Editor’s Reflections

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A NOTE ON ACE

In July of this year, the organization ACE, Art and Christianity Enquiry, met in Boston for its bi-annual meeting. The conference’s theme was “Art and Christianity in Revolutionary Time” an appropriate subject for the meeting’s Boston setting. Founded in 1991 in London, ACE has met every two years as an international group that works with subjects in the area of the church, theology, and the arts. (I would recommend that you view the ACE website and consider becoming a member. It offers with its quarterly, Art and Christianity, one of the best review publications available on works being published in the field (enquiries@acetrust.org).

NOTES ON THIS ISSUE

But more to the point. In this issue we are publishing two of the ACE conference papers each of which offers us theological reflection on works of revolutionary art. One essay is by Joan Carter, a former president and faculty member of CARE, the Center for the Arts, Religion and Education at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. She examines in her essay John Hicks: Painter of the Peaceable Kingdom the life of the Quaker artist, John Hicks, and his treatment of a group of his most important works. Her essay traces the changes in his treatment of his subject from that of a work that is idealistic and eschatological to a much darker portrayal of his Kingdom in which his view of the human situation has radically shifted.

The second article is by Paul Myhre, Associate Director of the Wabash Center, a member of the sarts Board, and previous contributor to arts. His essay, Visual Art as Revolutionary Power: Street Art in Religious, Theological and Ethical Declaration in Egypt’s 2011 Arab Spring, explores the role of graffiti art in the Egyptian revolutionary Spring. The images capture the swirling mix of hope and fervor that embodied the revolution’s call for a free Egypt and how powerful
the role of art was in that experience. Both of these essays deal with revolutionary themes—one flowing out of the American revolutionary period and the second out of the modern world of the middle east.

Our third essay is by Cecilia Gonzalez-Andrieu who continues the exploration of theology and politics. In her article, *Building the Community of Theology and the Arts: Part 2, Bilinguality*, she focuses on the role of the theologian in the interpretation of the art of marginalized people. Her essay is the second part of a two-part treatment of her subject, the first appearing in the last issue of *arts* (23:3, 2012) as a part of the Symposium on issues in theology and the arts.

The theme of theology and politics is continued in our reprint of Sandra Bowden’s essay on *Otto Dix’s Matthäus Evangelium: Otto Dix Lithographs*. This essay, first printed in *arts* (18:2, 2007), was a groundbreaking contribution to the publication of religious art, for it was the first American printing of the thirty-three Dix lithographs of Matthew’s story of Christ. In Dix’s presentations, political power is pitted over against the religious power of Christ in a stark and unyielding portrayal of the crucifixion and the actors in that politically infused drama. Sandra Bowden, is a former president of CIVA (Christians in the Visual Arts) and a painter and writer whose works have been featured in *arts*.

This issue offers a rich group of essays that have interwoven religion, politics and revolution in an original and provocative fashion. We hope that you find them significant writings for your own work and thought.

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