

# WORKSHOP SUMMARIES

## *Workshop Session A - Friday 10:30-11:45*

### **A1: WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A POEM**

Luci Shaw

### **A2: A MYTH ABOUT MODERN ART: ROTHKO AND THE STRIVING FOR A SPIRITUAL IDEAL**

Robb Ludwick

What we call 'modern art' has often been characterized by a grand attempt to dethrone and replace traditional religion in society. In certain artists, we can see behind this outspoken goal a strong spiritual yearning which could be described as an altar to an unknown god. In this workshop we will look at how the life and work of Mark Rothko embodies this tension.

### **A3: THE INTRIGUING FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN FRANCIS SCHAEFFER AND HANS ROOKMAAKER**

Edith Reitsema

Both Schaeffer and Rookmaaker were men whose insights made lasting impressions and had life changing effects on many people. Both men had vibrant personalities with a striking charisma flowing from their faith convictions ... Intriguing that two such strong characters formed such a lasting friendship. Perhaps it was because they each had their own particular focus that their bond was so strong. Schaeffer was a Christian apologist whose remarkable breadth of cultural interest and penetrating insights into modern life, led many to a profound spiritual reality. While Hans Rookmaaker was an art historian whose Christian insights in art, music and culture had widespread influence. This workshop will focus on the similarities, as well as the differences, between these two great thinkers which helped them have such a powerful impact on each other - looking amongst others at their views on how to engage with reality while creatively living out a relationship with God.

### **A4: ART THAT LEAVES ROOM: WHY AMBIGUITY IS OUR FRIEND**

Ben Keyes

### **A5: THE APOLOGETICS OF BEAUTY: THE AESTHETIC VISION OF EDITH SCHAEFFER**

Mike Sugimoto

Francis Schaeffer used aesthetic terms - poetry, a thing of beauty - to describe Christianity while L'Abri co-founder Edith Schaeffer held the same vision in the realm of everyday life, from family & education to fashion, hospitality & interior design. Foreshadowing contemporary writers, such as James KA Smith, who see aesthetics as a path to God in postmodern culture, this workshop explores the startling relevance of Edith Schaeffer's broad, aesthetic vision.

### **A6: THE PERILS AND DELIGHTS OF A CREATIVE LIFE**

Margie Haack

Often our best creative work comes when we feel like we don't have a clue, the feeling of being uncertain, of even being on the wrong track. But whether we're artists or not, it's our responsibility to press into what life has dished us and attempt to make something to the glory of God that wouldn't exist if not for the flood, the cancer, the long wait, the unexpected inheritance. In the midst of those efforts, we're often surprised by joy and satisfaction.

**A7: SHAKESPEARE AND THE CHRISTIAN WALK**

Keith Jones

Like many great authors, Shakespeare creates works of literature—largely fictional—that contain truth. The key truths he reveals to the Christian reader and theatregoer have to do with human nature. Shakespeare provides enormous insight into how our minds work. By reading or viewing his plays, we are better able to understand—or to understand in a different way—sin, evil, forgiveness, suffering, and redemption.

***Workshop Session B - Friday 3:30-4:45***

**B1: IS ART THERAPY? AN ATHEIST'S ATTEMPT TO RESCUE ART FROM THE ELITE**

Robb Luddwick

In a recent initiative called 'Art as Therapy', writer and founder of The School of Life Alain de Botton claims that to experience the real potential of art to 'help us with our most intimate and ordinary dilemmas', our interaction with it needs to be reclaimed from typical questions about style and history. In this workshop we will look at both the laudable goals and foundational weaknesses of his approach.

**B2: DIVINITY IN THE DARK: FINDING GOD IN THE MOVIES**

Denis Haack

Although we hear a great deal about how secular our world has become, it has not lost interest in the divine, and that interest is on display in movies and television. In *Thor* and *Thor: Ragnarok*, for example, ancient pagan Norse gods appear as heroes to save humanity from destruction; in *American Gods*, old Norse and Slavic gods like Odin & Czernobog resist the onslaught of modern ones (Media & Technical Boy) that seek to displace them. And Martin Scorsese has produced a powerful film (*Silence*) based on the novel by Shusaku Endo that assumes the existence of the Christian God and asks whether faith in him can be maintained when he remains silent in the face of horrific human suffering. The cinema is the primary storytelling medium in our world, and so these themes are worth careful reflection. In our time together we will begin to explore how Christians can understand and respond to these myths, ideas and stories.

**B3: BIBLICAL NARRATIVE AS ART**

Clark Schiebe

Some have found stories in the Bible as choppy and inaccurate, others say they're beautiful moral tales but historically untrue, and others expect an exact verbatim recording of history. There are richer alternatives. How might we think of the artistic beauty and purpose of biblical narratives and at the same time witness their power to convey God's revelation? That will be the central concern of this talk.

BOOK RECOMMENDATION: Phil Long's *The Art of Biblical History*

**B4: CREATIVE WORK IS WORK: DE-MYTHOLOGIZING ARTISTIC INSPIRATION AND THE CREATIVE PROCESS**

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Sarah Chestnut

This workshop will be geared more toward people pursuing creative work. We will consider what a Biblically faithful understanding of creative inspiration looks like in comparison and contrast to the residual idea that to be "inspired" somehow sets artists apart as another class of human. The goals would be both to give artists a Gospel-centered understanding of artistic inspiration, and to 'de-mythologize' the creative process

**B5: EVERYDAY ARTISTRY: PRAYER, BIBLE-READING, AND OTHER DISCIPLINES AS OPPORTUNITIES FOR CREATIVITY**

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Anna Friedrich

We Christians spend a lot of time worrying about our "devotional lives," berating ourselves for not having the prayer life we desire (or that Edith herself seemed to have!), struggling to understand or enjoy reading the Bible, and hardly dabbling in older practices like fasting, *lectio divina*, or meditation. In this workshop, we will explore these practices as creative endeavors, full of all the potential life and joy of other activities we love such as cooking, wood-working, or knitting.

**B6: FINDING A VOICE THROUGH THE ARTS**

Ann Riggot

This workshop will be speaking on the visual arts and its power to speak. Ann will share her journey as an artist through words and images of her paintings. Ann grew up with communication, social and academic difficulties due to undiagnosed autism. It was through the arts that she began to connect with other and find her voice.

**B7: KILL YOUR ART: A STREET PERFORMERS GUIDE TO BEING A MESSENGER OF JESUS CHRIST**

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Philip Shorey

In this talk, Philip will explore his book 'Kill Your Art', and the concept of what it means to surrender your art as a follower of Jesus. As he says, "this is not a book about art that glorifies art. This is a book about *killing your art* and giving it to Jesus in order for your gift to reach its greatest potential". Philip, founder and director of the Suitcase Sideshow marionette theater, will take us through the creative process to discover what it takes - from a biblical perspective - to be an artist and a messenger of Jesus Christ using street performance as the creative medium.

## **Workshop Session C - Saturday 10:30-11:45**

### **C1: BEAUTY OUT OF ASHES: BLUES AND SPIRITUALS FOR TROUBLED TIMES**

Bill Edgar

### **C2: TOLKIEN'S ELVES: THE IDEAL OF EVERY ARTIST AND SUB-CREATOR**

Jerram Barrs

When we read about the dwelling place of Elrond in Rivendell and of the home of Galadriel and Celeborn in Lothlorien readers are so captivated that we want to visit, to explore the rooms and gaze at the architecture and decoration and delight in the works of art; we want to sit down and feast at the tables and enjoy the wine; we are eager to listen to the music and the songs; we desire to wander through the gardens and arbors, to see and smell the flowers and to touch the trees ... What is it that creates these longings in us? Tolkien saw his elves as creative just as humans are, but their long lives, their great skills and their unfallen natures mean that they are able fully and perfectly to realize what they set about making. Our workshop will explore this aspect of the lives of Tolkien's elves.

### **C3: MUSICAL INVENTION AND DEVELOPMENT, AND HOW THEY TELL STORIES**

John Hodges

We will play examples of music to consider specifically how composers invent and develop material, and show how music, even without words, can tell stories.

### **C4: HOW IMAGINATION ENGAGES YOUR HEART**

Edith Reitsema

It took C.S.Lewis the use of his imagination to come to faith. Legalistic moralism, applying values disconnected from relationship, didn't get him there. For, to be able to be drawn into relationship with God, we need to use our imagination. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we can live ourselves into the stories that God gave us, so that our hearts can be engaged in a relationship with Him. This workshop will look at how story and art, with the use of our moral imagination, can "arrest us with strangeness" (to speak with Tolkien), so that our sense of reality can be increased, "drawing us to the threshold of mystery and moral truth and revealing them as such" (as George MacDonald says).

### **C5: REFLECTIONS ON THE CRAFT OF SONGWRITING WITH ORDINARY TIME**

Ben Keyes

### **C6: THE SILENCE OF GOD**

Mike Sugimoto

The severe persecution of Christians in 1600-1800 Japan is the backdrop for Endo's acclaimed novel, *Silence*, recently adapted for film - a 25 year project - by Martin Scorsese. Following contemporary painter Makoto Fujimura's essays in *Silence and Beauty*, this workshop explores the historic conflict between Christianity and culture in Japan, now reflected in the West as faith is eclipsed by modern secularism.

### **C7: CULTIVATING BEAUTY**

Alison McGregor

*"A Christian, who realizes he has been made in the image of the Creator God and is therefore meant to be creative on a finite level, should certainly have more understanding of his responsibility to treat God's creation with sensitivity, and should develop his talents to do something to beautify his little spot on the earth's surface."* — Edith Schaeffer, *The Hidden Art of Homemaking* Come with me on a "walk" through this little spot on the earth's surface that is Rochester L'Abri. With the help of a photographic slide show, we will take a "stroll", visiting both the natural creation beauty around us, and the attempts to cultivate beauty in our human environment, in the desire to engender truth, beauty and goodness, and the enjoyment of our good God.

### **Workshop Session D - Saturday 3:30-4:45**

#### **D1: 'SILENCE OF THE SEA': GOD AND THE FRENCH RESISTANCE IN WORLD WAR II**

Bill Edgar

#### **D2: THE EXPLORATION OF GOOD AND EVIL IN C.S. LEWIS'S SCIENCE FICTION TRILOGY**

Jerram Barrs

In each of the books of his Science Fiction Trilogy Lewis has characters who have given themselves to doing what is evil. In *Out of the Silent Planet* Weston and Devine kidnap Ransom and take him as a hostage to Mars, hoping to use him to help themselves gain wealth and power. In *Perelandra* Ransom is given the task of helping the Eve of Venus resist the temptations of the devil in the guise of the scientist Weston. *Perelandra* has one of the most thoughtful accounts of the nature of evil and of temptation in any work of fiction. In *That Hideous Strength* we are back on earth, but an earth besieged by powers of evil, both human and demonic. In all three works Lewis also presents the beauty and power of moral good. In our workshop we will discuss some of the important elements of the way Lewis presents the nature of good and evil and see how well he reveals a biblical understanding.

#### **D3: A WALK THROUGH AARON COPLAND'S 'WHAT TO LISTEN FOR IN MUSIC'**

John Hodges

Living from 1900 to 1990, Aaron Copland was the 20th century American composer for the concert hall, and ballet theater. His primer on the elements of music, now 60 years old, is still the best jargon-free book on the elements of music. We will walk through the chapters, talk about some of the examples Mr. Copland uses to explore the elements of music, and perhaps add some of our own

#### **D4: BEYOND GOOD BOOKS: BEING GOOD READERS**

Clark Scheibe

More often than not we try to find the right or best books (or film or art), but as important as that is, great books do not make good readers. Even a good reader can

make the best of a bad book. What makes a good reader? Well, that is what this talk will examine.

**D5: REFLECTING ON THE INCARNATION WITH THE HELP OF THE POETS**

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Sarah Chestnut

In this workshop we will learn to identify some important characteristics of good poetry as we read three poems together that give us a new--or renewed--understanding of the nature and significance of the Incarnation.

**D6: A CREATIVE SPIN ON THE QUESTIONS OF JESUS**

Anna Friedrich

Many artists begin their work with a question. Jesus himself egged on his friends and enemies with potent questions, like a true Artist. In this workshop, we will engage poets, songwriters, and visual artists that use questions as springboards and as truth-bearers. Could our propensity to question-asking be part of who we are, as beings made in the image of God, or even part of our work in the Kingdom where Jesus-asker-of-questions is King?

**D7: JULIUS CAESAR 2017: GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST**

Keith Jones

Julius Caesar was assassinated in 44 B.C. Shakespeare wrote *Julius Caesar* in 1599. This year, New York City's famous Shakespeare in the Park produced a version of the play so controversial that some corporate sponsors pulled their funding from the organization. For more than four hundred years, the play has been used to provide political commentary on contemporary issues.

A review of the play and of significant stage and film versions of it will reveal some of the reasons why this play endures.