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## Editorial

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We have the honor of dedicating this issue of *The Profane Arts / Les arts profanes* to the eminent scholar Charity Canon Willard. As she did with so many of her colleagues and friends, she also propelled me into the medieval world and opened my twentieth-century eyes to much that I had not previously noted. I have enjoyed many a sumptuous dinner with Charity and her stimulating partner, Sumner, and entertained them in my Paris apartment. A colloquium was always more interesting if Charity were there and we met in many scholarly surroundings on two continents.

I thank Leslie Abend Callahan for guest editing this issue. I have taken the liberty of adding a few notes to the papers presented at the Mid-Hudson Colloquium. These additions focus on the idea of Charity on misericords and also show that at least one commanding woman, Marguerite of Austria, who treasured manuscripts of Christine de Pizan, ordered an impressive set of choir stalls. Perhaps her writing and Christine's can help to explain some of the enigmatic iconography on these stalls.

*The Profane Arts* now has a web site maintained by Brian Levy of Hull University. We have listed, in response to many requests, the articles in back issues of the journal. We also have a *misericord of the month* and invite viewers to identify the image and comment on it. Listings of Misericordia colloquia are also included, and we hope in this way to reach a wider audience.

Misericordia is planning a mini-colloquia for the last weekend in October, ending November 1, 1998. We hope to gather together those students now writing theses on choir stall carvings and discuss some basic research problems. For example, vocabulary in this field is sadly confused. Words in English, such as "poppy" have no equivalent in French, and *jouée* has no equivalent in English. If we adopt a consistent lexicon, we will at least understand what others are doing.

One of the other research problems is the numerotation of choir stalls: Where does one begin to count and in what direction do we proceed? How do we indicate the forms of the seats and what significance do the different forms have? What data bases are being used, and what types of data are being collected?

These may not be the most exciting subjects for conversation, but they are basic to all work. Four dissertations are under way at the University of Paris and several more are in other universities in France and the United States. This is a decided increase over past studies, since the first dissertation on choir stalls at the University of Paris was completed six years ago.

We also wish to alert our readers to the fourth international Misericordia conference to be held in Amiens (Somme) from August 5-8, 1999. Papers on medieval iconography in northern France and Flanders are solicited.

Misericordia International is also sponsoring two sessions at Kalamazoo: Profane Images in Sacred Places I: LUST; II: PAGANS. The papers accepted for these sessions include commentary on tapestries, books of hours, and altarpieces, as well as misericords.

We continue to work with *Les Stalles de Picardie* and hope to raise funds to preserve the stalls at Saint-Martin-aux-Bois (Oise). To this end we have printed two postcards and a number of tee shirts with photographs of the choir stalls. We also sponsor occasional concerts and guided visits. Further information is available from Misericordia International.

We hope that you enjoy this issue. Thank you again, Charity Canon Willard for serving as our mentor and for enriching our lives.

Elaine C. Block, editor-in-chief