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EMPOWERING BIBLICAL CULTURAL  
ENGAGEMENT IN THE ARTS

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## DEDICATIONS

This work is dedicated first to my wife, Anne, who believed in me, prayed for me, encouraged me, and cheered me on in my research. She is my best friend, the love of my life, and the single most significant co-laborer for the work God has put before us to accomplish. Also, this work is dedicated to all the faithful Christian-based artists across the globe who have enlarged our vision and enriched our lives through their pursuit of excellence in their lives and their art.

## ABSTRACT

In 1989, John Akers challenged the evangelical world with the question, "where are the...artists?" (Akers 1989). For some, this seemed strange, as the church appeared alive with the arts. However, Akers was speaking to the conspicuous absence of Christian artistic presence in mainstream culture, which was necessary to counter the growing moral bankruptcy prevalent in western societies.

Over the previous three decades before Akers' appeal, astute theological voices had weighed in on the conversation and addressed the undermining aversion among evangelicals towards cultural engagement and their misgivings towards the arts. These writers not only eruditely disseminated understanding for art and culture, but they also articulated a biblical worldview, which is indispensable for confirmative action.

Their influence inaugurated a resurgence of interest among evangelicals and a new dialogue began. Yet, the primary application for the arts appears to have remained in the Christian sub-cultural context. The

question is why is this the case, and what can be done to adjust this inclination.

This dissertation's objective was to ascertain the obstacles and to seek out and identify strategies, which when applied, would result in a greater empowerment among streams of evangelicalism for deliberate Christian aesthetic presence in the broader-culture. In order to fine-tune the research, two methodologies were designed.

First, five evangelical, theological, and worldview experts were enlisted to speak to the evangelical mindset concerning art and culture. These experts were chosen not only for their understanding of art, but also because of their first-hand knowledge of the European cultural context. Secondly, six Christian mainstream artists were presented questions, which disclosed relevant issues that could help bring needed reconciliation between the evangelical streams of the church and the artists.

The experts' and artists' responses, along with the literature, provided an excellent starting point to begin to formulate strategies for forward progress in addressing the research concern. Through this study, other methodologies emerged that could also be instrumental for forward progress among evangelicals for a more mature, intentional cultural presence through the arts.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAE	Creative Arts Europe
CANTAB	Of the University of Cambridge or its alumni
CMI	Creative Missions International, Inc.
CIVA	Christians in the Visual Arts
EU	European Union
HTC	Highland Theological College
IAM	International Arts Movement
QVI	Quo Vadis Institute
YWAM	Youth with a Mission

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

#### *Research Concern: Where are God's Artists?*

Where are the creative men and women – the writers, the artists, the filmmakers – who will capture the imagination of our confused world in the name of Christ? Where are those who will expose by their work the vanities and contradictions of our age, and affirm with all their skill they can muster that only in Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge? (Akers 1989, 13)

When John Akers issued this 1989 appeal above in the popular evangelical magazine, *Christianity Today*, it was certainly not the first time such a challenge had been presented to evangelicals in the USA. Though there were other similar admonitions as early as the late 1960s, this was one of the first prominent evangelical voices from a conservative periodical calling for a vision for intentional Christian presence in the context of the broader-culture. In the same article, he goes on to state,

In recent decades, evangelicals have begun to re-enter academic disciplines they once abdicated, but unless we communicate to our generation through books and other art forms that influence it, our convictions will continue to be judged

irrelevant and unworthy of examination by modern secular man. (Ibid.)

Twenty years before Akers' appeal, Francis Schaefer addressed the marginalization of the arts, and subsequently the artists, in the thinking of evangelicals in his work, *Art & the Bible*:

As evangelical Christians, we have tended to relegate art to the very fringe of life. The rest of human life we feel is more important. (Schaefer 1973, 7)

One tangible consequence of this tendency is that over the last four decades evangelical believing artists in western societies have often suffered from a dual sense of isolation, abandonment, and alienation. On the one hand, these believing artists suffer from the evangelical church-world's lack of endorsement, vision, and spiritual nurture; on the other, the non-Christian arts community at large shuts them out because of their Christianity. It has been said by many that these artists are too *worldly* for the church, and too *holy* for the world.

The answer to both Akers' and Schaefer's challenges will not be realized simply through embracing a vision for the arts among evangelicals; nor is it just a matter of affirming a new generation of believing artists for the broader culture. Rather, it is about how we as evangelical leaders educate the church and how we then go

about affirming and mentoring such artists as they are being prepared for their calling in the broader culture.

Actor and writer, Garold Andersen, who lives and serves as a mentor to evangelical believing artists in Europe, insightfully addresses the issue:

Filling this void is not a one step process of deciding that Christians should be involved in the arts. So much bad art (religious propaganda) and poor communication has been done in the name of Christianity that it takes time to build a reputation for producing good art. . . Though Christians in the arts must view the Bible as the core of truth, if they want to communicate to others, they need to know why these things are true. They must understand the concept of life in God, as well as its implications to the individual and society. (Anderson 2007, 1)

Church leadership does in fact have a major role in this process. Sandra Bowden, president of Christians in the Visual Arts, speaks to this in her introduction to the collection of essays entitled, *It was Good Making Art to the Glory of God*:

The local church is supposed to be a place for personal and spiritual development, but most Christian artists find themselves lonely with few to help them work through theological or practical issues of concern to them. (Bustard 2006, 1)

CIVA was established one decade prior to Akers' appeal and is certainly a key Christian initiative that has attempted to take up some of the slack in the absence of the evangelical church's endorsement and affirmation for

artists called to work in the broader culture in the USA. In their website, they articulate a key aspect of their vision, which is applicable also for artists in any western culture:

Culture is that place where we 'live and move have our being,' that place where, each day and in every way, God's people either magnify the presence of God's Kingdom or diminish it.

As the world needs the salt, light, and leaven of those who follow Jesus, CIVA cultivates an incarnational presence in contemporary culture that is marked by serious art learning and practice, intellectual rigor, prophetic voice, and a spirit of hospitality. (Christians in the Visual Arts 2011)

According to William Dyrness, there has been, however, a growing pro-arts movement over the last thirty-five years, yet that involvement primarily stayed in the Christian sub-culture, behind closed doors. His observation was primarily about the USA, but it is also true in Europe. In his book, *Visual Faith*, twenty-five years into that movement Dyrness reports:

Christian art groups and magazines have proliferated in the last generation. Seminars and conferences on topics related to the arts and worship are being offered more frequently – often across denominational lines. Meanwhile, much work currently being done by Christian artists is of a high quality, even as this is measured by the artistic establishment...In the case of the arts, it is significant to note that it is precisely in the area of worship – within the walls of the church – that this revival is taking place. (Dyrness 2001, 13-14)

Even as early as the mid 1970s, there were multitudes of accomplished artists in the church worship culture in every western society. In addition, the Christian contemporary music arts scene has had widespread endorsement among most evangelicals since the mid 1970s. It is also very easy to substantiate that in the last 20 years in Western Europe, as well as in the USA, multitudes of evangelicals have made the connection to the viable role of the creative arts in the explicit declaration of the Gospel. In recent years, a number of prominent western evangelical<sup>1</sup> missionary societies have also begun their own art tracks for trained artists in their endeavors.

There are also numerous evangelical para-church initiatives<sup>2</sup> serving in the USA and in Europe, which have been established on behalf of artists serving in the market place. This includes the work that my wife and I have co-led since 1985, Creative Arts Europe<sup>3</sup>.

All these developments are commendable on the one hand, yet on the other hand, based on our first hand

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<sup>1</sup> YWAM, ACT, OM, Intervarsity, and a host of other Christian initiatives as well as individual churches scattered around the globe are focusing on the arts for outreach and missions.

<sup>2</sup> See the CAE website ([www.creativeartseurope.com](http://www.creativeartseurope.com)) in the Global Art Links section for examples of evangelical initiatives.

<sup>3</sup> CAE was established in 1984 with the name, Project Exalt; however, the CAE name was registered in 1995 in Germany.

experience, evangelical local church endorsed artistic presence in the mainstream culture remains miniscule. Though these para-church organizations have reached out to stranded believing artists and promoted understanding and an appreciation for the arts in their spheres of influence among evangelical streams, the question still is: how does the average evangelical local church member view the arts when applied outside of the church culture? Ultimately, the capacity to envision the viability of a career in the arts in the broader-culture as Christians is at the end of the day either nurtured or hindered in local churches based on their worldview and the status of the prevalent worldview of any local church is shaped and taught by the local church leadership from the pulpit.

Before we press on more specifically into the significance of the research concern and question, it is helpful to provide the researcher's missional biographical background along with a concise summary of the cultural and spiritual demographics of Europe. Both of these sections will provide a lens for the focus of this project.

### *Missional Biographical Background*

On the one hand, this research project began when my wife and I first arrived in Europe as missionaries in

1976 and has continued to be carved out through our missional experience through the last 35 years. Through much study, reading, and reflection, we have gone through major paradigm shifts in our thinking and worldview through the years. We have learned as much through our failures as through our successes. We are grateful for the fruit that has remained in the lives of many of our dear friends who are artists. However, there is much yet to be accomplished in awakening a vision among evangelicals.

Some of the key influential voices early on in our journey were art historian H.R. Rookmaaker of the Free University of Amsterdam, Francis Schaefer of L'Abri in Neuchatel, Switzerland, Frank Gaebelin of Stony Brook School of Long Island, New York, and television producer and sports manager Bob Briner of the USA. This DMin. program over the last six years, has provided an invaluable opportunity to look back, reflect on, and articulate more clearly the vision for the significant role of the arts informed by a biblical worldview for western societies, and specifically in Europe. This season of research has also proven to be foundational for the work of CAE, which my wife and I oversee from the European headquarters just outside of Brussels, Belgium.

Our journey actually began in 1976, when we arrived in Germany to work with Youth With a Mission, an inter-denominational and international mission active in Western Europe. YWAM's tagline became part of our spiritual DNA: *to know God and to make Him known*. The first nine years were formational with YWAM in our lives. In these years, we gained insight into the deep layer of religious tradition prevalent in Europe, an understanding of the common anthropological landscape amidst much ethnic diversity throughout the European continent, the challenge at hand to relevantly convey the Gospel to this current generation in Europe, and a keen awareness of the prevalent spiritual darkness that encompassed the European continent. We began to realize Europe was not only postmodern in its rejection of absolutes and the general embrace of philosophical pluralism, but also Europe had unfortunately become a post-Christian continent, though there were still some streams of living faith evident among a hand full of indigenous State and Free Church movements.

Across Europe, a number of para-church initiatives, including YWAM, were instrumental in reaching the un-reached youth in particular, all the while nurturing new and vibrant creative expressions of worship in the church throughout central Europe in the different language

groups. Along with this focus on creative worship, YWAM's central passion was to evangelize Europe with the Gospel. From 1975 through 1979, YWAM across Europe pioneered simultaneously a new concept of creative evangelism where the creative arts were employed in explicitly disseminating the Gospel. During this season, YWAM began to teach the usefulness of the arts for Gospel proclamation among Lutherans, Roman Catholics, and free-church movements.

Two key emphases in YWAM were deeply imbedded into our thinking and understanding. One was the focus on servanthood as a key character attribute that Christ longed to form in all the lives of his people. The other was from a challenge that we heard from Loren Cunningham in the mid-1976, the founder and international director of YWAM, on being "nation builders" (Cunningham 2007, 46). He began to ask key questions that were to temper the direction of the mission of YWAM for years to come:

Where do we start?...How could we turn our nations around? How could we see basic foundations of morality and goodness restored?  
(Ibid.)

In his book, *The Book that Transforms Nations*, he recounts his story and discloses what he calls, the seven mind molders of society, which were "like classrooms to disciple nations" (Ibid.). Interestingly, he met with Bill Bright the day after he wrote the seven areas, and Bright started

the conversation by saying, "Loren, the Lord has shown me several ways we can change our nation" (Ibid.). Cunningham notes that the list Bright shared "was virtually the same" (Ibid.) as his. A few days later Loren was speaking in Hamburg, Germany, sharing "the seven spheres God wanted us to target to turn our nations around" (Ibid.). According to Cunningham, "a few weeks later, Darlene heard Dr. Francis Schaefer, founder of L'Abri Fellowship, in a TV interview" (Ibid.) where he "gave the same list of areas for believers to target" (Ibid). Here is his list:

- Family
- Religion (church & mission)
- Education
- Celebration (arts, entertainment, sports)
- Public communication (media)
- Economy (including business, science, and technology)
- Government (Cunningham 2007, 46)

This focus by Cunningham factored in heavily in our developing vision for service in Europe. During the nine years that we served in YWAM in Germany, our focus was on the arts in missions and in the worship context; however, through this *nation building* challenge our peripheral vision capacity was enlarged, and there was a paradigm-shift taking place in our thinking.

In 1985, our work took a major turn as Anne and I stepped outside of YWAM to form the foundations for the work we are involved with today. In the first four years,

we focused on finding, networking, and discipling aspiring and career artists specifically in the performing arts arena. We were still involved in explicit evangelistic endeavors and encouraging the church to embrace the arts for the church culture in our worship expressions, however, in the late-1980s, we began to focus more on the expediency of embracing a biblical worldview for the church.

As a result of this growing understanding, we began to articulate a vision for nurturing artists called to serve specifically in a broader-culture amidst the streams of evangelicals we were serving, which included the State and Free Churches of central Europe. Where we could, we created opportunities for artists to apply their talent at the level of their skill development on diverse stages and venues across Europe.

Along with this passion to empower artists for mainstream culture, we pioneered a number of different strategies to aid evangelical streams in their stewardship of the talented artists in their midst. One particular strategy was to provide short arts training sessions for believers. Through offering such training opportunities, we hoped to connect with aspiring and career artists who had become believers, and this is precisely what happened. Some of the arts training events focused on investing in

the next generation of teens and in other events the family unit was our focus. Whereas we served the church and church leaders, finding the aspiring and existing career artists themselves was always one of our primary concerns. We began to realize that in order to see artists prosper as God's servants in society, a broader vision of the Lordship of Christ must be nurtured among church pastoral leaders and the church at large. In addition, there was a great need to develop opportunities for discipleship for these artists. The best way we felt to accomplish this was through relational discipleship rather than program oriented discipleship.

Since the mid 1980s through today, we have collaborated with indigenous church movements and Christian organizations to host seventy-five creative arts training events and conducted tours and performances in Germany, Austria, Czech Republic, Malta, Italy, Holland, France, Switzerland, Spain, Belgium, Great Britain, Finland, Estonia, Sweden, Canada, and in the USA. The primary aims in all these initiatives were the same: to nurture a biblical mindset among evangelicals concerning the arts and culture; to foster biblical character with a focus on servanthood among artists; to emphasize craftsmanship and excellence in artistic expression; and to stress

compassionate and relevant involvement in society. Our arts training sessions were key in accomplishing most of our aims. In almost all the arts training events, the artists were mentored, the next generation caught the vision that the arts sphere was a viable career alternative, and the collaborating church's vision for the Lordship of Christ was enlarged among church leaders in evangelical streams of faith.

A fifteen-year annual and ongoing example of one of our key strategies in action is the Finnish youth summer arts camp. In these camps, qualified trained artists taught over thirty hours of art workshops during one week. A few years back, sports and adventure were added and the name Life Camp was adopted. Some workshops offered through the years were: photography, sculpture, creative writing, comics, radio, standup-comedy, dance of all genres (ballet, jazz, modern, break-dance, hip-hop, choreography, etc.), acting, musical theater, animation, comics, film, music (from acoustic lead, base, and acoustic guitar to keyboards, brass and wind instruments), vocals, horse back riding, soccer, volleyball, parkour, and much more. In the evening gatherings, artists and guest teachers performed and often shared their story of how their faith influences their lives and their art works. Early morning sessions

were for corporate praise and teaching biblical truths on knowing God, character, culture, and the arts.

Another example of one of our strategies was a Christian-based short-term dance company made up of professional dancers from all over Europe and the USA, which today is known as Xaris Dance Company.<sup>4</sup> This proved to be a great discipleship tool for believing professional dancers and, at the same time, a tremendous 'in-reach'<sup>5</sup> tool for reaching European culture with art that disseminated godly values and Christian life-perspectives. The company has performed before thousands and continues on to this day with branches in Finland and Germany.

The most recently developed strategy is CAE's conference, Imagine. Every two or three years, an Imagine event takes place in a different major European city. The event is all about casting a vision for Christians in the arts. Bringing artists together with church leaders for the purpose of reconciliation and dialogue facilitate this. Breakout sessions are offered in order to create an opportunity for the exchange of ideas on the role of the arts in the church, missions, the marketplace, and in the

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<sup>4</sup> See [www.xarisdance.com](http://www.xarisdance.com).

<sup>5</sup> The term *in-reach* is a term that refers to penetrating society with the Gospel and was first in an article entitled, "5 Smooth Stones: Reaching into the heart of European culture with the Gospel" by this researcher.

field of education. This event is held in collaboration with indigenous church movements or recognized para-church organizations in the nation selected for the event.

Other strategies include launching examples of arts in culture worthy of being emulated, such as exhibitions, concerts, and musical theater tours. Relational mentoring and discipleship takes place through our artist's internships, which have been offered at our headquarters, the Brussels Arts House, for CAE since the late 1980s. Artists' gatherings and retreats for connection and encouragement are another means that we have employed and still offer from time to time.

All the strategies mentioned above were born out of a passion to express the relevance of the Gospel to all of life for this generation. They were created to educate evangelical streams of faith in State and Free churches about a biblical view of culture and the arts. Through these last thirty-plus years as we grew in our understanding of Europe and also grew in comprehending the implications of a biblical worldview, we became more convinced that the arts would play a significant role in Europe's spiritual awakening.

*Cultural and Spiritual Demographics of Europe*

Understanding the European cultural mindset only intensified our passion to work intentionally in the sphere of the arts. Through our missional experience, we have found that generally Europeans are receptive to give ear and consideration to the Gospel, specifically when it is disseminated through the arts, whether explicitly or implicitly. The European's search for transcendence and meaning often begins in the artistic realm.

To be sure, there are abundant living streams of evangelicalism throughout the State and Free churches across Europe, but still it is only a minute percentage of the whole population. The general population is steeped in post-modernity, even more so than many western societies across the globe. Europeans are listening more with their eyes and their senses than simply with their ears. It is not the position of this research that rational oral discourse is invalid as a means to reach this generation with the Gospel, however, it is important to realize Europe in particular and also many western populations no longer listen to or trust in words spoken by long standing forms of authority. When Christians are active in culture, and specifically in the arts either in the church or main stream-culture, the sheer involvement in the arts alone,

already speaks volumes to the European mind and heart of the relevance of the Christian faith to life.

To grasp and begin to understand the significance of the role of the arts for Europe, it is also important to understand the spiritual and cultural heritages and the diverse philosophical movements in history that influenced Europe's mindset even to this day. This continent is not only the birthplace for some of the greatest spiritual movements in history, but also some of history's most prolific composers, painters, sculptors, poets, writers, and dancers. It is expedient to also realize that from this continent emerged some of the fiercest ideologies ever constructed in history challenging Christianity. The influence of Voltaire, Kant, Hume, Nietzsche, and Sartre is still obvious in the hearts and minds of many Europeans today. With few exceptions, these shapers of the European psyche actually thought deeply of and valued the arts, though they not only abandoned, but also attempted to sabotage the moral moorings of traditional Christianity. In fact, it is important to note that the popular widespread contemporary postmodern consciousness in all western societies, including the USA, had its origins in Europe. Middleton and Walsh point this out in their *Truth is Stranger Than It Used to Be*:

The postwar existentialist movement in Europe (associated with names like Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, and Karl Jaspers)...articulated in novels, plays, essays, and assorted philosophical writings a profound loss of hope and sense of angst (undefined anxiety or dread) about the meaning and purpose of life in modern times. (Middleton & Walsh 1995, 23)

This angst spread by existential prophets laid the foundation for the hopelessness that is so pervasive in Europe. Yet, most of the European Union societies, with the exception of some of those integrated from former Marxist Europe, are still overflowing with overt religious Christian symbols of hope expressed most frequently through the arts of sculpture, glass-work mosaics, paintings, and even through the architecture of the numerous beautiful cathedrals scattered throughout Europe. In central Europe, there are not only crucifixes literally on the edge of almost every farmland, but also they often adorn the halls of justice and parliamentary buildings. Still, the European conscience is, for the most part, numb to the substantive reality behind the hope represented in the abundance of all these Christian symbols.

Though some European Union countries have attempted to secularize their societies, ironically today, religion is still a required school subject throughout the majority of European school systems. From our personal experience and conversations, we have found that many of

these religion teachers consider themselves either agnostic, some even atheists, but the majority are philosophical pluralists<sup>6</sup>. Daily, the State Church bells continue to ring out their assembly call. However, the average State Church parish draws under 20%<sup>7</sup> of the church membership, and in some EU nations, it is well below 5%<sup>8</sup>. *Nativity Scenes* are a common site in most every city square. In numerous cities around the continent, there have been crèches with live animals.

Though Christian symbolic artistic expressions decorate the towns, cities, and farm-fields today throughout Europe, these voices, for the most part, have fallen silent. These expressions of faith in art from

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<sup>6</sup> For an excellent discussion of the rampant *pluralism* among western societies today, see D.A. Carson's book, *The Gagging of God*, where he identifies two divergent forms of pluralism prevalent among western societies today: empirical and philosophical pluralism.

<sup>7</sup> In a 2006 editorial in *USA Today*, entitled "Is God Dead in Europe"; a Prague Post commentary was quoted that declares, "Common wisdom has it that alcoholics outnumber practicing Christians and that more Czechs believe in UFOs than believe in God – and common wisdom may be correct." Gannon goes on to point out that, "surveys show a sharp decline in church attendance and religious practice in most European countries. A series of Euro-barometer surveys since 1970 in five key countries (France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and Italy) shows that regular church attendance fell from about 40% of the population to about half that figure." See [www.usatoday.com/news/opinion /editorials/2006-01-08-faith-edit\\_x.html](http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion /editorials/2006-01-08-faith-edit_x.html).

<sup>8</sup> See [www.viaintegra.wordpress.com/2010/06/10/european-church-attendance](http://www.viaintegra.wordpress.com/2010/06/10/european-church-attendance).

other generations are not to be despised, however, it is important to realize that they do not speak to the contemporary Europeans of the viability of the Christian faith today. In central Europe some of the largest cathedrals, which once spoke profoundly to their times of the greatness and beauty of the Gospel, have now become museums; a magnificent voice from the past that no longer speaks today's vernacular. For the 21<sup>st</sup> century European, Christianity is simply tolerated by the majority as a reasonably harmless social necessity for births, marriages, and funerals.

Some evangelicals suggest Europe is simply cold, however, Europe is more closed than cold. There is still a strong movement among young Roman Catholics in particular and some portions of the Reformed and Lutheran Church, but the vast majority of Europeans are disillusioned and closed to Christianity's traditional statements and forms of religion. Still the search for transcendence and meaning goes on in the current cultural postmodern crescendo. Their search for meaning focuses on the aesthetic. That is why perceptive European voices, like that of C.S. Lewis, have observed: "the arts would play an essential role in a future awakening in Europe" (Hoehn 2003, 1).

Finally, through the ongoing collapse of modernism in western societies' sensibilities, as David Goa perceptively points out, the arts can once again awaken the European heart to the truth of the Christian faith. He observes, "the new ideology of postmodernism might even provide a lever to open such an opportunity" (Goa 2009, 3). In this context, the work of CAE endeavors to inundate European culture with art informed by the Christian view of reality, created by servant artists.

#### *Significance of the Research Concern*

An important issue that must be addressed is: Do we as western evangelicals and particularly in Europe realize what we are communicating to our world about God himself, redemption, and the relevance of the Gospel to all of life, through our conspicuous absence in the culture shaping sphere of arts in the broader-culture? The evangelical streams of the church in western societies are the most active in explicitly fulfilling the Great Commission. Thus, it is imperative that we re-think our position of the role of the arts in life generally and specifically in the broader-culture informed by a biblical worldview so that we effectively might make God known to European societies that are closed to traditional

expressions of the Christian faith in the State and Free churches.

Since the mid-1980s, we have observed that there is a steady stream of evangelical believing artists in almost every discipline. Some have successfully found the connection of their faith and their vocation as artists, but very few at all have found a resting place in local fellowships. A believing artist like any evangelical believer needs a local church fellowship for their growth and development, as well as for healthy relational accountability.

A Finnish Free Church evangelical pastor, Artero Laukkanen, in Helsinki confessed the following openly during the IMAGINE 2010 gathering.

We have not given a home to the artists in our congregations. They have come to our churches and we did not welcome them nor offer them opportunity in our gatherings nor encouragement. God forgive us...artists please forgive us!

This confession and admission is to be celebrated, but more than that, it must be exponentially multiplied.

Countless believing artists who are Christians, specifically in Europe, are still isolated and cannot find a connection with nurturing bodies of believers. Some western church leaders suggest that it is simply characteristic of the artists, in that they are independent

and un-willing to connect with the evangelical church culture. This may be true in some cases, however, could it also be that there is a deficit in the mindset of the evangelical streams of the church concerning art and culture. Consequently, the artists have little or no refuge, no resting place, no place to process and have a sounding board to think through their questions and challenges. Though evangelical envision statements have been articulated at conferences and as a result of consultations, yet the statements are unfortunately much more numerous than there are leaders implementing those vision statements.

In the European continent, a few church leaders are beginning to recognize that there is in fact a problem. One of the first official church leaders that voiced concern for artists was the Roman Catholic Pope John Paul II in his *Letter to Artists: On the Place and the Significance of Art*, published April 4, 1999. Perhaps some may consider it odd to quote a Roman Catholic Pope in this evangelical research project, however, Pope John Paul II possessed one of the warmest evangelical<sup>9</sup> hearts of recent

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<sup>9</sup> John Cavadini of the Theology Department of Notre Dame declared, "The most resounding and enduring innovation and legacy of John Paul II" was his "evangelical catechesis," and his ardent heart for "evangelization." This perception of Pope John Paul II is prevalent among

Roman Catholic papal history. He is a great example for all evangelical leaders certainly in the action and position he took towards artists. Pope John Paul II, who as a young man aspired to be an actor, with balanced and sound theological exhortations appealed and reasoned with the artistic community of faith. He begins his open letter this way:

To all who are passionately dedicated to the search for new "epiphanies" of beauty so that through their creative work as artists they may offer these as gifts to the world. (Pope John Paul II, 1999)

In a portion entitled *The Church Needs Art*, he explains:

In order to communicate the message entrusted to her by Christ, the Church needs art. Art must make perceptible, and as far as possible attractive, the world of the spirit, of the invisible, of God. It must therefore translate into meaningful terms that which is in itself ineffable. Art has a unique capacity to take one or other facet of the message and translate it into colors, shapes, and sounds, which nourish the intuition of those who look or listen. It does so without emptying the message itself of its transcendent value and its aura of mystery. The Church has need especially of those who can do this on the literary and figurative level, using the endless possibilities of images and their symbolic force. Christ Himself made extensive use of images in His preaching, fully in keeping with His willingness to become, in the Incarnation, the icon of the unseen God. (Ibid.)

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multitudes of evangelical spiritual leaders across Europe. See <http://www.chnonline.org/news/local/10725-evangelical-catechesis-is-abiding-legacy-of-john-paul-ii.html>.

In addition, a number of astute evangelical writers from the western world including Europe have begun to speak into the significance of the arts as a powerful shaper of culture and disseminator of ideas in their writings. In his book, *Shattered Visage*, Ravi Zacharias observes:

Those who harness the strength of the arts mold the soul of a nation to an extraordinary degree, affecting and changing the way people think and act to drastic proportions... far more than textbooks that plumbed the depths of language, truth, and logic. (Zacharias 1990, 181)

Zacharias also points out that in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the century of massive cultural shifts in western societies worldwide, that the arts definitely would play a major role in propagating answers to basic questions of meaning and purpose to a waiting public square:

The intelligent public is waiting to hear from art what it does not hear from theology, philosophy, and social theory and what it cannot hear from pure science. A broader, fuller, more coherent, more comprehensive account of what we human beings are, who we are, and what this life is for. (Carson 2000, 23)

Calvin Seerveld in his excellent treatise, *Bearing Fresh Olive Leaves*, exhorts that it is practically impossible to exclude the arts if we wish to participate in the work of his Kingdom:

God has given us a richness of cultural means that may make it difficult for us to participate in the Kingdom of Heaven (cf. Luke 18:18-30)

unless we are thoroughly committed servants of the Lord with a single-minded communal vision of wisdom on the task of art. (Seerveld 2000, 172)

N. T. Wright also added this weighty declaration, which accentuates the need to understand the significance of the role of the art in disseminating God's truth:

Our task in the present is to implement the achievement of Jesus and thereby anticipate the final coming together. How are we going to do that? We are going to have to do it through politics, we've also got to do that through the world of the arts...Whether its dance, whether its music, whether its painting, playwriting, whatever it is, we have lived too long with the arts as the pretty bit around the edge with reality as the non-artistic thing in the middle. (Wright 2008)

Jeremy Begbie spoke not only of the propriety of the arts in disseminating God's truth to society, rather than the church would be irresponsible should they not realize the significance of the arts for the relevant re-delivery of the Gospel in western societies state of spiritual bankruptcy for today:

As the western Churches face the enormous challenge of how the faith 'once delivered' is going to be re-delivered in a society increasingly alienated from the institutional Church and increasingly ignorant about the Christian faith, to neglect the arts potential would be curious, perhaps even irresponsible. (Begbie 2001, xiii)

Steve Turner, in his book, *Imagine: A vision for Christians in the arts*, accurately observes that the arts are the forum for debate in western cultures (Turner 2001,

21). If we are not there in culture, specifically in the sphere of the arts, we will fail to enter that important dialogue with relevant issues that touch our world.

David Goa, in his essay, "The Public Square and the Culture of Amnesia," perceptively observes:

Artworks are fulcrums of meaning. They may move our understanding of the world in such a fundamental way that our vision, our way of seeing, is transformed. They are a fount rather than merely an object of knowledge. An encounter with artworks, ancient, modern, and contemporary, has the capacity to open the floodgates of meaning for a person, illuminate particular moments within the life of a community, and become a cache of meaning for a culture. Both as fulcrum and as fount, artworks shatter the hegemony of aesthetics and history, and postmodern discourse finally recognizes this, albeit in what I often consider to be a clumsy manner. (Goa 2009, 7)

Colin Harbinson in his essay, *The Role of Creativity in the Expression of Truth*, astutely adds:

At particular times in history, the arts have played a strategic role in the mission of the church. At other times – when perceived to be morally and spiritually bankrupt – they were largely abandoned. However, in probability, there has never been a time in which a biblical understanding of the arts by the church has been more needed than in our current postmodern culture with its visual and experiential orientation. (Dawson 2008, 163)

Harbinson also insightfully points out the precedence set for the strength and value of the arts in conveying truth by virtue of the creative artistic means used in the writing of scripture. He states:

As the Biblical story unfolds, it does so in stories and poetry. In fact, approximately 75 percent of Scripture consists of narrative, 15 percent is expressed in poetic form, and only 10 percent is propositional and overtly instructional in nature. As we retell the story the Gospel story, we have reversed the Biblical pattern. Today an estimated 10 percent of our communication is designed to capture the imagination of the listener, while 90 percent is purely instructive. (Ibid., 163)

These insightful affirmative declarations above from sound evangelical theologians and worldview thinkers along with our missional experience substantiate the need for such a research project. There are a number of matters to consider, reflect on, and wrestle with in order to answer Akers' challenge practically in a biblical, contextually relevant, and balanced fashion.

#### *Research Question*

The research question for this project is: How might evangelical streams of the church in Europe at either an entire denominational level or in the local congregational context, be instrumental in empowering a new and steady stream of Christian-based artists into the broader-culture today?

In seeking to grapple with this question, the following four subsidiary questions are also directing and vital for this study and research:

Subsidiary Question 1: What primary hindrances can be identified among evangelicals, which specifically denigrate a vision for art and artists in the broader culture?

Subsidiary Question 2: How does our evangelical understanding of holiness and worldliness affect our position on engagement with the arts in the broader-culture?

Subsidiary Question 3: What are some essential assumptions in our evangelical Biblical worldview, which would be instrumental in facilitating an increase of Christian-based artists in the broader culture?

Subsidiary Question 4: What are some specific strategies, educational or otherwise, that would be most significant in empowering Christian-based artists for the broader culture?

### *General Review of Literature*

Various renowned and less known authors, essayists, researchers, lecturers, and art's advocates have supplied understanding and perspectives in a multitude of fields for the research findings for this work.

Insights on postmodern culture were gleaned from D. A. Carson's, *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism*; Gene Edward Veith, Jr.'s, *Postmodern Times*; and Leonard Sweet's, *Postmodern Pilgrims: First Century Passion for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century World*. David Goa's, "The Public Square and the Culture of Amnesia," declares that the postmodern era is a *kairos* opportunity for Christians in the arts.

Neil Postman's denigration of all spheres of the visual and performing arts, with the exception of rational discourse and oral or printed art forms, in his book *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, represents the antithesis to the position of this researcher. However, many points were well taken and his work was important to reflect on.

Two published dissertations, one by Dianne Collard, entitled, *The Role of Visual Art in the (Free) Evangelical Churches of Germany and Spain*, and John Barber's, *Luther and Calvin on Music & Worship*, were both helpful resources. Collard's work was very valuable in shaping the research concern and question. Barber contributed great insight historically for both Luther and Calvin providing their perspectives on art and culture, which shaped religious European society.

A number of the Lausanne Occasional papers from the 2004 Thailand Lausanne Congress for World Evangelism

specifically addressed the secular-sacred divide that plagues many evangelicals. Five specifically proved helpful for this project: *A Call to Develop Christ-like Leaders* #41, *Holistic Mission* #33, *Market Place Ministry* #40, *Media and Technology* #48, and *Redeeming the Arts* #46. All of these spoke to the mindset necessary for Christian cultural engagement in the western societal context.

An executive summary report of the findings from 'The European Arts Summit' conducted from May 9-15, in 2009, in Mittersill, Austria, provides a revealing report on the state of the evangelical world's mindset concerning the role of the arts in the broader-culture, specifically for Europe. Over fifty key artists, art-network, and Christian organizational leaders from fifteen European nations, representing the arts in the spheres of church, missions, the market place, and education met to begin a conversation how to overcome the schism that exists between the church and believing evangelical artists. CAE was one of five collaborating initiatives that sponsored the event.

Christian historians, philosophers, and apologists provided understanding in analyzing the stream of western thought through history from Greek mythology through pragmatism of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which significantly influenced all western cultures, including Europe.

*Revolutions in Worldview* edited by Andrew Hoffercker, provides a vast wealth of historical insight of the flow of thought, which aided this research project in understanding the origins and influences of Christian and non-Christian philosophical trends through history. Richard Tarnas's comprehensive work, *The Passion of the Western Mind*, provides understanding into the development of the prevalent contemporary western worldview.

Two resources specifically offered a wealth of insight concerning western societies' transition from modernity into post-modernity's ideologies and 'isms' (deism, agnosticism, and atheism), which have significantly influenced western thought: James A. Herrick's, *The Making the New Spirituality*, and also here once again Andrew Hoffercker's *Revolutions in Worldview*. Both these books proved to be invaluable resources. Two other works that were also very helpful were David Bentley Hart's, *Atheist Delusions*, as well and Ravi Zacharias's, *A Shattered Visage*.

On understanding culture, Charles Kraft's, *Anthropology for Christian Witness*, was broad and insightful providing understanding for the process of how worldview finds its way to the surface of culture. Lloyd Kwast's dissection of culture in his article, *Understanding*

*Culture*, contributed most significantly to understanding the integral relationship of worldview to culture. John Frame's concluding chapters in his book, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life*, where he deals with Niebuhr's classic *Christ and culture* typology was concise and particularly enlightening. Another astute theological writer, D.A. Carson, in his book, *Christ and Culture Re-visited*, challenges the notion of reducing the relationship of Christ and culture to one Niebuhrian type. Sociologist James Hunter's work entitled *How to Change the World* contributes insights from a sociological point of view. Andy Crouch's book, *Making Culture*, was practical in many ways for this project.

There is an enormous amount of valuable material from biblical worldview theologians and Christian philosophers. A most influential resource for this research project was *Art & the Bible* by Francis Schaefer, a brief yet profound biblical treatise on art. This work had a profound impact on this researcher and the work of CAE. His foresight, perspectives on art and culture, and the propensity for evangelicalism's cultural disconnection, provides key insights that were foundational for this study. Paul Hiebert's, *Transforming Worldviews: An Anthropological Understanding of How People Change* presents

a passionate missiology mingled with sound theological and biblical worldview perspectives. Albert Wolters', *Creation Re-gained*, also contributed to this research project with his concise reformational worldview reflections. David Naugle's, *Worldview: History of a Concept*, contributed historical insights to cultural shifts, which influenced contemporary western society. In addition, Naugle's paper, entitled, "A Christian Worldview and the Futures of Evangelicalism," eruditely imparted insightful perspectives for this research. The thorough work on Abraham Kuyper by Peter Heslam's, *Creating a Christian Worldview: Abraham Kuyper's Lectures on Calvinism*, was a rich resource for the Christian view of reality. The books of James Sire, *The Universe Next Door* and *Naming the Elephant*, informed this research project of the prominent and prevalent conflicting worldviews in western society.

Brian Walsh and Richard Middleton's book, *Transforming Vision*, aided greatly in identifying the possible origin of our western evangelicalism tendency for world-flight. Both Darrow L. Miller's, *Discipling Nations*, and James A. Herrick's, *The Making of the New Spirituality*, insightfully provided origins for the understanding the evangelical mindset in regards to the broader culture.

Rich treatises on the purpose of and the function of the arts were provided through Calvin Seerveld in *Bearing Fresh Olive Leaves* and William A. Dyrness's, *Visual Faith: Art, Theology, and Worship in dialogue*, offered practical theological perspectives for this project. An associate of Francis Schaefer, art historian H.R. Rookmaaker, spoke prophetically to issues of art, modernity, and evangelicalism's offense towards the arts in his book, *Modern Art and the Death of Culture*. Nicholas Wolterstorff's, *Art in Action*, contributed to the conversation concerning a number of pertinent issues. Lesser-known John Wilson of Scotland, provided one of the most comprehensive and theologically sound discourses on the function, purpose, and value of the arts for the church and society entitled, *One of the Richest Gifts*.

#### *Definitions of Relevant Terms and Concepts*

The following definitions of key terms and concepts for the purpose of this research project include the following.

**State and Free Churches:** These terms refer to the state sanctioned denominations by various EU nations. For example, the Roman Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, the Anglican, and the Dutch, Belgian, and Swiss Reformed

churches are church institutions generally affirmed in different European nations. Free Church is the name that represents all the non-state church Christian churches, whether the expression is more traditional such as Baptists, Methodist, Presbyterian, or independent Free churches that are either *non-* or *inter-*denominational in their makeup. The *Free Church* is more or less also known in the English vernacular as the Protestant Church. Since the late 1970s and certainly also before, there has been a new phenomenon where lay communities have been established that have come into existence associated with the Roman Catholic Church as well as in some Lutheran streams. For all practical purposes, these groups act as local fellowships similar to what is expressed in the Free Church movement and possess evangelical living faith as expressed in this section of definitions.

**Evangelical and Evangelicalism:** D.A. Carson, in his book, *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism*, speaks of a form of evangelicalism that he calls, 'confessional Christianity'<sup>10</sup>, which he defines as:

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<sup>10</sup>The decision to include Carson's definition for confessional Christianity is not in reference to the historical confessional church movements across Europe, rather, it was because his definition highlights the importance of a "supernatural worldview" and the emphasis on a traditional living faith. His definition implies committed adherence to faith in Jesus Christ as the

Usually taken to refer to believers who uphold a supernatural worldview and who are bound together by their common adherence to the ancient creeds, especially the Apostle's Creed, Nicea, and Chalcedon. (Carson 1996, 360-361)

Whereas, this definition does begin to depict the use of the term for this work, David Bebbington<sup>11</sup> in his *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* certainly provides a more precise definition that will be employed for the purpose of this paper. In his own words:

There are four qualities that have been special marks of Evangelical religion: conversionism, the belief that lives need to be changed; activism, the expression of the gospel in effort; Biblicism, a particular regard for the Bible, and what may be called cruci-centrism, as stress on the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Together they form a quadrilateral of priorities that is the basis of Evangelicalism. (Bebbington 1989, 2-3)

**Post-Modernity or Postmodernism:** Jimmy Long in his paper "Generating Hope," makes a valid point about postmodernism:

If somebody gives you a definition of postmodern, by definition it is not a definition of postmodern. It is a *modern* definition of postmodern, because postmodernists would say that postmodern can't be defined. (Carson 1996, 325)

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resurrected Lord and Redeemer, which is characteristic of evangelicalism.

<sup>11</sup> Based on this researcher's missionary experience, Bebbington's listed qualities exist in abundance in streams of the state churches in Europe, and are also prevalent in the free-church across the European continent.

The obvious inherent weakness of postmodern ideology is that this deconstructionist anarchy even undermines its own prophetic voices and any attempt to make declarative statements. The terms, post-modernity and postmodernism are used freely today among many writers and authors, but for the purpose of this paper, postmodern refers to the predominant philosophical cultural climate that continues to reign and erode western societies attacking all meta-narratives across the globe.

Leonard Sweet in his book, *Postmodern Pilgrims: First Century Passion for the 21<sup>st</sup> century World* provides a simple introduction into this existential ideological shift inaugurated by the likes of Frederick Nietzsche and echoed by such secular prophetic voices as Jean-Francois Lyotard, Jacques Derrida, and Michel Foucault among others. Sweet uses the acronym *EPIC* in view of the epic paradigm shift away from modernism.

First, the postmodern culture has shifted from the "rational to experiential" (Sweet 2005, 43). That is, modernism emphasizes reason and observation, whereas postmodernism emphasizes revelation and experience. The second deviation away from modernism to post-modernism is the move from "representative to participatory" (Ibid., 72). Modernism says, "We need our leaders to make

decisions for us" (Ibid.). Postmodernism says, "We want to make our own decisions and to have multiple choices" (Ibid.). In addition, postmodernism declares: "There are no more 'professional clergy' and pew-sitting laity" (Ibid.). In addition, postmoderns "want interactive, immersive, *in your face* participation in the mysteries of God" (Ibid.). The third is a shift from "word-based to image-driven" (Ibid., 86-87). Modernism emphasizes words and propositional truth. Postmodernism emphasizes images and the power of metaphor. The final characteristic represented by the letter *c*, stands for the move from the individual to the communal. Though he recognizes the individual still played a strong role in the postmodern culture swim, modernism was stronger in individualism, and postmodernism focused on the collective community. He states:

The paradox is this: the pursuit of individualism has led us to this place of hunger for connectedness...The transience of the culture requires that our community building and hospitality be more aggressive, not less; more premeditated, not haphazard. (Ibid., 109 & 117)

**Art, the Arts, and Artistry:** The meanings of these terms have evolved significantly since the Middle Ages. A careful study reveals that the artists of antiquity were servants who applied their talents in almost every community sphere of daily life. John Wilson

discloses the following about one of the premier artists of that era:

In a letter to the Duke of Milan, Leonardo offered his services and listed his credentials for a post on the Duke's staff. He numbered them and they included qualifications such as being a military engineer able to construct bridges, battering rams, mines, covered chariots, guns and catapults, as well as being an architect and water engineer. Almost as an afterthought, without numbering the item, Leonardo adds, 'I can carry out sculpture in marble, bronze or clay, and also I can do in painting whatever may be done as well as any other be he who he may.'  
(Wilson 1981, 2)

In his work, *Hopeful Imagination: Prophetic Voices in Exile*, Walter Brueggemann relates an important insight about the work of artists. Specifically, he refers to the work of poets:

Poets have no advice to give people. They only want people to see differently, to re-vision life. They are not coercive. They only try to stimulate, surprise, hint, give nuance, not more.  
(Brueggemann 1986, 22)

William A. Dyrness also adds this perspective on defining and understanding the art:

Art then is that human activity that goes beyond the useful to embody in allusive color, shape, or sound the joy or pain of being human...it shows us something we can learn in no other way.  
(Dyrness 2001, 99)

According to Dyrness, Nicholas Wolterstorff stresses:

Art is a way of acting in the world that engages with its materiality in such a way that it illumines something about the world's depth and reality. (Ibid.)

Still, John Wilson offers another side of art that goes to the Latin origin, *ars*, declaring: "art is the highest form of craftsmanship" (Wilson 1981, 6).

Along with these helpful insights, Frank Burch Brown in his book, *Good Taste, Bad Taste, and Christian Taste: Aesthetics in Religious Life*, provides an excellent foundation for understanding art, artisan, and artistry as used in this work:

In Western antiquity, and on through the Middle Ages, the term for art (*techne* in Greek, or *ars* in Latin) could apply to any activity or product of skillful, knowledgeable, and admirable making – everything from ordinary leather-work and masonry painting and architecture. The stone cutter and sculptor were equally artists. (Brown 2000, 27)

Brown's qualities listed in his definition for art in antiquity, "skillful, knowledgeable, and admirable making" (Ibid.) are precisely the terms that make art, art.

In the Redeeming the Arts track occasional paper of the 2004 Lausanne Congress for World Evangelism, the track leader, Colin Harbinson, offered their definition. He states, "at the very least the making of art is a creative activity that calls for skill and imagination" (Harbinson 2005, 6).

All the insights go into the understanding of the term art for this work. To fine-tune the definition for usage in this project, the arts refer to the vast array of

skillful, knowledgeable, and admirably created expressions, products, or presentations whether of historical, classical, or contemporary pop origins. Artisans are simply those that make art consistent with this definition.

**Christian-based Art:** Whereas many writers freely employ the adjective, Christian as a modifier to designate art that is created by Christians, for the purpose of this paper, art made by Christians will be referred to as Christian-based art. That is, art made by Christians is not only art that deals with biblical imagery, stories, or characters, rather Christian-based art refers to art that is created and informed by the Christian view of reality. Francis Schaefer expresses Christian-based art best when he states: "What a Christian portrays in his art is the totality of life"(Schaefer 1973, 96). Finally, Philip Ryken says it simply, art made by Christians is, "art for God's sake" (Ryken 2006, 47), and not for arts' own sake.

**Worldview and Biblical Worldview:** The term, worldview, will be repeatedly used throughout this work and most often with the adjective biblical preceding it. Whereas, one of the assumptions listed in this first chapter is the biblicity of a fully integrated biblical view of reality, it is important to concisely present the foundational essence of the concept of worldview for this

work as well as lay out a description of a biblical worldview.

As to the concept of worldview, Abraham Kuyper's, Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1899, provides a simple but helpful analogy: "As truly as every plant has a root, so does a principle hide under every manifestation of life"(Beckett 2006, 70). Kuyper goes on to explain:

These principles are interconnected and have their common root in a fundamental principle; and from the latter is developed logically and systematically the whole complex of ruling ideas and conceptions that go to make up our life and worldview. (Ibid.)

Darrow L. Miller, explains the universality of the function of worldview for all of humanity:

All people and cultures have a particular model of the universe, or worldview. Their worldview does more to shape their development, their propensity, or poverty, than does the physical environment or other circumstances. (Miller 2001, 34)

Miller's definition of worldview is insightfully practical:

A worldview, like a road map, sets out our direction and guides us through life. Like wind blowing through trees, it cannot be seen, yet it enlivens and animates. Worldview infuses a community with life and establishes its dynamic. (Ibid., 40)

James Sire's description in his book, *The Universe Next Door*, unfolds it comprehensively this way:

A worldview is a commitment, a fundamental orientation of the heart, that can be expressed as a story or in a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic constitution of reality and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being. (Sire 2004, 17)

Andrew Hoffercker quotes Francis Schaefer's simple supposition about worldview that, "people act as they think" (Hoffercker 2007, x). The idea here is not that everyone intentionally thinks through each act or decision, however, every human being moves from a framework of presuppositions which influences their daily lives, either consciously or sub-consciously.

A biblical worldview is formulated through the lens of the biblical narrative. For the purpose of this work, Walsh and Middleton's, *Transforming Vision: Shaping a Christian Worldview*, lays out the fundamental definition for a biblical or Christian worldview:

The biblical worldview of creation, fall, and redemption is comprehensive. It tells with clarity and richness who we are, where we are, what is wrong and what the remedy is. It is a vision that illuminates literally all of life and empowers us to walk obediently before the Lord. (Walsh & Middleton 1984, 93)

They went on to say that a biblical worldview provides a comprehensive holistic "vision that illuminates literally all of life" (Ibid, 93 & 95).

Finally, concerning the essentiality of a biblical worldview for the church, D.A. Carson argues that the Gospel is virtually incomprehensible without being rooted in a biblical worldview: "the good news of Jesus Christ is virtually incoherent unless it is securely set into a biblical worldview" (Carson 1996, 502).

**Culture, Subculture, and Broader-culture:** These three terms have thus far been freely used throughout this first chapter. Lloyd Kwast began his brief treatise entitled, *Understanding Culture*, with the right question: "What is culture anyway?" (Kwast 1986, C-3). Kwast states emphatically,

There is probably no more comprehensive word in the English language than the word, 'culture,' or no more complex a field of study than cultural anthropology. (Ibid.)

For the purpose of this dissertation, we will look to a number of Christian writers and astute theologians who have contributed to the dialogue on culture.

Richard John Neuhaus, in his foreword to the book *Culture Matters*, by T.M. Moore, accurately observes: "Even if fish can think they likely give little thought to the water in which they swim" (Moore 2007, 7). He went on to say, "Similarly culture is the taken-for-granted air of ideas, habits, hopes, and fears that we breathe every day. Unlike fish," he went on to say, "we human beings can, and

should think about it" (Ibid.). Moore refers to culture as "the artifacts, institutions, and conventions with which we surround ourselves" (Ibid., 11). To be fair to Moore, his helpful treatment of culture matters was more thorough than most, yet his definition does not articulate a practical working definition for culture for this work.

D.A. Carson contributed richly to the conversation on culture through his work, *Christ & Culture Revisited*. Anthropologist Clifford Geertz provides Carson's preferred definition:

The culture concept...denotes an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, as system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about attitudes towards life. (Ibid., 2)

Whereas, this definition possesses most of the components in more detail than Moore, it is still somewhat complicated and elusive. This definition also omits the mention of the very central component of culture, which will be addressed shortly.

John Frame's, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life: A Theology of Lordship*, helps us in looking at the Latin origin of the term.

The word culture comes from the Latin verb *colere*, which refers literally to agriculture, tilling the ground in order to grow things. (Frame 2008, 854)

In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, however, the term migrated from purely referring to *agriculture* to the realm of "cultivation of our minds...through education" (Conybeare 2003, 1).

In his brief essay on *Understanding Culture*, Lloyd Kwast provides a cross-section of culture, which supplies the most basic, practical, and comprehensive understanding of culture. For a visual, Kwast's diagram of a cross-section of culture has been included in the appendices section of this dissertation. (See Appendix A) According to Kwast, the best way or method to understand culture is to realize that culture is made up of "successive layers, or levels" (Kwast 1981, C-6), the innermost central core is *worldview*, Geertz's missing component. Kwast points out that beliefs, values, and ultimately behavior are birthed from the very center-core of worldview answering the primary question, *what is real?* (Ibid.)

Answering this question, what is real leads us to conclude what is true and then acts as an inner map, as it were. The fact that human beings move from an inner map, which gives them bearings and influences how they look at and act in the world according to James Orr, the first evangelical to employ the term, *worldview*, "is as old as thought itself" (Naugle 2002, 9).

Worldview cannot be omitted from a discussion of the meaning and function of culture. Worldview is not always, and truly most often not, a cognitive experience for the average person, but rather an unconscious guide. Hoffecker points out that "to be human is to have a worldview" (Hoffecker 2007, xi). It is true that most often the visible behavior of any given culture is simply learned behavior passed on to the members of any given culture through traditions. Again, more often than not, the individual members are not cognizant of the worldview that is behind their actions. Yet, worldview is the central most important essential component of culture.

John Frame's summary statement about culture in his book, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life*, offers still more insight as to how the term is used in this work. He observes: "Creation is what God makes; culture is what we make" (Frame 2008, 854). Frame's 'we' of course is humankind and his observation comes from the vantage point of the biblical meta-narrative, which is precisely the vantage from which this dissertation unfolds. Humanity and culture are inextricably connected, just as world-view and culture are integrally related.

Charles Ringma adds this simple axiom, which adds the final illumination: "Made in God's image, we are called

to shape and adorn the world in which we live" (Ringma 2000, March 29) and this shaping function proceeds ultimately from the worldview at the core of culture. For the purpose of this paper then, culture is the shaping and adorning function of humanity, which proceeds and is a direct result of a particular worldview.

The second term, sub-culture, is simply an identifiable group within a larger or broader-culture, which is driven by their particular worldview. The *Apple Dictionary* expands on the definition above by stating that differing beliefs or interests identify a subculture, which is often at variance with those of the larger culture. Never before in the history of the western world has there existed such a pluralistic array, a smorgasbord of subcultures inhabiting any given western society and varying worldviews drives each. D.A. Carson refers to this phenomenon as "empirical pluralism" (Carson 1996, 13) and concludes that this term "sums up the growing diversity in our culture" (Ibid.). In truth however, it is important to point out that, ultimately neither class nor race necessarily determines a sub-group or culture; rather it is the central vision for living life that defines a culture or subculture. Christianity, in truth, transcends classes and races and perhaps can be best labeled as more of a

counterculture. This will be taken up later in the course of the dissertation.

As to the final term, broader-culture, every western society also has an overarching preponderate cultural distinctiveness, which for the purpose of this paper is referred to as the broader-culture. Contemporary and generic synonyms for the broader-culture are the terms *public-square* or *mainstream* culture. It is in this context where all sub-cultures meet, interact, and sometimes clash.

**Platonic or Gnostic Dualism:** Dualism is not a worldview in and of itself, but it is inherent in many sub-cultures, especially today. Essentially, dualism has to do with the idea of a 'two-ism.' That means that things that exist belong to either one or another category. Platonic dualism specifically has to do with the separation of the physical and the non-physical or metaphysical reality expressed in the existence of the soul. The Greek philosopher Plato, though perhaps inadvertently, was the father of the Greek form of dualism. That is, that there is not only a two-ism, but also that the material world of things is of a lower value over against the realm of the soul or higher sphere of ideas. It is important to mention for clarity here that the term *idea* for Plato did not mean "subjective mental constructs" (Tarnas 1991, 10), but

rather "Platonic ideas are objective" (Ibid.) existing "in their own right" (Ibid.). They represented his absolutes and were un-embodied fixed realities. Ultimately, Plato's devaluation of the material world and the body laid a foundation for the Gnostic heresy that emerged in the second century, which was refuted by the writings of Irenaeus in his book, entitled *Against Heresies*, written around 180 AD. Platonism, whether expressed as Platonic Dualism or Neo-Platonism was addressed accurately by James A. Herrick as he points out the incompatibility of dualistic thought with Christianity:

Like Gnosticism, Neo-Platonism held that the human soul was spirit held captive in matter. This belief set the Neo-Platonist at odds with Christian teaching, which stressed the unity of the human body and soul, the ultimate redemption of each and the conviction that the material world had been created good. (Herrick 2003, 43)

Plato's view of the body specifically is also contrary to the biblical view. Though these words were attributed to Socrates in Plato's *Phaedo*, they reveal the dualistic propensities present in Plato's philosophy:

I reckon we make the nearest approach to knowledge when we have the least possible intercourse or communion with the body, and are not surfeited with the bodily nature, but keep ourselves pure until the hour when God himself is pleased to release us, and thus having got rid of the foolishness of the body we shall be pure and hold converse with the pure, and know of ourselves the clear light everywhere, which is no

other than the light of truth. (Plato 1988, 79-80)

Platonic dualism is the heresy that the physical body is something to be escaped, which is inconsistent with the Judeo-Christian biblical view of the body.

### *Overview of Research Methodologies*

Along with the vast relevant literature available addressing the focus of the research concern for this work, two methodologies were employed.

The first methodology, five evangelical, theological, and arts advocate experts with a connection to Europe, will be interviewed and given the four subsidiary questions of the primary research question presented earlier in this chapter.

Secondly, six European career artists professing evangelical faith and serving in different cultural contexts in Europe will be asked two questions. They will be asked what they consider the most urgent issues are, which need to be addressed that would potentially result in a greater church empowerment for Christian presence in the arts in the broader-culture. They will also be asked what are the issues in the lives of artists that need to be considered to work towards reconciliation with the evangelical streams of the church.

*Assumptions*

The following assumptions for this work were inspired by and adapted from the Intervarsity-Marketplace<sup>12</sup> focus group:

- The authority of the Bible is the primary revelation to guide every follower of Christ;
- The Redemption of Christ is for all creation and available to humankind through repentance and saving faith;
- The value and divine nature of work: that is to say, work is not a result of the fall or the curse, rather incorporates the idea of stewardship in every creational sphere;
- The church<sup>13</sup>, as the body of Christ, serves God in both its gathered (ecclesia) and scattered (diaspora) rhythms throughout society;
- The eternal value of every person and the significance of their gender, ethnicity, work, temperament,

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<sup>12</sup> The Intervarsity Market-Place is a focus group of the evangelical mission, Intervarsity. On their website, they list their convictions which form the basis for their training. See [www.urbana.org/whole-life-stewardship-reflections/a-foundations-discussion-paper](http://www.urbana.org/whole-life-stewardship-reflections/a-foundations-discussion-paper).

<sup>13</sup> The term church, for the purposes of this project, does not reference any specific established denomination, rather it refers generally to all those who are true followers of and believers in Jesus Christ.

gifting, age, and nationality are biblically supported values as God cherishes every person;

- The call to every believer to be witnesses to the good news of the Gospel, which is to be practiced by all believers, everywhere, all the time, in both word and deed; and
- The Biblicity of a fully integrated Biblical and Christian view of reality foundational for life and service.

#### *Limitations*

This research project is limited by the following constraints. The first is the time factor in view of full time work as a missionary in Europe and as the overseer of the organization CAE. The research was also limited due to funding for this project. The research methodology for this project is also limited to the available evangelicals encountered during the yearly travel teaching and ministry schedule. Thus, the selection of experts drawn on and artists used were affected due to this same restriction. Literature and research materials were largely reduced to books acquired for the DMin. modules, books already available in the researcher's theological library, as well as cyber space materials, due to limited English evangelical theological libraries in continental Europe.

*Delimitations*

This study is delimited to diverse streams of evangelicalism in western cultures, with a primary focus on Europe. In addition, the research is delimited to artists who are believers called to work in the broader culture. The evangelical theological and art advocate experts selected were sought-out as they either are of European origin or at least have had significant exposure to Europe and have exhibited an understanding of European cultures. Whereas, the focus of this study is delimited to artists, all vocations certainly would benefit from the sound biblical empowerment for cultural engagement expressed in this paper. The call to serve in the arena of the arts is definitely not intrinsically superior to any other vocational sphere, yet unequivocally as valid as any sphere of service.

*Overview for this Research Project*

This research project will unfold as follows. In chapter two of this dissertation, the resource literature informing this research will speak specifically to the subsidiary questions selected. Chapter three contains a more detailed description behind the two methodologies; the formats utilized for collecting the responses; the primary

reason behind each question; the criteria used for the vetting process for both experts and artists; and finally the experts and artists will be introduced along with a biographical sketch with their respective credentials. Chapter four will deal exclusively with the results of the methodologies without commentary or observations. Chapter five will disclose a summary of the responses from both the experts and the artists; suggestions for practical strategies based upon the findings; proposals for further research; and a conclusion with closing remarks about the way ahead.

CHAPTER 2  
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

*Introduction: A Step Towards Problem Resolution*

We are moving away, I think, from the old split in which, it was expected that good Christians couldn't be artists and good artists couldn't be Christians. (Wright 2008, 222)

The mindset that Wright is referring to is undeniably true. There is even in Europe, as he went on to state, a new wave of "Christian painters, composers, sculptors, and even poets who are showing the way forward" (Wright 2008, 223) among evangelicals.

Nearly one-decade earlier, writers like William Dyrness and Calvin Seerveld observed the small but growing movement as well. Regarding specifically the visual arts Dyrness observes:

Things are clearly changing at the turn of the new millennium. In fact, one might go so far as to speak of a revival of Christian interest in the visual arts. (Dyrness 2001, 13)

This revival, however, as mentioned in the introduction, according to Dyrness, is taking place more in the context of the sub-culture of the evangelical church:

In the case of the arts, it is significant to note that it is precisely in the area of worship – within the walls of the church – that this revival is taking place. (Dyrness 2001, 13-14)

Still, there is a new interest and involvement in the arts and, as a result, there has been a need to help provide assistance for this new movement. In the same year as Dyrness, in his preface for *Art & Soul* by Hilary Brand and Adrienne Chaplin, Calvin Seerveld writes:

More Christians than ever before are pursuing the arts. The resources to help them integrate their faith and their art, however have not kept up. This book is an attempt to redress the balance. (Brand & Chaplin 2001, vii)

Brand and Chaplin are examples of a trend that joined in the conversation through their writings on the arts toward the end of the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, attempting to provide a compass for those rising to the task of Christian aesthetic presence in the broader culture. These and other authors were building on a scholarly foundation informed by a Christian worldview, which was laid by arts advocate and biblical worldview pioneers such as Francis Schaefer, H.R. Rookmaaker, Frank Gaebeline, John Wilson, Nicholas Wolterstorff, and Calvin Seerveld. Their influence was and remains tangible, and laid the foundation to answer Akers' thought provoking challenge.

Over the last four decades, scores of those influenced by these pioneers have enhanced the conversation and as has been noted there has been some progress in the culture of the evangelical church. Yet, as articulated in chapter one, there is very little evidence that artists are being launched from evangelical churches into the public square with any sense of affirmation. Though there are occasional exceptions, still many believing artists have difficulty finding their way. Seerveld observes again in his preface for Brand and Chaplin:

For many young Christians, entering a course of study on the arts can be an acute shock. Some cope by separating faith and work into watertight compartments, others abandon one or the other – more often the faith. (Ibid.)

The question to ask is, why? Why is it, in view of the progress in the form of books and in the progress achieved in the context of evangelical church culture, that artists are not finding their way. Some blame the artists, suggesting that they are “too experimental, too self-indulgent, or too disturbing” (Taylor 2010,9).

Media specialist Bob Briner recognizes another potential source of the problem in the early 1990s in his book, *Roaring Lambs*, just a few years after Akers’s editorial:

Typically, the young people of the congregation who are called to the professional ministry are singled out for special attention, special counseling, special prayer, and special financial support. Why shouldn't talented young people of the congregation who hope to enter medicine or teaching, or journalism, or writing or plumbing, or retailing or any other world of work be given at least the same kind of attention. At the very least, they should be made to understand that in their careers they have both the possibility and the responsibility to be a part of the ministry of the church. (Briner 1993, 48)

Should Briner's vision take hold in streams of evangelicals at a grass roots level in congregations, perhaps another historical and spiritual renaissance would be underway.

What are the true root issues as to why this is not already happening? Perhaps the core of the dilemma lies in a limited vision for life and service in broader culture generally as Briner suggested. Maybe the problem lies in the worldview, which is propagated consciously, or unconsciously in our evangelical Bible schools, seminaries, and in our pulpits. Could it simply be indifference to the theme of the arts? Perhaps it has to do with a dearth of understanding for the arts. Maybe it is a combination of all these and more. The first and most necessary step in any problem-resolution, however, is the recognition that a problem, in fact, *does* exist.

In this substantive review of the resources, the findings will be disclosed which address some of the

potential roots of this problem. This will be accomplished specifically through the literature addressing the subsidiary questions of Chapter one. Through identifying and addressing the roots of the problem, the insights gleaned from the literature could possibly begin to aid evangelical congregations to overcome these obstacles and thus potentially enable them to empower a greater Christian aesthetic presence in the public square.

*Subsidiary Question 1: Hindrances*

The first subsidiary question is as follows: What primary hindrances can be identified among evangelicals, which specifically denigrate a vision for art and artists in the broader culture? Three primary hindrances emerged in the abundance of the resource literature available.

The first hindrance has to do with the absence of an integrated biblical worldview among the majority of church leaders, and, subsequently, church members. The second is our misunderstanding and propensity for cultural disconnection resulting in separatism and withdrawal. The third corresponds to the second: our evangelical misunderstanding and suspicion of the arts, resulting in indifference, and in some cases outright aversion. The

implications of these and the potential antidotes will be dealt with based on the literature resources.

### The Absence of an Integrated Biblical Worldview

Many writers have observed that simply because someone is a Christian does not necessarily mean that they live their life based on a Christian worldview,<sup>14</sup> or even that they have reflected deeply or at all on their view of life and the world. In his book, *Transforming Worldviews*, Paul Hiebert asserts that Christian conversion should include change not only in the beliefs and behavioral dimensions of our existence, but also in worldview:

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<sup>14</sup>It is important to mention that there is some disagreement among scholars as to whether or not there exists one Christian or biblical worldview for the church across the globe. Charles H. Kraft argues in *Anthropology for Christian Witness*, against the idea. He bases this on the diversity of how different cultures see or value things differently and that in order for there to be one Christian worldview that this necessitates a "single approach both to things like moral values and things like time, space and categorization" (Kraft 1996, 67). Equating issues like morality with amoral issues like time and space is the core of the problem for Kraft. Kraft contradicts himself actually in the same chapter by affirmatively stating that we are to follow Jesus' worldview by integrating Christ's kingdom perspectives into our own cultural context. An integrated Christian or biblical worldview does in fact allow for diverse approaches to space, time, and categorization. The moral absolutes, whether in African, Asian, European societies certainly do not change! His chapter dealing with this is highly recommended as each person comes to his own conclusion about the issue. (Kraft 1996, 51-68)

Conversion to Christ must encompass all three levels: behavior, beliefs, and worldview that underlie these...If behavioral change was the focus movement of the mission movement in the nineteenth century, and changed beliefs its focus in the twentieth century, then transforming worldviews must be its central task in the twenty-first century. (Hiebert 2008, 11-12)

Harold Best adds the important point that constructing a Christian worldview is not something that could be accomplished through an event in our lives that could take place over a weekend seminar, but rather it is an unfolding process in the journey of a maturing believer (Best 2004).

The results of a hand full of biblical worldview surveys conducted by respected evangelical survey groups have surfaced on the Internet and in a few published books. George Barna provides the most frequently referenced survey, which reveals, according to Barna, that few evangelicals "rationally reflect on and consciously evaluate their assumptions or interpretation of reality based on biblical revelation" (Barna 2003, 2). The data from his worldview survey<sup>15</sup> discovered that only 9% of born

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<sup>15</sup> His survey also reveals that numbers were even lower among other religious classifications: "Protestants (7%), adults who attend mainline Protestant churches (2%), and Catholics (less than one-half of 1%). The denominations that produced the highest proportions of adults with a biblical worldview were non-denominational Protestant churches (13%), Pentecostal churches (10%) and Baptist churches (8%)" (Barna 2003, 2).

again evangelical Christians have embraced a biblical worldview.

It is important, however, to point out that a closer look at his survey reveals that for the most part his questions were more about embracing key evangelical foundational biblical and doctrinal beliefs rather than embracing a view of life and the world based on key faith sub-structured presuppositions, which inform and influence biblical worldview formation. A biblical worldview, as defined by the Barna study has to do with...

believing that absolute moral truth exists; the Bible is completely accurate in all of the principles it teaches; Satan is considered to be a real being or force, not merely symbolic; a person cannot earn their way into Heaven by trying to be good or do good works; Jesus Christ lived a sinless life on earth; and God is the all-knowing, all-powerful creator of the world who still rules the universe today. (Barna 2003, 2)

Whereas these beliefs are true and substantiated through the Scriptures based on evangelical theology, ascertaining the level as to whether one has embraced a biblical worldview and able to articulate the implications of that view must go beyond evangelical political correctness. It must also involve ascertaining the capacity of evangelicals to apply the biblical view of reality to all spheres of life. Paul Hiebert summarizes Walsh and Middleton's early work, *Transforming Vision*,

which presents a more objective means to ascertain how evangelicals understand their world:

Worldviews are plausibility structures that provide answers to our ultimate questions: What are we (what is the nature of the world)? Who are we (what does it mean to be human)? What's wrong (how do we account for evil and the brokenness of life)? What is the remedy (what is the path from brokenness and insecurity to a life that is whole and secure)? They do this by providing us with mental models of deeply ingrained assumptions, generalizations, or pictures and images that shape how we understand the world and how we take action. (Hiebert 2008, 29)

To be sure, most evangelicals can reproduce and clearly state biblical doctrines and teaching, but this does not reveal a capacity to apply a biblical view of reality to their daily life experience.

Nancy Pearcey in her book, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from its Cultural Captivity*, discloses another survey conducted by sociologist Christian Smith formerly of the University of North Carolina, which reveals the weakness among American evangelicals in regards to applying a biblical worldview to diverse spheres of culture. She observes, "the results of the survey highlight both the good news and the bad news about American evangelicalism" (Pearcey 2005, 70). She went on to say:

The good news was that, on several measures of religious vitality, evangelicals came out consistently on top. It's clear that evangelicals are highly committed to their faith: they speak the language of the Gospel fluently. On the other hand, when asked to articulate a Christian worldview perspective on other subjects – areas such as work, business, and politics – they had little to say. They seemed unable to translate faith perspective into language suitable for the public square. (Ibid.)

Although her list did not mention the arts, it is reasonable to conclude that this sphere can also be added to this list of subjects. As to whether such worldview surveys have also been conducted in Europe, thus far no substantial data has been published at least on the internet in English; however, it has been the observation of this researcher that American evangelicalism has had a huge influence on western European evangelicalism. Therefore, to date, there is no reason to believe that the results would be significantly different.

The question is: What is the primary need or aid that would help average evangelicals in their attempt to apply their faith to all areas of life, and specifically to the diverse spheres of culture? Many writers such as Schaefer, Naugle, Wolters, Hiebert, Middleton, and Walsh among others suggest that a fully integrated biblical worldview, which maintains a reasonable coherence or

wholeness, holds the key. Some refer to this as a holistic worldview.

Albert M. Wolters in his book, *Creation Regained*, points out that worldview must be holistic because all decisions are directly shaped by our view of reality:

It is not only our views and arguments that are decisively affected by our worldview, but all the specific decisions we are called upon to make as well. (Wolters 2005, 5)

For instance, it affects not only moral decisions, but also as to whether or not one involves oneself in certain fields or spheres of culture. He observes:

When the going gets rough in a marriage, is divorce an option? When taxation is unjust, do you cheat on your tax forms? Should crime be punished? Will you fire an employee as soon as it is economically advantageous to do so? Will you get involved with politics? Will you discourage your son or daughter from becoming an artist? (Ibid.)

An integrated worldview, biblical or not, is not about what is professed; rather, it is about living and acting consistently with the framework of assumptions embraced.

Christian worldview expert David Naugle agrees with Pearcey that the capacity to apply an integrated biblical worldview among the majority of evangelicals is very weak. In his address to Evangelical Theological Society, he expresses his concern this way:

When it comes to this matter of a Christian worldview and the Futures of Evangelicalism...I have some good news and bad news. Some realms of evangelicalism deserve the grade of an A in terms of their understanding, embodiment, and promotion of a Christian worldview and its cultural significance. Other domains in the same born again, Bible-believing community are at the lower end of the reading scale. Various para-church ministries are rather worldview healthy. In evangelical churches at large, the diagnosis is not as cheery. (Naugle 2004, 1)

He also recognizes the diverse opinions among evangelicals when it comes to defining a Christian worldview:

Evangelicalism is characterized by worldview pluralism, especially in regard to hermeneutics and view of the church's relationship to culture. Covenantal unity or dispensational distinctions plus convictions that the Church should be either against, of, above, in paradox with or the transformer of culture make a great deal of difference...our worldview definitions can vary along these lines. (Ibid., 2)

He then offered his definition of a Christian worldview, implying his endorsement that there is in fact one biblical worldview:

When I am thinking of a Christian worldview, I am thinking canonically and holistically about creation, fall, redemption, and consummation in a hermeneutically covenantal and culturally transformative way. At a minimum, however, perhaps enough common ground can be found in our shared beliefs in the Creator-Redeemer God and in His Church that must interact with the world and its culture effectively. (Ibid., 2-3)

In regards to the arts, Naugle in his published paper, *After the End of Art: A Kairos Moment for Christians in the Arts*, provides what he perceives as the implications

of a Christian vision for western societies in regards to the arts. He states that the Christian vision provides the basis for artistic engagement and affirmatively offers...

a theological foundation for artistic activity and appreciation in the doctrine of imago Dei. (Ibid., 1)

To be sure, it lies out...

a set of viable aesthetic principles rooted in the beauty of God and in the design-structure of creation. (Ibid.)

He goes on to assert that it presents...

suggestions for the subject matter of art, not only in the narrative and doctrinal content of Scriptures, but also in the objects in the created world around us, the tragic realities of a fallen universe, and the blessed hope of Christian redemption, which is both "already" and "not yet." (Ibid.)

It not only licenses us in the sphere of subject matter but also names specific forms. He notes:

The Bible itself as a work of art embodies a variety of art forms set forth as worthy of pursuit, including poetry and literature, the visual arts, music, sculpture, dancing, and story telling. (Ibid.)

Specifically, in the last decade as Naugle notes, respected evangelical para-church voices representing this perspective are being at least listened to in major evangelical streams, which are beginning to have some good affect.

Some examples include initiatives like the Truth Project by Focus on the Family, which has very broad evangelical appeal and evangelical ministry and also Breakpoint directed by Chuck Colson, which calls for world engagement based on the Christian worldview. Breakpoint expresses their primary aim the following way:

We want to help you develop a robust Christian worldview—seeing, understanding, and *engaging* the world from a biblical perspective. (Colson 2011, homepage)

Whereas, though Naugle celebrates the recent surge among the diverse para-church initiatives, he identifies the lack and urgent need for congregations:

Local congregations must recover their heritage of the big biblical picture of the Christian faith with its radical comprehensiveness and full-bodied implications across the whole spectrum of thought, life, and culture. (Naugle 2002, 1)

The question is: how can this recovery take place? Could the heritage be recovered through evangelical pulpits?

#### Our Misunderstanding and Disconnect with Culture

Culture is the result of man's creative activity within God-given structures. So it can never be something apart from faith...For the Christian the problem remains of how we have to deal with the culture around us, often the fruit of a non-Christian point of departure. But then this is dealt with at length and depth in the Bible itself: it is even one of its main concerns, and bound up with its teaching on sin, redemption and sanctification. (Rookmaaker 1973, 36)

Rookmaaker's affirmative declaration above makes a solid case for the symbiotic relationship between faith and culture. Christian faith, according to Rookmaaker is in fact a primary source to be able to navigate through the issues. Yet, throughout church history, there has been an ongoing debate of the church's call and proper relationship to the broader culture. Even today, there is still not a common consensus on mainstream culture among evangelicals.

Latin church father Tertullian, was one of the first voices who specifically began to address the issue of Christ and culture. John Frame reveals that Tertullian "argued that Christians could not participate in the military, in politics, or in trade with the world" (Frame 2007, 864). In view of such statements, it is no surprise why some writers, such as Richard Niebuhr, conclude Tertullian advocated separation from the broader culture.

Niebuhr, in his epic work in 1951, *Christ and Culture*, positioned Tertullian in a "Christ against culture" (Carson 2008, 12-13) type based on such statements. However, D.A. Carson in his treatise on the Christian response to culture, *Christ and Culture Revisited*, challenged Niebuhr's notion and conclusion about Tertullian. Certainly, some statements by Tertullian could have led to Niebuhr's conclusion. For instance:

Christians constitute a 'third race,' different from Jews and ~~ Gentiles, and called to live in a way of life quite separate from culture. (Carson 2008, 13)

Yet, according to Carson, it would be wrong to place Tertullian, this founder of western theology as Justo González describes him (González 2010, 91-93), solely into the theological school of escapism from culture. Carson points to the following to substantiate his position:

Of course, Tertullian cannot be as consistent in this 'Christ against culture' position as he seems, for he rejects the charge that Christians are 'useless in the affairs of life,' for as he points out, "we sojourn with you in the world, adjuring neither forum, nor shambles, nor bath, nor booth, nor inn, nor weekly market, nor any other places of commerce...we sail with you, and fight with you, and till the ground with you, and in like manner we unite with you in your trafficking – even in the various arts we make public property of our works by your benefit (53, citing Apology xlii)." (Carson 2008, 14)

As this is not the primary focus of this study, space and time will not be taken to chronicle the debate from early church history onwards; however, it is important to note that the debate on our cultural obligation continues even today.

Gregory Wolfe in his essay, *Art, Faith, and the Stewardship of Culture*, speaks of the ongoing persistent evangelical abdication of cultural stewardship:

It is my conviction that the Christian community, despite its many laudable efforts to preserve traditional morality and the social fabric, has

abdicated its stewardship of culture and, more importantly, has frequently chosen ideology rather than imagination when approaching the challenges of the present. (Bustard 2006, 249)

Certainly part of the problem of our pejorative penchant towards mainstream cultural disconnection lies potentially in misunderstanding culture as a concept. Among evangelicals, unfortunately, there is as much thought about culture as there is about embracing and thinking through the implications of a biblical worldview.

In Chapter one, a thorough definition of culture was presented for this work, and it is not the intention here to restate that definition. However, it is important to look at how western societies generally understand culture, because, unfortunately, much of our Christian understanding is dictated through the culture around us.

First, not only Christians, but also non-Christians give very little thought to define culture. Consequently, the term is misunderstood and often misused. One example is the European newspaper, *The International Herald Tribune*, which is published in the English language. The paper currently has a section entitled 'Culture,' which deals foremostly with fashion trends and the latest in the arts world, as if this is all of what culture is about. We miss the obvious; the newspaper is in and of itself a part of culture.

Andy Crouch in his book, *Culture Making*, shares other instances that create confusion. A cultured-person, for instance is seen as one who is exposed to "hushed art museums and symphony orchestras" (Crouch 2008, 17). The usage allows us to think that it is possible to be disconnected from culture. The fact is, as John Frame points out in his discourse on culture: "we are all cultured, for no human being exists outside of culture" (Frame 2008, 857).

Crouch accurately points to the fact that culture in our western mind-set also often refers to...

trends, fads, and fashions of the self-proclaimed culture mavens who focus our collective attention on the latest single-named celebrity or the latest piece of technology – though celebrity, technology and mavens are all part of a particular culture, the mass-mediated culture in which we participate every day. (Crouch 2008, 17)

According to Crouch, "culture is more than any of these" (Ibid., 18). Culture includes the entire spectrum of humanity: "there is no withdrawing from culture" (Ibid., 36), according to Crouch, as it is an *inescapable* reality of humanity's existence.

The tendency to speak of high and low culture also creates confusion according to Crouch. *Low-culture* in the English vernacular is a disparaging or derogatory reference to just about any event or artifact in society

that appeals to the masses. *High-culture* appeals to the elite; that is those who can afford to be involved in life's finer things. These distinctions, however, in no way contribute to a balanced understanding of culture; rather they only truly reveal a personal or social bias of the one who uses the terms. Crouch observed, "Christian attempts...to come to terms with culture have fallen short because they paid too much attention to one of these categories" (Ibid., 18).

T.M. Moore in his work, *Culture Matters: A Call for Consensus for Christian Cultural Engagement*, observes that there exists no united consensus among evangelicals on the Christian's obligation toward culture. In his book, he speaks specifically of our evangelical cultural aversion:

We are all somewhat inattentive to or indifferent toward the way we use culture, in that we do not give consistently, Christian thought to all the many forms and aspects of culture in which we engage. We feel aversion to forms of culture that offend Christian sensibilities. We enjoy a bit of trivialized Christian culture, and we are happy to accommodate aspects of contemporary non-Christian forms of culture that please us or satisfy some need. We all practice a kind of cultural separationism at times – including our distinctly Christian interests with Christian friends in acceptable Christian contexts and ways – just as we all relish a little cultural triumphalism when 'our side' makes a point or appears to gain ground against competing view. Our confusion over culture matters could hardly be more evident. (Moore 2007, 15)

This separatism tendency often expresses itself in sub-cultural creation. Most evangelicals, according to Wolfe, opt for this, over against engagement in the broader culture:

Within the Christian community, there have been many different approaches to modern culture. Some of the mainline denominations have followed a liberal ethos that welcomes new trends in secular culture. Evangelicals and fundamentalists have moved into the opposite direction, retreating into a fortress mentality and distrusting the worldly products of mainstream culture – so much so that they have created an alternative subculture. To simplify somewhat, you might say that whereas liberals lack Christian discernment about culture, conservatives have just withdrawn from culture. (Bustard 2006, 250)

Wolfe is not alone in his opinion. Evangelical Art historian, H.R. Rookmaaker, in his book, *The Creative Gift*, addresses the retreating church in his work over four decades ago and challenges the church to get involved:

Far from retreating into a kind of Christian sub-culture, leaving the world to its evil, Christians not only can, but *must* take part in the world's activity...above all, our involvement in the world means perseverance. (Rookmaaker 1970, 37)

However, Rookmaaker rightly notes that in some ways that creating of sub-cultures is inevitable, yet...

we should also not see it as an ideal, and be content just to cultivate our own little garden. The Christian community should never behave as a 'we-group'...Christians should always be interested in the world around them...the church

should never be a closed community, removed from the world. (Ibid., 44)

Another way to express Rookmaaker's point is the '*us verses them*' sub-culture mentality. This mindset among some evangelical streams is in fact a closed withdrawn entity, which has as little contact as possible with the world around.

Installation artist, Thomas Hirt, from Austria directly spoke to the weakness of Christians remaining only in their own sub-cultures, which works against the very nature of art. Art is meant to build bridges and interact with the world around us. Installation artist, Thomas Hirt declares:

We Christians have often failed to bring quality works that will speak to anyone outside of our own Christian sub-cultures and this is an abdication of the influential role we are meant to have in society. As artists and Christians we need to leave our closed cultures behind and penetrate the heart of the world we live in... art is not only for direct evangelism but much more a sensible means to come in contact with our societies. Throughout history, artists have attempted to convey a revelation through artistic expressions of the beauty of God. Every time when a composition of the renowned composer, Johann Sebastian Bach, is presented, something more is happening than just a phenomenal work of art. His works are prayers or a statement of faith of God's reality. His works not only impact and are appreciated by Christians but also the entire society. (Mills 2004, 2)

The fact is, a closed community will find it difficult if not impossible to live out the mandate to be

salt and light actively in the culture around us according to Matthew 5:13-16. Brand and Chaplin share the inspiring message of our role of being salt and light, which offers an important observation. They declare, "Jesus does not tell us to *do* salt and light" (Brand & Chaplin 2001, 78), rather we are called to "*be* salt and light in the right place" (Ibid.). They go on to state:

Salt played a vital role in peasant society as a preservative and a disinfectant. If Christians are not there to stop rot, no wonder contemporary culture has more to say about the decadence and disintegration than health and wholeness. If Christians keep what light they have hidden inside the churches, no wonder our arts portray a dark worldview. (Ibid.)

One last point referring to the salt analogy, one must have direct contact in order to have its effect. Melody Green in her article, "Direct Contact" offers this simple yet profound concise example of the salt analogy:

Jesus told us that we are the salt of the earth ...We all know that salt only works by direct contact. It doesn't matter how close I hold the saltshaker to my potatoes – until I shake some crystals out onto my fries there will be no effect. (Green 1995, 4)

One of the earliest and most vocal advocates for Christian cultural engagement, even before Niebuhr, was Abraham Kuyper. Through the book, *Creating a Christian Worldview: Abraham Kuyper's Lectures on Calvinism*, Peter S. Heslam provides a contextualized synthesis of Kuyper's

thoughts articulated in his 1898 Stone lectures at Princeton, where he presented his reformational worldview. Heslam comments that the "Kuyperian concept of a Christian worldview" (Heslam 1998, 6) offers a vision for "the whole of life, including scholarship and the arts" (Ibid.). It was clear, in reading Heslam, that though theoretically Kuyper believed that the arts were "one of the richest gifts of God to mankind" (Ibid., 198), his inclusion of the arts in his famous Stone lectures at Princeton in 1898, appears to have been more of a theory consistent with his primary assumption of Christ rule over the whole of creation rather than an impassioned vision for the arts. Still, one of Kuyper's most potent announcements at his inaugural address for the Free University of Amsterdam in 1880 alone laid a biblical foundation for the Christian cultural obligation regarding the broader culture, which includes the arts. Kuyper declares:

In the total expanse of human life there is not a single square inch of which the Christ, who alone is sovereign, does not declare, 'That is mine'.  
(Kuyper 1880, 35)

Kuyper's focus on our cultural obligation can be detected in a number of evangelical, theological, contemporary voices into both the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. Art historian, H.R. Rookmaaker, was certainly also influenced by Kuyper's focus as he was a teacher in the

very university that Kuyper established, The Free University of Amsterdam. In Rookmaaker's book, *Modern Art and the Death of a Culture*, he declares:

It is basic to thinking about culture in the tradition of the Calvinist Reformation that there is no duality between the higher and a lower world. He created it, He sustains it, He is interested in it. He called the work of His hands good in the very beginning. Nothing is excluded. Everything, from the lowest atom or animal life to the highest doxology, everything belongs to Him. Nothing can exist outside of Him and all things have a meaning only in relation to Him. (Rookmaaker 1973, 36)

Henry R. Van Til, the nephew of the well-known Christian philosopher and Reformed theologian, Cornelius Van Til (a contemporary of Kuyper), summarized the Kuyperian neo-Calvinistic position in his book, *The Calvinistic Concept of Culture*:

The Christian is in the world, but not of the world. This constitutes the basis of the perennial problem involved in the discussion of Christian and culture. Because believers are not of the world, there have always been many Christians who have taken a negative attitude towards culture. They understand the Christian's calling to consist exclusively in proclaiming salvation through Christ to lost men in a dying world. They see the dying world only as lying under the sentence of death and final judgment. Others, having eagerly accepted the Pauline assurance, 'all things are yours,' stress the fact that believers have a cultural calling here and now to subdue the earth as members of the human race. They also rejoice in the fact that they have so much in common with all men culturally, so that they can together enjoy things that are beautiful and follow after that which is good. Thus, there is first of all a

conflict among Christians on their attitude towards culture. (Van Til 1959, 15)

Van Til summarizes by stating: "Culture is simply the service of God in our lives; it is religion externalized" (Ibid., 200).

Elton Trueblood over a half-century ago in his work, *Company of the Committed*, argues for our active responsibility in every part of this life:

The Church is never true to itself when it is living for itself...the nature of the church is such that it must always be engaged in finding new ways by which to transcend itself. Its main responsibility is always outside its own walls in the redemption of common life...in every part of life. (Trueblood 1959, 69 & 89)

D.A. Carson, Ronald Manahan, and John Frame reference the Genesis cultural mandate in laying the biblical precedence. First Carson declares,

As God's image-bearers we have peculiar responsibilities toward the rest of the created order – responsibilities of governance and care, as we recognize our oneness with the created order and our distinguishing place within it. (Carson 2008, 46)

In the dissertation, *A Re-examination of the Cultural Mandate: An Analysis and Evaluation of the Dominion Materials*, Ronald Manahan persuasively argues:

The question of whether a Christian has a cultural obligation is inappropriate. If cultural activity be defined as formative, shaping activity done with respect to concrete things in the cosmos, and if it be further acknowledged that God gave this function to man

within the context of the very relations in which He sustains man, then it follows that cultural activity cannot be avoided. It must of necessity be done by virtue of being human. (Manahan 1982, 293)

Frame, like Manahan, also acknowledges that our active involvement in culture is mandated:

Just as Adam was to take care of the garden (Gen 2:15), so Adam's family was to take care of the earth. God wanted them to use it and also to preserve it – to use, but not to use up. So God later told Israel to rest the land after six years of cultivation. Man is to rule the earth, but also to serve it. He is to be a servant king...So culture is what we make, and it begins right after creation, in response to God's command...something that God desires, something He values...God gave this command...for the same reason, ultimately that He does everything else: for his own glory...So he wanted Adam's family to spread that glory through the whole world...So culture is based on a divine command...Culture is for God's sake. (Frame 2008, 856)

According to these theologians, the biblical precedent declares that our intentional involvement with culture is not an option, rather it is a command. Andy Crouch again in his work, echoed Van Til, Schaefer, Manahan, Carson, and Frame in declaring that we "have a responsibility to care for what God has made" (Ibid., 22).

Some argue that the original Genesis 2:15 command: "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it," was before the fall, which is true, however, it is important to note that

the same exhortation was reiterated after the fall (Gen 3:23) and even after the flood (Gen 9:1-7).

Whereas, most theological proponents for intentional cultural engagement agree that the fall has certainly affected every aspect of all of creation, they affirmed that this in no way excuses our deliberate withdrawal. Albert M. Wolters in his book, *Creation Regained*, accurately observes that...

sin neither abolishes nor becomes identified with God's creation. Creation and sin remain distinct, however closely they may become intertwined. (Wolters 2005, 57)

He goes on to proclaim that the "anarchy and subjectivism of much of modern art" (Ibid.), such as Robert Mapplethorpe's horrific sadistic erotica, "cannot not obliterate the creational legitimacy of art itself" (Ibid.), any more than "prostitution eliminates the goodness of human sexuality" (Ibid.). It has to do with what we choose to do with what God has made that makes it either noble or corrupted.

In *Reconstructing Pastoral Theology*, Andrew Purves quotes Ireneaus' simple, yet profound axiom, which provides us with a launching pad for intentional evangelical presence in culture:

The theological insight that should govern our thinking is the doctrine of Ireneaus...ubi Christus – ibi ecclesia, wherever Christ is, there is the church found. (Purves 2004, 229)

Purves also speaks directly to the tendency towards world-flight arguing the concrete involvement of the church in culture is an expression of biblical hope.

A ministry of hope that does not take the risk of concrete engagement ultimately fails to be a ministry of hope and is instead faithless, sitting on the sidelines for fear of contamination...and to refuse to risk contamination by being involved in the often murky processes of political, social, and economic engagements amounts to a denial of the Gospel's eschatological claim that all life in every respect is under the one reign of God through Jesus Christ. (Purves 2004, 228-229)

John W. de Gruchy, who saw the transition of South Africa away from *Apartied*, agreed that resignation and withdrawal from culture is in fact inconsistent with the hope of the Gospel. He writes, "To lose hope was to surrender the power to bring about change" (de Gruchy 2001, 212). "Hope" (Ibid.), he proclaims, "is about the production of a new reality for damaged society" (Ibid.).

Calvin Seerveld's metaphor of Noah's homing dove speaks of the hope that the arts can deliver to broken society and leads us well into the next section.

Artists who would serve God in our desolate society, like the homing dove Noah sent out after the flood, should give their neighborhoods hope by bringing back to them tokens of new life the Lord provides. (Seerveld 2000, xiii)

Finally, based on these reasonable arguments, to withdraw from the broader culture as evangelicals is in fact antithetical to the Christian biblical mission articulated in the Scriptures from Genesis chapter one and throughout the whole Bible. If we understand the concept of culture, we realize that our active Christian presence in all the different spheres is not only mandated, but a living statement of hope and life, without which our message remains only another theory. Through our absence, our message in fact is diluted and fails to effectively touch and reveal the true nature of his reality and character to the very ones for which Christ died and rose again.

#### Our Misunderstanding and Suspicion of Art

There is a direct correlation with our aversion to mainstream culture and our conspicuous aesthetic absence in the broader culture. In his book *An Un-stoppable Force*, Erwin McManus says it straightforwardly: "Art expresses culture; art transmits culture; art creates culture" (McManus 2001, 127). If we are involved in culture, we will be involved with the arts.

Colin Harbinson insightfully adds in his *Stone by Stone: The Church, the Artists, and Cultural Transformation* that:

If we view cultural engagement as off-limits for the Christian, we support the sub-biblical idea that God is interested solely in the church and is not at work in our world. The call for the church to take up engagement with the culture in which it is located is a call to be the embodied, active healing and redemptive presence of Christ in the world. Withdrawal has also led to our neglect of the arts. In so doing we have muted a voice that can speak to issues of oppression and dehumanization as a prophetic critique and a resource for healing. (Harbinson 2005, 39)

William Dyrness, in his research, seeks to trace the origin of the persistent erratic relationship of the church and the arts. His findings substantiate Harbinson's concern. Dyrness provides the following example not only of our evangelical aversion, but our intentional abstention of the arts in the public square.

In the early 1900s, we disengaged in the first half of the last century, withdrew from arts schools and the arts, and then wondered why the arts were so secular. Twentieth Century Fox wrote Christian colleges in the 1930's and said, 'Please send us writers! We want writers!' One letter that went back said, 'We would no more send people to you than we would send people to hell.' That is what happened. Is it any wonder the movies have become so bad? Whose fault is that? It's partly ours. (Dyrness 2001, 1)

Whereas this example came from within the USA, the same root evangelical aversion to culture and the arts exists among European evangelical streams. European poet

and market-place journalist, Steve Turner, addresses the same issue in his work entitled, *Imagine: a Vision for Christians in the Arts*:

It's rare to find Christians directing in Hollywood, producing serious fiction, or writing plays for London's West End or New York's Broadway. It's even more rare to find them in alternative arts venues, comedy clubs and contemporary dance theaters. The average young cultured person would be hard-pressed to name a single contemporary Christian screenwriter, dramatists, choreographer, novelist, comedian, or painter, even though Christianity remains the dominant religion in both Europe and the Americas. When *Time* magazine compiled a list of the one hundred most significant people in twentieth-century art and entertainment there was only five who had shown any public signs of Christian faith. (Turner 2001, 22)

Dyrness's investigation in his work, *Visual Faith*, found that there has been "centuries of neglect in regard to art that reaches back to the reformation" (Dyrness 2001, 14). He asserts:

The Reformation...gave birth to the particular challenges and tensions that characterize the modern world – especially in regard to Christians and their relationship to the arts. (Ibid., 51)

He attributes the origin to both Calvin, but as well to Luther, though according to Dyrness, "Luther was more open to the use of images in worship and in private devotion" (Ibid., 52). Dyrness also suggests that Calvin "was more direct" (Ibid.) about his disparagement of the idea of images particularly in the context of worship, though

Calvin certainly did affirm the value of the arts for society<sup>16</sup>.

One example that Dyrness cites was his statement in his *Institutes*, "Even if the use of images contained nothing evil, it still has little value for teaching" (Ibid., 53). Then on the other hand he states, "Let us not be ashamed to take pious delight in the works of God open and manifest in this most beautiful theater" (Ibid.).

Dyrness goes on to quote Calvin:

There is no spot in the universe wherein you cannot discern at least some sparks of his glory. You cannot in one glance survey this most beautiful system of the universe in its wide expanse without being completely overwhelmed by the boundless force of its brightness. (Ibid.)

Dyrness did not present a full argument to support his thesis, however he adamantly suggests that though Calvin in particular appeared to have no place for the visual in worship, some of his followers go beyond Calvin in regards to the exclusion of the arts in the context of worship:

His theology does not support such an extreme position (though his followers usually read him this way!) Whatever his intention, his views, especially as interpreted by his followers, have become decisive in subsequent Protestant, especially Reformed practice. (Ibid.)

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<sup>16</sup> One of the best books on Calvin and the arts is unfortunately out of print. The book, *One of the Richest Gifts*, by John Wilson is a must-read and worth searching on the Internet for, for any serious student of Calvin.

John Wilson, however, cites many quotes attesting to Calvin's true position on the arts:

Calvin not only had a high regard for the arts in his thinking, but he encouraged his people to understand and appreciate the arts of men...But the church was not the sphere of the arts and the arts were not the handmaid of the Church.  
(Wilson 1981, 84)

The scope of this study does not permit an in-depth research into the role the reformation played in the protestant or evangelical poignant for the aversion of the arts. The fact remains, however, that evangelicals typically have expressed at least indifference if not direct rejection of the value and place of the arts, and thus there has been a subsequent neglect.

In 2001, British writers, Hilary Brand and Adrienne Chaplin, in their work, *Art & Soul: Signposts for Christians in the Arts*, observes that there were consequences due to this neglect. One of them was that there was little if any understanding for the arts.

For some sections of the church, the arts have never been a problem issue. For others they are ceasing to be a problem as Christians enthusiastically embrace the arts for the first time in generations (an enthusiasm, however that can be somewhat superficial and lacking in understanding). But still in some churches suspicion, if not downright opposition, remains.  
(Brand & Chaplin 2001, 25)

Chaplin quotes Dorothy Sayers' observation of the origin of the possible indifference towards the arts: "The church

really does not know what it thinks about the arts, and isn't too bothered either" (Brand & Chaplin 2001, 25).

In view of this indifference, according to Brand and Chaplin, there was no investigation, no "sermons preached against them" (Ibid.), and generally no real interest in art except maybe for illustrations in evangelistic tracks or church bulletins, and subsequently no real involvement in the arts. They then rightly observed that this indifference could have come from their own ignorance, and subsequent fear of the sphere.

Is it perhaps because the Protestant church (and particularly the evangelical wing), having abandoned the arts some centuries before, no longer has any understanding? Is it now unable to find a point of entry? Is it simply frightened of what it does not know? Officially, the arts seem to have been forgotten rather than frowned on. But unofficially, it can be all too easy for the unfamiliar to become the enemy. (Brand & Chaplin 2001, 25-26)

The *Redeeming the Arts* track of the 2004 Lausanne Congress for World Evangelism, under the direction of Colin Harbinson, observes that first on the agenda to aid the evangelical church in overcoming the neglect and aversion to the arts was "the critical need to educate the church about the arts" (Harbinson 2005, 3).

The literature generally points to two emphases in terms of the education needed. First, a *Biblical Theology* that reveals the Biblicity of engagement in the arts in

contemporary culture is needed and secondly, an understanding of the *Function and Purpose of Art* is expedient.

### *Biblical Theology*

The starting point for a Christian understanding and contribution to the arts must be a basic Christian theology because what we believe is never secondary to what we do...there is no need to develop a 'theology of the arts' – all that is required is a biblical theology that has a place for the arts. The Bible does give us this. All things were created to serve God and bring glory to His Name. (Wilson 1981, 70)

The closing phrase in the quote above by John Wilson from *One of the Richest Gifts*,<sup>17</sup> lays a simple yet profound biblical theology<sup>18</sup> for the endorsement of the fullest involvement in the arts: "all things were created to serve God and bring glory to His name" (Ibid.). Wilson was merely summarizing Colossians 1:16 and I Corinthians 8:6, which states emphatically that all things were created

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<sup>17</sup> Wilson's title of his book was a favorite phrase of Abraham Kuyper, employed in his famous Princeton Stone Lectures.

<sup>18</sup> What Wilson calls for here is simply a basic or sound theology consistent with the Scriptures, which in-and-of itself provides a full endorsement of the arts. He goes on to employ the phrase biblical theology; however, he is not referring to the relatively newly developed theological discipline known by that title as Wilson's work was written in 1981. Rather, he is simply stating this as over against developing a unique theology for the arts, which is redundant and unnecessary if a "basic Christian theology" (Wilson 1981,70) is simply embraced.

not only by Him but also for Him. All things include the arts! In addition, all things were created, according to Revelation 4:12, for his pleasure. Humanity's capacity to innovatively make art of any kind not only came from God himself as designer of the universe, but it also was for God's own delight. If God delights in humanity's capacity to make art, so should we!

Wilson also echoes the vision of one of his contemporaries, Francis Schaefer, by stating,

Man was made to be creative and imaginative in every sphere of life and these things are not wrong, but they are the gift of God. The Scriptures, while not a text-book on artwork or aesthetics, can teach us much on art and design; poetry and literature; and music, song, and dance. (Ibid., 60)

Wilson also declares:

If, as the Bible teaches, the arts are one of the good gifts of God, then the Christian has a responsibility, not only to value them, but to encourage their right use. (Ibid., 70)

Schaefer prophetically addresses the tendency of the believing church in disdaining the arts. It seems that he, contrary to some Reformed theological voices, found Calvin's theology as a sure foundation for the arts just as John Wilson declares.

What is the place of the art in the Christian life? Are arts – especially the fine arts of painting and music – simply a way to bring worldliness through the back door? We know that poetry may be used to praise God in, say the

Psalms, and maybe even in modern hymns. But what about sculpture or drama? Do these have any place in the Christian life? Shouldn't a Christian focus his gaze steadily on 'religious things' alone and forget about art and culture? (Schaefer 1973, 7)

Schaefer's book, *Art & the Bible*, provides one of the most intellectually and theologically sound foundations for the endorsement of and the involvement in the arts:

For the Christian the arts can be a source of joy, a symbol of the creativity that marks the manhood of man, man himself being made in the image of God the Creator. For the Christian artist the sky is the limit. Because he can distinguish between reality and illusion, he is the one whose imagination can fly beyond the stars. (Schaefer 1973, back cover)

In this treatise, he also presents the following basic biblical theology<sup>19</sup>, which empowers a vision for active involvement in the arts:

The Bible makes four things very clear: (1) God made the whole of man, (2) in Christ the whole man is redeemed, (3) Christ is the Lord of the whole man now and the Lord of the whole Christian life and (4) in the future as Christ comes back, the body will be raised from the dead and the whole man will have a whole redemption. (Schaefer 1973, 8)

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<sup>19</sup> Biblical theology here again is not referring to the new discipline under that title. "Biblical Theology, as a discipline, is integral to the whole process of discerning the meaning of biblical texts and of applying this meaning to the contemporary scene" (Alexander et al. 2000, 3). To be sure, both a basic and biblical theology articulates a relevant endorsement of the engagement of the arts in the mainstream of culture.

In his brief discourse, through the lens of Scripture, Schaefer deals extensively with the Bible's affirmation of our involvement with the arts beginning with Genesis and working through Exodus and the Ten commandments. Schaefer observes:

It is important to note that on Mount Sinai God simultaneously gave the Ten Commandments and commanded Moses to fashion a tabernacle in a way, which would involve almost every form of representational art that men have ever known. (Ibid., 12)

Among evangelicals, every position on any given issue is validated with an interpretation of Scripture and the scripture most often cited, which supports for many a 'hands-off' position for art, is found in Exodus 20:4-5:

Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them nor serve them. (KJV)

Schaefer points out, however, the obvious that what is being referred to here is not the mere making of art for the worship<sup>20</sup> context, but the bowing down and worshiping of it. He refers to Leviticus 26:1 where once again it is

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<sup>20</sup> The role of the arts in the context of congregational worship remains a controversial issue among different evangelical movements. Whereas, it is an important concern, dealing with this controversy does not fall under the purview of this dissertation. Suffice to say, each church movement must search the Scriptures in order to ascertain what they believe is ultimately pleasing to God.

explicitly stated that the issue is not the making of art, rather it is the veneration or worship of any art created.

John Frame also addresses the error among many in evangelical movements with these words in his essay in response to the Redeeming the Arts Act One.

So the commandment (2<sup>nd</sup>) does not forbid art, nor the use of art in the worship area, nor even representations of God, for that matter. Art can be idolatrous, when it replaces God in our affections. But Scripture does not justify any general suspicion of art among Christians. (Frame 2005, 20)

William Dyrness in his, *Visual Faith: Art, Theology, and Worship in Dialogue*, sites the theological concepts of the Incarnation, Trinity, and Creation as the foundations, which provide empowerment for the arts. He summarizes with these words:

The emphasis on incarnation provides an important reminder of the continuing significance of God's entrance to creation. The Trinitarian emphasis on the rich interrelationship of God's activities provides an important and biblical lens with which to understand the world. (Dyrness 2001, 98)

Harbinson points out that the very make up of the Bible itself was a theological statement about the value and significance of the arts:

The Bible itself comes to us in an artistic form and consists mainly of story and poetry. There is also the rich imagery of the biblical text in both Old and New Testaments. Metaphors abound as the writers attempt to help us grasp what God is like or make plain how we are to live. The use

of story allows us to enter into the life and times of biblical characters, and in the process, we are moved and instructed in ways that are not easily forgotten. (Harbinson 2005, 11)

These considerations of a basic Christian or biblical theology lay a foundation for how we are to appreciate, investigate, and move in the arts for the glory of God. Another way forward is to recognize and understand the significance, function, and purpose of art.

### *The Function and Purpose of Art*

In Begbie's *Beholding the Glory: Incarnation through the Arts*, he reasons:

The urge to make and enjoy art seems to be universal: the impulse to scratch out images on stone walls, revel in the delight of notes strung together, shape and re-shape words into patterns, and so on. And for most people these activities are more than entertaining and ornamental (though they can be that too) – they can also reveal, disclose, open up the world we live in, and in unique ways. In other words, they can be vehicles of discovery. (Begbie 2001, xi)

N. T. Wright's book, *Simply Christian*, also sheds light on the vital role that the arts play in disclosing reality:

The arts are not the pretty but irrelevant bits around the border of reality. They are highways into the center of a reality, which cannot be glimpsed, let alone grasped, any other way...The present world is good, but broken and in any case incomplete; art of all kinds enables us to understand that paradox in many dimensions. (Wright 2006, 235)

Begbie and Wright's affirmation of the vital function of the arts lays a strong foundation for understanding art. However, what is the purpose of art? Perhaps the more proper question is: does art even have a purpose? Many have wrestled with this question, and it is important to give ear to this conversation in order to begin to understand the arts.

Nicholas Wolterstorff's, *Art in Action*, directly speaks to this question. He asks, "What then is art for? What purpose underlies this human universal?" (Wolterstorff 2001, 4). This is what he says,

One of my fundamental theses is that this question, so often posed, must be rejected, rather than answered. The question assumes that there is such a thing as the purpose for art. That assumption is false. There is no purpose which art serves, nor any, which is intended to serve. Art plays and is meant to play an enormous diversity of roles in human life. (Ibid.)

As one reads further, his emphatic statement that art has no purpose is softened somewhat. One can deduce that he simply wants to free art from any sense of pragmatic utility. That is, that art needs no justification. This, of course, is precisely what Rookmaaker also argues: "Art as such needs no justification...It is meaningful in itself" (Rookmaaker 1981, 113 and 114).

Rookmaaker makes it clear that he is not talking about what is traditionally called, art for art's sake:

But if art needs no justification, it also does not follow that art is to be art for art's sake...it can never be on its own. It would wither and die. (Ibid., 115)

Wolterstorff, clarifying his position, also states essentially the same as Rookmaaker:

Works of art are instruments by which we perform such diverse actions as praising our great men and expressing our grief, evoking emotion and communicating knowledge. Works of art are objects of such actions as contemplations for the sake of delight. Works of art are accompaniments for such actions as hoeing cotton and rocking infants. Works of art are background for such actions as eating meals and walking through airports.

Works of art equip us for action. And the range of actions for which they equip us is very nearly as broad as the range of human action itself. The purpose of art are the purposes of life. To envisage human existence without art is not to envisage human existence. (Wolterstorff 2001, 4-5)

What Rookmaaker and Wolterstorff are both declaring is that art has to do very much with simply being human. The arts are not a sphere of leisure for the elite, or something that exists for its own sake; rather the arts are part-and-parcel to all of life. God, the awesome creator, made us in his image, and we are his image bearers, and thus created to be his art-makers. Philip Ryken says it this way:

The calling of an artist reflects deep truth about the character of God, namely that he himself is the supreme Artist. (Ryken 2006, 22)

Ryken also declares simply the purpose of art:

Thus the true purpose of art is the same as the true purpose for anything: it is not for ourselves or for our own self expression, but for the service of others and the glory of God. Or to put all of this another way, making art is an expression of our love – love for God and love for our neighbor. (Ibid., 50).

Ryken declares that biblical scholars who attempt to identify “a spiritual meaning for every detail” (Ibid, 47) in the tabernacle Moses built are truly “missing the point” (Ibid, 48). He affirms: “Some of the artistry in the tabernacle was art for art’s sake, in the full and proper sense of that expression” (Ibid.). Later Ryken clarifies, certainly in harmony with Rookmaaker, that it was not in the classic understanding of art for art’s sake, rather “art for God’s sake – this is what the tabernacle was all about” (Ibid., 50). Lauren Winner, also referring to Moses’ tabernacle and God’s explicit directions in the art of this house, echoes Ryken, “Scripture makes clear that God is interested in art” (Taylor 2008, 77).

The majority of evangelical art advocates repudiate the original 19<sup>th</sup> century French adage, *l’art pour l’art* (art for art’s sake). Ryken, again in his 2006, *Art for God’s Sake*, suggests why artists sometimes embrace the

concept of *art for art's sake*: "What they mean is that art has intrinsic value" (Ryken 2006, 47). He clarifies that art does have "value in and of itself, apart from any utility" (Ibid.). In other words, art has meaning, but not always intentional messages; art can "nourish our souls" (Ibid.), but still not necessarily "perform some practical function" (Ibid.). Art does not have to serve a utilitarian or pragmatic purpose in order to be meaningful, yet all art does in fact communicate.

A visual artist interviewed by Dianne Collard for her dissertation work provided one of the most insightful thoughts related somewhat to the question of art for art's sake. Collard asked her whether art should convey intentional Christian or Gospel messages for it to be Christian. Collard recounted the young artist's response:

A woman painter denied that her art had any message, but she strongly indicated that it had meaning. "If not," she said, "It would be very meaningless what I do." Many of the artists agreed with the distinction between art having a message and having a meaning. For example, an abstract artist using mixed media focused on the "symbolic meaning of colors." Meaning represented significance and purpose to these artists. (Collard 2004, 122)

Philip Ryken and many resources actually spoke to the tendency among evangelicals to endorse the arts only in the context of communicating intentional or explicit

Christian messages, for example art in direct evangelism.

Ryken states:

Art can be Christian without serving merely as a vehicle for evangelism, or other forms of preaching. Such a utilitarian perspective improvises art. (Ryken 2006, 51)

It is the phrase, "merely as a vehicle" (Ibid.), that Ryken addresses. In his writing, it is clear that he endorses art as a means to convey the Gospel, but this is not what justifies art created by Christians. Ryken emphatically states that art was ultimately given as a gift from God for all humanity, and that "all good art" (Ibid., 50) inadvertently glorified God, even if "it is not explicitly offered in his honor" (Ibid., 51). However, he declared, how much more is God "most truly praised when His glory is the aim of our art" (Ibid.).

American-born actor-Director, Garold Andersen, who has lived and served in Europe since the mid 1980s, in his "Art and Christianity – A Dilemma," reacted to the art for art's sake concept when it is wrongly understood to mean art does not communicate anything. He observes:

*'Art for art's sake!'* is the battle cry of many artists and art lovers...This idea, however, has been pushed to mean that art should not communicate anything at all; rather it should exist in a vacuum, disconnected from conscious thought and belief. This is impossible. All art communicates something, even if that 'something' is our inability to truly communicate. (Anderson 2008, 1)

Leland Ryken in his work, *The Liberated Imagination*, challenges the art for art's sake notion as well, and suggests that the issue is, whether "works of art make claims of truth" (Ryken 1989, 130).

An influential modern attitude that some times goes under the title of 'art for art's sake has denied that works of art make claims to truth. They are purely aesthetic phenomenon, says this theory. While this may be true of non-representational art and music, it is not true of literature, nor of most art and music. (Ibid.)

He notes that when artists set out to make art,

they are asserting something about the world and people...those implied assertions deserve to be treated just as seriously as we treat the ideas of philosophers and theologians. (Ibid.)

He quotes novelist, Joyce Cary's declaration:

All writers...must have, to compose any kind of story, some picture of the world, and of what is right and wrong in that world. And the great writers are obsessed with that theme. (Ibid.)

Calvin Seerveld, adamantly condemns the notion of art for art's sake, as antithetical to art based on a Christian understanding:

Artists – be they painters, sculptors, poets, novelists or song-writers – who unwittingly accept art-for-art's sake have drunk the cup of hemlock, even though, like the heroine in a Puccini opera, they may take a while to finish singing the dying aria. Artists need to realize that they are, as Heidegger would say, neighborhooded, and that other people are the artist's fellow-creatures who need care and help in looking at the nuances of reality; and it is this service of care and help which artists are called to provide. (Seerveld 2000, 58)

Steve Turner in his book, *Imagine: A Vision for Christians in the Arts*, observes another primary function and purpose for the arts for our time and that is the potency of art for societal debate. He states:

The arts remain an important forum for debate in our culture...and...art plays an important part in shaping our understanding of the world. Because debates are taking place in cinema, painting, dance, fiction, poetry, and theater on issues where Christians have something to give, and yet they are not even being heard...we should be in those debates as part of our mandate to look after and care for the world. (Turner 2001, 21)

John Wilson deals extensively with the purpose and function of the arts and specifically addresses the notion that art is only for the elite:

They are neither an exclusive gift for a select few nor an insignificant aspect of experience. The arts are for all, and for all of life...the arts are a means of extending our experience; a means of exploring creation; and they give us another language to understand aspects of truth. (Wilson 1981, 8 & 9)

Wilson brings attention to the fact that the "arts reveal areas and aspects of life which are beyond our immediate experience" (Ibid.). In his own words, Wilson says it best:

We cannot all know the full extent of tortured hopes, dreads, desires, lusts, loves, greeds, and the many other complex and terrifying capabilities of the human soul. We cannot know all the fears and phobias that affect people. We cannot all know the alcoholic's craving for drink, the drug addict's dependence which blots

out all other emotions...but through the medium of the arts these and all of life can be made real. By exposing ourselves to works of true art, we can vicariously rejoice or suffer and have a better understanding of the range and possibilities of being human. (Ibid.)

The arts can open our eyes and, "shock us into an awareness" (Ibid., 10). Dyrness compares the arts to the "biblical notion of the Sabbath (which means at its root to 'stop')" (Dyrness 2001, 144). He states, "art stops us in our tracks and forces us to pay attention to life in a way that we have not previously done" (Ibid.).

The arts also are a rich means of gracing us to explore creation. Wilson explains this role of the arts:

It is a calling of the arts to explore creation, to examine and disclose the wonderful, beautiful, and yet terrible, world of objects, animals, and plants, as well as people with their tangled emotions, fears, hopes, and thoughts mingled with the infinite longings of the human heart. (Wilson 1981, 11)

Seerveld agrees with Wilson and adds:

God gave us artistry to open us up to nuances in the creation...to focus attention on things you never imagined existed. (Seerveld 2000, 46)

Science explores creation from a different vantage point according to Wilson. He notes:

The scientist catalogues, classifies, and analyses creatational structure in order to formulate tentative theories of a rational kind. The tools of the artist are imagination, and insight, intuition...and then the craftsmanship to make his vision a reality of communication to others. (Wilson 1981, 11)

In addition, Wilson observes that, "the arts expand language" (Ibid.). We have heard the old adage, one picture is worth a thousand words; art articulates powerfully rich truths, thoughts, and emotions, in a conciseness that words cannot accomplish. However, words themselves of course can be employed as art, which goes beyond the simple use of language. Wilson goes on to say:

The dialogue of a play, no matter how realistic it may sound, can never be a precise copy of everyday speech but a careful selection of words to give the impression of everyday speech.  
(Ibid., 14)

Wilson concludes his section on the purpose and function of the arts by stating the obvious: "The arts must point to something outside of themselves and the image must never be taken as the reality" (Ibid., 15).

Christian-based abstract<sup>21</sup> visual artist Makoto Fujimura, founder and now current Creative Director for the International Arts Movement in New York, contributes this

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<sup>21</sup> Whereas, an in-depth discussion of such genres of visual art expressions as abstract art or representational art, does not fall under the scope of this research project, it is, however, a very important theme for the church, evangelicals in particular, to think and work through. One example of a Christian-based advocate of abstract art is noteworthy as it does go somewhat to the question of the purpose of art. In a media piece on IAM's website ([www.Makotofujimura.com](http://www.Makotofujimura.com)), Fujimura explains his appreciation for abstraction as a Christian: "20<sup>th</sup> century abstraction (in art forms) has really given me this language to tap into the mystery of creation." (See [www.Makotofujimura.com/four-holy-gospels/](http://www.Makotofujimura.com/four-holy-gospels/))

perspective to the conversation about the way art created by Christians could work in our current truant postmodern western societies. His thoughts go to the question of the purpose of art, specifically created by Christians:

Art is always transgressive, but what I always say is, we need to transgress in love...in our culture we have a language (in art) to celebrate waywardness, but we do not have a cultural language to bring people back home. Everything I do, my paintings, the work of International Arts Movement has something to do with that.<sup>22</sup>

In closing this section on understanding the purpose and function of the arts, it is simply important to say that the purpose for art coincides with humankind's purpose in life and in all things: that God may ultimately be glorified (I Corinthians 10:31). Gregory Wolfe will contribute the final thought, which sums up well the thoughts and perspectives in this section:

The making of art is an end in and of itself; it is an act of worship in and of itself; it as an act of humility and joy at once; and, in the life of the believer, it is accomplished as a gift back to the Creator who made us—art for God's sake instead of art for art's sake, as it were. (Winner 2010, 2)

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<sup>22</sup> In 2003, President George W. Bush appointed Fujimura to the National Council on the Arts. This statement is a quote taken from the website of *IAM* on the occasion of the announcement of his commission by Crossway Publishing to illustrate a commemorative Four Gospels of the King James Bible version in view of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this Bible. See [www.makotofujimura.com/four-holy-gospels](http://www.makotofujimura.com/four-holy-gospels).

*Subsidiary Question 2: Holiness and Worldliness*

The second subsidiary question is as follows: How does our evangelical understanding of holiness and worldliness affect our position on engagement with the arts in the broader-culture?

A few authors and essayists spoke directly to the concern of understanding holiness and the implications for artistic cultural engagement. This section will deal directly with the origin of the propensity for cultural withdrawal among evangelicals and also the deliberate engagement with culture as an expression of holiness.

R.C. Sproul, in his highly esteemed work, *The Holiness of God*, speaks of his recognition of the central role of the holiness of God for his own journey of faith:

Today I am still absorbed with the question of the holiness of God. I am convinced that it is one of the most important ideas that a Christian can ever grapple with. It is basic to our whole understanding of God and of Christianity.  
(Sproul 1998,12)

According to Sproul, understanding holiness is basic to all of Christianity because:

Not only does he penetrate every aspect of our lives, but he penetrates it in his majestic holiness. Therefore, we must seek to understand what the *holy* is. We dare not seek to avoid it. ...It defines our goal as Christians.

To reach that goal; we must understand what holiness is. (Ibid., 14)

No truer words have ever been spoken. The Scriptural exhortation, "You shall be Holy, for I am Holy" (Lev 19:2; I Pet 1:15-16), as Sproul acknowledges, is one of the most prominent evangelical biblical tenants today and has in various seasons of church history characterized entire church movements. Therefore, in our heated pursuit of understanding this central aspect of God's character and obeying his command that we are to be holy as he is holy, we are challenged to find the application of his holiness in the midst of every day profane life. The question is, is it possible to be holy as he is holy? Most conservative evangelical theological writers contend that it is certainly possible, but we have to understand what it means to be holy in order to live out the holiness of God in every day life.

The object of this section is not to do a thorough study into the biblical notion of what it means to be holy or for that fact what it means to be worldly. Such an undertaking would be a dissertation subject in and of itself. However, in this section a succinct look into holiness and worldliness will be investigated as it relates to our involvement, not only in the arts, but also in any of the diverse vocational spheres of society as Christians.

In his excellent treatise on the arts, John Wilson perceptively observes the following:

There has always been a tension within the Church between the mystical 'other-worldly' view and an involvement in the affairs of men. From early in the Church's history there have been hermits and communities of monks who sought to escape from the snares and temptations of the world by withdrawing from all social contacts. (Wilson 1981, 83)

Holiness in many seasons of church history and even often still today among many evangelicals, is commonly associated with the idea of escaping the contaminations of the world by removing ourselves from it. That is, that through having as little to do with our world (understood by many to be the mainstream culture) as is conceivably possible, we are enabled to achieve, strive for, or maintain a biblical level of the other-worldly holiness.

Nicholas Wolterstorff in his book, *Art in Action*, speaks directly to the error of confusing the central message of the Gospel with the idea of escaping or withdrawing from worldly affairs. He observes:

Admittedly, there are those who perceive the message of the Christian Gospel as the message of escape from our creaturely, earthy existence. (Wolterstorff 1980, 84)

Yet, he points out,

The Kingdom of God is not escape from our earthy condition; it is the state in which men acknowledge God's sovereignty and carry out their creaturely responsibilities. Such a state is...the renewal of human existence,

so that man's creaturely vocation and fulfillment may be attained, already now and in the future. (Ibid.)

Bob Briner, in his book, *Roaring Lambs*, argues for an offensive or deliberate approach to fulfilling as Wolterstorff calls, our creaturely responsibilities in the affairs of men, rather than the common evangelical defensive posturing. According to Briner, it is not a question of escaping from the world; rather it is about the opposite. He declares:

We need to reclaim the territory (culture), not in a triumphalistic sense, but out of a strong conviction that this is where we belong. Our churches are growing. Our colleges are full...In short our subculture is healthy. It doesn't need more attention. It's the world that needs help...What I'm calling for is a radically different way of thinking about our world. Instead of running from it, we need to rush into it. And instead of just hanging around the fringes of our culture, we need to be right smack dab in the middle of it. (Briner 1993, 31)

Whereas, holiness for many evangelicals is most often associated with withdrawal or pulling back from culture, Briner seems to be advocating a completely different position. Either that, or he is disregarding our call to be holy altogether. Briner's call is clear: our mission is to '*be there*' in the midst of the real world; his implication is that this is part of what it means to be holy.

William Edgar's essay "Worship in All of Life" in the book, *Give Praise to God: A Vision for Reforming Worship*, similarly challenges erroneous conservative notions and thinking on holiness. For instance, he confronts activist Paul Weyrich's Open Letter, which calls for "evangelicals to withdraw from public institutions and instead practice holiness" (Ryken et.al 2003, 341), as if withdrawing, in and of itself, positions Christians to be more able to practice biblical holiness. Weyrich trumpets this in view of his conclusion that as evangelicals, "we probably have lost the culture war" (Ibid.), therefore, we simply need to focus on what is most important. Edgar contests the false notion behind Weyrich's conclusion. In this essay, he essentially argues that holiness is not synonymous with isolation, disconnection from culture, or world-flight, but rather holiness is the capacity "to live in the tension of operating within the system without succumbing to it" (Ibid.) as John 17:13-19 states.

Edgar goes on to point out that "holiness is not withdrawal, but it is sacrifice" (Ibid., 344). Of course, this statement is in reference to Romans 12:1, where all of God's own are exhorted to relinquish all that they are to God as a living sacrifice. The inference is not to throw away or deny our gifts, or to embrace a ascetic mindset of

abstinence of all that we would normally enjoy or do; rather, it is about making all that we are, and all that we possess available without reservation to God continuously. This is when holiness becomes tangible in our lives as we apply all that we possess, as Wolterstorff states, in our creaturely social and responsible involvement.

Edgar asserts that withdrawal is in fact more consistent with worldliness:

In fact, withdrawal is usually a shameful accommodation to a social trend that represents the very essence of worldliness. (Ibid., 342)

David Naugle's chapter "Theological Reflections on Worldview," in his book, backs up this assertion by Edgar. In order to understand holiness, Naugle provides a tremendously insightful and direct definition of what it means to be worldly. To be worldly, according to Naugle, is to live your life from an "idolatrously based belief system" (Naugle 2002, 278), one that interprets all reality shortsightedly, only looking to the physical creation, as if that is all that there is. "These idolatrously based belief systems...make up what the New Testament calls 'worldliness'" (Ibid.). Harold Best also touches on the same idea of idolatry and provides some insight here through the following statement in his book, *Unceasing Worship*.

Conformity to the world is conformity to a worldview that, however subtly, reverses the order of the Creator and creature...and perpetuates the confusion of master to slave. (Best 2003, 37)

Naugle quotes Craig Gay's perceptive thoughts, which insightfully conveys with clarity the essence of true worldliness. In understanding worldliness, we are better enabled to grasp the essence of holiness.

Could it not be true that 'worldliness' rests not so much in personal temptations to debauchery, but instead lies in 'an interpretation of reality that essentially excludes the reality of God from the business of life. (Naugle 2002, 278)

Naugle goes on to conclude,

In other words, worldly behavior is the eventual outcome of worldly views that dot the cultural landscape. (Ibid.)

These idolatrous views act as a substitute for why we were truly created.

To embrace holiness then, as a lifestyle, is the converse of what Gay represents in his definition of worldliness. True holiness embraces an interpretation of reality that essentially *includes* the reality of God in the daily business of life, including what is commonly referred to as the profane; yes and even in the sphere of the arts as Briner was calling for. A significant aspect of

holiness then is the offensive<sup>23</sup> intentional involvement in our world. Harold Best states it this way:

Personal holiness...is a hungering, growing, pressing-on condition in which all things take on the peculiar fragrance of being done for Jesus sake. (Best 2003, 35)

That is, all things that are done in culture are to be done for his honor and glory. This involvement for Jesus' sake, as both Gay and Best describe, involves a willingness as Andrew Purves declares, "to risk contaminations by being involved in the often murky processes of political, social, and economic engagements" (Purves 2004, 228-229), or in other words, cultural engagements, including the sphere of the arts.

Reaching back in church history, Richard Baxter in the 17<sup>th</sup> century observes the high calling of holiness, which is being engaged in God's good creation in all spheres of life, as opposed to being disengaged. He declares,

But it is a most high and noble part of holiness to search after, to behold, to admire, and to love the great Creator in all His works. (Baxter 1655, 94-95).

Baxter also qualifies this intentional involvement, which expresses also the very essence of holiness:

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<sup>23</sup> The word *offensive* used here refers to being aggressive in the pursuit of an objective; not in the sense of offending someone's cultural sensibilities.

We know little of the creature until it is set in relationship to God...So your study of physics and other sciences is worth little, if it be not God that you seek after. To see and to admire, to reverence and to adore, to love and to delight in God, appearing to us in all His works, and to pursue them for the knowledge of God – this is the true and only philosophy. This is the sanctification of your studies, when they are devoted to God...When you have first learned God, or His will, you can address yourself cheerfully to the study of His works. If you do not see yourselves and all things as living, moving and having their being in God, you see nothing, whatever you may think you see. For God is all and in all (Rom 11:36), and without Him you may think perhaps you know something, but you know nothing as you ought to know. (Ibid.)

To be sure, it is worth little, if the primary reason for our existence is ignored, but it is worth much and expresses true holiness when we realize that everything that exists does in fact exist for him. To be holy then according to Baxter is to be rightly engaged in cultural spheres, moved by a passion for God Himself! To be sure, there is a tension. It is as Edgar points out, the essence of being holy in the contexts of the real world is "to live in the tension...without succumbing" (Ryken et al., 341). Succumbing to what? Blindly succumbing to the un-holy idolatrous non-Christian worldview system and the values of that system prevalent in the broader-culture that we live.

Many evangelicals embrace a platonic dualistic tendency for world-flight in order to avoid contaminations from mainstream culture. World-flight, based on Gay's

conclusion above, is in fact worldliness and is in direct opposition to what Jesus prayed in John 17: "I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one" (Jn 17:15). World-flight is about abdicating our biblical mission. The essence of holiness is that we have been sent as Jesus was sent. That is to say, to be present in our world (Jn 17:18) on his behalf is holy.

It is also very important to look briefly at the concept of holiness in regards to our understanding of the mission of the church. The fact of the matter is many evangelicals struggle to find the balance of being holy and being missionally engaged as has been set forth thus far.

Christopher Wright aids us here in his, *The Mission of God: Unlocking the Bible's Grand Narrative*, in offering his definition of the Church's biblical mission, which goes to the heart of what holiness is all about:

Our committed participation as God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's own mission within the history of God's world for the redemption of God's creation. (Wright 2006, 22-23)

We are invited to participate with God in his own mission. From the beginning, God has been at work in his world. If God is at work in his world, and he is Holy, then there is a missional aspect of holiness that propels us to be

consciously intentional about our place and service in the real world.

The Lausanne track under the name, Holistic Mission, defines the Church's mission and phrased it as *holistic* mission. They stated that the holy mission of the Church is comprehensive, where his church is involved in bringing the whole of life under his Lordship, which was also one of Francis Schaefer's primary presuppositions. This Lausanne track speaks directly to this:

Holistic mission is the task of bringing the whole of life under the lordship of Jesus Christ. It begins with the confession that Jesus is Lord of all and attempts to live out that lordship in the whole of life. The mission of the church is, therefore, comprehensive in its means and in its impact. (Holistic Mission 2004)

This Lausanne track also speaks to the evangelical consensus that the church is to be inherently missional<sup>24</sup>, but appropriately asks: what does it mean, "that the church is by nature missionary" (Ibid.)?

There is a general consensus among evangelical

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<sup>24</sup> For clarity, the use of the word missional for this entire work does not refer to political activism where the church campaigns to bring about social change. Missional is, however about making a difference in peoples lives and in our world. Inspired by writings from Jacques Ellul, Charles Ringma says it well: "While we may be able to improve certain aspects of social and economic life, we cannot change the insidious persistence of evil...Only God can do that. In spite of this we are called to be salt and light and to overcome evil with good" (Ringma 2000, February 28).

Christians all over the world that the church is by nature missionary. But, what does that mean? How is the mission of the church defined? What is included in mission? Can mission be circumscribed to trans-cultural missionary efforts for the sake of the planting of churches in "the regions beyond?" Should mission be identified with evangelism being understood as "the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Savior and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God?" Or should mission be equated with social transformation resulting from God's action in history through human agency, which may or may not include the church, as has often been advocated in ecumenical circles? (Ibid.)

The intention of this track was to find a way to address the one-sided-ness of understanding our mission as evangelicals. This paper quotes W.A. Visser t'Hooft, who in his "opening speech at the Uppsala Assembly of the World Council of Churches" (Ibid.), aspired to "bring both dimensions together in a biblical synthesis" (Ibid.).

I believe that, with regard to the great tensions between the vertical interpretation of the gospel as essentially concerned with God's saving action in the life of individuals, and the horizontal interpretation of it as mainly concerned with human relationships in the world, we must get out of that rather primitive oscillating movement of going from one extreme to the other, which is not worthy of a movement which by its nature seeks to embrace the truth of the gospel in its fullness. A Christianity which has lost its vertical dimension has lost its salt and is not only insipid in itself, but useless for the world. But a Christianity which would use the vertical preoccupation as a means to escape from its responsibility for and in the common life of man is a denial of the incarnation, of God's love for the world manifested in Christ. (Ibid.)

John Witvliet also, in his work, *Worship Seeking Understanding*, connects the idea of the church's missional active presence in culture as an expression of the Incarnation. Since Jesus was the incarnated express image of the Father and the epitome of what is holy in the flesh, it is not hard to see the significant relationship between mission, holiness, and the Incarnation. Witvliet declares:

The Incarnation provides the model or paradigm for the church's involvement in culture. The Gospel accounts present Jesus' life as a simultaneous full *participation in* and critique of culture. The incarnation provides a metaphor for the life of the church in the world. The terminology for addressing liturgy and culture, in fact, closely parallels theological interpretations of the incarnation (the term 'in-culturation' bears a metaphorical resemblance to in-carnation). The church, as the body of Christ in the world, mirrors this Christological pattern. It is constituted not as a timeless, bodiless idea but rather as an embodied, concrete, worldly reality. The church is a full participant in culture, a cultural agent that both reflects and shapes a local cultural environment. As such, the church need not shy away from critical engagement with every aspect of local cultural environment. (Witvliet 2003, 116)

Alan Hirsch also frames his discussion of the church's mission in the context of the Incarnation. Some evangelicals are offended at the use of incarnation when it comes to discussing the church's mission. However, Hirsch declares that...

the Incarnation not only qualifies God's acts in the world, but must also qualify ours. If God's central way of reaching his world was incarnate himself in Jesus, then our way of reaching the world should likewise be incarnational. (Hirsch, 2006, 133)

If the incarnation is our model, then missions is all about being there in culture as Briner declared earlier. It is certainly uncontested across the board by evangelicals that Jesus was the fullest expression of God's holiness in the flesh. Therefore, this premise alone marries the two concepts of holiness and mission. To be *there* - wholly engaged for his sake - is a necessary expression of true holiness.

Christ's *incarnate* mission then, which we are taken into when we come to Christ, includes not only opening humanity's eyes to behold and receive the invitation of the Gospel and to experience a transformation in their personal lives consistent with the beauty of his holiness. It is more! It is about being involved in his work in broken cultures consistent with that same beauty of His holiness for the restoration of those cultures.

The Church's mission and holiness then are not antipodean concepts; rather they are an inviolable unity. When we as evangelicals attempt to suggest that to be holy is antithetical to being involved in culture missionally, we are exposing our fragmented understanding of these

biblical concepts. Holiness is the primary medium for mission that propels us into the core of God's concern for his world. True holiness is about pushing in, not pulling back. It is about pushing into God and pushing into this world for his sake.

In conclusion, most definitions on holiness among evangelicals center on being separated unto God. To be sure, holiness is about being separated to God, but that does not mean separated from involvement in our world. Rather to embrace holiness implies in every sense that we are called to be intentionally engaged with him in his world.

Prayers for the church's artists must be as Jesus prayed, that they would be empowered to move in the broader culture, and yet be protected from the idolatrous system prevalent in the broader culture. They must be there, as art and artists shape, bend, and mold culture in our contemporary society. However, even more, art is the language of dialogue with our broader culture as Steve Turner pointed out earlier. When we do not endorse and move in the arts as Christians, we turn the culture over to other idolatrous worldviews. Art shapes as no other spheres of culture can, if we are not *there*, as his holy

ambassadors, then the broader culture will be shaped by the un-holy and the broken.

Our contemporary culture is often dominated by the decadent because we, the church, have abdicated our mandate to be present. We are called to be holy, not absent. Being present in this world must play a greater part in what it means to present the Gospel to our generation. (Harbinson 2005, 53)

Overcoming dichotomized and fragmented thinking about worldliness, holiness, and our mission, can empower evangelicals to embrace a holistic view of life, whereby they then are thrust into the culture shaping spheres of society, such as the arts. The fact is, art is an inextricable dimension of culture, and therefore it is imperative that evangelical streams grasp a biblical vision of holiness. By doing this, we then are expressing one way in which it is possible to worship the Lord in the "beauty of holiness" (Ps 29:2), by implementing our God-endowed artistic talents.

### *Subsidiary Question 3: Worldview Assumptions*

The third subsidiary question is: What are some of the essential assumptions in our evangelical biblical worldview, which would be instrumental in facilitating an increase of Christian-based artists in the broader culture?

In this section, the resource literature will deal specifically with three premier factors in a biblical worldview, which potentially can enable an effective launch of more Christian-based artists for the public square. The biblical worldview factors are: God's Good Creation; Overcoming the Subtle non-Christian Notion of Dualism; and Embracing Christ's Lordship over the Whole of Creation.

#### God's Good Creation

*"God saw all that He made, and behold, it was very good."*  
Genesis 1:3

This Genesis affirmation reveals the Creator's view of what he made. John Wilson posits the obvious implication of God's good creation for the arts:

The arts, no less than science, agriculture, understanding and wisdom is a gift of God and part of His handiwork in creation. (Wilson 1981, 70)

Wilson also points out John Calvin's true position on the creational design of the arts: "the arts are a gift of God...by no means to be despised" (Ibid., 6-7) lest we "insult the giver" (Ibid.).

Albert Wolters in his *Creation Regained* and David Bentley Hart, in his work, *Atheist Delusions*, speaks potently to God's creational goodness, which lays a foundation for active involvement in the arts. Hart

declares, "the world is in itself good and beautiful, and true; it is in fact the very theater of divine action" (Hart 2009,207). Hart goes on to announce that God's good creation was not something "from which the soul must flee to be saved" (Ibid.), which is bound up in dualistic thought. Rather, as Wolters states, we also have a vital role to which we are called:

We are called to participate in the ongoing creational work of God, to be God's helpers in executing to the end the blue print for this masterpiece...If God does not give up on the works of His hands, we may not either. (Wolters 2005, 44-45)

Wolters addresses the tendency among some evangelicals to conclude that formless matter was in-and-of itself less than good. He states clearly, "There is no distortion of God's good creation before man's sin; formless means 'unformed' not deformed" (Ibid., 22).

God spoke matter into existence and turned the unformed matter "into a beautiful cosmos" (Ibid.), according to Wolters. It is also reasonable to conclude that God's structural design was good and in truth still is! That structural design includes our capacity to make art as His-image bearers.

Gene Edward Veith, in his book, *State of the Arts*, shares this observation, "God is infinitely more imaginative than we are" (Veith 1991, 133). God, as many

artists themselves have confessed, is the "primal artist" (Ibid., 134), and without a doubt the supreme "artist of all artists" (Ryken 2006, 22). Veith describes God as the "original abstract artist" (Ibid.). Veith goes on to elaborate:

Without models or patterns, God made all things visible and invisible from nothing. He invented colors, the laws of geometry, the shapes of animals. His works are so various and we are just now learning, so intricate, that they are staggering. (Ibid.)

Veith's book is a rich resource in accentuating the breadth and height of God's creational goodness. He states, "God's act of creation is the ultimate model and enabler of human artistry" (Ibid., 145). To be sure, God's work of art is the entire universe itself, with all its vastness, diversity, mystery, and brilliance. Elizabeth Douglas also observes the following:

The first chapter of Genesis describes God establishing at the very onset of creation the prerequisites for art – light, space, and unity. (Ibid.)

With these affirmative biblical observations from Hart, Wolters, Wilson, Ryken, Veith, and Douglas, any tendency among evangelicals to devalue physicality in God's creation is not only unfounded, but also simply un-biblical.

According to Nicholas Wolterstorff, devaluing God's creation is more about "following in the footsteps of

Plato's Phaedo" (Wolterstorff 1980, 70), rather than following Jesus into the biblical vision of God's creation of the material world. Wolterstorff explains:

The world in which we live is an artifact brought about into being by God. It represents a success on the part of God – God who is love – not a failure. In contemplation of what He had made God found delight. But also, God knew that what He had made would serve well his human creatures. So God pronounced His "Yes" upon it all, a "Yes" of delight and love. You and I much do no less. (Ibid., 69)

The tendency to devalue the physical or material creation, he argues, was "characteristic of many religions and philosophies" (Ibid), but unfortunately, "characteristic also of Christianity at many points in history" (Ibid.).

This penchant took various forms in the thinking of evangelicalism; for instance, he notes:

It has taken the vague and curious form...of persons holding that 'spiritual' values are higher than 'material' values...it has taken the form of persons arguing that the nonmaterial arts of music and poetry are superior to the material arts of painting, sculpture, architecture, and dance. (Ibid.)

Wolterstorff steadfastly goes on to declare...

every such form of devaluation flies in the face of God's affirmation of His creation. The sheer physicality or materiality of something is never a legitimate ground for assigning to it a lower value in our lives. (Wolterstorff 2005, 49)

Wolterstorff words express it straightforwardly:

God does not make junk, and we dishonor the Creator if we take a negative view of the work of

His hands, when He himself takes such a positive view...God does not make junk, and He does not junk what He has made. (Ibid.)

The fact that God's creation needed to be redeemed (Col 1:20), does not infer that his creation, which was good at the beginning, became evil because of humankind's rebellion. It certainly did become less than his original intention; it had the potential to be distorted. Of course, there were horrific consequences for God's good creation as Wolters declares:

The Bible teaches plainly that Adam and Eve's fall into sin was not just an isolated act of disobedience but an event of catastrophic significance for creation as a whole...the effects of sin touch all of creation; no created thing is in principle untouched by the corrosive effects of the fall. (Wolters 2005, 53)

Yet, Wolters in his book, also observes with Wolterstorff that matter did not become evil as a result of the fall:

Sin neither abolishes nor becomes identified with God's creation. Creation and sin remain distinct, however closely they may become intertwined. (Ibid., 57)

In his work, *Creation Regained*, Wolters explains his position through his postulation of a concept he calls, "structure and direction" (Wolters 2005, 87).

Structure denotes the essence of a creaturely thing; the kind of creature it is by virtue of God's creational law...direction by contrast refers to a sinful deviation from the structural ordinance and renewed conformity to it in Christ. (Ibid., 88)

This simply means that it is not a matter of matter. It is a matter of what we do with God's created matter: whether we choose to deviate from his original intention. As stated earlier in the section on our evangelical propensity towards disconnection with culture in regards to the arts, the rebellion and decadence that is at the root of some contemporary and modern art today does not extinguish the "creational legitimacy of art itself" (Ibid.).

#### Overcoming the Non-Christian Notion of Dualism

In his paper, "A Christian Worldview and the Futures of Evangelicalism," David Naugle identifies dualism as one of the three most "debilitating problems in churches today" (Naugle 2004, 11). Naugle does not spare words in pointing out the horrific consequences of this "doctrine of demons" (Ibid., 12), as he called it. He exclaims:

This egregious heresy and doctrine of demons, with Platonic, Gnostic, Manichean, and Enlightenment roots, slices metaphysical and anthropological reality into the distinct categories of the spiritual, sacred, and eternal vis-à-vis the physical, secular, and the temporal. Christianity is sequestered in the former domain and in the latter domain is found ordinary life. To so compartmentalize Christianity and quotidian affairs has distorted the faith, disfigured believers, devastated creation and culture, damaged the church, diminished its influence, and deprived God of glory. (Ibid.)

Naugle is certainly not the first to attempt to expose and renounce this horrific denigrating concept that found its way into western evangelical theology. A. W. Tozer, in his book, *The Pursuit of God*, proclaims:

One of the greatest hindrances to the Christian's internal peace is the common habit of dividing our lives into two areas – the sacred and the secular. But this state of affairs is wholly unnecessary. We have gotten ourselves on the horns of the dilemma, but the dilemma is not real. It is a creature of misunderstanding. The sacred-secular antithesis has no foundation in the New Testament. (Tozer 1993, 101)

Unfortunately, this "creature of misunderstanding" (Ibid) has done much more than simply hindered our "internal peace" (Ibid.). How did this paralyzing component find its way into evangelicalism?

Middleton & Walsh, Schaefer, Rookmaaker, and a host of other historical and evangelical writers with one voice identified Plato as the source in antiquity that propagated the inferiority of the material world to the world of forms or ideas. Plato, though perhaps inadvertently, was without a doubt the father of dualistic thought for the western mind.

Richard Tarnas's, *The Passion of the Western Mind*, points out that in Plato's "chosen literary mode" (Tarnas 1991, 4) there were often "deliberate ambiguities" (Ibid.). Yet, certain statements from Plato reveal the

presuppositions behind his denigrating dualistic view. For instance Steve Turner points out in Plato's *Phaedo*, the following presupposition postulated by Plato's mentor, Socrates:

I reckon we make the nearest approach to knowledge when we have the least possible intercourse or communion with the body, and are not surfeited with the bodily nature, but keep ourselves pure until the hour when God himself is pleased to release us, and thus having got rid of the foolishness of the body we shall be pure and hold converse with the pure, and know of ourselves the clear light everywhere, which is no other than the light of truth. (Turner 2001, 59)

With this as Plato's primary presupposition then there is little wonder why he had little need for the arts.

Graham Buxton's book, *Celebrating Life: Beyond the Sacred-Secular Divide*, observes:

Plato's division between 'higher' and 'lower' reality critically influenced the way the church distinguished between the 'sacred' and the 'secular' in life, with regard not only to the creative arts generally, but to all of life. (Buxton 2007, 5)

Buxton reveals Plato's specific denigration of literature:

Plato voiced three objections to literature – that it is 'fictional and deficient in truth, that it leads to immorality, and that it is not useful and therefore a waste of time. On these grounds he claimed, poetry and fictional literature were to be avoided at all costs. (Ibid.)

Tarnas's book provides an excellent history disclosing the systematic unfolding of Plato's worldview in

his section of the book entitled, "The Greek World View" (Tarnas 1991, 3-72). According to Tarnas, Plato categorized the physical creation or world to be inferior, ever changing, only a dim statement of the higher world of the divine or eternal. Divine for Plato did not refer to a divine being, rather he believed in "archetypal principles...and other absolute moral and aesthetic values" (Ibid., 4), which were divine.

Plato's thinking was the foundation for the heresy in the second century church known as Gnosticism or Gnostic Dualism, which was effectively refuted by Ireneaus in 180 AD. James Herrick, in his thorough study, *The Making of the New Spirituality*, discloses the premise behind Gnosticism of the second century, which resonated with Platonic thought: "Gnosticism teaches the soul's escape from the world, the body, and time by means of secret insights into the nature of spiritual reality" (Herrick 2003, 270). Herrick goes on to state:

Only the individual possessing spiritual knowledge or gnosis has any hope of understanding the truth about our human predicament and thus of being saved from...the limitations of the physical. In both its ancient and more modern manifestations, Gnosticism questions the goodness, often even the reality of physical existence...The soul is eternal and evolving, a manifestation of the divine essence in the highest realm of reality. The body...is merely the vessel of our entrapment to be escaped by

means of the secrets of spiritual assent.  
(Ibid.)

Plato's thinking came again later through Plotinus in his own form of neo-Platonism. Herrick again recognizes the same deadly dualism in Plotinus that was in Plato.

Like Gnosticism, Neo-Platonism held that the human soul was spirit held captive in matter. This belief set the Neo-Platonist at odds with Christian teaching, which stressed the unity of the human body and soul, the ultimate redemption of each and the conviction that the material world had been created good. (Herrick 2003, 43)

Still, in view of the Gnostic-dualistic heresy being rejected by astute discerning early church fathers, how did such thought finds its' way into the thinking of the western world and in particular in evangelical streams.

In a collection of essays entitled *Critical Concepts in Sociology*, Andrew Blaikie alludes to the origin of dualistic thinking in today's western society:

Most Western thought, if not downright anti-corporeal, tends to gloss over or ignore the place the body plays in the constitution of the human being...despite important differences between their philosophical positions, both Plato and Aristotle regarded the human soul as rooted in the 'real world by means of the body.' The soul and the mind of the person were therefore regarded in an influential stream of Greek thought as being above the body, in the twin sense of being morally superior to it and being lodged inside the body only unwillingly.  
(Blaikie et.al 2003, 3)

Blaikie goes on to say, "This Greek derogation of the body as a more physical receptacle of the non-physical, mental

capacities of the human being, in part shaped the Christian dislike of corporeal matter" (Ibid.).

Blaikie is both right and at the same time wrong in his conclusion. Whereas he is correct in asserting the influence that Greek thought had on some early Christian church fathers, still this perception of the body is unequivocally not of a Judeo-Christian origin, rather it hails purely from Greek or platonic dualistic thought. Though both Ambrose and Augustine were influenced through Neo-Platonism, yet to suggest that Christianity as a system of faith, in a syncretistic fashion, officially incorporated Platonic thought and embraced Greek-dualism is definitely not defensible. Platonic dualistic thought and the biblical Christian worldview are incongruent.

Church history however does reveal that bishop Ambrose who was instrumental in Augustine's conversion and of course his view of life formation, embraced and propagated the neo-Platonism of Plotinus (Tarnas 1991, 143). There is little question that Ambrose did disseminate platonic dualistic assumptions in Augustine's thinking.

Augustine contributed so overwhelmingly and positively to church doctrine and Christian thought that when one begins to suggest that there was any deviation

from sound biblical worldview perspectives, offending sensibilities is inevitable. To be sure, his love for righteousness, regard for the Scriptures, dependence on the Holy Spirit, and humble transparency, as evidenced in his personal diary, modeled passionate biblical evangelicalism. The authentic ardor in his vulnerable *Confessions* and his prophetic apologetic, *City of God*, are indeed marvelous gifts to the church. Peter Nathan in his article, *Augustine's Poisoned Chalice*, accurately notes "Evangelical Christianity owes a debt to Augustine" (Nathan 2008, 1). Even with these positive contributions, traces of dualism in his writings haunt the evangelical mindset to this day.

Some contend that Augustine "held that the root of evil did not reside in matter, as the neo-Platonist suggested, for matter was God's creation and therefore good" (Tarnas 1991, 145), yet his *Confessions* unmask the subtle neo-Platonic and Gnostic assumptions that formed his worldview. His ruthless honesty in his *Confessions* provides the labyrinth of his spiritual journey and the worldview that accompanied him in his Christian faith. Concrete examples of his dualism are found in book ten where Augustine confesses what he considered a number of his sensual desires. For instance "the tendency to enjoy a good meal a little too much" (Pusey 2006, 397) or his

tendency "to be distracted from prayer by the beauty of a hymn in church" (Ibid., 262-267) or of how he was "captivated by the scent of a woman's perfume" (Ibid.). He wrote in his diary that a rabbit distracted him once in his time of prayer with the Lord, and his conclusion was that the rabbit was therefore evil. Though it would be incorrect to blame the writings of Augustine solely for the dualistic thinking lurking in some streams of the evangelical church, it is true that western theology today was heavily influenced by dualistic tendencies in his writings. Just as Plato unwittingly laid the philosophical foundation for dualism, Augustine laid the tracks for this thought in Christian theology.

Tarnas affirms that Augustine originally embraced "the Judaic ethical vision of God's purposefulness in history" (Ibid.); yet again, Tarnas exposes Augustine's neo-Platonist influence, which penetrated his theology and view of life:

His fundamental depreciation of the secular, combined with his philosophical background, his psychological predispositions, and his historical context, transformed that vision in the direction of a personal interior otherworldly religiosity. (Ibid., 148)

Thus, the leaning towards "escape from this world to the next" (Ibid., 147) was correlated to escaping "from self to God, from flesh to spirit" (Ibid.). All this therefore

"constituted the deepest purpose and direction for human life" (Ibid.) among early western mystics and theologians. Such thinking was inadvertently passed on from Augustine and this two-tiered or split-view vision of reality found its way into western thought and subsequently into western evangelicalism.

The Hebrew mindset as revealed in the Old Testament, which is the foundation for Christianity, espouses a vision for one reality: "One Creator and one world created by this one God...this world was originally created good" (Bustard 2006, 39). The problem is that a multitude of western Christians, among them a majority of evangelicals, continue to unconsciously embrace a Platonic split-vision for this world. This is also obvious in the typical sacred-secular divide very common in streams of evangelicalism.

The term, split-vision, was introduced by Brian Walsh and Richard Middleton in their early discourse on embracing a biblical worldview and Christian cultural engagement, *The Transforming Vision*, in 1984. This split vision thinking is in truth a platonic primitive form of dualism, which heavily influenced the early second century Gnostic heresies. In their book they declare that a Christian worldview is one that involves "shaping all of

life and not just for shaping some *religious* or *spiritual* or *sacred* corner of life" (Walsh & Middleton 1984, 10).

The implications for the arts are obvious. Brand and Chaplin expose the dualistic tendencies that even emerged in late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century modern market-place art, as well as in the earlier history of the church:

It is dualism at work in the abstraction of Kandinsky, Mondrian, and Brancusi, believing that to get through to something pure and spiritual, one must strip away all objective representation. It is dualism we see throughout church history, banning organs, dancing bonnet ribbons, or the 'sinema', as being too worldly. It is dualism we hear in the church that subtly suggest being a full-time Christian worker is more worthy than being a reporter; in the art college that implies fine art is higher than graphics. (Brand & Chaplin 2001, 66)

They go on to disclose there is a proper duality in Christianity consistent with a biblical worldview, yet it is emphatically not about dualistically compartmentalizing our world.

A truly Biblical worldview will not let us get away with such simplistic divides...There is a duality (as distinct from dualism) at the heart of the Christian message – a very real battle between opposing forces of good and evil. But it is not played out in endless legalistic divides: Rembrandt good, Rothko bad; guitars good, organs bad; headscarves good, nose piercing bad – or what ever the latest rule-maker happens to decree. The problem comes when the line is drawn compartmentally rather than spiritually, putting certain aspects in culture inside the Kingdom of God and others outside. We need to understand that the battle-lines between good and evil run

across all aspects of culture and every facet of life. (Ibid., 67)

The implication of embracing a truly biblical vision for his creation results in a celebration of the gift of *matter*. Wolterstorff states:

The artists who sees life and reality as a Christian will not despise the creation in which he finds himself. He will not see it as something from which to be liberated...he will see the world as a storehouse of materials out of which he can select so as to make his work. He will think of those materials more as something whose potentials are to be realized than as something constricting the scope of his own self-expression. (Wolterstorff 1980, 70)

Wolterstorff goes on to point out other consequences of dualistic thinking:

One's attitude toward the physical incorporates an attitude toward oneself. We are not angels hovering lightly over the earth. Denigration of the physical implies denigration of oneself. Correspondingly, any denigration of art on account of its physicality is a form of self-denigration. To denigrate dance, for example, because it so intimately involves the body, is to denigrate the whole dimension of oneself. (Ibid., 71)

Walsh and Middleton observe that embracing such a dichotomy is simply un-biblical.

The Bible knows no such dichotomy. In the biblical worldview all of life, in all of its dimensions, is constituted as religion. From our economic choices to our recreation, from our prayer life to the way in which we bathe our babies, in every cultural action and deed, we live only in response to the cosmic, creation law of God. This is God's universe throughout.

But, the sacred/secular split dies hard. Many object, arguing that God has standards for some human actions but that to others he is simply indifferent. They argue that life indeed is religious in some sense but that it cannot strictly be identified with religion. After all, our Christianity does not apply directly to everything we do. It does not apply for example to such secular activities as agriculture and art.

Or does it? Hear what the Bible says... 'I have filled him (Bezalel) with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability, and knowledge in all kinds of crafts – to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver, and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of craftsmanship' (Exodus 31:3-5). (Walsh & Middleton 1984, 67-69)

Finally, another primary antidote for overcoming the subtle notion of dualism according to many authors is through embracing Christ comprehensive Lordship over the whole of creation.

#### The Lordship of Christ over all of Creation

The Biblical worldview...empowers us to walk obediently before the Lord. Indeed, Christ's Lordship will settle for nothing else. (Walsh & Middleton 1984, 93)

A third worldview assumption for the empowerment of the arts for the broader culture is the reality of the scope of Christ's Lordship over the whole of life. This premise possesses comprehensive cultural implications as Walsh and Middleton insightfully pointed out above.

In Jeremy Begbie's, *Resounding Truth*, in answer to the question, "why should music be a significant or important matter for Christians to think about" (Begbie 2007, 15), his answer covers not only the sphere of music, but all the cultural activities, including all the arts:

Theologically, the most general and basic reason is simply the Lordship of Jesus Christ. For the follower of Christ, there is no 'exclusion zone,' no 'secular' territory outside the scope of His saving work, no value-free or neutral area of human life. This applies to music as to any other cultural activity. (Ibid.)

Francis Schaefer was one of the first to challenge evangelical thinking as early as 1973, in regards to our limited vision of Christ's rule:

As evangelical Christians, we have tended to relegate art to the very fringe of life. The rest of life is more important. Despite our constant talk about the Lordship of Christ, we have narrowed its scope to a very small area of reality. We have misunderstood the concept of the Lordship of Christ over the whole of man and the whole of the universe and have not taken to us the riches the Bible gives us for ourselves, for our lives, and for our culture. (Schaefer 1973, 7)

For Schaefer, embracing Christ's Redemptive Rule over the whole of humankind was the anti-venom for overcoming the platonic dualistic poison rampant in the church. He declares:

The Lordship of Christ over the whole of life means that there are no platonic areas in Christianity, no dichotomy or hierarchy between the body and the soul. God made the body as well

as the soul and redemption is for the whole of man. (Ibid.)

John Wilson states essentially the same, but refers specifically to the sphere of the arts as an expression of Christ Lordship over the whole of life.

Many Christians, particularly in the pietistic or evangelical tradition, have tended to be suspicious of the arts and to treat them as weapons of the devil. So the theatre and cinema are considered 'worldly'; novels read for pleasure are suspect; paintings are acceptable if they are of religious subjects...poetry would be permissible if it could be sung as a hymn or chorus...the mainstream of the arts, and the vast body of artistic work have been ignored...but ...Christians are called to work towards bringing all things under the Lordship of Christ...they are called to serve Him with their gifts He has given – these gifts include imagination...and all the tools of artistic work. Jesus Christ is Lord of all and there is no authority to say that His Lordship should not be exercised in the sphere of the arts. (Wilson 1981, 71-72)

Brand and Chaplin again echoed Schaefer and Wilson's recognition of Christ over all Lordship. They state:

In stark contrast to the position of dualism is a Christian view, which sees Jesus as Lord over all areas of life. All things were created by Him and for Him, claims the letter to the Colossians, and in Him all things hold together...

Unfortunately, many Christians have been taught more about Christ's Lordship over their personal life than their working life. They have been encouraged to get very excited about His Lordship of the church, but find it somewhat harder to recognize his Lordship over the structures of society. (Brand & Chaplin 2001, 70)

Colin Harbinson articulates the collective voice of the fifty international evangelical delegates for the Redeeming the Arts track at the 2004 Lausanne Congress:

His Kingdom - His rule and reign - is both a present reality and a future hope... Unless a Kingdom perspective of the Lordship of Christ over every area of life permeates our understanding of mission, we will continue to express a reduced story that communicates a reduced vision of the overarching work of God to restore all creation back to His original intention. (Harbinson 2005, 13-14)

Some evangelicals become paranoid when one begins to speak about the Kingdom. N.T. Wright addresses this fear and brings understanding to a passage most often misunderstood among evangelicals in his lecture, *The Christian Challenge in the Postmodern World*, given at Seattle Pacific University:

We Christians have often read John 18 to be saying, my kingdom is not of this world meaning my kingdom simply belongs to somewhere else called heaven. It's not what the Greek says, actually. It's, my kingdom is not *from*, or *out of*, this world. It is not characterized by the mechanisms and the power plays of this world. But, my goodness, my kingdom is for this world. Jesus taught us to pray, "Thy kingdom come...on earth as it is in heaven." And we Christians have all too often said, "in heaven as it is in heaven, and if we can sort out a little bit of earth, that's OK, but it's not terribly important." Jesus' kingship is all about a different way of power, a different way of life, within this present world. (Wright 2005)

A limited vision of his Lordship reduces us to stay on the fringes of life in a secular/sacred divide. It

holds the next generation back from *being there* in the broader culture with a sense of destiny letting their light shine in darkness. Without this indispensable cornerstone of his Lordship over the whole of creation for the empowerment of God's people into every sphere of God's creational design including the arts, the church is waylaid to stay behind the closed-door of the church sub-culture with dire consequences for the rest of society.

*Subsidiary Question 4: Strategic Considerations*

The fourth and final sub-question is: What are some specific strategies, educational or otherwise, that would be most significant in empowering Christian-based artists in local evangelical congregations for the broader culture?

Among the many books, essays, and articles drawn on in the material for this research project, there were in fact very few that offered viable practical strategies specifically for the local church context in order to accomplish the aim represented in the research question. There have been, however, multitudes of strategic endeavors initiated by para-church organizations, which have been significant in making forward progress. Most of these initiatives focus on an integrated worldview, which plays a

major role in their progress. Some para-church organizations are mindful of the value of synergistic collaborations with local churches, as they are aware that these initiatives provide the greatest opportunity to propagate a vision of the arts for evangelical streams of the church.

In this final section, first, some examples of strategies have been selected and are presented under the title: Empowering Collaborative Strategies. Following these examples, a few resources will be cited which provided some practical and strategic suggestions for pastors of local congregations. These are presented as: Some Practical Suggestions for Pastoring Artists. Finally, the results of two significant consultations for the arts, the 2009 European Arts Leadership Summit and the Redeeming the Arts Track of the 2004 Lausanne Congress for World Evangelism, will be presented as these consultations provided the most practical strategies found in print. Their strategies could be significant for accomplishing the aim of the research question for this work.

#### Empowering Collaborative Strategies

An excellent event example is the "Transforming Culture: A Vision for Christians in the Arts" that took

place in Austin, Texas, in 2008. Their tagline was: 'a symposium for pastors, church leaders, and artists.' The Hill Country Institute of Contemporary Christianity and the arts ministry of a local church, Hope Chapel, headed up the event. Approximately seven hundred participants gathered, which included: theologians and pastors (25%); artists from a diverse array of disciplines (50%); and "the great other" or better known as art-enthusiasts (25%). The participants came from diverse Protestant and Roman Catholic evangelical streams. The event took place with another chief collaborating partner, First Evangelical Free Church of Austin. This rich collaboration was one of the first evangelical trans-denominational arts events where both artists and pastors took part. Their inspiring vision was well articulated:

A vision of the church and the arts that is theologically informed, biblically grounded, liturgically sensitive, artistically alive, and missionally shrewd. (Taylor 2008, 23)

A CAE European example of such an event runs under the name of *Imagine*, and takes place every two to three years in a major European city. The event, administered by Creative Arts Europe, intentionally collaborates with indigenous and international church movements in a host nation. These conferences or congresses gather aspiring and career artists together with evangelical pastoral leadership, with an aim for

reconciliation between the church, the artists, and art. The format makes room for presentations, fine arts expositions, and plenum messages from internationally recognized leaders, debate and dialogue, and fellowship opportunities. The event mission statement articulates the purpose in the gathering:

*Imagine* is a unique connection opportunity where career & aspiring artists meet up with each other along with pastors and church leaders for exchange, dialogue, and mutual encouragement. The banner of this event is a restoration of arts, artists, and the church. Also, the aim of the Imagine event is to ignite and strengthen a Biblical vision for the significant place that the arts have for the church and European society. (Imagine 2010 Flyer in English)

#### Practical Suggestions for Pastoring Artists

There were only a few resources in the research literature, which provided practical ideas for nurturing the arts in the context of a local congregation. The most practical ideas were found in the Christian periodical, "Last Days Magazine." Selected strategies worth adopting have been included below for the local evangelical context:

'Adopt' a gifted artist and help him tangibly with training, encouragement, and prayer.

Start an Art Gallery in a room of your church, or even better in the lobby. Fill it with works from artists in your congregation. Play music from the musicians in your church in the background.

Encourage those with artistic desires to pursue training – and applaud their achievements, big and small.

Start an artist Support Group in your church where artists can gather to pray for and learn from each other.

Support an artist with a monthly financial gift. We do it for evangelists and teachers. Artists with the potential to touch the world with their art are just as deserving. Maybe you can help an artist with art college expenses.

Organize regular citywide Christian art exhibitions – to pull artists together and encourage the Church with the giftedness that is in it.

Make room for musicians, poets, dancers, painters, video, and filmmakers etc. to do a special segment in your church service.

Bring skilled instructors to your church to give seminars on worship, drama, painting, singing, sculpturing, poetry, video, filmmaking, writing, etc. (Last Days Magazine 1995, 15)

In addition to this source above, one other book, *For the Beauty of the Church*, edited by David Taylor, also provides helpful suggestions for pastoring believing artists in local congregations in two essays. Barbara Nicolosi currently working as a screenwriter and script consultant, wrote the essay, "The Artist: What exactly is an Artist and How do We Shepherd Them?" (Taylor 2008, 103). The second essay by artist-pastor, Joshua Banner, is entitled "The Practitioner: Nurturing Artists in the Local Church" (Ibid., 123).

In the first essay, Nicolosi provides useful tips for pastors in her advice on how to recognize a true artist. Nicolosi states: "The problem...is that we aren't really sure who is an artist" (Ibid., 105). There are, according to Nicolosi, "lots of people doing creative things in the church whose work in the arts, seems to me to be much more about their own spiritual or emotional catharsis" (Ibid.). Whereas, given the essay's title, one would expect more practical insights on the shepherding aspect of artist, however, very little was actually given along these lines. Still, her insights aid pastors to recognize and affirm someone genuinely called to work professionally as an artist in the broader culture. She suggests five criteria:

First...artistic talent turns up early...second ...their work has emotional power...third, a real artist's work is going to have freshness, a startling quality of something new...fourth and final sign of an artist: artists are obsessed with details of form. (Ibid., 114-116)

The second essay by Banner focuses on being a nurturer as a pastor, rather than an exploiter. He exhorts, "The standard of an exploiter is efficiency; the standard of the nurturer is care" (Ibid., 124). He is addressing an important issue for local pastors to consider. Evangelical churches have alienated many artists, as the artists have felt used, most often without

remittance after huge investments of time and materials have been made in serving a project for their church. The only other practical suggestion Banner offers is the significance "of sharing in the life of an artist" (Ibid., 128) for pastors. It is important he states, "to draw near to artists and to share in their work...This is what artists ache for" (Ibid.). This drawing near must be out of "sincere curiosity and interest" (Ibid., 129).

#### Results of the European Arts Summit

The European Arts Summit, sponsored by five evangelical arts organizations, took place at Schloss Mittersill in Mittersill, Austria, in May 2009. Fifty key evangelical arts organizational leaders from 15 European countries representing the spheres of the Church, Missions, Academia, and the Marketplace attended the Summit to engage in dialogue and healthy debate, to network, and to be inspired.

The report of the event conveys the motivation behind the gathering:

Given the history of Europe as both a cradle of Christianity and a place of global significance in its contribution to the arts, it is with some dismay that Europeans of faith witness the diminution of the place and influence of art and artists in the life and faith of the continent. (Arts+Europe Round Table, 2010)

The report also expresses the delegate's shared passion, which united both organization leaders and artists:

The power of art and the artists was perhaps at its height in the Renaissance. We long to see a new renaissance where the artists once again take their rightful place as influencers, translators, and contributors to the culture and as an *avant garde*, raising questions about our society and provoking a deeper reflection on what lies beneath the surface of our existence and our societies. (Ibid.)

The report also discloses that the delegates affirmed the "painful schism" (Ibid.) that exists between the artists and the living church. Among those gathered there existed "a deep desire to heal the painful schism that has developed between the church and the artists" (Ibid.) and in the exchange ways were sought that would foster reconciliation and nurture the church to "once again embrace the richness of all that artists have to offer within and outside the church context" (Ibid.).

Featured speaker, Colin Harbinson, taught each day, encouraging delegates to identify obstacles within the Church, culture, and personal impediments among artists themselves that had resulted in the abandonment of the arts and imagination in the life and mission of the Church in Europe. Dialogue was passionate as delegates examined, discussed, prayed, worshiped, and dreamed of spiritual and

cultural renewal through a reformation of artistic practice and a restoration of the arts to God's original intention.

The Focus Groups (up to 12 people) examined implications for the church, marketplace, academia, and missions, in a more contextualized fashion. Each focus group was asked to prepare a mission statement encapsulating the vision of the group and to articulate three practical steps towards making the vision a reality. Finally, these vision statements and practical steps were presented in the plenum sessions to the entire group.

For the purpose of this dissertation, only the church focus group's vision statement will be presented along with the strategic steps, as this relates directly to the research question for this work. This researcher directed the church focus group and the following is the corporate vision that was articulated during the five days of dialogue.

The vision of the church focus group states:

We dream of a future in which the church humbly acknowledges her humanity, celebrates God and His creation, lives out authentic relationships, embraces a diversity of creative artistic expression, affirms artists in their calling and acts as a catalyst for cultural change inspired by a holistic Christian worldview. (Ibid., 5)

The church focus group also articulates three strategic steps to accomplish the vision:

- 1) We, as the church, must educate and disseminate an ethos for the arts, the artists, and culture in the church, through the integration of art into our church life and service.
- 2) We, as the church, must rediscover and cultivate cultural awareness, openness, and an appreciation of art in the broader culture, working towards a mutual reconciliation between artists and the church community.
- 3) We, as the church, must develop nurturing, caring communities, which welcome the artist and supports them in their often arduous and lonely assignment in the broader culture.  
(Ibid.)

#### Results of the Redeeming the Arts Track-LCWE

The Redeeming the Arts track was one of thirty tracks identified for the 2004 Lausanne Congress for World Evangelism, which was held in Pattaya, Thailand. At the conclusion of the event, each track was to prepare an occasional paper representing the findings of the dialogue. In the Redeeming the Arts track three major issues emerged:

- 1) The critical need to educate the church about the arts.
  - 2) The importance of Christian discipleship for the artists.
  - 3) The strategic role for the arts for cultural transformation.
- (Harbinson 2005, 3)

For the purposes of this dissertation, the strategies will be presented that specifically had to do with the first and second issue articulated above. These

well-articulated strategies were some of the most pertinent found in print for the purpose of this research.

The Redeeming the Arts track presented the following strategies for nurturing a renewed theological vision in order to educate the church:

1. Developing and supporting networks of Christ-centered arts organizations. This relational synergy will help to increase the momentum and understanding of arts-related concerns within faith communities while encouraging individual artists.
2. Creating educational resources for faith communities to provide informed biblical and theological understanding of the arts. These may take the form of church or small-group curriculum.
3. Funding qualified teachers to create courses in the arts for Christian higher education. One of the greatest challenges facing arts and art organizations today is the issue of funding. Patronage is still necessary if artists are to pursue what God has gifted and called them to do. Sadly with notable exceptions, most evangelical grant-giving foundations have little or no understanding of, or interest in the arts. Ironically, secular foundations and arts-funding organizations are much more responsive to Christians when they see quality work in the arts and perceive that the community will benefit in some way. Artists and their supporters also need to think more in terms of business models in their work and projects. It is of particular importance when making funding proposals to businesses and corporations to present them in language they will understand and respond to. Mutually beneficial and helpful relationships must be established with the business community.

4. Establishing biblically based courses and degree offerings in the arts at Christian colleges, seminaries, and universities. In is in these places that both the leadership and the rank and file of the church can discover the value of the arts in the scheme of the divine order of creation and the mission responsibility of the church. (Ibid., 17-18)

The second category of strategies in the occasional paper was for the discipleship of the artist. These strategies address the "character, artistic, and relational development of the artist" (Ibid., 23). The strategies are categorized below under the following categories: character development of the artist; artistic development of the artist; and relational development of the artist.

For the character-development of the artist the occasional paper suggests the implementation of the following programs or measures:

1. An artist's covenant (a written statement) with an artistic counterpart (performance, exhibition, reading, etc.) in the context of a local body of believers - a community ritual, formalized in a public way.
2. An artist's study guide on discipleship, written by and for artists, leading them through the process of evaluating and integrating art and faith, while deepening their commitment to Christ.
3. An initiative, led by local, national and international arts groups, in which Christians in the arts are identified, contacted, prayed for, connected together, and linked to a local church...if they do not already attend.

4. Local, regional, or national conferences with an emphasis on spirituality and character development that also provide individual counsel and prayer for artists.
5. An arts council that is made up of practicing artists, pastors, or spiritual leaders, business people and other gifted members of the Christian community for advice, prayer, support, accountability, and project development. (Ibid., 26)

For the artistic development of the artists, the occasional paper suggests the subsequent proposals:

1. Developing a theology of creativity and beauty
2. Commissioning and funding arts projects within the church and cultural community.
3. Identifying and mentoring creative people within the church.
4. Presenting and installing quality works of art in church sanctuaries.
5. Devising short-term "artists in residence" projects.
6. Creating a study guide (and workshops) to develop creative-process skills in the church.
7. Building or adapting church and community facilities for arts education and expression.
8. Offering arts courses in partnership with local Christian artists and/or schools of art.
9. Developing an articulate artistic "voice" through critical insight into its own creativity. (Ibid., 30)

In regards to the relational development of the artist, the paper suggests:

1. A well-developed reconciliation process for reconnecting arts, church, and mission leaders

that facilitates mutual openness,  
understanding, and healing.

2. A biblically-based curriculum for artists on spiritual walk, leadership training, teamwork, administrative process, and the role of the artist in church and community.
3. An organized, cohesive, church-supported engagement of community and professional artists in ways that are conducive to the building of genuine relationship and dialogue.
4. Cultivation of financially viable commissions that respect the need of the artists to make a living and that pay for the amount of material and time required for excellence in any art form.
5. Cultivation of far greater access to foundation resources (private and institutional) to support art project, artist development initiatives, and especially arts leadership training in each country. Investment in leaders is perhaps the wisest investment of all.
6. Formation of a creative arts pastor/facilitator leadership training program in which spiritually mature artists are employed to nurture the artists in their church, integrate the arts into the life of the congregation, identify and train upcoming arts leaders, and make fellow leaders more aware of the place and role of the arts in the life of God's people.
7. Development of a national and international network of arts leadership to collaborate on strategy, funding, sources, prayer, conferences, communication, etc.
8. Funding and support for training in arts management, because arts programs and initiatives need people with business and arts understanding to make them happen.

9. Development of virtual interactive forums on topics related to the arts and faith and the design of web galleries where artworks can be shared, discussed, and evaluated. (Ibid., 34)

These strategies for church education and the discipleship of the artists were some of the most practical and well articulated in the available literature. Should these thoughtful directives be reflected on, studied, and applied by evangelical church leaders, to be sure, a new empowerment for Christian-based artists would certainly be launched.

### *Conclusion*

Over the last forty years, these rich contributions from astute evangelical theologians, mature arts advocates, and passionate pioneers have laid a solid foundation for the church to build upon. However, the deep insights and biblical vision articulated by men like Schaefer, Rookmaaker, Seerveld, and Wolterstroff for the viable role of the arts and the validity of empowering artists for the broader culture have not found their way significantly into evangelical church movements, and only rarely in local congregations.

There were, however, those who did hear, as Naugle points out. For the most part, it was the para-church organizations, which heard their vision,

embraced it, and is acting on it. These initiatives, as is often the case, had to be willing to venture outside the prescribed lines of conventionality in order to pursue the vision that God indeed gave them. Metaphorically, they heard the Redeemer's music; a liberating sound. Sometimes this caused divisions and walls even with mainline evangelicals. As the age-old saying goes: *those that hear not the music think the dancers mad.*

In the next chapter, the two selected methodologies for this research will be explained in more detail and the chosen arts' advocates and theological experts will be introduced. In addition, the market-place Christian-based artists will be introduced; along with the questions that were crafted for them will be presented.

## Chapter 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

#### *Introduction: Vision and Mindset Modification*

Casting a vision for the arts in the church context, particularly when it has to do with a potential mindset modification requires an investigation and unearthing of sub-structure assumptions. This unearthing reveals either a good foundation that can be built on to accomplish the vision or possible obstacles that are resistant to the realization of that vision. Should inconsistent or flawed presuppositions be disclosed, they can be sensitively adjusted consistent with biblical truth, which can in turn bring about the desired result. The beginning place to accomplish the aim expressed in this research question requires this unearthing process.

#### *The Methodologies Utilized*

The first methodology for this research project has that investigation and unearthing in mind. The literature materials for this research project provided perceptive insights that apply to evangelicals generally in

regards to the arts and culture. However, observations from indigenous theological and worldview experts who are, so to speak, *on the ground*, can potentially provide more fine-tuned insights relevant to the unique cultural soil in Europe. Therefore, experts who are either European, or have substantial experience in Europe have been drawn upon to aid in this process.

The second methodology took the form of questions to resident European Christian-based market-place artists and was designed to give ear to the their assessment of what is needed for forward progress in bringing reconciliation with evangelical churches and the artists.

In this chapter's next two sections, the methodologies one & two will be presented in more detail. In each of these sections, a brief description of the methodology will be presented. After this, the formats utilized in presenting the questions will be conveyed. The vetting criteria for the selection process will then be disclosed. Following this, the primary reason behind the design or purpose of the research questions will be concisely articulated. Finally, the selected experts and artists themselves will be introduced along with highlights from their background.

## METHODOLOGY 1: The Experts

*Methodology Description*

The first methodology involved the selection of five theological trained arts-advocate and biblical worldview specialists with some solid connection to Europe. The questions were selected so that the experts could speak from their own personal experience and observations, which aims to primarily disclose the hindrances and assumptions, which must be identified in order to accomplish the objective of the research question. They were also given the opportunity to present strategic concerns. These experts were presented the four subsidiary questions in Chapter one in English.

*Formats Utilized*

Two different formats were utilized in obtaining the responses for this methodology. Though all the experts were conversant in the English language, responses from two experts, whose mother tongues were not English, were carried out as a combination of written and via a live interview, which took place during a leadership conference in Budapest, Hungary. The two sessions were recorded and transcribed into American English. Once the transcription was completed, their answers were presented to the

respective experts for review, editing, and final approval. The experts whose first language was English were requested to present only a written response via email. This email exchange took place from August through mid-October 2011.

The researcher carried out the final editing for all experts. Both live interviews, as well as the emails, are on file with the researcher.

### *Vetting Criteria*

The criteria for the selection process of the experts for methodology one were the following:

- 1) Have been awarded a seminary degree at a Doctoral or Masters level in theology, divinity, missiology, or intercultural studies.
- 2) Possess a fundamental comprehension of the implications of an integrated biblical worldview for Christian active presence in society.
- 3) Have a basic understanding, appreciation, and a vision for the sphere of the arts.
- 4) Profess evangelical faith as defined in chapter one.
- 5) Have had some significant presence and connection with Europe at some point their lives, whether through ministry assignment or education.

*Primary Reason Behind the Expert Questions*

The subsidiary questions emerged as a direct result of the investigation into the research literature utilized. These same questions were used in the previous chapter two as a means to present the findings of the resource materials. The questions will be dealt with in the same order presented in chapter one.

Subsidiary Question 1: What primary hindrances can be identified among evangelicals, which specifically denigrate a vision for art and artists in the broader culture?

This question was designed in order to identify the fundamental concepts, doctrines, or circumstances whether of a theological or cultural origin, which represented resistance to a vision for the arts among evangelicals specifically in the context of the public square. The experts, who have had experience not only in the arts, but also in Europe, were specifically qualified to address and point out possible obstacles. This question was the first probe into what could be behind the pejorative penchant, which the resource literature disclosed among streams of evangelicalism towards the arts and culture.

Subsidiary Question 2: How does our evangelical understanding of holiness and worldliness affect our position on engagement with the arts in the broader-culture?

This question purposely began the probe for typical evangelical interpretations of fundamental biblical concepts, which could also potentially provide insights into an aversion towards culture, which has immediate implications for the arts. The experts were at liberty to agree or disagree as to the significance of the understanding of these terms in relationship to affecting evangelical engagement in the broader culture.

Subsidiary Question 3: What are some essential assumptions in our evangelical biblical worldview, which would be instrumental in facilitating an increase of Christian-based artists in the broader culture?

With this question, the intention was to ascertain from the experts, the sub-structured assumptions, notions, or presuppositions in our evangelical view of life and the world, which could play a significant role, either positively or negatively in regards to the primary research question.

Subsidiary Question 4: What are some specific strategies, educational or otherwise, that would be most significant in empowering Christian-based artists for the broader culture?

This question was presented to draw out potential strategies from the expert's experience, as they understand the mentality and tendencies among evangelicals in Europe, which goes directly to answering the primary research question.

#### *Introducing the Experts*

The following five experts were selected and agreed to provide answers to the research questions presented. They were Colin Harbinson, D.D.; Dianne Collard, D.Miss.; Andrzej Turkanik, Pd.D., Th.D. (Cantab); Beat Rink, M.A., Th.M; and Charles David Cullen, Th.D. The biographical sketches conveying their nationality, background, education, publications, ministry focus, and accomplishments are provided below.

#### Colin Harbinson, D.Divinity

Harbinson was born in London, England, and has been involved in many varied aspects of the arts, missions, and education for over 40 years. Colin created the internationally acclaimed production, *Toymaker & Son*, that

has been performed in over 70 countries. *Dayuma*, another of his internationally performed productions, completed a 21-city tour of the United States in partnership with Wycliffe Bible Translators. Recognized internationally as a pioneer and leader in his field, Harbinson's work as a writer, director, and producer has won numerous industry awards, including the prestigious *Golden Halo Award* from the Southern California Motion Picture Council.

Harbinson received his education at Sussex University, Brighton, England, and became the headmaster of a public school in Horsham, Sussex. He left a career in the English education system in 1979 to join Youth with a Mission, and directed the YWAM Academy of Performing Arts in Ontario, Canada, from 1984-1994. He subsequently served as the International Dean of the College of the Arts for the University of the Nations of YWAM. He was awarded a Doctor of Divinity (honorary) for lifetime achievement in the arts in 1992 from Canada Christian College.

Harbinson is also Founder and President of the International Festival of the Arts that pioneered *Sacred Fire* festival, the first East-West arts festival in St. Petersburg, Russia; the *Love Without Borders* festival in Sofia, Bulgaria; and *The Ode to Joy* festival in Kunming, China, which involved over 700 artists from 21 countries.

This was the largest international arts festival of its kind in the history of that nation.

Harbinson also chaired the *Redeeming the Arts* Issue group for the 2004 Forum in Thailand, and was appointed Senior Associate for the arts with the Lausanne Movement. He is the former editor of the *Creative Spirit*, a journal on the arts and faith, and until recently was Dean of the Arts at Belhaven College in Jackson, Mississippi. Currently, Harbinson is the Director of Stone Works, International, a Belhaven College arts initiative. Stone Works is a global arts partnership for cultural reformation and the recovery of the imagination in the life and mission of the Church. In 2008, Colin and his wife, Maureen, celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary, and they have two sons and three grand daughters.

Dianne Collard, D.Miss.

Dianne Collard is an internationally known educator, speaker, and writer who is currently the pan-European director for Artists in Christian Testimony, International for Europe.

Collard's education included her 2004 Doctorate of Missiology conferred from Biola University in the School of Intercultural studies. This interdisciplinary degree combined studies in anthropology, theology, church history,

and was equivalent to a Ph. D. in Intercultural Studies. Before this, in 1998 Collard received her Master of Arts Degree (Highest Honors) from Biola as well. Her undergraduate work took place at San Francisco State University in the field of Speech and Communications in intercultural communication. Collard also received professional training in Europe at the International Society for Training in the Institute of Intercultural Education in Kilkenney, Ireland, in 1989.

What is particularly important for her contribution to this dissertation was her research for her doctoral dissertation. Her topic was *The Role of Visual Art in the (Free) Evangelical Churches of Germany and Spain*. This extensive research focused on pastors of non-state churches and artists who are Christians in both countries. The purpose was to determine the acceptance of visual art in the functions of churches today and to what extent the artists felt embraced or alienated from the organized church. In addition, the reasons behind such acceptance or non-acceptance of visual art in the evangelical tradition were analyzed. The findings have significant implications in ministry of the churches, mission agencies, and for the believing artists of Europe.

Collard's missionary service abroad includes her service with Greater European Mission from 1986 to 2004. Her many articles and essays published in different European language groups speak of her influence across Europe. Her recent 2010 article, "Christians in Visual Arts: Healing Power of Art," and her recent book, *I Choose to Forgive: An Intimate Journey with God*, published by WestBow Press speaks of the beauty of the arts as an agent of personal restoration. Along with her husband Glenn, the Collards have served as missionaries since 1986, ministering in 40 countries while living in Europe.

Andjrez Turkanik, Ph.D., Th.D (Cantab)

Rev. Dr. Andrzej Turkanik, was born and raised in Poland, and today resides in Salzburg, Austria, with his wife and children. As a young man, Turkanik completed degrees in art and music, as well as theology before earning his Ph.D. from Cambridge University in the UK. Growing up, he and his family have lived in Poland, Germany, and the UK. He is therefore fluent in German, Polish, and in English. He is regularly invited as a speaker and seeks opportunities to instigate uncommon reflection on the future of Europe.

Today, Turkanik directs the work of *Quo Vadis Institute*, an initiative that was built on the legacy of

the original vision of Schloss Mittersill, out of which the vision of a Christian Renaissance in Europe was born in 2005. Over the previous four decades, Schloss Mittersill has convened think tanks, seminars, summits, and forums calling for reflection on issues in a multitude of societal spheres, including medicine, the arts, law, commerce, and politics. QVI is continuing that original vision as a research charity based somewhat on a different business model.

From their own research, QVI gathers data about flourishing societies, utilizing a broad range of societal intra and cross-disciplinary field experts. The gathered data is disseminated to existing network partners, leading innovators, and critical thinkers of this generation, as well as, emerging next generation practitioners. The name expresses the modus operandi of the work, which calls for inter-disciplinary re-evaluation of the current direction among inter-disciplinary practitioners and challenges them to find new ways to live well and productively as they meet the challenges of a rapidly changing European social landscape.

Turkanik is not only a researcher, but also travels extensively as a speaker for conferences and professional gatherings. He is an academic teacher and a

gifted net-worker and communicator. His passion is to translate big ideas to a wider audience in order to excite people about a biblical worldview working towards a rebirth of biblical faith in Europe. As a theological professor, he has taught theological courses in various settings including at Schloss Mittersill for Genesis in 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, and "Psalms & More" in 2007 and 2008.

Beat Rink, M.A. Germanistics, Th.M.

Rev. Rink, born in Basel, Switzerland, was raised in a Christian home where there was a great appreciation for the arts. From 1976 through 1983, he attended the University of Basel where he obtained his M.A. in Linguistics, German Literature, and History. His thesis focused on "Modern German Bible translations." At the same university, he studied theology and obtained there his Th.M in 1992. The topic of his thesis was: "Art, Artist, and the Art experience: A Theological View". In 1983, Rink married Airi Neuvonen from Finland, and they have three children. Rink is an ordained Evangelical Reformed pastor.

In 1985, the Rinks, together along with coworkers, launched an initiative under the name of Crescendo International ([www.crescendo.com](http://www.crescendo.com)), a mission dedicated to nurturing career artists in their walk with

God, in producing quality works of art, and encouraging them to be a light in their world for Christ. Crescendo is an official part of *Campus fuer Christus* (*Campus for Christ*, which is *Campus Crusade* in the USA), and consists today of more than 2000 classical and jazz musicians. The primary projects of this work include: establishing local prayer and Bible study groups among musicians; hosting regional meetings; running their International Crescendo Summer Institute ([www.hungary.crescendo.org](http://www.hungary.crescendo.org)); organizing "Creative church" services (Basel: [www.kirchekreativ.ch](http://www.kirchekreativ.ch)); organizing arts conferences; and book publications. Rink is editor of several books by Franz Mohr, the famous chief technician of Steinway & Sons.

Rink is not only an arts advocate but also an artist in his own right as a writer and poet. He is also Editor in Chief for the Magazine "Crescendo," which is produced in German and English. Through the years, Rink has contributed a number of articles and essays on the theme of "*Theology & the Arts*" and continues to be a voice for articulating a biblical view and the significance of the arts for church and society throughout Europe.

Rink was also instrumental in establishing Arts+Switzerland ([www.artsplus.ch](http://www.artsplus.ch)), a round table group of arts advocates and church leaders. He was also involved in the

establishment of Arts+Europe Group, a European group of visionary leaders collaborating in order to make forward progress in the sphere of the arts informed by a Biblical worldview. Link was honored with the service role of "Cultural Representative" for the Evangelical Reformed Church for the city of Basel, Switzerland.

Charles David Cullen, Th.D.

Dr. Charles David Cullen is a theologian, scholastic contributor to many periodicals and journals, professor, secondary school instructor, and arts advocate. Cullen's primary artistry takes the form of creative writing. His connections with Europe came through extended residences in France and Belgium. He earned his doctorate (d. théol, mention théologie protestante) at the University of Strasbourg in 1987. From 1996-1999, he lived in Brussels with his wife, Nancy, and traveled extensively as a guest lecturer, researcher, and contributor for various papers and projects.

In the United States, Cullen served as Director of the Equipping Center and co-developed a two-year certificated program for adults at Faith Community Church in Wichita, Kansas (2000-2006); he served other churches in a variety of capacities between 1980 and 1996.

A highlight among his published writings is his essay, "The Imaginative Embrace: John Warwick Montgomery and the Door to the Inside of the World," in *Tough-Minded Christianity: Honoring the Legacy of John Warwick Montgomery*, edited by William A. Dembski and Thomas Schirrmacher. He also contributed to *Climb High, Climb Far*, by Gregory and Suzanne Wolfe (Simon & Schuster: 1996). From 1985-1990, he was a weekly newspaper columnist for Joyce Media, Inc. in Acton, California.

Cullen has also received a number of honors and certificates. At the Institute International des Droits de l'Homme (International Institute of Human Rights) in Strasbourg, he received a certificate granted by the Twelfth Study Session. Cullen was awarded a scholarship for doctoral-level study in France from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He also holds a Lifetime California Community College Instructor Credential in Philosophy and Religion. He was Professor of Logic and Critical Thinking at the Simon Greenleaf School of Law and has taught Business Ethics, Modern Literature, and Philosophy at the university level. His Master of Arts is in the field of Christian Apologetics from the Simon Greenleaf School of Law in Anaheim, California.

## METHODOLOGY 2: THE ARTISTS

*Methodology Description*

The second methodology has to do with the artists themselves who potentially will be affected through new empowering strategies in the evangelical streams of the church. Reconciliation between the arts, the artists, and the evangelical church, is the primary need at present. Therefore, two questions along these lines were prepared for these career artists.

*Format Utilized*

The artists were requested to present a written response via email. This email exchange took place from July through September 2011. The researcher carried out the final editing and the responses are on file with the researcher.

*Vetting Criteria*

The artists were selected from the network of Creative Arts Europe, a Christian-based collection of aspiring and career performing arts and fine arts artists. The specific criteria for the selection process of the artists for methodology two were the following:

1) The artists must be professionally trained and actively engaged in their artistic discipline.

2) They must be professing evangelicals as defined in chapter one and possess a balanced relationship with a local evangelical church.

3) The artists need to have lived and practiced their art for an extended season in the European context.

*Primary Reason Behind the Artists' Questions*

Question 1: Please share what you consider the most urgent issues, which need to be addressed that would potentially result in a greater church empowerment for Christian presence in the arts in culture?

This question was included to give ear to the mature Christian-based artists themselves in what they consider primary issues that could potentially foster a greater reconciliation with the church and would be instrumental in achieving the aim of the research objective for this dissertation.

Question 2: What are the issues in the lives of artists that need to be considered to also work towards reconciliation with the evangelical streams of the church?

This second question was posed to the artists so that they could articulate what they should review in their own lives, which would foster a greater reconciliation with the evangelical church and thereby strengthen the trust relationship with their local evangelical church situation.

### *Introducing the Artists*

Each artist has taken part in projects, events, or training seminars directed by Creative Arts Europe, either as arts workshop instructors, project leaders, or performers. These artist's stories, in brief, are provided in the next section below.

#### Titta Tunkkari Story – Dancer

Tunkkari was born in Kokkola, Finland in 1972 and was raised in a Lutheran family. At the age of six, she began her ballet training, and at twelve began to dream of becoming a professional dancer. Her dream was only affirmed and enhanced when her faith grew into an evangelical expression at the age of 15 years.

After high school in 1990, she was accepted into the Centre de Danse de Paris (Center of Dance in Paris), France, for further ballet education and studied there through 1991. During her training years in the 1990s, she

along with two other Christian dance professionals formed a part time company called Kadosh. In 1994, Tunkkari continued her training by studying at the Turku College of Art and Education in Finland, where she focused on choreography and dance productions. She performed in a number of companies including productions by the Finnish National Opera in Finland, the Dance Theatre Distanz in Holland, Dance Ad Deum in the USA, and with Eternia Dans Teater of Sweden. She has maintained her dance career until today, directing the Finnish branch of Xaris Dance Company-Finland, a company that is officially a part of CAE.

In 2003, though she continued her dance career, she studied English translation and interpretation. She also attended the University of Helsinki where she studied French and cultural studies.

Parallel to her career in dance, she began to work as an editor as a result of her education at the University of Helsinki. In 2007, she was a publishing editor at Otava Publishing Company, Ltd Helsinki, in the Department of Education and Department of Languages Series and Publications, where she worked on a number of projects, which required translation into either English or French.

Tunkkari applied her training in cultural production from Turku in 1998 through establishing Creative

Arts Europe-Finland. As the director of CAE-Finland, in 2002, she also was instrumental in establishing CAE's work in collaboration with the Finnish Lutheran mission. Since 1997, she has overseen the administration for the teen arts camp known today as Life Camp. She also established the first Arts College on the campus of the Finnish Lutheran Mission and directed it for two years.

She also worked as a dance instructor and choreographer for classical and modern dance since as early as 1993 until presently. The venues include Karjaa Dance College, Tanssistudion Footlight, Kirkkonummi Dance Association, Lathi Dance Academy, and in the Finnish Lutheran Mission Arts College as well. Since 1993, she has also taught frequently in the CAE art sessions in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and Finland.

Today, Tunkarri is living her dream as she now has eight professional dancers who are committed evangelical believers, and 26 young intern dancers in the beginnings of a dance school in Helsinki. She is married and lives just outside of Helsinki, Finland.

#### Thomas Hirt Story – Installation Artist

Thomas Hirt was born in Austria and currently lives with his family in Vienna, Austria. Hirt's artistic

skill set includes film and media, but his primary focus is installation art. His education includes his Bachelor of Fine Arts at the University for Applied Art in Vienna in 1997. In 1997, Hirt also completed the Summer Film School in Rockport, Maine, in the USA. In 2002, he received his arts teaching training and certification at College of Applied Art in Vienna as well. For his Master's thesis for graduation from the University of Applied Arts, he prepared a room installation of the "*last words of Christ*" from the scriptures. Today, Thomas is a freelance artist and teaches art in public high schools in Vienna.

Upon graduation, Hirt has worked with a diverse array of visual communication media. Among the many different projects, he was commissioned by the Boston Consulting Group to oversee two different projects. His most recent work was an interactive installation of the bar-codes codified into musical tones.

One of Hirt's passions is to bring artists of different artistic disciplines together. One of the best examples of this work was the production under the title, "HaShem - der Name" (HaShem - the Name). In this piece, which premiered in early November 2004 in the Kosmos Theater in Vienna, the production included moving graphically created Hebrew letters through video projection

enhanced through the media of Dance und Music. The piece was a collaboration of a choreographer, a dancer, a composer, a classical percussionist, a Jazz singer, and a guitarist. All the professional artists working on this project were professing Christians and career artists. Jewish and Christian organizations worked hand in hand with Thomas in full support for this multi-media production.

#### Hector Ramirez Story – Playwright

Hector Ramirez, a Colombian born actor-director, presently lives in Madrid, Spain, with his son, Daniel, and his Austrian wife who is a professionally trained dancer. His background as an actor dates back to his adolescence when he got his first experience in the theatre at the early age of eight, taking part in a major production in his native town. At the age of fourteen he started taking lessons in the Culture House Drama School and at 18 he was already working with one of the major theater companies in Colombia. He was mentored by some of the most renowned names associated with the stage of his country and at the early age of 19, he became a member of the Actor's Guild.

His formal acting training took place in the National School of Acting in Colombia, which was heavily influenced by the Marxist ideology. This worldview

influenced him greatly to the point that he concluded that the Marxist philosophy was the best way to bring needed change to the social and political problems of his country. On leaving high school, he joined a professional theater troupe that performed in different theatres and festivals throughout Colombia in the 1970s.

An abrupt change occurred in 1977 at the age of 20 when he encountered some missionaries on the streets who shared the gospel with him. Through this encounter, he became an evangelical believer, which brought about a radical change in his life and thinking.

After his conversion to Christianity, he attended a two-year discipleship program with YWAM. He then joined YWAM serving in various countries in outreaches, and discipleship programs for nine years. In 1980, he moved to Spain where he took part in the production of *Toy Maker and Son*, which was created and directed by Colin Harbinson.

In 1984, Ramirez studied TV production in Canada and in 1986 worked as floor manager for some TV programs in Italy. He also took a number of workshops and courses with renowned names in stage acting: John Strassberg, from the Actors Studio in New York; James de Paul of the Milwaukee University; Bruce Myers of the Peter Brook International School in Paris; and Jacques Lecoq and in the Globe Theatre

in London. He has been an annual participant in the Almagro Classical Theatre Festival in Spain and The Greenbelt Festival in England. Ramirez has also attended the annual *Art Within* Symposium for producers and writers of faith.

In Madrid, in the early '90's, Hector and his wife founded the *Aslan Theater Group*, a performing arts initiative with Christian worldview values. Through the years, Ramirez has produced his own plays; one example was an adaptation of Othello by Shakespeare and the staging of a poem by a Spanish Renaissance writer based on the book of the Song of Songs.

Today, he and his wife together direct the Aslan Academy of the Performing Arts in Madrid, Spain, which they originally established in 2000. Today, the academy offers music, dance, and theatre classes as well as recitals, lectures, and performances. The lectures focus on the arts and culture and are carried out in discussion groups that want to reach into the secular community with values and principles in an artistic non-religious threatening way.

His original aim in starting the academy was to establish a Christian presence in the arena of the arts in Madrid, Spain. Through his years there, he has staged various classical plays like Othello, and other Renaissance

and Baroque pieces by Spanish playwrights, such as *The Great Theatre of the World*, *The Quest*, *The Soap Opera*, *El Cántico*, and *The Comedian*.

Four years into directing this work in 2004, the Ramirez family took a sabbatical in order to reassess their work and seek other input in order to move forward with their original vision. They first attended a missionary training course again with YWAM and in 2005, they began studies at Belhaven College in Jackson, MS, where they not only studied, but also taught and did research in the area of Christianity and the performing arts in North America and Europe. As part of the research they traveled extensively in the US and Canada as well as in Europe visiting and spending time with various Christian theatres and dance companies as well as some individuals working in the entertainment industry. Seeing what was taking place among Christians in the arts in the USA and Europe re-shaped their vision and understanding for how they were to move forward with the academy in Madrid.

Ramirez and his wife are firmly persuaded that the arts have a great power to spread and communicate values and principles in a very subtle way, and even contribute to turn them into convictions in the long run in people's lives and behavior. According to Ramirez, "this we can clearly see from the way the cinema, the arts, and

the mass media influence and contribute to shape and conform people's opinions in modern societies."

#### Barbara Lidfors Story – Painter

Barbara Lidfors' early love for art was influenced by her father, Eugene Johnson, a painter, potter, and art professor at Bethel College in St. Paul, Minnesota. His interest in combining artistic pursuits with his Christian faith later resulted in the creation of the nation-wide American arts organization CIVA.

Barbara studied for two years at Westmont College in California and then finished her B.A. at Bethel College in 1971. Art studies, with an emphasis in painting, followed at the University of Minnesota. The completion of a Masters of Fine Arts degree in 2001 from Vermont College of Norwich University further focused her interest in painting portraits of people and narrative scenes.

In 1982, Barbara moved to Germany with her husband, Robert Lidfors, who subsequently was involved in pastoring, Bible school teaching, and mission activities in India and Africa. They arrived in Europe with four young daughters and added a son to their family a few years later. During these years, Barbara focused her artistic interests on painting the people and places that were part

of her everyday life. This later expanded to include people of diverse cultures - such as her paintings of African and Indian village scenes. Her artistic output expanded as her children grew and left home.

In general, the *documentation of everyday life* is the middle point of Barbara Lidfors' work. In her paintings, people are presented in the intimacy of private spaces as well as in the anonymity of public arenas. Their gestures and physical bearings reveal their cultural and social backgrounds and express the importance of the incidental and the momentary. It is the essentially human aspects of the people she paints and the inter-relation between these individuals and their personal worlds that concern her. Her works create narrative moments, which are transformed into visual poetry by the deliberate and meditative process of painting.

The favored technique in Barbara Lidfors' work is oil paint built up in thin layers of contrasting colors on canvas. Her compositions are usually collaged together from a collection of photographs in which lighting, perspective, gestures, and other factors play a defining role. The *frozen moments* of everyday experience are then elaborated upon and transformed into visual poetry by the deliberate and meditative process of painting.

Lidfors lives in Nürnberg, Germany. Her paintings are represented by Galerie Ederer in Nürnberg and have been exhibited in Germany, Austria, France, Spain, Montenegro, Macedonia, and the USA.

#### Lynn Caldwell Story – Poet/Writer

Lynn Caldwell was born in Canada and served from 1985 through 1990 in Germany and Belgium, as office and project administrator for the performing arts endeavor, Project Exalt, which currently exists under the name of Creative Arts Europe. In the early 1980s, she attended and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Creative Writing from the University of Victoria in BC, Canada.

Her passion for writing has produced a wealth of poems and articles in her freelance writing career. Her poetry and other creative articles has been published internationally in various periodicals and magazines such as *The Press* (Christchurch, New Zealand); *U Magazine* (Ireland); *Antigonish Review*, *Irish House and Home*, *Pier*, and *Proem* (Canada); and *The Irish American Journal* (US). Her only novel *The Red Room* has yet to find a publisher.

She is married to uilleann piper and tin flautist, Martin Nolan, who is a band member of the contemporary Scottish band, Iona. Currently, she and her

husband live in Dublin, Ireland, along with their two children, Caoimhe and Tadhg.

She serves currently part time as the administrator for a faith-based charity, Aids Care Education and Training, which works with people affected or infected by HIV. She has also served on staff with Trinity Church in Dublin, however, is currently on sabbatical from leadership.

Loreen Fajgel Story – Dancer

Born in Zimbabwe (then Rhodesia), Fajgel recalls, "I can hardly remember life without dance." She began taking dance classes from an early age. When her parents immigrated to England, she had the great fortune to attend the Royal Ballet School of London, where she received intensive training for eight years, before graduating and moving to Germany. There she worked at two state theatres in Gelsenkirchen and Kassel, where she met her husband, Michael Fajgel.

She worked as a full-time professional dancer for six years, leaving the theatre before the birth of her first child, Emmanuel. She was raised in a church-going family as a child; however, she only became an evangelical Christian after she was in England during her training

through meeting other dancers who were committed believers.

The move to Germany to work caused isolation in her Christian life, which continued until she became fluent in German. Once in Kassel, she became a member of a conservative evangelical church, whose members welcomed her warmly, but showed no interest in her work at the theatre. During this time, she confessed she often felt as if she had to lead a dual existence and indeed tried to keep her theatre life separate from her Christian life. Struggling with an eating disorder, she did not feel that help could be obtained, and felt spiritually trapped on a desert island. While working at the theatre, she became very disillusioned with her career. One deep sense of frustration was that she was often required to perform in pieces that were shallow or mediocre. In her heart, she began to question her life's direction, wondering if she would not be able to better be a fisher of men by becoming a nurse and practically serve others in need.

In this season, she met other Christians at the theatre who helped her to reconcile the two sides of her life: faith and art. Both were so very important to her and to realize that there was no need for them to be kept separate provided a much deeper sense of fulfillment. Through the loving encouragement of spiritual mentors who

understood the importance of the arts, fortunately she did not stop dancing.

In 1996, Fajgel co-founded CAE's Xaris Dance Company. This initiative was comprised of trained professional dancers from around Europe who were dedicated evangelical believers. The first year in 1996, 14 professional dancers toured in ten cities on city stages, in schools, and in churches performing Leonard Bernstein's Chichester Psalms and raising finances for refugees in Bosnia. The plight of the refugees as a result of ethnic cleansing in Bosnia was depicted through the masterfully crafted music of Bernstein and expressed richly and dramatically through Fajgel's choreography. Since that time, the company has performed in 11 European countries and in the USA frequently on market-place stages. Over 45 dancers from 20 nations around the world have taken part in projects and thousands of Euros have been raised for worthy humanitarian works.

Fajgel's joy is to not only dance on stage and portray aspects of her faith and to witness the huge impact the arts can have on an audience, but also to provide other dancers who are believers an opportunity to dance with other Christians to express their faith through art and offer them a discipleship experience during the projects.

After running two projects a year from 1996 to 2006, she had her third child, and for a season focused on caring for her newborn. However, after about a year, she was once again on stage working with her husband/actor, Michael Fajgel, who was director of his own musical theater in Kassel. She is choreographer and frequent cast member for numerous productions throughout the year. She also continues to teach ballet in a local studio in her city, as well as being a frequent guest teacher and performer for Christian seminars for the arts around Europe. Today, Fajgel continues to serve as the senior artistic director and mentor for the Xaris project.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS OF THE METHODOLOGIES

#### *Introduction: The Experts' and Artists' Responses*

The subsidiary questions prepared for the experts and the reconciliation questions for the artists in this body of work, emerged from the research materials from evangelical and theological writers in the western world. The probing questions give voice to those who have critically reflected more deeply on the potential reasons for the aversion towards cultural engagement and the lack of endorsement for the arts. The artists in particular are directly impacted through either the church endorsement or the disapproval of their involvement in the public square. The artists' questions were designed to provide an objective opportunity for a free and un-coerced response.

This chapter simply discloses, without evaluation or commentary, the responses from these two groups. Only grammatical editing, where necessary, was applied. In the first section of this chapter the experts' answers are presented and in the second, the artists' answers.

*The Experts*

In this section, the responses from the experts will be presented. Each of the subsidiary questions will be re-stated along with their responses in the following order: Colin Harbinson, Dianne Collard, Andrzej Turkanik, Beat Rink, and Charles David Cullen.

## Subsidiary Question 1

What primary hindrances can be identified among evangelicals, which specifically denigrate a vision for art and artists in the broader culture?

*Colin Harbinson, D.Divinity*

The story we live in, will live in us, and influence all that we think and do. The lack of understanding and suspicion of the arts and artists has its roots in the lack of understanding of the whole biblical narrative. We have a reduced narrative that leads to a reduced vision of God's purposes. This reduced narrative, in turn, spawns a life approach that is legalistic, joyless, and guilt-ridden—a poor reflection of the abundant life Jesus calls us to. When this is combined with a withdrawal from the broader culture, and the development of a Christian subculture, the resulting "us" and "them"

mentality or a "siege" or "survival" mentality sees the world as hostile, broken, and outside of God's redemptive purposes: a world to be avoided.

Such a worldview has little understanding of the place or value of the arts, the imagination, or the visual. This view appears to be reinforced by the King James Version of the Bible, which always sets the translation of image [icon] in a negative context. Historically, this may be understandable, given the challenges of the time, but it is irrefutable that since the Reformation, the image, and by inference the arts, has been viewed with suspicion in Western Protestant Christianity. As evangelicals, we have become the people of the Word, despite the fact that in Scripture we see God's Word coming to people in non-verbal ways (dreams, visions, visual communication, etc.).

A utilitarian approach to Christian living, in which something is valuable to the extent that it directly leads to conversion, can also be identified as a hindrance to the arts. By nature, the arts speak indirectly by allusion and suggestion. They do not preach well. This lack of understanding of the way the arts speak is a continuing struggle between artists and the church. If artistic expressions do not directly and evidently lead people to salvation in Christ, they have little value. If

an artist does want to express truth and beauty in the cultural marketplace, ambiguity is deemed unacceptable, as the message must be direct and clear.

Finally, recognition of the brokenness and prevalent sinfulness of the arts can be cause for non-engagement of that sphere of life, resulting in either a separation from it, or an embracing of it in the safe, sanitized confines of the church. Either way, art and the artist are either not encouraged to exercise their creative gifts in the broader culture, and are often seen as backsliders and compromisers in their faith if they do.

*Dianne Collard, D.Miss.*

One of the primary hindrances that I found in my research was that Post-Reformational theology taught a separation from the *world* (interpreted as *culture*) and this created a fear of cultural expressions such as visual art, dance, and other performance arts. Music was usually exempt from this teaching but has been a hard-fought battle concerning style, etc.

Another hindrance is an interpretation of Scripture that prepared individuals for heaven and denigrated anything considered *non-spiritual*, which speaks to a Platonic divide of spirit and matter. A third

hindrance, is an eschatology prevalent among evangelicals, which promised the escape from the earth and nurtured absolutely no vision for transformation of anything considered to be 'of the earth.'

A fourth hindrance is the post-Renaissance view that the artist is somehow different from *normal* people and not generally able to adhere to other cultural norms. This contributed to the reputation, some unfortunately earned, that the artist was problematic.

A fifth hindrance specifically in the western world is the human tendency and response of being fearful or critical of anything that we do not understand or is not easily comprehended, which included many artistic expressions.

Finally, a sixth was a fear, probably rooted in puritanical teachings, of the role of nudity in art.

*Andrzej Turkanik, Ph.D., Th.D.(CANTAB)*

Turkanik presented his answers to the questions via interview on May 13, 2011, in Budapest, Hungary. A transcription of the interview was then presented to him for final approval and editing.

Before I talk about hindrances, I believe there is a broader issue to consider. There is a worldview in

evangelical churches in Europe that is very strongly focused on the second coming of Jesus. I firmly embrace this theology and believe that it is a biblical teaching; however, the emphasis on this in the church has eclipsed nearly everything else. It is like the adage that states that some people are so heavenly minded that they are of no earthly use. That may be a bit of an overstatement; however, I have seen this demonstrated on several occasions. One case in particular involved an evangelical leader who, when I mentioned the idea of being involved in different aspects of life within the church, told me that his understanding was that we were to be fishers of men, fishing people out of the pond with no concern for the pond. For this person, and indeed for many, the only thing that is important is to try to save everyone.

The arts represent a field that, for these and others, only serves one purpose – transporting the Gospel. Anything else is beyond the scope of Matthew 28's call to share the Gospel, and so is not a valid use of time or talent. I do not believe that this is a correct interpretation of that Scripture. I was trained as a classical musician. My parents were both involved in theological work. People would ask them why they were allowing their son to study music and waste so much time in

favor of getting a practical job to make money to support Christian ministry. As things turned out, I am involved in ministry, but I have had experiences in the arts that help me understand the issues and complexities.

Those who adopt a narrow view of Matthew 28 miss the fact that it is an expansion of the cultural mandate from Genesis, Chapter 1. We are taught to go out and teach the nations all things he has commanded us. This encompasses the whole of the Old Testament teaching along with the teaching in the New Testament. As an Old Testament Bible scholar, it is grievous that we as evangelicals tend to leave out parts of Scripture in favor of some of the teachings in the New Testament. The fact is, the arts were part-and-parcel of everybody's life in the Old Testament. Everyone had a profession, but most shared some type of art in addition to other parts of their lives. This ranged from painting and music to weaving, sculpting, writing, and other forms of expression. For this reason, the arts must be tackled with respect to a theological perspective. Artists do not have to create work that specifically speaks of God to glorify Him. As the heavens and earth declare the glory of God, so can the work of humankind.

*Beat Rink, M.A. Germanistics, Th.M.*

On May 13, 2011, Beat Rink was also interviewed in Budapest. The transcription was reviewed and edited by Rink for presentation in this dissertation. The only changes were English grammatical corrections.

To understand the view towards the arts in many churches one needs to look at the social structure of the individual church as they are or could be very different. Most of the evangelical state and free churches throughout Europe are made up of the middle class. I am not suggesting that the middle class is not intelligent, however, typically they do not enter into the intellectual conversation, which is ongoing, about the arts. Consequently, not many of these middle class evangelicals are even interested in the arts. They often give little to no thought about the fine arts, and have very little experience in the arts. As a result, their pastors are not challenged to think about the arts or address the arts to the congregation because the church is not challenging him to address these issues.

For the average church members, the historical reason, especially in the tradition of the pietistic movement, as to why the arts do not play a major role in their thinking and theology, is that there is a lack of

general understanding for the arts. There is also across the board a lack of interest and as a result, a general lack of vision for the role the arts can play in missions, church growth, and in the life of a congregation.

There are root causes of course, but it depends on the one hand which country in Europe that one is speaking about. There are some countries, for instance, in Hungary and Finland, where the average interest and knowledge of the arts is much higher. Should you visit Finland, for instance, you will notice a Finnish flag in front of some public buildings and should you ask, why did they put up a flag in front of a public building, the answer would be because it is a memorial day for a famous or well-known national painter or writer. The depth of appreciation, knowledge, or interest in the arts depends on the education and exposure of the people to the arts. In these countries then where there is more connection with the arts, as all people, including the evangelicals in that country, are artistically aware. When this is the case, the church can more easily find a bridge to the broader-culture. In addition, the pastors are more interested because their church members are more engaged with the arts also in their education.

In my understanding, it is truly not so much a theological issue in these countries among the members of evangelical churches. Perhaps among the pastors who are evangelical, yes, it could be that they have not thought through their theological concepts and presuppositions for the arts. If they do their homework and embrace a biblical view of the arts, they could educate the congregation consistent with their vision and theological assumptions. Among some countries, there is simply no education in the church, or a keen awareness of the arts as it is simply not a pronounced aspect of that culture generally.

In summary, then, the hindrances include that there is little understanding among many evangelicals concerning the arts, (with exceptions of course depending on the country) and therefore a lack of interest and cultural awareness about the arts. As the pastoral leadership is not challenged to address this issue, there is very little vision nurtured among believers in many European countries. In some sense, the problem is about being educated, which turns out to be a classic hindrance among many evangelicals.

*Charles David Cullen, Th.D.*

My sense is that many evangelicals look askance at artists in general – situated as they are outside the realm of real-world production and consumption. That this might be an overly broad generalization notwithstanding, some favor is granted to artists who are believers, but only if they are creating “Christian art” (a term by which I mean visual, performance, and written works based on Christian themes or persons: Jesus and the disciples, scenes from Bible narratives, and so forth). Even then, being an artist is often not seen as a genuine occupation in the way that being a mechanic or office worker is: art is optional, decorative, and transitory. This supposed ephemeral quality is adduced to further establish art as unnecessary. One need not look further than the content of many Christian seminars and workshops to discover that what is coveted by a large number of believers is the practical: a happy marriage, well-disciplined children, meaningful (read: productive and income-generating) employment. This neglect of the inner life leaves in its wake a sere and barren soul. The distrust of the soul – more broadly, of human need and emotion – is at the bottom, I believe, of those things, which relegate art and artists to secondary status.

## Subsidiary Question 2

How does our evangelical understanding of the concepts of holiness and worldliness affect our position on engagement with the arts in the broader-culture?

*Colin Harbinson, D.Divinity*

I have addressed that somewhat in my response to the first question. Our 'come out and be separate' and our 'in the world but not of it' theological misunderstanding of what this means, in turn leads to withdrawal from the *world*. A dualistic worldview, in which the world is seen to be divided into two realities (sacred and secular), reinforces the separation mentality. When this is combined with a Gnostic approach to reality, in which the spiritual is given superiority over the physical, withdrawal from both the wider culture and withdrawal into a *spiritual* reality ensue.

Fear of contamination from the world results in an escapist/survivalist mentality rather than a biblical vision of rigorous engagement and restoration. The fact that something has become distorted is not a reason to abandon that sphere of life. This reaction shows a lack of understanding of the current work of God in the world

through his Holy Spirit and the Church, in beginning to redeem all of Creation back to his original intention.

*Dianne Collard, D.Miss.*

If a person interprets being *holy* as meaning total alienation from the *world* then a separation is sought. Holiness, among many evangelicals speaks of not being *tainted* with anything considered as *worldly*. The challenge commonly taught is to 'come out from among them and be separate.' However, a basic belief in holiness of that which is termed *sacred* and a total depravity (sinfulness) of anything considered 'worldly' (or profane/secular) would reinforce the rejection of anything accepted as of the world or *cultural*.

*Andrzej Turkanik, Ph.D., Th.D.(CANTAB)*

I recognize that we live in a complex world and it often takes understanding and discernment to grasp the nuances of the whole spectrum of culture. Evangelicals often look at this complexity and decide to step back and refrain from getting involved in fear that they might do something that fails to honor God. The tendency is often presented to 'play it safe' in favor of taking risks. Actually, I believe we should be willing to take risks, but

we can understand better where the risks really are in life. Evangelicals often fail to study Scripture and understand God more completely, shedding light on where we face real or imaginary risks. Such is the case with artists, where the church could do a better job discipling the artists, helping them to embrace their calling and effectively fulfill their role in mainstream culture.

I'm afraid that many evangelicals take a very naive approach to concepts such as holiness. We must ask ourselves, what does it mean to be separate from the world. What does Jesus mean by his command to be salt and light in the world? This teaches us to be in the world, but not of the world. This concept is difficult for some evangelicals who think that enjoying God's creation is the same as loving the world. This is not a sound biblical interpretation of what is meant by the concept of *world* in this passage. Jesus is teaching us not to set our affections on being materialistic in the sense of living for economic prosperity and being driven by the love of money. Christ was not referring to the creation or even the things that we do in the world as much as he was saying that we were not to make any of those things into gods in and of themselves to be served. This is a subtle difference, but an important one. It is easier for us to

concentrate on physical, tangible things than the attitudes that often snare us into lives where we fail to recognize God in all we do.

*Beat Rink, M.A. Germanistics, Th.M.*

Our evangelical understanding of worldliness is usually quite dualistic, which of course is inconsistent with a biblical understanding. As evangelicals, we have not paid much attention to creation or to the fact that we are created in the image of God. Culture, of course, is the same root for our word cultivate, which was the task God gave to Adam in the Garden, which was to cultivate the earth. Among evangelicals, one also finds a narrow theological understanding of the Gospel, which focuses solely on being saved through Christ, but often there is an inadvertent exclusion of the Genesis emphasis of being created in the image of God. Consequently, the concept of holiness is reduced among evangelicals. Evangelicals tend to emphasize sanctification; however, there is a tendency to overlook or downplay our humanity. They forget that we are simply justified sinners sent, as Jesus was sent, into this sinful fallen world. The humanness aspect is often lost and a kind of dualism is lived-out. We do not

recognize that the God who created the world continues to be present in this world through his Holy Spirit.

Take for instance, an example from Proverbs. One scripture that was included is a copy of the passage of an Egyptian book of wisdom. It was imported into this holy text. The writer did this without being afraid of not being holy and learned something rich from them. The writer was not afraid of losing his holiness to appreciate the things he could learn from them. Creation is a general revelation, which is available to all humankind and this does not diminish our holiness. It would be potentially revealing and interesting to investigate the history of the word *holy* in evangelical theology, specifically in the pietistic movement in Germany and Switzerland. Actually, these movements held holiness conferences, dealing with how one could become more holy during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. An emphasis was placed on the way and life of a Christian. Initially, they were broader in their understanding, and then over time, the understanding of holiness became narrower. Today, specifically among evangelical charismatic and Pentecostal congregations, holiness is quite dualistic. However, the message of the Holy Spirit is not dualistic at all. Some of these groups

associate holiness with pulling back or withdrawing from culture.

*Charles David Cullen, Th.D.*

Too often, we are satisfied with a definition of holiness that means only "come out from among them and be ye separate." In thrall to this definition we are admonished to stand back from the unclean, the so-called worldly. Whether this means television programming, music, or visual art, the effect is the same: a refusal to address what is worldly by condemning its mode of expression. It took time for Christians to understand that the medium of broadcast television (and now, the internet) was not itself demonic. Such means of giving voice to points of view are modalities; methods by which any that use them gain a place in the culture. Art, broadly defined, has this same potential: it is a channel for fashioning a fit word to place biblical views before the eyes, ears, and hearts of the world.

Granted that many believers now understand the need to use the named means of communication, one still notes the tendency, as noted in the response to the first question, to limit subject matter to the "acceptable" in order to give preeminence to holiness over worldliness.

## Subsidiary Question 3

What are some essential assumptions in our evangelical biblical worldview, which would be instrumental in facilitating an increase of Christian-based artists in the broader culture?

*Colin Harbinson, D.Divinity*

The primary adjustment, in my view, is the understanding and embracing of a Kingdom worldview, in which we engage all of life, because Christ is Lord of all of Creation. The Church needs to move from an exclusive focus on personal salvation to recover an understanding of the restoration of all things in Christ.

This will necessitate a recovery of the scope and power of the biblical narrative through a marrying of the Cultural Mandate with the Great Commission. The Church needs to understand the implications of the cultural mandate (and what the fall actual did) before it can fully understand the scope of restoration. We were created as cultural beings with a view to being culture formers under God. Cultural abandonment must be replaced with cultural obedience. The arts are, of course, one of the important ways in which the Church can embrace this call.

An understanding of the arts and the imagination must also be rooted in a biblical framework that endorses the arts as gifts from God to be used for his glory and for the blessing of others. The Church needs to see the pervasive place of imagination, creativity, and artistic expression within the narrative of Scripture. When Bible believing Christians grasp this profound fact, their minds can be opened and educated. Should this happen among Christian leaders, it would be a vital starting point.

*Dianne Collard, D.Miss.*

First, an accurate understanding of the role of culture in God's economy is an important worldview factor. Secondly, a correct biblical definition of the term *world* and the false dichotomy of sacred/secular (worldly/fleshly/profane) must be addressed in order to see a greater vision among evangelicals for art in the broader culture. A third factor is that a theology of aesthetics is needed among evangelicals. A fourth worldview factor is that the role of *steward* over creation needs to be understood. This includes the concept of transformation of culture and the role culture will play in eternity. A fifth factor is realizing that God's blessing and *spirit enabling* of craftsman/artists is needed to accomplish their work.

Sixthly, a biblical theology of worship needs to include the fullness of sensory expression that is blessed of God: that is that the *whole* person through the *whole* of life expresses *true* worship. Seventh, the fullness of the Incarnation of Christ, the very *image* of God, being in human form (and the image in some measure in every human life) should be addressed.

*Andrzej Turkanik, Ph.D., Th.D.(CANTAB)*

First, we need to recognize that one key presupposition is that God is the Creator. The world exists because he made it. It is beautiful, complex, and rich as well as being functional. There is no reason that we would find beauty in a mountainside, a seascape, a flower or in the work of those he created, but we do find beauty in these things. Because we were created in his image, we share this ability to not only appreciate beauty, but to create it, although in a more limited scale! It is part of who we are, and to deny this God-given ability causes us to limit our growth and relationship with him.

Second, we must realize that we are fallen creatures brought into a relationship with God as first fruits of this new creation. We are able to bring understanding to the fallen world of God and his glory.

Our lives and the way we interact with each other fulfill the command to teach others to observe all that God commanded us. Many overlook the concept of observation in Matthew 28, verse 20, but how we live teaches others often more than what we say. Evangelicals must learn to embrace the artists in the culture within the church so that the world can begin to appreciate the beauty and diversity of God's creation. Rather than speak with declaratives, perhaps we should better ask questions, starting with 'who are we?' and 'who is God?'

*Beat Rink, M.A. Germanistics, Th.M.*

One factor or assumption that would be helpful is a theology that would go back to the understanding of the creation of God as the Creator, of God who gives the world to mankind in order for man to cultivate it, to make new things. Here again, I see also a lack of *Pneumatology*, understanding the work of the Holy Spirit and the work of the Spirit among peoples. The fact is, the Holy Spirit moves like he wants and not like we wish him to move. The Holy Spirit inspires artists as well.

We need to also consider the missional role of the church in the world in our contemporary context. We must realize that we must be about reaching this post

Christian society. The fact that we are not engaging the postmodern world effectively is certainly due to a lack of worldview education. The fact is we must admit that we have not done our homework yet regarding a healthy worldview among evangelicals. The origin of this failure points to a pastoral failure, to the theological seminaries, and Bible schools. The fruit of this failure is tangible in the churches. There is a lack in the study programs of the Bible schools and generally, there is probably a great lack in the curriculum about worldview among evangelicals across Europe. Not much attention is paid to understanding culture generally, or the society of economics or of politics and how the Kingdom of God can penetrate these areas. Therefore, there is a critical inability of being able to penetrate spheres of culture and mainstream society.

There is a desperate need to understand the world of the arts and the role of the artists in society. There is little or no understanding at all of the benefit of having artists in the church. As evangelicals, there is so much that we need to learn about how to equip and disciple the artists to be able to go out effectively into the broader culture.

Recently, I was reading an autobiography of a famous Swedish writer. This writer was not a Christian, though he was raised in an evangelical church. He recalled in his book that sometimes missionaries were sent out by his home church. He questioned why he was not sent out to be a writer in society just as those missionaries were commissioned to serve in Africa. This example reveals the core of the problem.

As to the question of what influences the worldview of the church, if it is not the Bible, the answer is simply that western European thought is heavily influenced through Platonic, Neo-Platonic, or Greek thought. These philosophical roots are tangible by the general belief that there is a world above the world, but this is not the Gospel nor is it consistent with biblical truth. The message of the Gospel is that God came into our world to intentionally work among imperfect people. The Gospel is not about a perfect world. Some in the church tend to create a culture with its own concept of holiness and therefore does not connect to the world around them. Of course, it is important to maintain their identity as a flock, but we must come to understand that we are in the world but not of the world. We must connect and engage in the world around us and not be afraid to be contaminated.

Again, sometimes I see this more pronounced in Pentecostal and Charismatic evangelical Free Churches. There is an overt fear of being contaminated. These movements of God's Spirit truly have experienced closeness, intimacy, and experienced the beauty of holiness in coming close to God and experiencing his presence, but there is a fear of losing that closeness when they go out into the world or have too much contact with the world. However, of course this is unfounded biblically, as the Holy Spirit is present and working in the world continually.

*Charles David Cullen, Th.D.*

My primary focus would be on an understanding of the symbolic and image-bearing qualities of scripture. Though by no means mainly symbolic, the Bible often uses imagery and symbol to illustrate concepts which one might wish to call 'mysteries.' Even at the level of literature, scripture is not satisfied with mere literal representation: figures of speech, themselves built on image and symbol, open the soul to truth; narratives may be presented in a fashion more properly literary than as sparse accounts of historical events.

By increasing awareness that in the midst of revelation one faces (at least some) non-representational

vehicles, that truth may be carried along non-propositionally an appreciation for Christian-based art in particular will be gained -- but also for art in general as a gift given to man by the loving Father.

#### Subsidiary Question 4

What are some specific strategies, educational or otherwise, that would be useful in empowering western evangelical artists in the broader culture?

*Colin Harbinson, D.Divinity*

Having artists actively help the Church to provide an arts friendly environment, where creativity permeates its life, worship, and mission would be a great place to start. The artists need the Church and the Church needs her artists. Church life, in all its facets, should reflect the creativity of the Original Artist. In this way, many artists who have abandoned the Church would return home from their exile and alienation.

The Church can provide the Christian community, which artists so desperately need, along with encouragement and spiritual accountability. Artists have specific challenges and issues they struggle with, and solid discipleship (and the development or application of

spiritual growth materials) would be a way in which the Church could empower artists to be more able to deal with the daily challenges they face in the marketplace.

Pastoral acknowledgement in the Church of the artists, their gifts and calling, would be of immense encouragement. Encouraging artists to be salt and light in the marketplace, the Church could commission them as cultural *missionaries* (in the broadest sense), committing to pray for them on a regular basis.

In the past, the Church played an important role as patron of the arts. I believe it is time for the Church to take up that challenge once again, so that excellent works of art can be produced that glorify God, challenge our thinking, and bring hope to a hurting world.

*Dianne Collard, D.Miss.*

A key strategy would be a focus on instructing artists about their God-designed role in the world. It is paramount to deal with the overarching role of the church and the importance of relationship with the church. Spiritual formation and godliness should be emphasized in the church for the artists. It is also important that their missional role in the Kingdom should be taught and modeled by 'mature' artists/ministers.

There is a great need to call church leaders and individual artists to forgiveness and reconciliation. This would be best in a public way repeated throughout all churches where the arts/artists have systematically been excluded. Another urgently needed strategy is the training of artists to commit to excellence in the exercise of their craft to the glory of God. Bible studies where there is teaching on the role of the arts as well as the role of culture are urgently needed. The missional nature of God's Kingdom should be articulated and presented in a published format for use in churches. It is very important to begin teaching the laity an accurate biblical theology concerning the practice of the arts.

*Andrzej Turkanik, Ph.D., Th.D.(CANTAB)*

The European environment has been often considered hostile to evangelicals, more often because of their perceived subculture that is foreign to a European secular, cynical mind. I do not think that the broader European culture, especially in respect to the arts, is as hostile as it may appear. Indeed, in my experience I have found people very interested in projects run by artists who are believers if they are not in-your-face and naively simplistic in outlook and shallow, but instead engaging the

person's mind and emotions at the same time. Most importantly, however, I hold highly the issue of professional competence. This is not just the issue in Europe; I believe that it would be the same the world over: people respect quality and proficiency and are put off by mediocrity. If I were to give artists who are evangelicals any advice it would be to make sure they can come up with the goods; study, practice, work hard at the mastery of your craft and entrust the acceptance of the work to the Holy Spirit.

*Beat Rink, M.A. Germanistics, Th.M.*

There are numerous strategies and ways to move forward here. One strategy would be to create opportunities by facilitating arts classes or training in the context of the local church. Worldview education on a basic level could be nurtured through seminars in Bible schools that are open to the average evangelical. These can also be offered in the context of a local church in the educational program. Artists themselves could share what it means to be an artist in the world in evangelical local church contexts. There is a general need for a biblical theology, which can also be taught in these classes or seminars, even by artists. We should also produce

materials to help bring understanding through printed material or through other media made available for the purpose of education.

Another practical strategy that would be good is if the local churches would make it a priority to launch artist's gatherings from their church. For instance, they could delegate professional artists who are mature and have a heart to develop this area in the local church. Perhaps these artists can even provide understanding for the pastor and the members of the church. In this scenario, space could be made available in the church facility.

Another strategy is calling for a prayer day in the local churches for artists. In *Crescendo*, this has been our aim through a project where we have intentionally involved local churches in praying for artists. We actually selected an entire month yearly and in that month, we have encouraged the integration of the artists into the local church services. Of course, our hope is that this will not only take place in that one designated month, but also through the year.

Another possible step is that the churches need to understand that they can aid the artist to move into the culture; not just encourage them to hang their works on the church walls inside the church, but also encourage the

artists to go out and rent space in culture. Perhaps the local churches could help financially, as well as in the sphere of public relations and promotion. At least they could actively pray for this event. It should not be treated so much as a church outreach event, but rather a separate sanctioned event in the market place, which they carry in prayer. On a Sunday service then, they could bring in this artist for an interview of how his event is progressing.

There are so many ways to build a bridge and encourage artists to be present in the world. We must be creative and begin to think outside the four walls of the church.

One strategy of education that we offer in our work in Crescendo is our classical institute of the arts that is held annually in Budapest, Hungary. We have about 150 students in Budapest each year, about half of whom are non-Christians. This is exciting to us, as the non-Christians who attend are exposed to Christianity that embraces and endorses the arts as a normal part of the Christian faith. We do not push religion down their throats, so to speak, but we announce God's love of the arts and that he is behind us and wants to help us in our calling. About 95% of the teachers are Christians.

We also have 20-30 teens (from 5-17) who attend this event, along with a youth chamber created for the event. To be sure, some are children of the participants, but some parents actually send their children to this parallel project. I consider this a very important part in our work, to reach this age group, and we have seen some of these kids come back as adults. During the institute, we also give out three awards at the end. One of three winners one year was a 14-year-old pianist who was outstanding in his talent. Our hope is that he will come back as an artist, knowing through having attended this event that Christianity is certainly not against but actually for his development as an artist. We have run this event now for eight years and plan on continuing this in our work. For Crescendo, this is a key project in order to establish other Crescendo artists groups in their own country.

We also set up Crescendo groups throughout Europe to offer prayer and Bible study groups for music and other artists. We hope to see these established actually in academies or conservatories and develop into citywide groups. Our goal is that this happens not just for musicians, but also rather in all areas of the arts. In some of our groups, there are actors with the state

theaters. In these groups, a big part is mutual encouragement in their daily life struggle. Specifically, of course, the groups serve many artists who are in local churches, which have very little if any understanding for the arts. Our aim in this strategy is to help them to know that Christianity and the arts belong to one another.

*Charles David Cullen, Th.D.*

Certainly, a deeper look at the issues raised in my previous response would be helpful. Such an examination could be effected by direct teaching, by a better understanding of underlying interpretive principles that more fully include the non-representational. To put this teaching to work, opportunities would need to be made for artists to put flesh on the principles; a place needs to be created for women and men of artistic bent to give voice to their visions. Such a place, or places, must be purposeful, intentional, not add-ons or options.

#### The Artists' Responses

In this section, the responses from the artists will be presented. Here again as with the experts' responses, they will be presented without commentary. The two questions will be re-stated along with the artists'

responses in the following order: Tunkkari, Hirt, Ramirez, Lidfors, Caldwell, and Fajgel.

*Question 1:* What are the most urgent issues in evangelical streams of the church, which need to be addressed, that would potentially result in a greater church empowerment for Christian presence in the arts in the broader culture?

Titta Tunkkari - Dancer, FINLAND

The churches I feel competent to address are streams of evangelicalism in the Lutheran and other free churches, which are in Finland. I think that pastors would need to be culturally more educated. They are often very limited to church life and evangelistic endeavors and spend little time in the theatre, ballet, or cinema. As a result, churchgoers do not often value culture and art in the market place, but rather see this as a secondary activity. Nevertheless, the Lutheran Church, in my experience, has had over recent decades a growing appreciation for the arts in many different forms: music, altar paintings and weavings, sculpture and even architecture. Art is commissioned from mainstream, top artists for these movements. Churches themselves are often seen as cultural arenas, as well.

Things are often valued at a personal level. Anything leading to personal conversion is of value among the evangelical streams in Finland. Art is not seen as being part of culture and mindset shaping tools. Art only has value when it is applied in a direct evangelistic context, or it is a part of the worship of the church. Understanding the potential of art as a means to speak to the masses, shaping points of view, pointing out issues and speaking up for the poor, oppressed, neglected or wronged, should be seen as an important task for Christians as well among evangelicals. Arts can bring out life changing stories. If the church limits the value of communication only to preaching, then the artists will not be encouraged to train, grow, and move in these areas.

Thomas Hirt - Installation Art, AUSTRIA

Basically, I think the problem that most Christian streams have with contemporary art and their participation in it is somehow nurtured by the idea that a human being consists of multiple parts just like an automobile is made out of multiple elements. Such thoughts are probably based on the thinking of people like Augustine. Augustine combined, in his philosophy, Greek thoughts with Judeo-Christian traditions, and he had a very

discrepant relation to his sensual needs. He felt that sensuality and especially sexuality is not controllable and is therefore strongly related to sin. This church father battled a very long time with his strong sensual attraction and some of this conflict is deeply imprinted in his philosophy that became somehow a foundation for Christian theology and thinking.

Keep in mind that we use the term "Christian Art" to describe what someone does. What does this imply? Have you ever heard of a Christian cook, or Christian salami, Christian knife, or a piece of Christian bread? Can you see the separation that is created when using Christian as an adjective to the noun, art? There is art and there is Christianity. I can be a follower of Christ and I can be artist. However, I refuse to called a Christian artist! If I would be a Christian artist, what would my work have to look like? A lot of so called Christian artists live in exactly this tension. You would never ask a cook if his entrecote is somehow related to his faith to Christ. You would just say how wonderful the taste of this entrecote is and that he is a great and creative cook. Employing Christian as an adjective before the word arts is perhaps sometimes the very reason for the weakness of contemporary art today inside of the church. Art inside the church

today is somehow restricted to only certain kinds of expression. As a result, evangelical church members usually have a very limited understanding of art. Successful mainstream artists often, consequently, do not feel accepted inside the church.

Finally, in summary, the truth is there are diverse occupations represented in the church, and we do not find it necessary to require them to add the adjective Christian in front of their professional title in order to validate their work as pleasing and acceptable to God. The fact is, each one of us, as members of the church, has our particular expertise and calling of God, and we can all be enriched and learn from one another. We should all excel in our fields and we should all enjoy and celebrate the other's success and work, whether they are cooks or visual artists. Also, it is important to say that just as the church does not instruct cooks how to be cooks, artists should not be taught from the church how to be artists. Some of the greatest cooks are not even Christians and are not in the church, and this of course is true of artists as well. Artists need a sense of endorsement and support for their personal lives. They need help to keep the main thing the main thing. They need help to keep the balance of family and their careers. There are many ways that the

church can invest in artists, but teaching them how to be artists is definitely not one of them.

Hector Ramirez - Director, SPAIN

In my opinion, there are a few issues in relation to the arts, which the main stream of evangelicals need to think seriously about if we are to have a relevant influence and impact in our broader society. If we have ears to hear, there are a number of tremendous writers, apart from the Bible, to help us deal with the different issues of the human experience concerning culture and the arts. God has raised up these voices who give understanding on the specific issue of the arts and culture, writers like some of the fathers of the church and in modern times Francis Shaeffer, C. S. Lewis, G.K. Chesterton, Hans Rookmaaker, J.R. Tolkien, Dorothy Sayers, and others less known as well.

As I see it, in order to enter into and join the conversation on the arts, the church is in need, first, to look at the issue of *the nature of the creative gift*. In other words, why did God equip humanity with that special and subtle attribute of *aesthetic sensitivity* and the ability to *think, imagine, and create*? What is the place it ought to have in the life of the individual, the society

in which he lives, and the church? It seems from what one can gather in many evangelical circles, that the only reason for the arts is so that we will be more efficient in doing evangelism. This utilitarian view would have the moon with a great sign in which everyone could read, "*made to the glory of God*" and the leaves of the trees and pedals of the flowers with Bible verses written on them, and the birds singing hymns and choruses, etc. This utilitarian view lacks a real concern for the craft itself as well as sensitivity, interest, and passion for the contemplation and appreciation of beauty, and for the mere enjoyment of life, for that matter. God has richly bestowed these gifts on his creation that we might enjoy them. God the Creator made a beautiful universe for his creatures to live in, enjoy and grow as they sharpen and cultivate their spirits with the not so obvious and subtle pleasures of the spirit, which the arts can provide. Furthermore, that view has very drastically contributed to promote a certain distortion and even devaluation of vital aspects of the human condition such as the arts, the intellect and culture in general. In this world where the cultivation of spirit is something which is very rapidly disappearing, people are treated as things and machines by a totally secularized society and their education systems. This is very sad that

the evangelical church cannot contribute to help discover the wonderful and great potential there is in the arts, as given by the Creator of the universe. Finally, the arts are a relevant means to help human beings to become better people and realize they have been made in the image of God.

Barbara Lidfors - Painter, GERMANY

Generally, we need a greater Christian empowerment and presence in ALL areas of society! Getting believers involved in church-related activities can become the main emphasis of the Church in its efforts to build up the kingdom of God. Unfortunately, this too often results in a minimal or absent Christian presence in the broader culture, leaving the life of Christ boxed up within the walls of the church. In order to remedy this situation, Christians need to be educated, encouraged, and empowered to bring their unique contributions not only to the church community but also to the areas of secular society where their talents and interests can best be invested, whether in cultural, social, political, economic, educational, scientific, recreational or other areas. Only with a renewed vision of these opportunities, will believers function well as salt-and-light in the broader culture and fulfill this aspect of their calling.

Since Christians spend a good part of their life outside the church in secular society anyway, bringing the best of their talents and abilities to these areas is only smart. A fulfilled, competent Christian with a clear vision of how to use his or her talents are something attractive inside and outside of the church. In addition, sharing what is spiritually meaningful is much easier for believers when it takes place within a circle of common interests rather than with complete strangers on the street. An active role by the church in spiritually equipping and supporting believers in their community callings will only strengthen and not weaken the church.

Concerning the matter of a stronger Christian involvement in the broader arts-culture, the church can play an important role here. It has many opportunities to educate its members about the intrinsic value of the arts, even apart from their use as vehicles to communicate a particular Christian message. The basis of this valuation is grounded in the creative nature of God, in whose image we are made. God thought creative activity was so exciting and good that he kept at it for six days straight! What a rush! The Scriptures also provide an abundant list of creative gifts used to enhance and intensify worship and life in general, including through song, dance, marches,

architectural beauty, clothing, instrumental and choral music, symbolic action, visionary pictures, etc. Even those with no interest in God are drawn to the energy and possibilities that creativity awakens.

Inside the church, Christian artists need to be valued and supported in spiritual ways and given room to function creatively. Workshops, seminars, and courses can provide opportunities to develop creative abilities and can provide mentoring possibilities with experienced artists. Generally, church life can be drenched with creative expression. It is all a matter of vision and priorities, for without creativity a church can become routine and uninspired! Outside of the church, believing artists need to be confirmed in their calling and capabilities, prayed for, and supported. The lifelines between the church and those in the arts culture need to be kept healthy and open.

Lynn Caldwell - Poet/Writer, IRELAND

First, does the church recognize that a Christian presence in the arts is imperative? Is the church aware that there needs to be a greater Christian presence generally in the arts worldwide? Clearly, the realization that this is crucial is the most urgent issue to be addressed. Most churches, however, probably do think that

a Christian presence in the arts is important to some degree, but it may not be a high priority for them. Churches need to see that their engagement with society in all areas - business, science, politics, education, social issues, and of course art and culture, is a basic mandate from Jesus, what he has called us to when he called us to be salt and light.

The church needs to affirm, encourage and stand alongside the artists in their midst, without agenda, without judgment and without expectation of 'what can the artist do for us' (for example: evangelism, fundraising, boosting the church's 'cool' status). Discipling, counseling, prayer support, friendship, a sense of acceptance and belonging - artists in churches need what everyone else in churches need. Healthy artists create healthy art. Beyond that, fostering community and support for artists together would be wonderful -- making a conscious effort to bring people together, encouraging a gathering together across disciplines, styles and artistic ideas.

Loreen Fajgel - Dancer, GERMANY

I must begin by stating that I have no wish to attack the church in which I grew up, was nurtured in, and

encouraged at almost every point of my Christian walk. My spiritual roots are in the Presbyterian Church and through the years, I have been a member of a Baptist church, an Anglican church, and a Lutheran church before finally finding my 'home' in the Pentecostal movement. However, I do feel strongly that the church needs to be more aware of the massive change in culture that has occurred with the transition to the Internet. With the massive amount of information, entertainment, and virtual distraction available to most Western households, there has been a dramatic change in the way information is processed. We now live in a society that is accustomed to visual stimulation. This is something every Sunday school teacher has realized; visual aids help increase the attention span of the children in their class. Surveys comparing education in different countries have repeatedly revealed that the Scandinavian countries are streets (way) ahead of their European and North American fellows, producing pupils who are most able to logically process information. What is their secret? Only one third of their lessons use the frontal teaching method. They also use project and group work to great effect. The reason for mentioning both of the above facts is that the church still relies heavily on traditional teaching methods. The main element in most

services is the sermon, which is delivered from the front of the church by the pastor and which requires the congregation to sit quietly and listen, without any opportunity to discuss the subject, or participate actively, unless they are called to respond to an altar call at the close of the service. Churchgoers are used to this form of teaching and benefit.

My concern, however, is for those people who have not been raised in a church-going family and who are accustomed to punchy, brief inputs of information accompanied by visual effects. How can we expect members of this society to feel welcome within our churches, to sit still, yet listen attentively to a lengthy sermon and respond in a form that is alien to their culture? I feel that the journey required of them to adjust and accept our church culture is too long.

*Question 2:* What are the issues in the lives of artists, which need to be addressed in order to realize a greater reconciliation with the evangelical streams of the church so that a great stream of artists can be empowered to work in the public square?

Titta Tunkkari - Dancer, FINLAND

Every person has his or her own set of character issues, whether one is an artist or a pastor. Therefore, the value of the art is viewed through the artist's personal witness. No one really cares how a plumber lives his personal life as long as he can fix the pipes. The artist pours out from the depth of his or her soul, and the worldview is mirrored in the piece. A fear of interference with this process, looking for answers and seeking for the source, can cause many artists to pull out from the church. The ability to stretch the limits and think outside of the box is often the prerequisite for the artistic process. To submit, fit in and obey are not the strengths for many artists. However, artists need to understand that a sense of belonging is not the opposite of artistic freedom. Trusting and committing to a church body (hopefully one that has a broad view and affirmation for the arts) can help them to grow as Christians and avoid being a loner.

Thomas Hirt - Installation, AUSTRIA

In one word: character! This is the great need for both artists and the church, and the second great need is self-examination. We as artists need to realize that we are all fallible human beings. It is true that the church

as a whole has done some appalling things through history, things perhaps that are still unresolved. And yes, sometimes churches are in somewhat of a mess and in a state of chaos but let's not forget that we as individuals, all of us, are also broken and dysfunctional and in need of grace. It is important that we all realize that we are all, both artists and the church, in a process of growth and we all need to be willing to accept one another even in our imperfections. In history, it is true that the church has not always made the best of decisions in many spheres and subsequently there is a great deal of unresolved issues. We must realize also that we, the church, are a diverse community and this diversity requires mutual respect, a large dose of humility, and patience in our character in order to grow. To attain the necessary humility, we as individuals need to reflect on our own thoughts, our history and our actions, and on our personal journey with God.

Our common ground is our mutual faith, as small as that faith may be in some of our hearts. To be sure, we all, the artists like everyone else, need to examine our own lives and hearts measured against his truth. It is too easy, much too easy, to give up, simply disconnect, and remove ourselves when we do not see eye to eye on issues.

It costs something to stay and sometimes it is painful. Staying in relationship generally affords each of us the opportunity to even learn new things about ourselves and see things differently than we have before. Finally, we need the church and we definitely need to be in relationships in the church, so that we can all grow together.

Hector Ramirez - Director, SPAIN

Now for this situation to change, the Christian artist needs to walk in a humble and not critical attitude towards the church. We need to view the situation and use our talents to help the church see beyond their concerns with other important, and probably more practical, aspects of the Christian life. On the other hand, missionaries, pastors, and ministers need to be willing to listen to this bunch of strange, sensitive and difficult people (artists) whom God has blessed the church with, so that they can help those who are more pragmatic, to dream, imagine, see, and appreciate other more subtle and profound aspects of the human condition. We have to learn to live and pray for one another so together we will be able to draw and see the complete, difficult, intricate and even mysterious painting of life God has created.

Barbara Lidfors - Painter, GERMANY

Because of the nature of their gifting, artists often have highly sensitive personalities and strong relational needs for encouragement, understanding and involvement. Their creativity can hugely enrich the church but often comes dressed in unusual packages, leading to misunderstandings on all sides, hurts and sometimes a drawing back out of deeply needed relationships. In order for artists to be well integrated into the life of the church and nurtured, the particular relational needs of artists have to be taken into consideration. Artists often have high-maintenance personalities. They do not 'get over' being sensitive artists; they just mature into maturely sensitive artists! Those called to pastor creative believers and to promote creative expression inside and outside of the church need patience and an understanding heart for these particular challenges.

Artists, in turn, need to work on maturing in their personal spiritual lives and in their capacities to understand the perspective of others, to forgive and to work through relational difficulties. They can often be wonderfully supportive of each other if artists' groups are formed. They thrive when opportunities to express their gifts are offered. When they are seldom offered this

opportunity, artists can feel discouraged and useless. Opportunities for creative expression need not be large ones, just ones that appear regularly and are valued.

Artists who are believers must realize that they have an important role to play in introducing the church to the value and excitement of creative expression. Since they are the ones called to be creative, they cannot just wait and expect others to take the lead. It is their ballgame! They need to initiate projects and present ideas, and guard themselves from being discouraged if initial contacts do not go far. Since they are the ones who understand the processes of forming creative ideas into artistic works and of mulling over impulses until creative clarity comes, they need to be willing to offer this kind of creative training to others in the church. They have technical skills and creative insight to offer which can contribute highly to the quality of life in the church, and as we know, a non-creative church is a boring church! They also need to keep in mind their need for prayer and backing as they work within the broader art world around them. It is up to them to keep the lifelines of support flowing well between themselves and other believers in the church.

Lynn Caldwell – Poet/Writer, IRELAND

Although the church can be insensitive to artists, sometimes the artists are insensitive to the church. The church is a community of very diverse people: ages, cultures, understanding, education, tastes, expectations, and experiences. Artists are naturals for confronting people's biases, broadening their vision, and pushing them beyond their boundaries, but considering their audience (the church) is imperative. How the message is delivered is often as important as the message itself. Personally, are the artists looking for validation, acclamation, sponsorship, or patronage? They need to ask themselves: is this a realistic expectation from this community of which I am a part?

Artists, especially visual and performing artists, are ideally suited to equip and encourage the church in their expressions of worship and in their expression of Jesus to the world around them. However, the teaming of professional artists and keen but untrained church members can sometimes be a frustrating and unfruitful venture -- together the church and the artist need to explore the best ways to engage with each other and culture around them.

Loreen Fajgel - Dancer, GERMANY

I have personally always felt welcome within the body of the church and have been under the leadership of pastors who were willing to allow artists to use their art forms within the structure of the service. However, many fellow artists feel misunderstood by the church. Many tend to be unconventional in their dress or habits, and they often feel out of place or alien to the dress and behavioral culture of their fellow Christians. Many are therefore isolated, preferring to think of themselves as a 'voice calling out in the wilderness' rather than an integrated church member. Their art is often provocative and too outrageous for the more conservative parts of the church. My call would be for the church to accept them as they are so that trust and friendship can grow. I am reminded of an unmarried Christian couple (singer & musician) that attended a cell-group in a local church in Düsseldorf, Germany. As soon as the members of the group heard that they were artists, they immediately asked if the couple would like to perform a couple of songs for the group in the following week. This couple felt accepted and appreciated. They are now married and fully integrated members of the same church.

*Conclusion*

In the next and final chapter, a summation of the content of the experts and artists will be woven together. Suggested strategies will be presented, areas for further study and investigation will be listed; and, finally, concluding remarks with a view to the future.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### *Introduction*

The findings<sup>25</sup> of the methodologies from the theological experts and feed back from the artists along with the research material come together in this chapter to aid in shaping viable strategic action<sup>26</sup> for the context of church movements, as well as for local churches in western societies. The results acquired through the methodologies utilized for this research resonated with the resource literature conclusions drawn on for this project.

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<sup>25</sup> That the responses were presented without critique, does not infer that the researcher endorses every suggestion or position articulated by the artists or the experts. The methodology data, though neither exhaustive nor comprehensive, does adequately provide a wealth of insights into the European cultural psyche, which supplies relevant considerations for shaping potential strategies.

<sup>26</sup> The actions proposed in this final chapter flowed from the data and are only suggestions. Any strategic action employed, which nurtures a Biblical mindset or intentional affirmation of believing artists, must take into consideration the predominate cultural soil in any given society and the church's traditions. It is this researcher's position, however, that the church leadership's role includes nurturing a vision for cultural engagement and empowering the congregants informed by a biblical worldview for their service in society to the glory of God, whether in the arts or any other sphere.

It is important to note that due to the subtle cultural differences within European Christian ethnicities as well as the differences in other western contexts, the suggested strategies will always need to be fine-tuned according to the unique cultural setting. Whereas, the focus has been on the application in the European context generally, the findings of this research provide applicable insights for designing viable strategies for forward progress among all western evangelicals.

In the first section entitled *Responses Summarized*, the experts and the artist's responses will be briefly summarized and reviewed. The expert's responses will be stated via concisely worded statements with comments from the researcher's first hand missional experience. In this section also, a summary of the artists' responses will then be presented.

After the response summaries, a section entitled *Practical Strategies*, will present strategies based on the three sources: the literature, the responses from the experts, and the artists' reflections. The strategies will also be presented in a list format along with applicable comments from this researcher. The next section presents *Suggestions for Further Research* and the final section, entitled *Conclusion*, provides final words from respected

leaders from the research literature along with a final exhortation for what is needed pastorally in order to effectively connect with, affirm, and empower a new generation of artists for the future.

### The Responses Summarized

#### *The Experts*

The experts exposed hindrances, addressed the general misunderstanding of holiness and worldliness, articulated key worldview presuppositions, and posited strategies for the church. The researcher, having served in streams of evangelicals among State and Free Church movements over these last thirty-five years, will provide comments that will accompany the points summarized.

#### The Hindrances

The hindrances, which denigrate a vision for art and artists in the broader culture among evangelical streams that emerged through presenting subsidiary question one to the experts are summarized below concisely along with observations from missional experience.

Table 1: Hindrances

Utilitarian view of the arts only for evangelism and discounting any activity where souls are not saved
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<p>Comment: This terminology 'souls are not saved' is expressly employed only among Free Church streams of evangelicalism. However, the utilitarian leaning is also evident among revived streams in state churches.</p>
<p>Lack of understanding for art due to indifference</p>
<p>Comment: Experience has revealed this to be true among most all evangelical streams in Europe.</p>
<p>A reduced vision of the implications of the biblical narrative</p>
<p>Comment: Due to the continued entrenched influence of modernism among evangelicals in Europe, there is commonly very little thought given to this terminology let alone the implications of the fact that 75% of the scriptures are expressed in a narrative format and 15% in other creative artistic genres. To be sure, grasping this concept alone can aid evangelical streams in embracing the fact that God as a creative God selected creative forms like story, creation itself, and the arts as the primary means of revealing Himself to humanity.</p>
<p>A general disparaging of the physical creation</p>
<p>Comment: This is specifically more common among Free Churches, however evangelical streams in state churches also are encumbered by this tendency.</p>
<p>A general tendency to escape from this physical world, which has platonic origins</p>
<p>Comment: This is prevalent among ultra conservative European evangelicals, but platonic tendencies are detectable as well among state church evangelicals. Also, throughout western European culture there is a thick layer of Greek dualistic thought.</p>
<p>The worthy goal of desiring to be a 'people of the Word' however, discounting the biblical use of the non-verbal in communicating God's truth</p>
<p>Comment: There are strong movements of 'back to the Bible' among Lutherans in Scandinavia and in central Europe over the last forty plus years due to the liberal theology embraced by much of the state church world early on in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, this is less applicable among streams of evangelical Catholics who value images and symbols who have experienced a new appreciation for the Scriptures.</p>
<p>A dispensational view of the work of God, renouncing any responsibility for stewardship of God's creation</p>
<p>Comment: This is more applicable for conservative evangelical streams among Free Churches.</p>

A narrow worldview inconsistent with Biblical Theology
Comment: This is certainly true across the board among evangelicals in Europe in all streams.
A general shunning of arts altogether due to the prevalent misuse of the arts in the broader culture
Comment: This is primarily true for both hyper-conservative groups as well as neo-Pentecostal and charismatic streams of evangelicals, but less true among State Churches.
Sub-cultural Christianity disconnecting from broader culture expressed as 'us' verses 'them' mentality, based on the secular/sacred dichotomy
Comment: The most pronounced sub-cultural development among evangelicals is in central Europe specifically among many Free Churches. For instance, the <i>Christliche Kunst Senze</i> (Christian arts scene) specifically in the German-speaking world, have expressed they wish to create a Christian sub-culture in music similar to that of the USA Nashville Christian arts scene. Due to a hostile environment culturally toward the Free Church movement in Europe, sub-cultural development was more prevalent. In the last two decades, this seems to have abated somewhat, but the secular/sacred divide is very strong in all evangelical streams in Europe.
The notion that believing artists are problematic
Comment: The tendency to stereotype artists is also prevalent among European evangelical streams, but most frequently among Free Churches.
Reducing acceptable art as only dealing with overt Christian stories, characters, or biblical themes
Comment: In some ways certainly this goes back to the sub-cultural issue raised earlier, however, this is very typical among Free Church evangelicals.
Pastoral failure in bringing biblical understanding of the arts for the church and society, as well as a failure to impart a biblical worldview among the parishioners.
Comment: Very common among all streams. The subject of the arts is unfortunately simply not a topic for teaching, except in many trans-continental para-church organizations that have pioneered in this sphere. Also, whereas there are worldview schools in para-church organizations, there is rarely teaching on worldview from the pulpit.
The arts are viewed by most as optional, decorative, unnecessary, and secondary status to real life
Comment: Francis Schaefer originally addressed this over forty years ago, however, unfortunately this

thinking is still common among evangelical churches whose budget alone discloses their true position.
Puritanical view of nudity, which defenestrates art that deals with such subjects
Comment: This is certainly less a problem in indigenous European State Church movements, but more prevalent among American church plants across Europe.

In summary, the primary obstacles included the hyper-focus fixation with oral discourse among evangelicals at the expense of missing the potency of the image accentuated in the Old and New Testaments. There was also agreement that there existed a tendency to view art generally as unnecessary and secondary to real life. These conclusions were consistent with the research literature employed for this project. With one voice, the experts affirmed with the research literature that there exists a general lack of understanding for the purpose and function of the arts among evangelicals across Europe as well as a tendency towards an unbiblical disparagement of creation. The predisposition to value the arts only for the explicit declaration of the Gospel where souls might be potentially saved, rather than a general endorsement of the arts, unfortunately holds sway among Free Church, but less among State Church evangelical streams. The experts posited that most of these hindrances could be overcome with sound

biblical teaching and by placing an emphasis on God's good creation and Imago Dei.

### Holiness and Worldliness

The experts spoke to the confusion among evangelical streams as to the application of holiness for living life in general. Many of the responses to this question were similar to the responses to the first question on hindrances and will not be repeated here. Comments bring practical application of their responses to the various streams of evangelical faith.

Table 2: Holiness and Worldliness

A general theological misunderstanding of what it means to come out and be separate
Comment: This is very common among the older generations who desire to be true to what they perceive to be holy. The younger generation often has not thought through their positions on holiness nor the relevant implications thereof.
The general fear of becoming unholy through affiliating with the mainstream culture
Comment: This is certainly true of more conservative Free Church streams of evangelicals; however, the tendency is more prevalent in the older rather than the younger generation. This is not characteristic of more formal State Churches.
The propensity to see holiness as a hopeful means of escape from the material world
Comment: This is often true for all evangelicals, including State Church streams where there is fervent faith. It goes back to the dualistic layer that is resident in European culture at large.
A general notion that sanctification (becoming holy) is a means to overcome our humanity

Comment: This holds generally true both for State and Free Church movements, however the younger generation would simply not consider it a relevant consideration due to postmodern influences.

The experts mutually recognized the prevalent tendency to associate biblical holiness with withdrawal from mainstream culture. The motivation among evangelicals appears to proceed from a misunderstanding of the New Testament commandment to "love not the world" (I Jn 2:15), and associating 'world' with the broader culture. Conversely, worldliness is generally associated with overt cultural involvement, specifically in the arts among many ultra-conservative evangelicals, especially Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal church movements.

#### Worldview Assumptions

Without commentary now, the experts pinpointed the worldview issues, presuppositions, and assumptions that can play a major role in empowering a new stream of believing artists into the mainstream of culture.

Table 3: Worldview Assumptions

A Kingdom worldview for the whole of life
A focus on the Biblical call for cultural stewardship
The biblical affirmation generally of aesthetics
The presupposition that God is the good Creator and we are made in His image

The incarnation of Christ as a precedence for intentional involvement in mainstream culture and the arts
Providing a balanced Biblical worldview among evangelicals from church leadership
Understanding our postmodern reality, which presents a significant opportunity for Christians in the arts
Identifying and overcoming the Greek philosophical dualistic roots that encumber European evangelicals

The experts expressed a reformed position on the need for the evangelical church to embrace what is commonly known as the cultural mandate and a Kingdom worldview, which is consistent with the Lordship of Christ premise articulated by many of the authors for this research project. Overcoming cultural abandonment through cultural obedience was prioritized. The foremost worldview assumption that was determined by the experts to be necessary for a balanced worldview in regards to the arts was the biblical doctrine of Imago Dei. The implication of Christ's incarnation for most of the experts provided an apologetic for intentional involvement in the arts. Another valid point was the overriding use of imagery in the biblical narrative itself, provided ample grounds for intentional involvement in the arts.

The primary reason for the problem of dualism, the prevalent propensity toward cultural disconnection, and the lack of vision for the arts was attributed by the experts to be in part due to the failure on the part of

evangelical pastoral leadership. According to the experts, these problems could be overcome if a biblical worldview were to be taught in Bible schools, theological seminaries, and subsequently in evangelical pulpits.

#### The Expert's Strategy Considerations

In answer to this question, the experts posited strategic concerns as well as some practical strategies that could be instrumental in nurturing and ultimately empowering the artists for service in the broader culture.

Table 4: Expert Strategies

The church should actively involve the artists in the worship, mission, and in all aspects of church life
The church should provide discipleship for spiritual formation and a church home for spiritual accountability
Direct pastoral acknowledgement through informing the church of expositions or performances from the front
Pastoral biblical teaching on the importance of being salt and light in the broader culture
Regular prayer from the front could be offered for artists called to work in the mainstream
The church should consider being a patron, financially empowering the artists who work in the mainstream
Pastoral teaching of biblical theology and also on the missional role of artists in local churches
Specific gatherings for reconciliation for the artists and the church done in a public way
Pastoral leaders should encourage all practicing artists to professional competence in their sphere of the arts
The church should organize and facilitate arts training in the church context in order to steward the talents in the local congregations
The church should produce or seek out good educational materials for church members about the purpose and function of the arts

The church should launch artists gatherings for Bible study, fellowship, exchange, and prayer
Pastoral leaders should create space in the church for artists' work, whether they are musicians, painters, or stage arts artists
Pastoral commission of the artists publicly in the context of church gathering

All the experts called for a greater involvement of the artists in the culture of the church through participation in the worship culture through their art forms. The objective was to expose the church members to high quality art presented by mature artists. There was also a recognition for the need of a public reconciliation between the church and the artists and a call for church leaders to lead the way.

The experts called for more willingness on the part of church leaders to provide encouragement through counsel and through offering spiritual accountability. The experts suggested the intentional commissioning of the artists called to mainstream culture. This could be a potent empowerment tool. They also pointed out that more discipleship programs are needed which are specifically designed with artists in mind.

They proposed financial patronage as one possible way to express support. Biblical worldview teaching for the artists was also seen as very important to prepare them for their call to serve the broader culture. It was also

recommended that artists should be challenged towards professional competence.

In order to increase the sense of appreciation for the arts generally among church members, Bible studies and art classes taught by artists themselves could possibly foster a biblical mindset. Space should be created for art, not only in the Sunday program, but also room for expositions of art created by artists in the congregation.

Direct biblical worldview education, taught from the pulpit as well as in Bible schools and seminaries, was recommended to nurture a grass roots movement, which would endorse involvement in the arts. Finally, one expert recommended an intentional annual prayer focus for artists in the church calendar.

### *The Artists*

The six artists that took part in this methodology exhibited a great deal of symmetry in their responses. A concise summary of the artists' conclusions leads well into the section of practical strategies.

### Considerations for Church Leaders

In response to the first question, the artists concluded that the launching pad for bringing needed change

in the thinking of the church was a mindset change first among church leaders. The artists longed for the leaders to begin to think more in terms of the broader culture, rather than to continue to center primarily on the church sub-cultural dimension. The artists felt that the leaders themselves need to engage culture, which can aid their congregations to follow suit. The artists agreed with a vision for integration of the arts into the church gathering, as perhaps this could nurture a vision for the arts among the average church members.

The required usage of the adjective 'Christian' before the term art revealed the narrow view prevalent among evangelicals toward the arts. The artists affirmed an obvious lack of understanding in the church for the role art plays for influencing and shaping society.

The artists themselves also recognized a lack in discipleship, affirmation, and a sense of commission from their experience with evangelical streams of the church. This lack, according to a couple of the artists, was not only in the sphere of the arts, but also in a vast array of cultural spheres. They longed also for the church and the church leaders to rethink why God had gifted humanity with diverse artistic capacities in the first place, if he did not wish them to be actively involved in the arts.

One of the primary concerns they identified among church leaders was the tendency to validate art only when it was applied for the express purpose of evangelism. They noted that often the only time the church began to think about getting beyond their four walls was when they were involved in explicit evangelistic initiatives. The church was often unaware of the cultural shifts in the real world and consequently was out of tune with the relevant issues and concerns that society faces according to the artists.

#### What Artists Need to Consider

In their experience, the artists themselves recognized their tendency to pull back from the church's accountability for fear of control or critique, and consequently there was a lack of a sense of belonging. The artists also identified a critical attitude among some artists toward the church, which needed to be dealt with in order to begin to see a mending of the relationship.

These mainstream artists also realized the need to work on their spiritual lives. They recognized a need for discipleship formation. Some of the artists felt that they should actively seek out service opportunities in the church culture to build relationships and nurture a vision for the role of the arts to convey truth and beauty.

### Practical Strategies

Strategies, which bring about change, are born out of vision and passion. The 2009 Mittersill summit's *church focus group's* vision and general strategic steps cited earlier in this work, so resonated with the findings of the responses of the methodologies that they are repeated below by way of introduction to this section.

We dream of a future in which the church humbly acknowledges her humanity, celebrates God and His creation, lives out authentic relationships, embraces a diversity of creative artistic expression, affirms artists in their calling and acts as a catalyst for cultural change inspired by a holistic Christian worldview. (Arts+Europe, 5)

The strategic steps articulated at the summit for the church focus group to accomplish this vision were:

- 1) We, as the church, must educate and disseminate an ethos for the arts, the artists, and culture in the church, through the integration of art into our church life and service.
- 2) We, as the church, must rediscover and cultivate cultural awareness, openness, and an appreciation of art in the broader culture, working towards a mutual reconciliation between artists and the church community.
- 3) We, as the church, must develop nurturing, caring communities, which welcome the artist and supports them in their often arduous and lonely assignment in the broader culture. (Ibid.)

Based on this vision statement and strategic steps, the strategies will respond to these three overriding concerns. First, pastoral leadership is in need of embracing an ethos for the arts and culture and must learn how to articulate a biblical worldview for their congregations. It is a hard word to some degree, but church members of any given evangelical church have their pastoral leadership to thank or blame for the worldview that prevails among church members. Secondly, for the successful launch of a grass roots movement where the arts are appreciated and endorsed in the church, there is a need to develop an ethos for the arts for the church and society among church members. Thirdly, the market-place artists, called to work in the broader culture, are in urgent need of nurturing evangelical fellowships that stand with them as they navigate their way into the public square.

In response to these three overriding concerns, the strategies below are divided into five areas. They are: mindset educational strategies for pastor training; mindset strategies for cultivating a cultural ethos for congregations; program strategies for developing cultural ethos for local congregations; spiritual nurturing strategies for the aspiring and career artists at the local

church level; and strategic considerations for entire church movements.

*Mindset Strategies for Pastoral Training*

For a new mindset change to be instilled at a grass roots level among church movements regarding the arts, it is necessary to begin at the pastoral level of leadership. The necessary tools that can bring about this change are pastoral leadership that provides sound biblical worldview teaching and pastoral vision casting for the sphere of the arts. Therefore, the following curriculum emphases are suggested for pastoral training. By no means are these suggestions an exhaustive list. These are only meant to stimulate the imagination in regards to study focuses, which would be instrumental in launching a new renaissance in the thinking among evangelical leaders specifically in western societies. As the leaders then ignite their congregations with a biblical vision, this could potentially empower the church for more effective cultural engagement in the arts, as well as instill a sense of destiny among the members in their occupational vocation.

Table 5: Mindset Strategies for Pastoral Training

<p>1) <b>Biblical Worldview Focus:</b></p> <p>The first and foremost required area of curriculum that would greatly aid in pastoral leadership training would be core required studies at all Master levels and Doctor of Ministry courses dealing with the art of comprehending, crafting, and grasping the implications of an integrated Biblical Worldview for local congregations. Courses on apologetics are certainly also important as the young pastoral student needs to be aware of the pluralism of worldviews in postmodern western societies, yet biblical worldview teaching must take a new precedent. The emphases should be on a comprehensive vision of the Lordship of Christ for the whole of life, the significance of God's good creation, and the comprehensiveness of Christ's redemption. Such an emphasis would address many of the hindrances articulated by the experts, the artists, and the research literature. This would also be advantageous for all Masters' level studies including specializations for biblical, theological, missions, divinity, and Christian education studies. The focus can aid the pastoral student in not only constructing a biblical worldview, but also articulating it in a language that the average member can understand. The hope is that this will also aid the congregants to translate their faith perspective into practical implications of the biblical view for spheres of society like work, politics and government, commerce and business, medicine and scientific research, arts, and the media.</p>
<p>2) <b>Understanding and Engaging Culture:</b></p> <p>Some examples of courses dealing with this arena is: Understanding the Concept of Culture; The Role of the Arts in Culture; The Mission of the Church in regards to Culture; Empowering the Church Members for Cultural Service; or Understanding our Mission for Our Times. The experts' and the artists' responses here again reveal that there is very little understanding resident among many evangelical pastoral leaders, specifically in Europe dealing with the biblical vision for cultural engagement, specifically in the sphere of the arts. A general knowledge and understanding of postmodernism is expedient as it is imperative that we understand the culture of our times</p>

in western societies. We must also seek ways that we can penetrate our world with God's truth and beauty. Such courses could investigate the mind-molders of culture conveyed by Loren Cunningham and look into ways to make each church member mindful that their service role in society is an expression of the mission of the church. A few of the experts and the artists specifically addressed the tendency to dismiss any responsibility of stewardship toward culture, as if the mission of the church was only to save souls. The experts pointed out the mission of the church expressed through the people of God's service to society for the glory of God, is also a biblical mandate. Though the cultural mandate is contested as a concept among some evangelical streams, understanding this concept is essential and needs to be instilled in evangelical congregations in western societies. Perhaps an alternative terminology, such as *Cultural Stewardship* or *Stewardship Mission*, could be employed to reintroduce the concept. At least these subjects should be debated and considered by future pastors of congregations.

### 3) Overcoming Un-Biblical Dualism:

This topic is of the utmost importance according to the experts. This focus could effectively be covered in the integrated biblical worldview course, however because of the subtle and often un-noticed root of platonic dualism that is rampant among evangelical thinking, it is important in this season to intentionally address and uproot this non-biblical notion in all of its expressions. This of course should ideally begin at the undergraduate level of those called to work in pastoral or church educational ministries. The experts also emphasized that there is a genuine lack of understanding for the biblical concepts of biblical holiness and worldliness in the church. This understanding must first be resident among church leaders and needs attention. The fragmentation issue among evangelicals will only be overcome through overcoming a dualistic mindset, which is embedded in European culture.

### 4) Understanding the Arts:

Required courses at MA, MDiv., and DMin. levels could be for instance, *The Value, Function, and the Role of the Arts for Church and Society*. Perhaps this could be touched on in the worldview emphasis, and

then also offered as elective courses for post-graduate theological studies. This would provide important insights as well for the role of the arts in the church culture. The experts pointed out the need to grasp Imago Dei as foundational for our understanding for successful ministry to society. The artistic capacities are our creative tools, and it is part in parcel to pastoral service to steward a creative mentality for both church and society. Another course, which could be offered, could be a course where there is an investigation into the arts in church history as well as the movements of arts generally in history. Such a course would be effective in learning from the church's successes and failures in history in regards to understanding and involvement in the arts. Other courses of study for pastoral training could be for instance, 'Stewarding the Grace of God in our Church,' or perhaps very directly 'Art and the Bible.' As western societies are inundated with the creative arts, this sphere is too important to be left to purely intercultural tracks for pastoral training.

*Mindset Strategies for Congregations*

The following are pastoral teaching focuses in the church, which lays a foundation for creating a cultural and artistic ethos for our congregations. This is certainly not an exhaustive list, but simply some examples for sermon series and teaching venues.

Table 6: Mindset Strategies for Congregations

1) Sermon series on holiness from the pastoral staff, with implications for Christian presence in culture.
2) Sermon series on stewarding the grace of God expressed in physical talents. Teaching that the talent itself does not determine the calling or assignment, rather the talents are to be seen as

tools to accomplish the call and service assignment given by God in whatever sphere he directs.
3) Sermon series on the mission of the church, emphasizing a sense of destiny for serving God in every sphere to the glory of God, which of course includes the arts. It is important to emphasize that all are called to serve God. (Malachi 3:18)
4) Whether the term biblical worldview is used or not, teach and articulate a biblical view of life using a vocabulary that is understandable along with the practical cultural implications for God's calling and service in the mainstream, not only for artists, but for every sphere of society. A church could employ educational materials from organizations like Focus on the Family's, <i>The Truth Project</i> , which is a DVD-based small group curriculum designed to communicate a Christian worldview.
5) Pastoral sermons about the beauty of the narrative dimension of the Bible as well as focusing on the strength of the imagery of Scriptures. Emphasize that 75% of Scriptures are either narrative or image and arts driven. In addition, highlight the fact that the Psalms are written in poetic form as well as many of the Psalms were written as hymns to be sung for all of Israel. Note that King David musically arranged some Psalms for certain instruments as Psalm chapters four, five, six, and twelve.
6) Sermon series on the implications of the Incarnation of Christ: <i>The Word became flesh</i> . Strengthen through this teaching that we are to become a people of the Word of God, but emphasize that the Word must also be incarnated into our lives tangibly through our presence in the real world context.
7) Offer a season for Sunday school teaching from books that have a focus on the arts, such as <i>Roaring Lambs</i> by Bob Briner or <i>Art &amp; the Bible</i> by Francis Schaefer.
8) A survey needs to be constructed or obtained and used for local churches that assesses and discloses the dualistic thinking prevalent in local congregations so that teaching materials can be prepared or acquired that address these issues.

*Program Strategies for Congregations*

Educating the congregants of a church of course can take many forms. Modernity's form of education is via the pulpit or lectures, which is still valid, but there are other effective ways of educating and enlarging the vision of the local church for the arts. Below is a list of seventeen suggestions, which certainly are not exhaustive but given here as potential examples.

Table 7: Program Strategies for Congregations

1) Organize 'Creative Arts and Bible Camp' for teens in the summer months. Find an appropriate creative title such as Creative Explosion, Artrageous, Art Revolution, or the Next Generation: Arts & Creativity. It is important to emphasize the biblical endorsement of imagination and make it clear that teaching on the Bible will lay a foundation for involvement in the arts and culture. The goal is not to suggest that everyone should consider becoming a fine arts or performing arts artist; rather such an training opportunity simply meets the younger generation where they are. Their role models are contemporary artists and it is important to provide excellent examples. In addition, such an event would potentially expand the vision of what serving God is for the next generation. Workshops could include, sports, the arts, adventure, and even science. For workshop teachers, recruit qualified artists, athletes, and local science teachers from your own local congregation or from other local churches in your city to teach workshops for the camp. Draw from para-church organizations for advice on content and facilitation. For the arts area, include as many artistic disciplines for training as you have qualified instructors. Think as broadly as possible about the arts workshops. This list is not exhaustive but some examples include painting, video, theater, acting, dance, creative story writing, story telling, graphic arts, stand-up comedy, poetry, voice, various musical

instruments, and photography. The pastor should be a significant voice teaching in these camps. Finally, the emphasis for camps should be on craftsmanship, character, creativity, and with teaching on a biblical view of the arts and life.

2) Consider altering the age old (an over 100 year strategy among many evangelicals) vacation Bible school program for the younger ones that is traditionally held annually and reform it to run under the name of "Kids, the Bible, and the Arts" or "Creative Bible Camp". This event is held primarily in church movements that have been spawned by American missionaries in Europe, but where such programs are carried out in Europe, this adjustment would be recommended. Here again find artists available to teach workshops who are excellent role models and remit the teachers reasonably.

3) Organize art excursions for church members visiting galleries, attending a concert, or a musical theater performance for different age groups in the church. Organize a film to be played at the church facility or go together to a selected film and set a time later for dialogue about what was seen. Through such excursions, teach your church in the different age groups how to critically discern contemporary or classical art.

4) Recommend current books, both fiction and non-fiction to the local congregation. There are sources in the Internet for Christian advice for good material appropriate for all ages and interests you can draw from.

5) Offer a book-reading evening, reading books created by artists who are Christians, or worthy books that address relevant material and issues either in fiction or non-fiction.

6) Launch special creative church programs for church gatherings incorporating the arts, beyond just music perhaps based on the seasonal church celebration calendar.

7) Consider collaborations with your local church with para-church organizations, even if they are not a part of your denomination to create short-term conferences, seminars, or training programs in the arts for church members and the community.

8) Organize an evening during the week for creative expression either in watercolor painting for beginners taught by artists of the congregation or artists from other churches if there is not a painter. If not water-coloring, it could be workshops on sketching or drawing. Actually, such events can be in musical areas, as well as poetry, drama, or photography for example. This could be done in semester units.

9) Invite artists as a guest speakers to perform and share from their lives, whether in the Sunday school context or during a retreat, or for a Sunday service. Especially invite artists who are godly role models who are dedicated believers, but who are called to work in the mainstream.

10) Nurture a sense of endorsement for those called to the arts in the mainstream as well as service in other societal spheres. For instance, build in the Sunday liturgy special prayer for different spheres of societal service of the members once a month. For example, from October through April there are seven months. This provides seven opportunities to pray for and endorse those called to different spheres of vocational occupations. Include for example, diverse spheres such as: medical, science, and research professionals whether for physical or mental health; business and commerce people in retail or wholesale; all those involved in education for all levels; all those involved in the political realm in local and national arenas; all public service and the military; all clergy and missionaries; and the arts and entertainment professionals. In doing this, the arts and media then receive the same affirmation as all of the other spheres. Each month include those who are called to each of these spheres, even if they are currently unemployed. Have those stand and have the congregation pray silently or a leader can offer prayer out loud. Perhaps offer a brief biblical endorsement for these spheres. This would awaken a powerful cultural ethos generally for the congregation for all the spheres of culture, including the arts.

<p>11) Acquire quality fine arts works either through a specific commission reflecting a specific aspect of the church DNA, or that speaks to the values and vision of the church. Present the works in an appropriate location determined with the artists, which is available to the entire congregation, either in the foyer, or in special rooms in the church facility.</p>
<p>12) Pastoral leaders could create a survey for the church membership to discover the diverse artistic talents that are resident in any given body. Once this is given and the results reviewed, offer opportunities for special workshops taught by artists in the church for those areas. If there are no artists in any particular church that can cover these areas, perhaps invite an artist from another church to come and aid in this stewardship exercise.</p>
<p>13) A questionnaire should be crafted that ascertains the level of understanding generally among the congregants on subjects like culture and on the attitude towards the arts. Such data would be helpful in preparing the teaching direction for the church body.</p>
<p>14) Organize one-day Creative festivals, to celebrate some historical date relative to the local church. This could be a friendship festival reaching out to the community, recruiting the artists of the church to prepare and present their works, as well as creativity at all levels.</p>
<p>15) Some churches in various church movements already have small groups. Re-organize these groups based on special interest, fine arts, drama, creative movement (if the term dance has a negative connotation), photography, crafts, puppets, video production, etc. The possibilities are endless. Allow these groups to participate in the church life, holidays, special events, celebrations, etc. When there is a need for creative program, these groups are already functioning.</p>
<p>16) Occasionally do an entire church service employing the arts. For such a service invite professional vocalists that are Christians, interview them, have them perform. Also, invite a fine arts professional who is a Christian in your city if not a member already of your church, and ask them to provide a small</p>

exhibition of their works for the evening. Have a speaker specifically address the church of what it means to be a Christian in artistic professions. This has been done successfully in Reformed churches in Basel, Switzerland and in Brussels, Belgium. Such an event should be carried out in the normal church service gathering so that the entire church could benefit from the exposure to quality art and artists.

17) Create space for a gallery in the church facility and open it up for the congregation and for the general-public.

### *Church Strategies for Nurturing Artists*

The following practical strategies for spiritual formation and nurturing of the artists in the congregations are recommended and come from the experts, artists, and some from the research material. Certainly, some of the strategies below will need more thought, but these suggestions are meant to get creative thinking underway.

Table 8: Church Strategies for Nurturing Artists

1) Identify the gifted and trained aspiring or career artists in the congregation. If they have never been commissioned as an artist, then find an appropriate time and in a public way officially commission them for their call to serve in the mainstream culture. Of course, again this format is more conducive to the Free Church context; however, special organized meetings can be arranged in more formal expressions of the State Churches, where the leaders can carry out this commissioning. In any case, call for prayer for them in whatever context is appropriate to the existing church culture.

<p>2) Invite for a specific season, a fine arts or performing arts artist as a resident artist for the church supplying finances and time for them to be able to work on their art. The artists in this season could serve the church calendar and the specific culture of the church through their artistic talent. A close affirming pastoral mentoring relationship must be a part of this association.</p>
<p>3) Create appropriate space or a gallery for the fine arts artists of the congregation where congregants and guests can view these works.</p>
<p>4) Establish an artists' group that meets weekly for the artists of the church or even for believing artists in the city for mutual encouragement, creative exchange, and for discipleship. Perhaps offer an artists' breakfast for aspiring and career artists either monthly or quarterly.</p>
<p>5) Intentionally invite aspiring or career artists at specific times to contribute to the worship gatherings through their art form. Of course, this must be done with sensitivity for the artists, for the art form as well, and also for the congregation and in regards to the denominational position on the arts in worship in any specific church movement. If there is an opportunity for the arts in this context, then the presentations must be sensitive, appropriate, and edifying for the church.</p>
<p>6) Through personal contacts and associations of the pastoral leadership, build bridges to the community and in the city for your artists. Aid in the connection between businesses that wish to have an exhibition at their bank, or venue and the artists of your church.</p>
<p>7) Encourage a vision for further training and for professional competence for artistically gifted young people of the congregation. Investigate potential sources for scholarships or make known the need among the business community in the local church.</p>
<p>8) Raise up artist leaders to help disciple younger artists in the congregation and encourage collaborations with other churches to connect for arts projects into the community or city.</p>

9) Inaugurate an annual prayer day for artists called to work in the mainstream culture. Present the artists at least in name if not in person to the congregation for prayer. Have them share briefly and then pray for them.

10) Consider creating a volunteer, part time, or full time position called Pastor for Culture and the Arts. This is warranted specifically if there is a number aspiring or career artists in the congregation. This of course is an unconventional concept for State Churches, yet whatever the title is selected, some intentional pastoral oversight is needed. A layperson in the Catholic, Lutheran, Anglican, and Reformed streams of evangelicalism can be appointed. The pastor for worship, which is more common in the Free Church contexts here in Europe, could carry out these responsibilities. The range of responsibilities for this role could include the following: fostering character development, servant-hood emphasis, and integrity among the aspiring and career artists. In addition, this person could integrate diverse genres of the arts into the life of the congregation, and also identify and mentor upcoming arts leaders. They could also be instrumental in creating virtual interactive forums on topics related to the arts and faith for the church and the artists. They would be responsible for overseeing the design of web galleries where artworks can be shared, discussed, and evaluated. A crucial responsibility would be to make fellow church leaders in the congregation more aware of the place and role of the arts in the life of the church and society.

11) Consider sponsoring or launching a fund raising project for artists who need funds for a specific project. Raise funds also by presenting the need to generous patrons or business people in the local church.

12) Consider creating an artist's statement or covenant that represents a biblical vision and character for an artist ethically and aesthetically such as "Confessions of a Servant Artist" that can be employed publicly at the commissioning of an artist. This document should result from a collaboration between mature artists in the congregation and also church pastoral leadership or other church staff.

13) Search for a discipleship material that is already available specifically written by and for artists, which provides a map for moving in the arts as Christians. The goal of this material is to bring the artists to a deeper commitment to Christ. Apply this material for discipleship training for the aspiring and career artists of the church. One resource in English is the DVD series Stone by Stone prepared by Intervarsity with featured speaker, Colin Harbinson, of Stone Works International. The material is currently being translated into German, with a future goal of providing it also in other European languages.

14) Create an arts council that consists of pastors, practicing artists, spiritual leaders, and business people, as a resource for counsel, career advice, prayer support, and potential project development.

15) Publicly communicate any arts exhibits, performances, or presentations by artists in the church via the church weekly bulletin, or a notice board, or through a Sunday announcement about artists of the congregation. Offer prayer publicly for the event, exhibition, or presentation and allow a brief report on the event after the fact.

### *Strategies for Church Movements*

Church wide movements and evangelical alliances in Europe can serve a very important role in forward progress in the landscape of the arts for European society informed by a biblical worldview. The work of CAE has experienced this first hand. In order to see this progress, it will take a renaissance in the thinking and heart of entire church movements. The following

suggestions in some ways are already being enacted, however, much more is certainly to come.

Table 9: Strategies for Church Movements

<p>1) Church movement arts consultations for all the Christian-based artists associated with their denomination, where dialogue, exchange, encouragement, and needed reconciliation between artists and with church leaders can take place openly in their ranks.</p>
<p>2) Seek out collaborations with mature para-church organizations, which have effectively pioneered in the arts in order to offer networking for artists in their denomination whether the artists work in education, missions, the church, or in the market place.</p>
<p>3) Re-evaluate the curriculum in denominational Bible schools and theological seminaries as to whether they are offering courses, which nurture a biblical endorsement of cultural engagement and the arts. As an example, they could see if in their course of studies adequately covers the following areas: Crafting and Articulating a Biblical Worldview; Understanding Culture as a Concept; Understanding the Function and Purpose of the Arts; and Understanding Contemporary Cultural Movements. Heads of denominational Bible schools or seminaries in evangelical streams could draw from other schools either in their own continent or in other western societies that have made good progress in this sphere of arts and cultural engagement for council and advice for developing an arts program.</p>
<p>4) Hire a temporary arts advocate expert as a consultant to lead think tanks and speak into the church movement, encouraging the development of a new mindset regarding the arts and culture. Two para-church initiatives, Intervarsity and Operation Mobilization, hired Colin Harbinson as a consultant. The fruit resulting from this investment in their works has been tangible.</p>
<p>5) Schools with advanced art programs could consider sending representatives out to continental European Bible schools and seminaries to act as a diplomatic arm for exchange and potential collaborations.</p>

<p>6) Form a round table of those church leaders in the denomination who have a specific focus on the arts for church and society. In Switzerland, under the direction of Beat Rink, the evangelical alliance has collaborated with Rink and others to form a round table called Arts-Plus Switzerland for arts leaders among evangelicals as an extension of the alliance. This round table is called on for specific alliance gatherings. The arts are thus publicly endorsed and an appreciation, ethos, and awareness are cultivated among all evangelicals.</p>
<p>7) Appoint a pastoral leader to be the cultural representative, like an ambassador from the church, to the country or a given city. This has been done in Switzerland and as a result, bridges have been built to the community.</p>
<p>8) Issue an official letter or statement from the church movement similar to Pope John Paul II's letter to artists. Whereas, the authority structure and understanding is certainly different among many evangelical streams of faith, still such a statement or official letter could be circulated in order to begin the reconciliation process between artists and the evangelical church.</p>

### Suggestions for Further Research

Numerous research directions can be undertaken for further progress for cultivating a biblical ethos for the arts, and for enlarging the vision for the arts among evangelical congregations.

Table 10: Suggestions for Further Research

<p>1) Research church history in terms of observing the church's attitude and position towards culture and the arts of their age. Begin with studying the Reformers and the age of reformation. As the old adage declares, if we do not learn from history we are destined to repeat it.</p>
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<p>2) A new biblical worldview survey should be constructed for local churches that would go beyond simply ascertaining if the church is biblically literate or that they possess a correct New Testament vocabulary. A great deal of the research would be to determine, what kind of questions would best expose the genuine view that affects the average evangelical's daily decisions. Such a survey should reveal the capacity to articulate the implications of their faith for the sphere of work, business, politics, the arts, education, and science. This survey then could be employed to specifically address the sub-structured issues that need to be addressed.</p>
<p>3) Undertake a study that relates to tracing the origin of dualistic thought prevalent among evangelicals. For instance, a study on the early Latin and Greek church fathers could be carried out to ascertain which theologians were influenced by dualistic thought. Such a study could constitute an entire dissertation. Then perhaps, a comprehensive study of the pre-modern, and Dark Age writer's propensity towards dualism leading up to the Reformation could be investigated. One could also trace the dualistic thought that influenced the Reformation, the counter-reformation, and Free Church movements birthed in their respective eras.</p>
<p>4) Undertake a research project that deals with the historical evangelical perception of holiness in relationship to the mission of the church in various epochs of history.</p>
<p>5) There could be regional investigations to find out which local churches have developed an ethos and subsequent capacity for empowerment of believing artists for service in mainstream culture. Interview them and discover their journey and the steps that brought about their success. As a result of this investigation, provide a report for the denominational leaders, which could also be made available to local church pastors.</p>
<p>6) An intensive investigation in Europe for the Christian-based arts organizations that exists in the 27 EU states for mutual encouragement, and potential collaboration. This study would include the movements that are under the immediate direction of a local church, a church movement, or a para-church organization.</p>

7) A research survey could be conducted which ascertains the relationship of mainstream believing artists to their local church and the level of support they have or the lack of it. A second part would be to survey pastors of these churches. They also need the chance to express their perspectives about the arts, artists, and their relationship to the church. Carry this out nation by nation, but include all genres of art. This data would be invaluable to aid in developing strategies for reconciliation between artists and local churches.

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, there are multiple valid concerns expressed in an endless number of books and essays these days for evangelicals to consider and the spokes-persons for any legitimate concern will certainly be just as passionate about their area as was expressed for this research concern. Whereas, it is so true that one concern is certainly not more important than the other, yet the arts have been so neglected among evangelicals that attention for this area is long overdue, especially in view of the postmodern cultural prevalence in western societies. In truth, it is not only a *kairos* moment, but also a *kairos* season for evangelicals to awaken to the significant role of the arts for the church and society.

The great challenge before us now is how to awaken church leaders and evangelicals to the importance of the arts. If church leaders would read and process authors

like Seerveld, Schaefer, Rookmaaker, Wolterstorff, the Rykens, Dyrness, Begbie, and Harbinson, then certainly a renewed vision could be imparted and change could be set in motion. However, the written word can only go so far in catalyzing needed change.

There remains then an urgent need for a tangible incarnation; a flesh and blood demonstration of the viability of what has been presented in these pages, modeled through artists living out the vision articulated in this work beyond the sub-cultural dimension of the church. As Albert Schweitzer declares, "Example is not the main thing in influencing others, it is the only thing" (Stanley 1999, 177).

Thankfully, there are examples of patient, faithful, servant artists who corroborate the veracity of the concerns expressed in this work through their biblical relevant, honorable, and godly engagement in the arts in mainstream culture in many western societies, including Europe. The six market-place artists involved in this research are some of those examples. These represent hundreds across the continent who did not wait for the church to understand them before they connected and became faithful members of evangelical churches. At the same time, these artists remained true to their call to work in

the mainstream, and they through their humility have taken the first step towards the church. Their hope is that, in time, their churches will grow in their understanding and then rise up and be intentional about affirming their engagement in the mainstream culture.

Through proofreading the artists' submissions just before writing this conclusion, my heart overflowed with praise to God in the small office where the majority of this paper has been composed, just outside Brussels, Belgium. The praise was mingled with intercessions again for these and hundreds of other artists across Europe as well as for a renewed vision among God's people for the arts whether applied for the context of the market place, missions, education, or in the church culture.

As a finale, it is important to give ear to some closing statements of those who have attuned their ear to God's heart for this current generation in regards to the arts. First, renowned theologian Calvin Seerveld provides his prophetic observation as he saw the good fruit for church and society ahead when artists fulfill their designated mission in the mainstream culture:

When artists as individuals or as a local community direct their skilled imagination to service the needs of their individual or institutional neighbours, teaching us through their works to see more sharply what nuances there are in reality; then a start may be made in

situating artists more normatively and wholesomely in our society. (Seerveld 2000, 60)

Gene Edward Veith, Jr. then expresses the obvious pressing need for artists and for the church:

Artists need the discipling of the church. They need its dogmas, its pastoral care, and its community support. The church also needs its artists, both for the sake of its own spiritual life and for the sake of its larger mission in the world. (Veith 1991, 24)

Erwin McManus's appeal in his book, *An Unstoppable Force: Daring to Become the Church God had in Mind*, speaks to the urgency of finding the motivation to embrace the importance of the arts:

If we as a church are unmotivated by the importance of the aesthetics, then perhaps we should become motivated by the importance for our children. To neglect the aesthetics as a part of the ethos of the church is to concede the potential of her constituency to mediocrity. (McManus 2007, 129)

He goes on to relate the tragic outcome should we fail in our call to stewardship for this expedient sphere:

The big implication for the church is that we will lose our ability to communicate with culture if we do not regain a commitment to the development of aesthetics. (McManus 2007, 129)

In order to fulfill Akers' appeal over twenty years ago, the artists need affirmation, not patronization. They need relationship and not only an invitation to another church gathering. They need *holy* license from leadership to think innovatively outside the box and to

draw outside the lines, not the lines of righteousness, but the lines of conventionality. Yet with this license they need feedback and honest critical dialogue and not a superficial approval of any and everything they produce. They, more than most members of the church, need *authentic* interest, not superficial inquiry. Trust with church leadership is crucial and must be established through integrity driven authentic friendships. When this is achieved, artists have a chance to embrace healthy relational accountability with pastoral leadership.

In the book, *Visioneering: God's blueprint for developing and maintaining personal vision*, Andy Stanley quotes an ancient Chinese proverb, which is crucial to the realization of the vision of this work. He declares:

If your vision is for a year, plant wheat, if  
your vision is for ten years, plant trees, if  
your vision is for a lifetime, plant people.  
(Stanley 1999, 73)

Change takes place when the church sees the vision, starts to design and implement new strategies, and begins to disseminate the artists throughout mainstream culture.

How can we get there? If we are to see a greater presence of God-fearing artists for the public square, as pastoral leaders we must be available and pour into artists' lives as we would for any of those who are called to full time ministry or missions. To be sure, we cannot

teach them how to be artists, but we can teach them how to be servants, how to walk in integrity, and how to hold on to God amidst the storms of life. The strategies in this work are only possibilities of what could be enacted. What is needed above all else now is leadership. Pastors must do what they do best and are called to do, which is simply, lead. The Pope led for Catholics; may evangelical leaders do the same for their congregations.

John Wilson's profound summation of the current state of affairs for the arts in western societies and his solution expresses the true starting place for our involvement in the arts as evangelicals and appropriately bring this dissertation to an end.

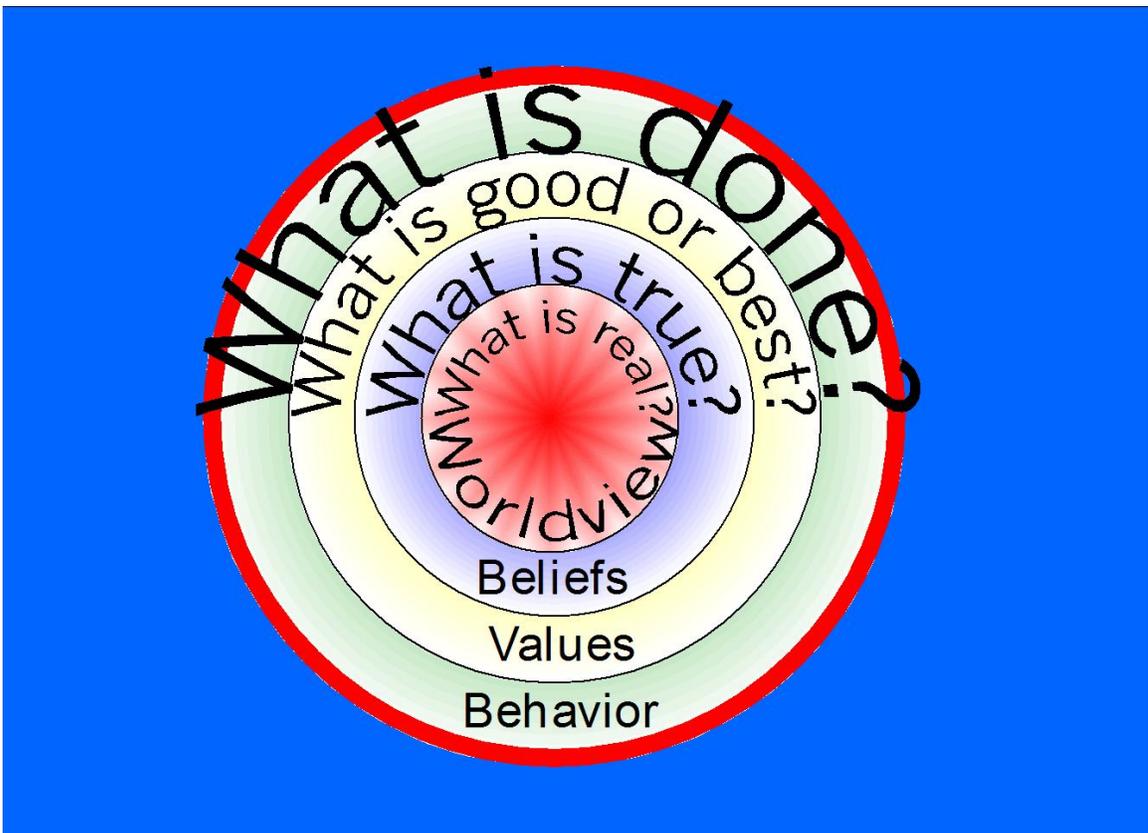
Perhaps the starting point should be tears. Weep for a glorious gift that is being degraded into a worthless thing; for art that shows no craftsmanship and communicates no vision. Weep for our theaters where blasphemy and sexual license are mistaken for liberty; for our often violent and pornographic cinema; for cheap sensational literature; for poetry that has nothing to say; paintings revealing no created reality, and music that only disturbs and can never delight. We must weep for our lost culture, for the makers of that culture and the casualties that are all around us. We must mourn for the death, and apparent death of real art that, made with skill and imagination, can reveal a transcendent reality adding fresh dimensions to human life.

The tears should lead to prayer. Prayer for those highly gifted that they will use their talents to enrich human life, bring truth and joy by opening our eyes and understanding. We should

pray for those whom God has called to serve Him in the arts that they might learn to use them aright in their lonely, difficult, yet glorious calling. We should pray that God the giver of every good and perfect gift, will raise up Christian artists for our age; men like Bezalel and Oholiab who, called to work on the building of the Tabernacle, were filled with the Spirit of God with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship. (Wilson 1981, 103)

APPENDIX A

LLOYD KWAST'S CROSS-SECTION OF CULTURE



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## VITA

James Walter Mills, Jr., was born June 16, 1950, in Memphis, Tennessee. He was raised Southern Baptist and baptized in 1959 at his home church, Dellwood Baptist Church. He graduated from Frayser High School with a double major in mathematics and science in 1968.

In 1972, he graduated from Memphis State University with a Bachelors of Business Administration in Marketing Advertising and a minor in Mathematics. In his final year, he was awarded the Advertising Department Undergraduate Assistant position, conferred by the Memphis Advertising Federation. In March of 1972, he surrendered to full-time Christian service and was licensed for the Gospel ministry on October 15, 1972, by his home church.

From 1972 until 1975, he studied five semesters at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) in Texas towards a Master of Divinity. He married Elizabeth Anne Gibson on August 3, 1975. From 1975 to 1976, he served voluntarily in various outreach ministries at Beverly Hills Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas. In the fall

of 1976, the Mills followed God's call to missions to Germany with Youth with a Mission.

After attending the YWAM German language school and the School of Evangelism, they became YWAM staff until 1985. The Mills served as co-leaders for German speaking discipleship and evangelism training schools from 1978 through 1983. From 1980 to 1983, they were appointed as worship directors for the YWAM headquarters in Hurlach, Germany. The Mills also sang on YWAM German worship projects and then recorded their own German language recordings in 1981 and 1990. Together, the Mills have written numerous choruses in German, which were published by various publishing companies, which are still sung today throughout German speaking Europe. Their only son, James David Mills, was born in Augsburg, Germany, in 1981.

In 1983, the Mills family worked for six months serving with YWAM in Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, and with the YWAM 1984 International Olympic Outreach in Los Angeles, California, for four months. During the Olympics, they served on staff with King's Kids International. In 1983, the Mills were invited to join the board for the Celebration Ministries International, known today as Creative Missions International, Inc.

In 1985, they resigned their position with YWAM to pioneer the work they currently spearhead which focuses on the sphere of the arts, known as Creative Arts Europe, a subsidiary of CMI. Mills was ordained November 1, 1989, by their sending church, Church of the King in Dallas, Texas.

From 1986 well into the first decade of the new millennium, the Mills pioneered creative arts training camps and seminars in Germany, Austria, Holland, Finland, Switzerland, and Belgium, overseeing over 70 training events through their years of service. In 2000, Mills enrolled at Covenant Theological Seminary in Tallahassee, Florida, and on December 1, 2002, he was awarded a M.A. in Theology. Currently, he and his wife continue their work with CAE and CMI and serve as the directors for both of these initiatives from the European headquarters of CAE near Brussels, Belgium. Currently, he and his wife, Anne, are part of Christian Center Church of Waterloo, Belgium.