

# Editor's Reflections

## Wilson Yates

Welcome to this Winter issue—winter, at least, in Minnesota—and to good reading for we have a rich selection of articles that will engage both your thoughts and your heart.

Our first article, by Mary Farrell Bednarowski, *Theological Creativity and the Powerful Persistence of Traditional Religious Symbols* was originally published as an essay in ARTS in the Fall of 2000. We are reprinting it here for the continued relevance of its ideas and the nice complementarity that it offers Mark Burrows's essay. In her article, she examines the power of art, and particularly poetry, to take, reshape, offer anew in creative reformulation symbols that engage us and touch us in transcendent ways. We are affected intellectually and emotionally in such a fashion that we experience what she calls "a lump in the throat" that signals that we are on holy ground. Drawing on poetry she presses us to see that there is a "reciprocal energy between artistic and theological creativity". And the article reveals what that energy is.

In Mark Burrows essay, certain of the same themes are dealt with that we find in Mary Bednarowski's discussion. He, too, is concerned with the "energy" of poetry and particularly the energy it has in what otherwise is the "culture of saturation" in which we live. Drawing parallels with the power of religion to affect us, he discusses poetry as a form of art that can offer us an epiphany in which we reach that which is deep and substantive within us; that which offers us what Charles Taylor, who Burrows draws on, calls a "sense of fullness". In his essay he explores how the effect of poetry can be to push us out, to connect us with each other and, in so doing, invite us, if not teach us, how to sense the need and capacity to love and know the "radiance" that poetry has to offer.

James Malone provides us in his article an exploration of the spirituality of the artist, Egon Schiele. He invites us to see how Schiele in pulling us into his own spiritual quest, moves us into an exploration of those religious questions that are central not only to Schiele but to us all. Schiele's journey was at times a dark quest, but it always remained an honest one that pushed through to a deeper understanding of what Tillich called "our religious depths". He was often overshadowed in the public eye by the older artist and colleague, Gustav Klimt. A part of the excitement in this essay is the discovery that Schiele invites us to go where Klimt never took us. For one on a religious journey, the works of Schiele serve us in often shaking and engaging terms.

I hope that you enjoy this issue. It truly offers a feast of ideas and moments of discovery about who we are as both religious and spiritual creatures.

-wy

### SENIOR EDITOR

Wilson Yates

### EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Mary Bednarowski  
Frank Burch Brown  
William Cahoy  
Robin Jensen  
Cindi Beth Johnson  
Kimberly Vrudny

### ADMINISTRATIVE AND EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

Kayla Larson  
office@societyarts.org  
651.255.6170

### SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER

Michelle Turnau  
artsmag@unitedseminary.edu  
651.255.6117

### DESIGN AND PRODUCTION (PRINT)

Trio Bookworks  
Ann Delgehausen  
www.triobookworks.com

### DESIGN AND PRODUCTION (ONLINE)

Kayla Larson

---

## Contact arts

### OFFICE

Kayla Larson  
office@societyarts.org  
651.255.6170

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Michelle Turnau  
artsmag@unitedseminary.edu  
651.255.6117

### MANUSCRIPTS

Wilson Yates  
senior editor  
wyates@unitedseminary.edu

### WEBSITE

www.artsmag.org

## *Exciting changes in the leadership of SARTS and arts!*

### ***Paul O. Myhre Elected President of SARTS***

I take great pleasure in reporting that the Board of Directors of the Society for the Arts in Religious and Theological Studies has elected Rev. Paul O. Myhre, Ph.D., as its new President. The term of office is three years. Myhre is the Associate Director for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion at Wabash Center in Crawfordsville, Indiana, and he has served on the board of SARTS since 2007. During his time on the board, he invited SARTS to cosponsor with the Wabash Center a special program on teaching pedagogy in theology and the arts. He has been deeply involved in further efforts to develop SARTS as a well-organized academic society, and he has helped chart new directions for **arts**, the Society's publication.

Paul is particularly interested in the field of theology and the arts in terms of the artist's power to engage us in theological and spiritual questions and, at a practical level, with how we might most creatively teach the arts in theological and religious studies. These interests, combined with his administrative and program development talents, bode well for the future of SARTS.

### ***Kim Vrudny Elected Editor of arts***

The Board of Directors of SARTS has elected Kimberly J. Vrudny, Ph.D., to be the new Senior Editor of **arts**. She has previously been an editor of this publication and in that role helped shape its use of technology and its current focus on articles that cover subjects related to the studio, the study, the sanctuary, and the classroom.

Kim is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul and is an artist of photography. Her artwork and intellectual engagement can be beautifully seen in her article for this current issue. She has written often for **arts** over the years, and her symposium, *Consultation on Teaching: Visual Arts in the Theology or Religious Studies Classroom* (20:2, 2009) and her contribution to visual ethics and the photographing of human suffering in the *Symposium on Issues in Theology and the Arts* (23:3, 2012) offer wonderful insights into her current interest in the field. She is the coeditor with Wilson Yates of the book *Arts, Theology, and the Church: New Intersections* (Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2005) and with Robin Jensen of the book *Visual Theology: Forming and Transforming the Community through the Arts* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2009).

In "Reflections from the Editor" in the spring 2009 issue of **arts**, I wrote a piece that reflected on the amazing work Kim had done for **arts**. It is a delight, now, to have her returning as the Senior Editor. In her hands rests the shaping of a new future for our publication. They are able and creative hands.

### ***Spring and Summer Issues***

We will explore in the Spring and Summer issues more on the changes taking place and more about our new leadership. And I want, particularly, to comment on what it has meant to have created and edited **arts** for the past twenty-four years.

### **PUBLISHER**

**arts** is a journal of the Society for the Arts in Religious and Theological Studies (**sarts**) published by the Religion and Arts Program of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities ([www.unitedseminary.edu](http://www.unitedseminary.edu)) in partnership with CARE: Center for the Arts, Religion & Education (GTU); Fuller Seminary; MOCRA: The Museum of Contemporary Religious Art, St. Louis University; St. John's University School of Theology; United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities; Vanderbilt Divinity School; Wesley Theological Seminary; and Union Theological Seminary (NYC).

### **ATLA**

This periodical is indexed in the ATLA Religion Database® and included in ATLASerials® (ATLAS®), an online collection of major religion and theology journals, published by the American Theological Library Association, 3000 S Wacker Drive, Suite 2100, Chicago IL 60606; [atla@atla.com](mailto:atla@atla.com); [www.atla.com](http://www.atla.com).