

Art and Architecture

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Abstract

Part I: Architecture

I talk about an example of architecture in the town in which I live that catches my attention. I explain what I see in detail, and discuss the elements of form and function. I determine which concepts from the chapter reading are applied in this work.

Part II: Art

I chose a piece of my own artwork to describe and, using the terminology from the text, I discuss the medium, age, and category. I discuss the purpose of the work and what it means to me.

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Part I: Architecture

Anderson, Indiana is now a midsized town, but in its hay-day it was a metropolis fed by many different types of industries when a massive reservoir of natural gas was discovered beneath its plains. As in most Midwestern towns, churches were one of the major structures to sprout on almost every street corner. Anderson became the National headquarters for the Church of God, establishing a University, a Publishing House and many other businesses interrelated with the establishment of a denomination. However, as the gas fields began to dry up, and the major auto industries closed their doors, Anderson slowly shrank in population and employment, moving from a once wealthy, stately city to a quiet backwater, struggling to survive. Yet, the churches survive, some closed up, others used for different businesses, even some made into homes, and others still quietly continuing to serve their aging parishioners, though dwindling in numbers.

One of these churches caught my eye as I passed it, tucked into its corner, no massive



bell towers, no neon signs, just a sturdy building of white sandstone blocks that look hand-hewn. It drew my curiosity because it looked so out of place on an American street, rather it should have been in some little medieval town in England that dated back to the Normans, or perhaps even the Saxons. The squat bell tower was complete with battlements, and the front of the Sanctuary was graced with arched, stained glass windows. I had to stop and see if I could get a look

inside!

The curator was in and delighted to take me on a tour of Trinity Episcopal Church, consecrated in 1911 (“History”). Trinity was built in the Norman style with the short, square bell tower and long, narrow Sanctuary without the traditional Transept – the sections on either side of the Nave that are just below the Chancel, making the sanctuary into the shape of a cross. As is befitting a riverside town, the sanctuary was built eight feet above ground level, and was accessed by a double red door.

As we moved into the back of the Nave where the worshipers would sit, I once again felt as if I had stepped back in time as sun-dappled light from the stained glass windows warmed the interior stonework with shades of red, blue, green and yellow. Rows of wood pews, darkened with age and use, lined the center aisle which led to the chancel, separated by a low railing. The ceiling was lost in shadows, but I could see the dark timbers, the To the left, the raised pulpit stood, perhaps not as high as some, but still high enough to establish the authority of the priest as he gave the sermon. On either side, behind the pulpit were more pews facing the central aisle where the choir would sit. The Alter held the Sacred Scriptures with a candle on either side, framing the Cross hanging over a red velvet curtain. The simplicity was stunning and serene.

Along the walls, between the arched openings with the magnificent stained glass windows, were banners depicting the Stations of the Cross, and hanging where they could be easily seen by all were the boards with the page numbers of hymns and prayers, just as they had hung for hundreds of years in other such churches in other countries, all around the world. The sense of timelessness pervaded, even after I returned to my car and drove away.

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Part II: Art



Blue Heron at Sunrise

“Blue Heron at Sunrise” is an award-winning digital image I created in 2010. It depicts a view through a hedgerow of a field still in early morning shadows. In the distance a Blue Heron stands near the edge of a lake that is touched by the rising sun.

Although it looks like a photograph, Blue Heron is actually a collage of several photographs that are manipulated either in shape or texture to produce the desired effect. This form of realism is becoming more popular as artists move away from frustratingly slow and messy methods of art creation, such as using oils or acrylics on stretched canvas. The selected images are layered on the digital canvas, and sections are removed or erased so that the layers below show through. The skilled artist draws together the abstract textures of plants pulled to the foreground with the play of light on the trees in the background. The depth of the final image is created by adjusting the layers, tweaking some to curve and wrap around others, melding and molding them into one final, complete image.

References

“History” retrieved June 18, 2011. <http://www.trinityanderson.indyio.org/>

Janaro, R. P. / Altshuler, T.C. “The Art of Being Human: The Humanities as a Technique for Living”. Longman, New York, 2009

Images:

Church Photograph – Marian Betts

Blue heron painting – Marian Betts