily," he reported. The assembly prayed the Our Father and recited the Creed. After an invocation, a slide depicting an event from scripture appeared on the make-shift screen.

---

[3] The following summary of the liturgical order of and media use of the 1888 service is drawn from a description in W. A. Wickham, "Lantern Services," *The Newberry House Magazine* 4, no. 3 (January–June, 1891): 271–272.

The image served to stir up and to inspire the imaginations of the people. The priest preached, with the help of four more carefully chosen images that he had borrowed for the occasion. Halfway through the priest's sermon, the organist led the assembly in singing another hymn, aided by projected lyrics once again.

As Rev. Wickham continued his sermon, six more pictorial slides accompanied his words. At the close of the sermon, the people saw an image of a woman clinging to a rock surrounded by raging seas. Signaled by this image, all sang another well-known hymn, possibly the very popular and theme-appropriate "Rock of Ages." After prayers and grace, the people departed into the night.

Wickham's experiment was a success. When he wrote about it after having offered Lantern Services for three years, the rector recalled:

> One result of our Lantern Services certainly is that a number of people have been brought into the church who might otherwise have not been there. Another clearly is that a good many people have seen a number of sacred pictures which they would otherwise not have seen, and heard sermons they would not otherwise have heard. Some people who have come once have come again, and many have expressed their delight with what they have seen and heard.[4]

Wickham went on to offer other Lantern Services for Evening Prayer and Holy Week. His efforts, though, met with some of the same complaints offered by today's critics of media art in worship.

Against the objection that bringing projected images from a "magic" lantern into worship would be irreverent and sacrilegious, and the schoolroom might be a more appropriate venue, Wickham responded that worship in the church was perhaps the best possible place for them. He argued:

> One was far more likely to secure a reverent reception for the pictures and the sermon in the church. People were far less likely to regard it merely as a pastime if held in the Church, where no entertainment could ever be held. Moreover, what is there about the lantern that it should be out of place in a church? . . . No one

---

[4] W. A. Wickham, "Lantern Services," *The Newberry House Magazine* 4, no. 3 (January–June, 1891): 272–273.

> thought of it in connection with religious impressions. But times have changed, and the lantern with them. Why should it not be used in the service of religion and in the most religious place? . . . Indeed it is impossible to imagine anything more quiet and solemn than our Lantern Services. . . . That the eye is an avenue to the heart I have taken for granted.[5]

Wickham's use of the magic lantern provides an early example of "liturgical media art."[6] It is *media art* by reason of the means by which its content, *art*, was brought into worship. It is *liturgical* media art, because the projected art was not incidental but was made integral to and integrated seamlessly within the worship service. The *art* functioned to make the worship—not just the art—evocative. It was media *of* worship, not just media *in* worship.

The technology involved—the magic lantern projector, slides, and projection screen—were just tools. Today's media technology likewise can bring art, with its pastoral and prophetic potential, into worship in powerful new ways. As Rev. Wickham argued in his Parish Magazine in 1888,

> The Church has always instructed her children, whenever possible, by means of the eyes, to enlisting pictorial art in her service in various ways. She has filled her windows with pictured glass and covered her walls with fresco paintings. The Lantern Service is simply a practical adaptation of the principle so long held by the Church that Art is the handmaid of Religion.[7]

PAST: MAGIC LANTERNS' ENTRY INTO WORSHIP

Rev. Wickham made use of a projection device, a magic lantern. But how did he happen to have it available for his experiment? He borrowed it from the Sunday School classroom where it had been in use for some time to teach religion to children. He borrowed slides from a fellow clergyman, slides with religious-topic images, slides marketed by major slide companies that served the church market of that time. At the end of the nineteenth century when this rector first conducted his worship experiment, magic lantern projection technology was not novel. It was more than two centuries old.

---

[5] W. A. Wickham, "Lantern Services," *The Newberry House Magazine* 4, no. 3 (January–June, 1891): 270–271.

[6] Eileen D. Crowley coined this term in "Testing the Fruits: Aesthetics as Applied to Liturgical Media Art," (dissertation, Union Theological Seminary, 2002), 9.

[7] W. A. Wickham, "Lantern Services," *The Newberry House Magazine* 4, no. 3 (January–June, 1891): 270–271.

Many people seem to have had a hand in developing what would come to be known as the "magic lantern." Two scientists of the seventeenth century typically get most credit for the invention, although there is "evidence of earlier versions of the magic lantern."[8]

The first inventor is a German Jesuit priest named Athanasius Kircher who wrote a book in 1659, *Ars magnus lucis et umbrae* (The great art of light and shadow) in which he wrote about and illustrated a lamp he had invented to project images onto a wall in a darkened room. Folklore about Father Kircher reports his going about at night using a small magic lantern hidden under his cowl to project images of death onto the parchment windows of the homes of simple farmers . . . who, he is reported to have said, were thus motivated to show up at worship the next Sunday!

The second important figure is a Dutch physicist, Christiaan Huygens. He improved upon earlier lanterns by incorporating images painted on glass and a projection lens.

What is a magic lantern? Here's one explanation:

> Lit by a variety of sources from candles and kerosene lamps to limelight and electricity, magic lanterns work like a camera in reverse—they shine light out through a lens and project onto a screen, with a static or moving slide or slides inside them, between the light and the lens . . .[9]

According to Henc R. A. de Roo, the curator of the *Dutch Magic Lantern Site:*

> In the beginning magic lanterns were mostly used by scientists, but soon various people realised [sic] that it was a good business and took advantage of it . . .

---

[8] "Magic Lanterns," Projectionscreens.net (Everything about Projection Screens) website, http://projectionscreen.net/history/magic-lantern/.

[9] "Magic Lanterns," Projectionscreens.net (Everything about Projection Screens) website, http://projectionscreen.net/history/magic-lantern/.

> [People from Wallonia, Belgium] started travelling all over the country to give magic lantern shows [at] fairs, pubs, weddings and so on. The magic lantern and accompanying slides they carried on their backs, were built by themselves in most cases.[10]

But why was it called *magic*? In the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, people could not understand how the images got on the screen, and they attributed their appearance to the devil. Fr. Kircher urged the lanternists to explain to people how the invention worked, so that they would clearly understand that the devil was not involved.

"Technologically, the magic lantern developed throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" for use as entertainment in parlours of grand houses and larger publics spaces.[11] In the nineteenth century, a particular genre of Lantern Show developed—a horror show, called Phantasmagoria. These gruesome shows were wildly popular. But magic lanterns were also used for public lectures that brought people images from other countries and were some of the first travelogue slide shows.

The use of these projectors—with one to three lenses and mechanisms for animating the slides—was very popular around the world. Companies produced and distributed, internationally, sets of black-and-white and color slides for education and even for home entertainment.

Ministers and missionaries found innovative uses for the magic lantern in the work of the church. They became a staple of religious education for children and adults. A growing commercial market developed for slides showing scenes from the Bible.

As is typical of the story of how technology enters worship even today, on occasion some daring ministers, such as Rev. Wickham, moved their magic lanterns from the classroom to the sanctuary.

---

[10] Henc R.A. de Roo, *Dutch Magic Lantern Site*, http://www.luikerwaal.com/index.htm.

[11] "Magic Lanterns," Projectionscreens.net (Everything about Projection Screens) website, http://projectionscreen.net/history/magic-lantern/.

Historians have found evidence of the use of magic lanterns and slides in Christian worship as early as 1840. From England to Norway; from India and Burma, Japan to China; from Paraguay to Mexico; from Australia and New Zealand to the far-flung Pacific Islands; from Uganda and the Congo to the United States of America, ministers and missionaries used the light of these projectors to bring the light of the gospel around the world.

Like Rev. Wickham, they called them "Lantern Services," obviously because of the technology that made this type of service possible. Not so unlike the thinking behind the church growth movement of the twentieth century that resulted in media in worship, ministers recognized that in order to evangelize you first had to get people in the door into a worship space where they could experience something "magical," liturgical, and perhaps even spiritual.

According to historian Elizabeth Hartrick of the University of Melbourne, the magic lantern "had a place in the social and liturgical life of many Christian congregations in the Australasian colonies, as local clergy followed the example of the more progressive of their English counterparts in recognizing the power of the medium as a pastoral tool."[12] Anglican, Methodist, and Baptist missionaries embraced this visual technology[13] as part of "the great religious project of western imperialism in the nineteenth century"[14] that eventually included a new wave of colonization of the indigenous peoples of the Pacific and Asian islands. She concludes:

> The combined persuasive power of the authoritative voice of the Christian missionary, the literality and immediacy of photographic representation, and the entrancing spectacle of the magic lantern, strengthened and promulgated the prevailing discourse of white Christian supremacy . . .[15]

---

[12] Elizabeth Hartrick, " 'Strong men will weep in the dark': the magic lantern and religion" in *Consuming Illusions: The Magic Lantern in Australia and Aotearoa/New Zealand*, PhD Thesis (September 2003), The Australian Center, University of Melbourne, 173.

[13] Hartrick, 179.

[14] Ibid., 179.

[15] Ibid., 187.

In writing about magic lantern use in missions in the Congo, art historian John Peffer explains:

> For the Protestant missionaries, the rhetoric of salvation was easily combined with the image of a lamp projecting light in the darkness; the light of the truth of the Gospel, and the light of reason and European civilization on the seemingly complete darkness of "paganism" and "superstition."[16]

Argentinian anthropologist, Dr. Alejandro Martínez, reports how Anglican missionaries in Paraguay used the magic lantern and slides "both in the propagating of the Gospel and as a particularly effective vehicle for the spread of Western ideology and culture."[17] "By 1898 the magic lantern was regularly used in their Sunday services."[18] But, he notes, "The slides used in the lectures and religious services were almost exclusively reproductions of works of European artists representing several passages of the Holy Scripture."[19]

Obviously, from the perspective of the early twenty-first century, missionary use of the magic lanterns for culturally hegemonic religious education and worship calls out for post-colonial critique. Missionaries projected more than the gospel when they used their magic lanterns. They projected the superiority of whiteness and of white European culture. Unfortunately, this problem persists today in the stock photo and video footage available for today's Houses of Worship market that either offers purchasers mostly images of people with light skin or, too frequently, images of people with dark-skinned faces only in the context of crises, as people in need of help from light-skinned people.[20]

---

[16] Quotation from John Peffer, "Snap of the Whip/Crossroads of Shame: Flogging, Photography, and the Representation of Atrocity in the Congo Reform Campaign," *Visual Anthropology Review* 24, no 1 (2008): 55–77 as quoted in Alejandro Martínez, "Evangelization, Visual Technologies, and Indigenous Response: The South American Missionary Society in the Paraguayan Chaco," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 34, no. 2 (April 2010): 85.

[17] Martínez, 83.

[18] Ibid., 85.

[19] Ibid., 85.

[20] See the critique of Joan Harrell, "A Womanist Perspective: Imago Dei in Black and White," *Liturgy* 23, no. 3 (July–Sept 2008): 15–24.

An example of a projected image incorporated into a multimedia setting.
Photo: Rev. Alexandra Childs © ARTSS

PRESENT:
MEDIA IN WORSHIP IN 20TH & 21ST CENTURIES

As media technology has evolved, so have the possibilities for media art carefully and appropriately integrated into worship. Here is a brief review of twentieth- and early twenty-first-century developments regarding media technology and media art in Christian worship:

> Starting in *1910*, silent movies joined magic lantern slides as part of some US worship services. Pastors of Congregational churches appear to have been in the vanguard, as documented in Terry Lindvall's *The Silents of God*. In the *late 1920s*, though, scandals in the Hollywood movie industry appalled ministers and other Christians to such an extent that the Silents were thrown out of the church, along with the still and moving image projectors.[21]

---

[21] For an example of the evolution of the use of media in worship from magic lantern projection to silent films, consider this description from 1912: "After an organ voluntary, the choir rendered the sacred song, 'The Way of the Cross' which was at the same time illustrated by lantern slide pictures thrown on the screen. Then, after a responsive reading and a prayer, the choir and the congregation sang the hymn 'Work for the Night is Coming' illustrated by 12 slides. This was followed by the exhibition of Vitagraph's 'An Innocent Theft,' the collection of the congregation and a short address

In the *1940s and 1950s*, Pentecostals, Baptists, and Methodists were early adopters of 16mm filmstrips and short movies and of overhead projectors and transparency film that preachers could write on while preaching. They even occasionally pulled a TV set into the sanctuary for all to hear a famous televangelist preach.[22]

In the *mid-1960s through the 1970s*, churches that used projection counted on Kodak Carousel™ projectors and 35mm transparency slides. They projected onto projection screens or light-colored walls. Post-Vatican II, slides were not uncommon as part of reformed liturgies in Catholic high schools and colleges.

By the *1980s* some churches, such as the growing mega-churches, worked with very expensive video projectors to cast images on screens that steadily grew in size and number. As some Catholic leaders tried to pull back on liturgical reforms, media art in Catholic worship, where it existed at all, was seldom used, except in large youth gatherings and conventions.

In the *mid-1990s*, as a result of the advent of relatively cheaper video projectors, personal computers, Microsoft PowerPoint® presentation software, and church members who knew how to use all of these, media projection increased significantly, not only in large churches, but also in medium-size and even some small-size churches.

In the *early twenty-first century*, mega-churches with highly produced services and with huge technology budgets sometimes rival local broadcast TV stations in equipment and media personnel. These churches—nondenominational and denominational—have set the standard, even for moderately sized churches that do not have auditorium-style worship spaces, including Protestant and Roman

---

on the moral taught by the moving picture. Then came another song, 'Throw out the Lifeline,' illustrated by five slides, and the service concluded with the benediction and an organ postlude." "The Picture in the Pulpit (October 26, 1912)" in Terry Lindvall, *The Silents of God: Selected Issues and Documents in Silent American Film and Religion 1908–1925* (Landham MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 79–80.

[22] For a fuller historical review of twentieth-century developments, see Eileen D. Crowley, "A History of Media in Christian Worship in the United States," in *Liturgical Art for a Media Culture* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 18–36.

> Catholic churches. The Houses of Worship media market is now a multi-billion-dollar industry. Unfortunately, many "liturgical" churches have followed uncritically the media model of the mega-churches.

What are churches doing with that media art and technology? In general, its use falls into two categories based on its functioning as communications and as art.[23]

The first category consists of media that primarily serves *communications* purposes, no matter how artfully they have been designed and created . . . or not. For more than a century and a half, this has been the most common function of media in worship—from the missionaries' usage of the magic lantern to what appears on the giant media screens in some worship spaces today. This media is used:

- to convey information;
- to encourage participation; or
- to reinforce or to enrich oral communication.

Projected lyrics, announcements, scripture passages, prayers, sermon points and themes, image magnification, or staging to support a praise song, skit, or preacher's sermon exemplify media used for communications purposes. The worshipers' interpretation of this kind of media is somewhat limited and, to a certain degree, controlled by the media artists who produce them and the ministers who use them.

But media in worship can do and be more than that. It can be intentionally designed and created to serve as *art*, not as back-up and reinforcement for anything. It communicates on its own and is experienced as symbolic, polyvalent, metaphorical *art*, that does what art can do:

- open up an interactive space—internally and externally—for discovery, and
- provide beauty, unexpected . . . or to elicit wonder.

---

[23] The following explanation of these categories is a summary of "Framework II: Analysis of the Functions of Media in Worship," in Crowley, 66–77.

The media art in this second category serves a community as *liturgical art*. At this point in time, relatively few churches have explored this possibility. Examples can include:

- *images*—with no words plastered over them—that are intended to invite viewers into contemplation or to stretch their religious imaginations;
- *video* that speaks for itself and needs no introduction or explanation afterward; or
- *media art* that serves as environmental art or installation art that may shape worshipers' encounter with God and each other, or transform the worship space itself.

That media likely is functioning as *art*, in particular as *liturgical media art*. It is *not* art just for the sake of entertainment[24] or for decorative purposes. It potentially *moves* people, internally and even perhaps externally. It calls them to enter more deeply into liturgy and life, to participate. It enhances and calls upon people's poetic capacity to contemplate this art that is metaphor.

At play in the potential use of media art in worship in the early twenty-first century is a cultural phenomenon that has arisen along with the increased availability of media-making devices, such as cell phones and smart phones equipped with cameras. Media professor Henry Jenkins writes that, as a consequence of this phenomenon, today's children and adults now live in a Participatory Culture, defined in this way:

A culture that has . . .

1. relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement;
2. strong support for creating and sharing one's creations with others;
3. some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices;

---

[24] For a discussion of the positive and negative role of entertainment in worship, see Crowley, 42–45.

4. members who believe that their contributions matter, and
5. members who feel some degree of social connection with one another (at least they care what other people think about what they have created.)[25]

Media-art-making and media-art-sharing are now literally at hand . . . as near as one's camera-equipped phone. This phenomenon has inaugurated a new chapter in the history of media in worship. Now, church leaders can invite members of the community to share their creative efforts through webalbums, some images of which may end up as liturgical media art. This new, more-inclusive vision of *who* might create media art for worship—along with those professionals already creating it—is one way the ranks of those who might become tomorrow's "liturgical media *artists*" can open up in the coming decades.

FUTURE: NEW POSSIBILITIES

Other possibilities that might influence or inspire future experimentation in cathedrals and local churches involve new production techniques, new presentation technologies, and new models of how professional media artists create their art.

New options for the projection and display of any media art now present church media ministers and church leaders with opportunities to liberate media art from large permanently installed media screens commonly seen in many churches Protestant and Catholic, in North America and elsewhere around the world. Church leaders and architects designing a worship space need no longer ask, "Where shall we position our projection screens?" They do not necessarily even need them.

Special Screen Goo reflective paint available from Rose Brand, a "Theatrical Fabrics, Custom Curtains & Production Supplies" company, can turn any blank wall into a huge canvas for images.[26] When not in use, no one knows the painted wall is an as-needed projection surface.

---

[25] Henry Jenkins with Ravi Rurushotma, Margaret Weigel, Katie Clinton, and Alice J. Robison, *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2009), xi.

[26] Explore options for projection and display surfaces at http://www.rosebrand.com/.

Fabric hung artfully and inexpensively from church rafters can serve not only as potential fabric art, but also as canvases for media projection.[27] Susan Francesconi has developed a website called "Art in the Sanctuary" where she offers advice from theatre production professionals on how to install rigging that can be use when a church wishes to "fly" fabric art or fabric upon which media art might be projected as needed.

For $297 a media minister can buy from Amazon a portable, 2-inch-square projector that fits in the palm of one's hand, The Cube. Its manufacturer claims that it "transforms any screen into a cinematic experience." The Cube can be connected to an iPhone and project digital media as a 120-inch display.[28] This is only one of many mini- or pico-projectors on the market. The portability of these kinds of small projectors means that projection of images could occur in multiple places within a worship space at the same time or in a sequence on walls, ceilings, or floors. Individuals could control the projectors and media art shown with their smartphones. Consequently, they could project anywhere at any time, because no cords would limit their movement in the space.

In a church whose members do not want to see screens, switchable projection glass, with just a bit of an electrical charge to trigger the alignment of liquid crystals inside, can turn glass into an opaque surface onto which to project media art. Just as easily, that glass can become clear again when not needed for projection.[29] This avoids the problem of ministers and media ministers feeling they must have something on "the screen" at all times, and reduces the pressure of needing to feed the idol of a permanently installed media screen.

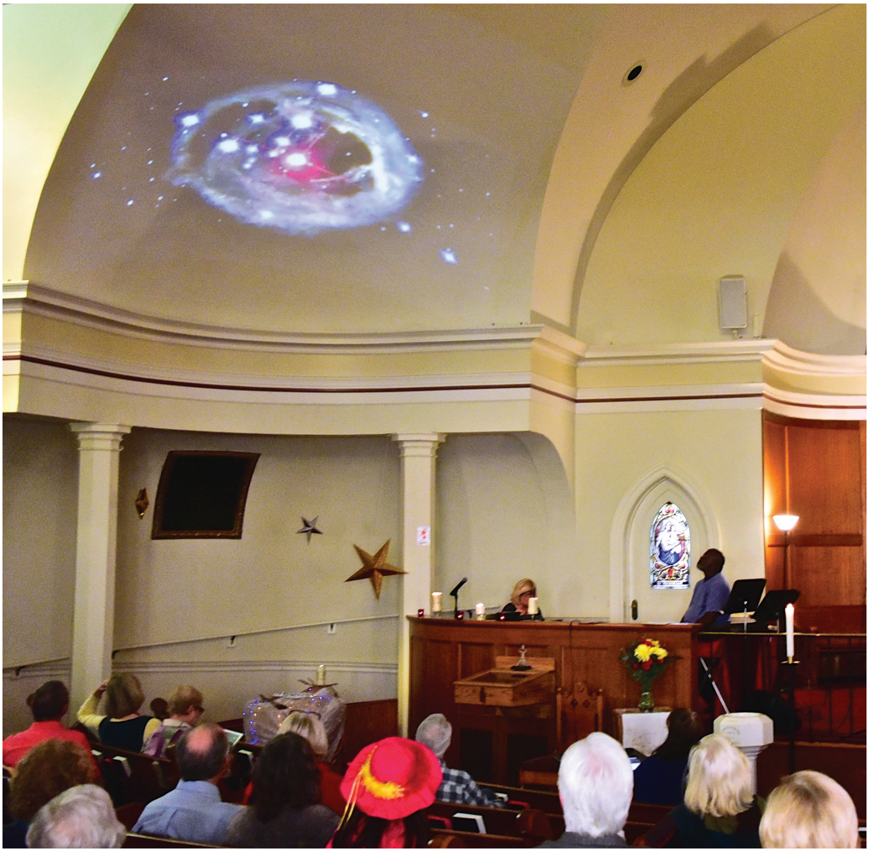
Scientists have been working on digital display material that is so thin and flexible that one can roll it up, and on hair-thin metal films for video that one

---

[27] See the installation tips offered and case studies presented regarding temporary installations at Susan Francesconi's website, https://artinthesanctuary.com/.

[28] See product information at https://rif6.com/Other manufacturers also make micro- and pico- projectors and offer them for a wide range of prices.

[29] See examples at manufacturers' websites, such as http://www.scienstry.us/Switchable Projection Glass.pdf and http://www.smartglassinternational.com/electric-switchable-glass/.



This image demonstrates how to project onto a curved space.
Photo: Rev. Alexandra Childs © ARTSS

can potentially use like wallpaper. LG Display has in 2017 come out with transparent flexible displays that you can bend, roll or fold. How might this material eventually be used in a shrine space or shaped along the curve of an apse or other architectural surface?

These new projection and display technologies will potentially inspire ways that media art can be integrated into worship through multiple mobile projection units connected to smartphones and used in a variety of spaces within worship, through temporary video installations using fabric hoisted with pulleys from church rafters, or via transparent films and glass that can be put to a variety of uses, depending on the creativity of a faith community and its ministers.

However, none of these new possibilities will find their way into Christian worship without church leaders, ordained and lay, developing their poetic and sacramental imaginations about how media art can function and be incorporated into a space as liturgical media art. For this expansion of their perspective they will need the example and help of media artists who have been experimenting and creating media art since the 1960s, as well as graphic artists who have been developing new media content that can be projected in a way that expands from one wall to another to another, and even on the ceiling. Here are three media artists whose work is pertinent to a discussion of media art installation today:

Nam June Paik: Video artist pioneer Nam June Paik[30] demonstrated over the course of his forty-year career that video need not be confined to display on a single TV monitor, but could be displayed in media walls, could become a Stonehenge-like media wall of monitors that enwrap viewers, could become part of small assemblages of screens, and could be shown in simple small video monitor installations. He would have known what to do with The Cube! Inspired by his work, architects, media artists, and liturgical media artists (both amateur and professional) could experiment with the variety of display options that in the future will become more readily available and less costly than they are today.

Bill Viola: From video installation artist Bill Viola[31], church leaders and architects could learn how to create rooms and other built environments wrapped in video that create a space for deep contemplation. He has created illuminated walls that enclose spaces into which people enter, encounter, and are invited to contemplate life's mysteries. What would liturgy be like if the faithful were to enter into worship spaces that truly enwrapped the congregation in media images and footage of the beauty of creation, or its destruction? How might worshipers pray differently? How might worshipers act differently when they are sent forth from worship?

---

[30] See the National Endowment for the Arts website on Paik, https://www.arts.gov/photos/nam-june-paik-artist-who-invented-video-art and the official Paik website, http://www.paikstudios.com/.

[31] See the official website of this artist at http://www.billviola.com/.

In an installation inspired by the biblical story of "The Visitation," Viola's work entitled "The Greeting" makes people look again at Luke's story of the pregnant Mary and Elizabeth greeting each other. How might a video installation like this, encountered in a narthex or shrine space in churches, surprise and inspire people to look at God's love shared so intimately in the life of women who are graced to bear new life? Viola's video installation, "The Martyrs," is now permanently on display in St. Paul's Cathedral in London. It calls upon viewers to consider the example of martyrs of the past and, potentially, to pray for the martyrs of today, and for all who suffer violence of any kind. His most recent work at the cathedral focuses on "Mary," the mother of Jesus.

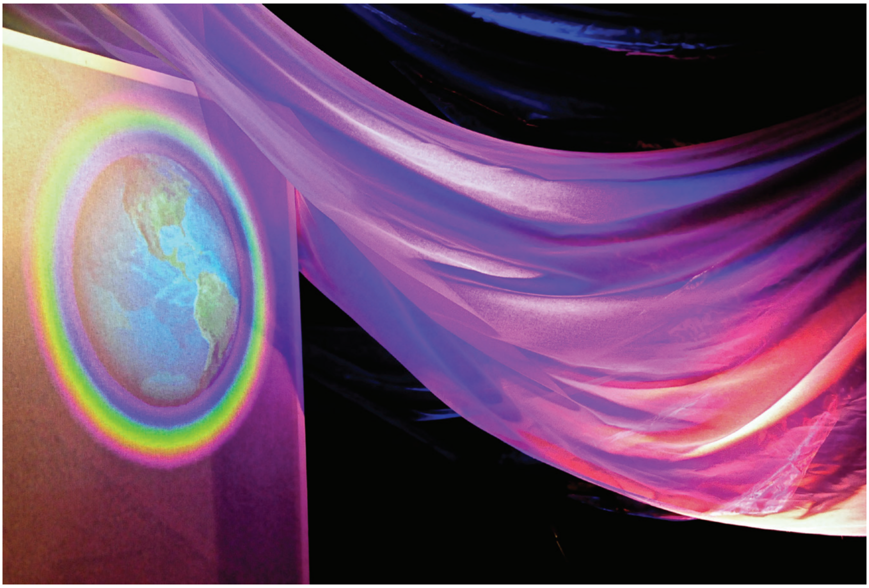
Many of Viola's installations feature video of a person floating in water in extreme slow motion. Contemplating these installations might trigger viewer reflections on the waters of baptism. His "Nantes Triptych" that literally shows video of birthing on the left screen and his own mother dying on the right screen can potentially evoke reflection on the paschal mystery of life, death, and resurrection.

If media installation art in worship were to evoke deep contemplation on life's mysteries, as Viola's work does, and if it were to invite Christians to make connections between the faith they espouse and the way they live their lives, what might happen?

Diana Thater: From installation artist Diana Thater[32] church leaders and local media artists could learn that projection need not be confined to a single rectangle of light, but that it can be shaped in a way that invites viewers to have an experience of being engaged with and surrounded by whatever is projected, wherever it is projected, however large or small it is projected or displayed. She, too, creates rooms into which people enter and are confronted by and called to contemplate video. She creates immersive environments. An animal activist, her work has included installation projections in which dolphins swim above viewers, to give them an experience of being in the water with these sea creatures. A six-walled room installation features video from her visit to the

---

[32] See her studio website at http://www.thaterstudio.com/.



This combines image projection and lighting as an installation.
Photo: Rev. Alexandra Childs © ARTSS

ruins of the town destroyed and abandoned at the Ukrainian Chernobyl disaster site. Walking into that space, people are surrounded by crumbling architecture and wild horses. How might people pray differently for the needs of the world if photographic and video images from earth's suffering people and environment were integral to their worship experience? How might their intercessions change and be experienced differently if there were no words spoken, only images presented in sacred silence?

The churches have much to learn from Diane Thater and other media artists. Michael Govan likens Thater's work to Baroque church art and architecture, such as Andrea Pozzo's *The Apotheosis of St Ignatius*, 1691–94, in the Church of St Ignatius, Rome:

> Thater's inventive integration of moving images into three-dimensional space can be compared to the Baroque melding of architecture, painting, and sculpture into immersive environments that encompassed the real space of the viewer. . . . Both artists (Pozzo and Thater) rely upon the frame of architecture, and both create a new spatial reality beyond the confines of walls and ceilings. . . . (Thater) con-

> structs multiple perspectives, beginning by disassembling the conventions of pictoral space by her use and manipulation of the technologies of moving images.[33]

Environmental Projection: At the largest scale, churches could learn from media artists who are working with environmental projection mapping and turning worship auditoriums into spaces less sterile, as with Triple Wide Media[34] video projections. Or they might imagine how an exterior of a worship space might become a projection surface, such as the video projection cast upon the front of St Peter's Basilica, "to inspire change around the climate crisis[35].

Media art installations inside and outside of churches represent just one aspect of the churches' potential integration of the arts into worship spaces. Such media art would need to be carefully, fittingly, and appropriately incorporated . . . or used not at all. No worship requires media art. But if today and in the future a faith community wishes to welcome this genre of art into its spectrum of liturgical arts, digital media artists (amateur and professional) surely can help them navigate the complexities of introducing this art form. Much small-scale experimentation, such as Rev. Wickham's, is possible, given the creativity arising within today's Participatory Culture and today's many options for display and projection.

Christian churches, Protestant and Catholic, can be slow to welcome and to incorporate the arts of contemporary culture into worship, particularly in the area of digital media arts. If churches wish to create liturgical and devotional media art in the future, their leaders, ordained and lay, will need to seek out today's digital media artists and teachers, experience their work, and engage them in conversation and collaboration.

How might today's and tomorrow's media artists help architects, liturgical consultants, church leaders, and liturgical media artists dream new dreams for what can serve as liturgical media art? The ELCA Lutheran document, *Principles for Worship*, reminds us that *all art* can become "portals to the mystery of God."[36] Why not media art?

---

[33] Michael Govan, "More Wolves Are Better Than None," in Lynne Cooke and Lisa Gabrielle Mark with Christine Y. Kim, *Diana Thater: The Sympathetic Imagination*, (Prestel: Munich, 2016), 117.

[34] See this stock media company's website, http://www.triplewidemedia.com/.

[35] See images and video at http://www.ourcommonhome.world/.

---

[36] Principle S-20, *Principles for Worship*, available at http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Principles_for_Worship.pdf.

Contributors

EILEEN D. CROWLEY, PhD, is Associate Professor of Liturgy, Arts, and Communications at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. She is the author of *A Moving Word: Media Art in Worship* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2006) and *Liturgical Art for a Media Culture* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007).

MICHAEL H. MARCHAL is a retired teacher of English and Philosophy. His recent book on the RCIA is entitled *Deep in the Spirit: The Inner Dynamics of Conversion*. He is involved with worship at Bellarmine Chapel of Xavier University, Cincinnati.

HENRY L. NOVELLO taught systematic theology at The University of Notre Dame (Fremantle, Western Australia) for several years, and currently has full academic status in the Department of Theology, Flinders University (South Australia). He has published articles in a number of international journals.

STEPHEN R. SHAVER is a priest of the Episcopal Church and a Ph.D. candidate in liturgical studies at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. He is currently completing a dissertation on ecumenical theologies of eucharistic presence from the standpoint of cognitive linguistics.

GEORGE B. WILSON, SJ, is a retired ecclesiologist living in Cincinnati, Ohio.

JOHN D. WITVLIET is the Director of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship and professor of worship, theology, and congregational and ministry studies at Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary. He is a *Worship* editorial consultant.