

The Profane Arts of the Middle Ages



Les Arts profanes du Moyen Age

Vol. VII, No. 1
Spring 1998

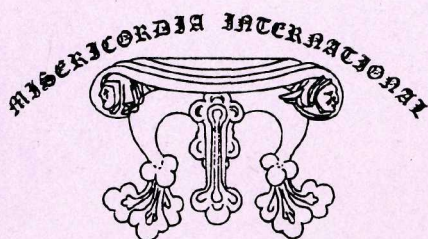


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Misericordia International was established to further research and communication among scholars engaged in the study of medieval choir stall carvings and other profane arts of the Middle Ages. Concerns encompass visual arts, music, dance and literature to the extent that they focus on the secular sphere. Membership is open to all interested scholars and amateurs. *The Profane Arts* welcomes articles on recent research and critical observations in all areas of the profane arts.

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Editorial

Thanks to this electronic world, in November, 1997, we were able to meet Chris Henige, from the University of Wisconsin, at Saint-Martin-aux-Bois. At a meeting of the Board of Trustees of *Les Stalles de Picardie*, we learned that Chris had just completed his doctorate on the 13th century architecture of the abbey of Saint-Martin and was to present, in three days time, a copy of his thesis to Mayor Warmé. Several e-mails later we were in telephone contact and three days later we exchanged information on the architecture and the choir stalls of Saint-Martin. Chris will write the architectural portion of the guide we plan on Saint-Martin-aux-Bois and has presented a paper on the on the glazing program of Saint-Martin's glorious windows, at Kalamazoo.

Two new theses on medieval choir stalls have come to my attention. France Richemonde has written a master's thesis (University of Limoges) on the choir stalls of Mortemart in the department of the Haute Vienne. Part of her doctoral thesis at the University of Paris will be a survey of the work that has been done on choir stalls in France. She has joined the team working on *Les Stalles de Picardie*.

Natalie Pineau-Farge has completed a master's thesis (University of Paris) on the choir stalles of Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne in the department of Savoie.

Other theses are under way at Tel Aviv University in Israel, at the University of Toulouse and at Poitiers. Several theses are also in process in the western hemisphere at Missouri, North Carolina, and Toronto. I am sure there are still others hiding from our eyes. Please let us know where they are and the problems they propose to resolve.

Since there seems to be a flowering of theses on choir stalls at this time Misericordia International, with the help of France Richemond,

is planning a small conference in early fall of 1998 to discuss the problems of research on choir stalls. Vocabulary is not yet standardized, nor is the method of identifying and describing a carving on choir stalls. In one language or another a word to describe a part of a choir stall does not exist and in other cases several alternate words are used indiscriminately to describe the same part of a choir stall. High and low stalls are described in varying ways and numbering of stalls is quite haphazard. Some kind of agreement on these basics would help researchers to exchange information.

Our aim is to gather together the young scholars working on choir stalls and a few who have already developed unique systems of study. Those of our readers who are interested in such a conference please contact Misericordia International. See the form on the last page of this issue.

Misericordia International has participated at the British Art Historian conference at Exeter and at Kalamazoo during the spring of 1998. Events are planned at Saint-Martin for the summer and we will again offer guided tours of the choir stalls of the Chateau of Gaillon at the Basilica Saint-Denis and the choir stalls at Saint-Martin during patrimony weekend, the third Saturday and Sunday of September. Do join us if you are in the neighborhood.

We regret that our issue honoring Charity Canon Willard had to be postponed. Some of the authors of the works that were commissioned had not submitted their papers in time for the spring issue of *The Profane Arts*.

We look forward to that issue next fall or spring.



Ape and Fox at Lectern

Zamora, Spain