



# THE SANCTUARY

## AT FLEISHER ART MEMORIAL

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
HSPV 701-201: PRESERVATION STUDIO  
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# 1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was created in Fall 2009 as part of the Second-Year Studio, a required course for all students in the Graduate Program of Historic Preservation at the University of Pennsylvania. The course is structured to provide real-world experience working in groups to create solutions to actual preservation problems. The end product is a written report comprised of group work and individual projects undertaken by each group member. The group chose to focus its efforts on facets of the Sanctuary that had not yet been covered by either the KSK Report or the Penn Praxis summer report, in order to leave Fleisher with a comprehensive understanding of the space.

The studio team focused on preservation issues relating to the interior of the space, for example the conservation of the wall paintings, and



**Figure 1.0.1. Detail of Oakley reredos. Credit: Authors.**

remedying the current underutilization of the Sanctuary through possible alterations to building fabric and usage. In addition, it was agreed that although the previous reports did an admirable job of putting Fleisher's campus in the context of its neighborhood and the broader city, it was important to examine how the Sanctuary performs within the context of the campus to fully understand how it could best serve the rest of the school.

Throughout the project, the group considered the goals and mission of the Fleisher Art Memorial, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing free or low-cost arts education to Philadelphians of all ages, backgrounds, and levels of experience. The recently completed *Strategic Plan 2009-2012* highlighted their desire to grow and change as necessary to better serve their mission-- "To make art accessible to everyone." The group felt it was of the utmost importance to arrive at solutions that also helped further their mission.

While identifying interior preservation issues was a fairly straightforward task, grappling with the task of reprogramming the space proved to be a challenge. The group shied away from suggesting narrow, specific uses for the Sanctuary, instead focusing on identifying possible usage categories (e.g. gallery space, classroom space) and evaluating any material changes such usage would require. The statement of significance allowed the group to "rank" the physical fabric of the Sanctuary by tolerances for change and guided the design, conservation,



and programming recommendations. Our evaluation of space usage on campus further directed our recommendations. Our tentative programming categories, while not exhaustive, were created in conjunction with the Fleisher Art Memorial's mission statement. We felt that, as the Sanctuary is the symbolic "heart" of the school, its use should further the goals of the school.

The individual projects undertaken by group members as a requirement for the course were wide-ranging, but it was decided that all projects should relate to the preservation principles developed from the statement of significance. Given the limited number of group members, however, and the limitation of a three-month window in which to complete the project, obviously not all identified preservation issues could be addressed as individual projects.

For the final deliverable, this report provides a comprehensive historical, physical, programmatic, and contextual evaluation of the Sanctuary at the Fleisher Art Memorial. It is designed to allow Fleisher to use this report as part of a strategy to preserve and properly utilize the Sanctuary.



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## 2.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE SANCTUARY AT FLEISHER ART MEMORIAL

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

### 2.2 PREVIOUS WORK

### 2.3 SANCTUARY TERMINOLOGY



## 2.1 INTRODUCTION & OBJECTIVES

Within Fleisher Art Memorial's campus, the Sanctuary serves as an art gallery, gathering place, and quiet refuge. These multiple values and uses give the Sanctuary a significant place within the history and current functioning of the organization. By deliberately connecting the Sanctuary with Fleisher Art Memorial's mission "to make art accessible to everyone," this report strengthens the Sanctuary's role as a landmark within the campus and the neighborhood.

While several studies have addressed campus-wide space allocation and organizational structures, no comprehensive study has been completed combining a study of the interior historic fabric with stakeholder uses of the Sanctuary. This report addresses these gaps and connects the Sanctuary with Fleisher Art Memorial's goals for institutional growth.

The studio team approached the Sanctuary project with the following objectives:

1. To evaluate the available resources within the Sanctuary space.
2. To evaluate the significance of the historic fabric of the Sanctuary.
3. To build on the research and recommendations of the PennPraxis and KSK studies.
4. To increase flexibility of use in the Sanctuary space and provide design suggestions to promote the goals of Fleisher Art Memorial.

These objectives reflect a values-centered preservation approach based on Fleisher's campus-wide goals for growth and the significance of the

historic structure. They also encourage innovative ideas for transformations within the Sanctuary. By building on previous research and thoroughly documenting the Sanctuary, this report provides a foundation for change and preservation that will help Fleisher Art Memorial plan for the future of the Sanctuary.





## 2.2 PREVIOUS WORK

Two previous reports were recently created involving the Fleisher Art Memorial, and they formed the starting point for our research. The first was a buildings assessment concluded by Kise Straw & Kolodner (KSK), a Philadelphia-based architectural and preservation firm, in the Fall 2009. Suzanna Barucco led the project at the Fleisher Art Memorial as head of a multi-disciplinary team. Their purpose was to document the existing conditions for the exterior of all campus buildings (excluding windows) and the interior of the Sanctuary.

Particular attention was paid to the roofing systems, especially in the Sanctuary where water infiltration has damaged wall paintings and deteriorated rafters. The exterior façade of the Sanctuary was deemed to be “in generally good condition.” However, it was suggested that a large scale repointing of the façade ought to be undertaken. Some minor cracking of masonry elements was noted, along with damage to the entranceway. The KSK recommendations for the exterior are broken into three levels based on how soon they should be executed: Level 1 (within 1 year), Level 2 (1-3years) and Level 3 (3-5 years). The majority of Level 1 repairs are to the roof and drainage systems. Most moderate repairs are to the façade and canopy along with treatment of the clerestory windows. Level 3 recommendations suggest conservation of the Lafarge window and replacement of the South door with a “historically appropriate door.” The KSK report also includes a proposal for a new lighting scheme for the

Sanctuary which will be discussed later in greater depth.

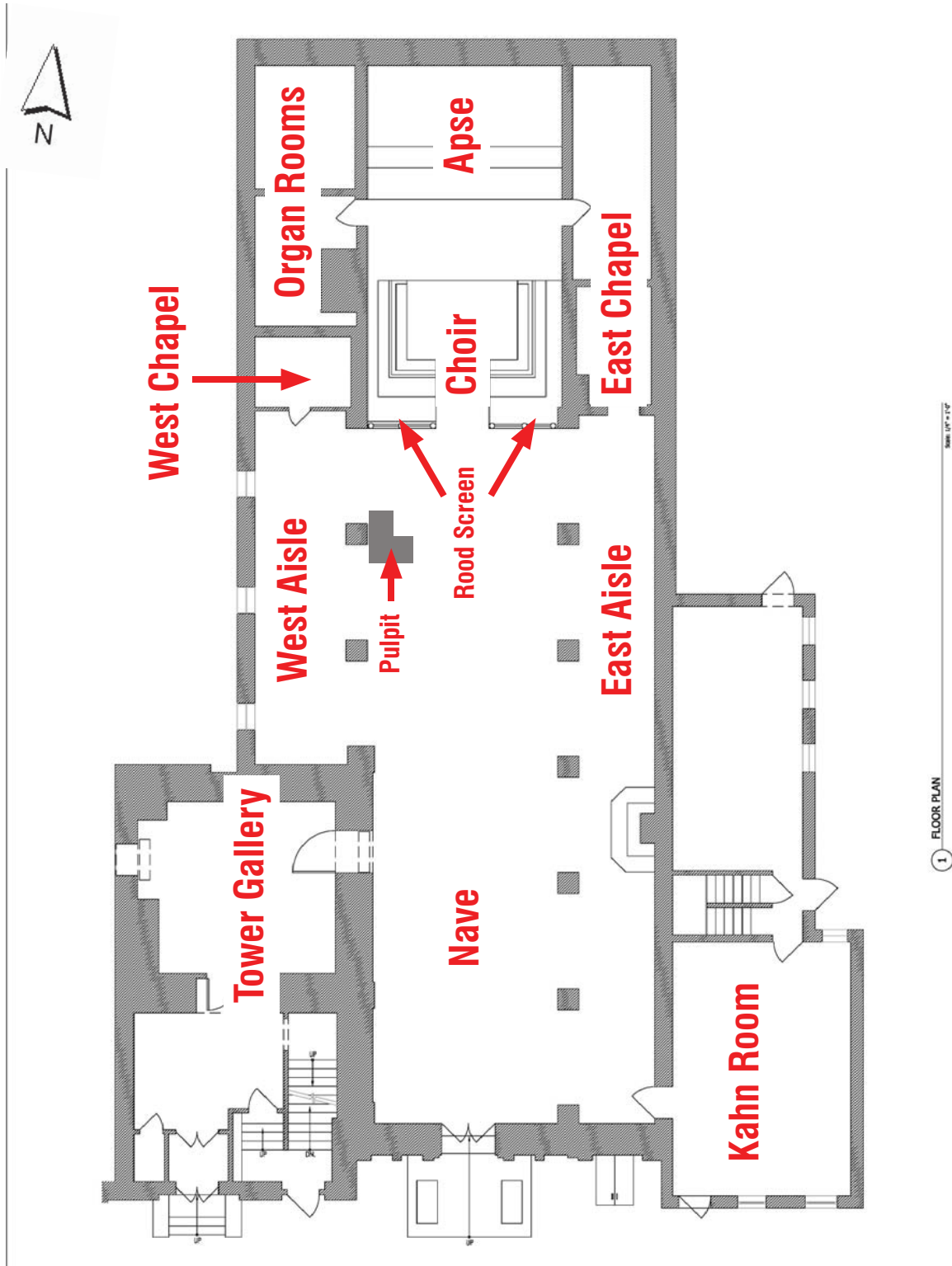
In the summer of 2009, PennPraxis began a project at the Fleisher Art Memorial to design an exhibit about the history and adaptive reuse of the Sanctuary and to lead a stakeholder “visioning session” about the potential for its future. This required research into comparable historic sites to develop a set of best-practices; establishing a stakeholder outreach/visioning process for the sanctuary; working with the Philadelphia Museum of Art to develop content for a semi-permanent interpretive exhibit about the sanctuary; and documenting the research and outreach processes. The project garnered terrific input from internal and external stakeholders and compiled a comprehensive history of the sanctuary, its fabric, and its context within the neighborhood.

After reviewing the work that had been done before us, our group developed a list of research questions and deliverables that we felt had not been included in the scopes of the previous reports. Using the historical research of the PennPraxis project as a jumping-off point, we expanded that research and created a statement of significance for the Sanctuary. That statement and the mission statement of the Fleisher Art Memorial were our primary guides when making space.





## 2.3 SANCTUARY TERMINOLOGY





## 3.0 SITE ORIENTATION

### 3.1 SITE EVOLUTION

### 3.2 CAMPUS SPACE ALLOCATION

### 3.3 CAMPUS CONTEXT

### 3.4 HISTORY OF THE SANCTUARY

### 3.5 HISTORIC DESIGNATION



## 3.1 SITE EVOLUTION

Within the greater region of Philadelphia, Fleisher Art Memorial is located in South East region of the city. This region is more commonly referred to as Bella Vista, which is Italian for “beautiful sight”. The boundaries of the neighborhood are South Street to the north, Washington to the south, 6<sup>th</sup> Street to the east, and 11<sup>th</sup> Street to the west. The area is well known for its arts and cultural events centered around public concerts, coffeehouses, Mew Gallery and Fleisher. The Sanctuary and Fleisher as an institution to situated centrally within the neighborhood.

In the 1849 Map of Philadelphia, the block on which Fleisher now stands held very few buildings. The Church had not yet been built, and the block stretched past Fulton and St. Albans streets. By 1858, the Philadelphia Atlas displays the current Fulton Street, which had just been created. The 1875 Philadelphia Atlas displays a much more dense region, in which row-house developments have become pervasive throughout the blocks. The initial incarnation of the Church of the Evangelists is shown on the current site of Fleisher, and extends from Catharine into Evangelist Street (now Fulton Street). This street name, coupled with St. Paul’s Avenue reveal the religious tenor surrounding the largely residential community. Important staples of industry include the Farmer’s & Butcher’s Market, along with the House of Industry, a vocational institution, across the street.

In 1881, Dr. Percival became rector for the Church

of the Evangelists at 711 Catharine Street. In 1884, Dr. Percival commissioned Furness, Evans and Co. to design a new church. The old Church of the Evangelist was torn down, with the exception of the campanile, and the new building was completed on the site in 1886. Dr Percival resigned in 1897, and his successor founded St. Martin’s College for Indigent Boys at 713-715 Catharine Street in 1905. The school was adjacent to the Church of the Evangelists, flanking its west wall and campanile. However, in 1911, both the Church of the Evangelists and St. Martin’s College closed.

Between this period and the 1910 Philadelphia Atlas, the Farmer’s & Butcher’s Market has been demolished to provide for much-needed housing in the region. Two more schools have been added within the vicinity of the Church. The street name changed from Evangelist to Fulton, reflecting a shift in the importance of the Church within the community and the waning support of the congregation. By 1911, the Church of the Evangelists closes, and the building sits vacant until 1922, when Fleisher buys the property as a continuation of the Graphic Sketch Club.

In 1958, the three story, four apartment building adjacent to the west of the Fleisher Art Memorial was purchased, 721 Catharine Street. Changes to the Fleisher complex over the next two years were the culmination of a large capital improvement program. The interior of 721 Catharine Street was completely reconstructed to meet the needs to the school; improvements included the creation of two classrooms, an exhibition studio, and a Print



Department in the basement. A garden in the back of the building was designed to exhibit outdoor sculpture and ceramics. And the seven classrooms in the original school building were refurbished at this time. All the ceilings, windows, and doors were repainted and ventilating fans were installed in the new partitions separating the classrooms.

During the 1962-1963 school year, a faculty member began repairs the damaged murals in the Sanctuary. The poor condition of the roof had caused extensive water damage. The repairs were completed the following year and the small garden behind 721 Catharine Street was completed. Also, a study was made to increase the basement space for additional classroom space for the print and ceramic departments.

In 1968, the campus was further expanded when 709 Catharine Street was purchased at Sheriff's sale. The vacant rowhouse was directly east of the Sanctuary. In this same year, the architect John Lloyd conducted a study which resulted in a restoration program to upgrade the safety requirements of the complex's fire, electrical, and security systems. A fund drive was initiated to raise the \$200,000 needed for the project and the building restoration began in 1974. The heating system was overhauled and a new ventilation system was installed to improve classroom conditions for the print-making, welding, and photography students.

In 1977, Fleisher received a Housing and Community Development Act Block Grant to rehabilitate 709 Catharine Street. This facility was intended for neighborhood use to increase Fleisher's ability to serve the surrounding community. This grant resulted in the Louis

Kahn Memorial on the first floor of 709 Catharine Street (which now opens to the Sanctuary).

The Board of Directors of the Fleisher Art Memorial initiated a recording project in 1980 to create a permanent record of the architecture of the complex and plan the rehabilitation of the buildings (see Figure 1). The survey included measured drawings and an inspection report. In conjunction with an overall rebuilding program, it was decided to raise funds to restore the Sanctuary which had been closed for several years. The restorations were completed to celebrate the Sanctuary's centennial in 1886. The Sanctuary resumed its concert and museum programs and was integrated back into the Fleisher campus. In the 1980s, Fleisher became an independent non-profit organization.

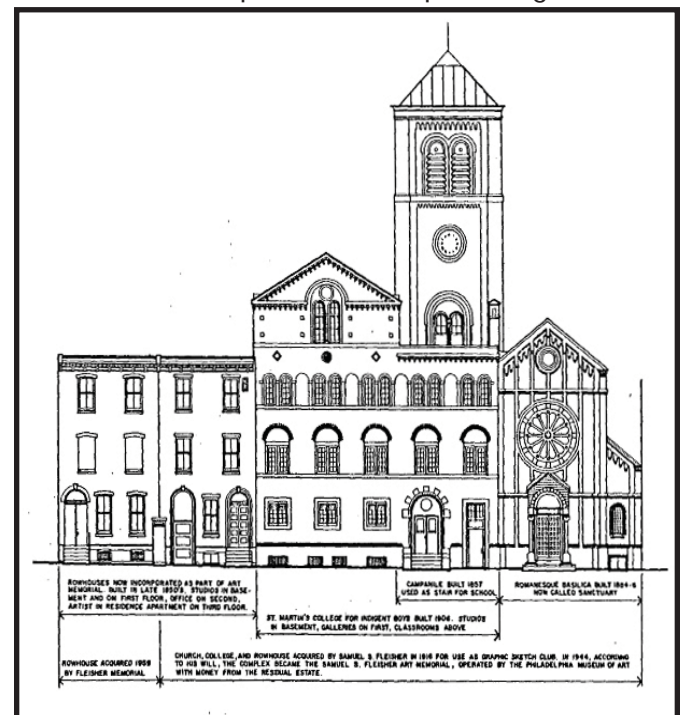


Figure 3.1.1. 711-721 Catharine Street, Survey number HABS PA-1229, 1980. Credit: Richard Tatar, McCauley Spear Architects



In 1993, architect David Schultz created a new wheelchair accessible entrance to Fleisher. His volunteer work led to a space needs study conducted in 1997. This study resulted in a capitol campaign to acquire and renovate Fleisher's Center for Works on Paper in 2001. The center is located in 705 Christian Street and is adjacent to

Fleisher's parking lot across Catharine Street from the Fleisher Art Memorial. The capitol campaign also resulted in improvements to Fleisher's main buildings on 709-721 Catharine Street beginning in 2004 (see figure 2). The project made the buildings safer, more accessible and energy efficient.



Figure 3.1.2. Loading drywall into 713 Catharine Street, 2005. Credit: [www.fleisher.org/about/renovations.php](http://www.fleisher.org/about/renovations.php)



## 3.2 CAMPUS SPACE ALLOCATION

A study was made of the use of space within the current configuration of the Fleisher Art Memorial. A campus survey was made to determine whether space was used for: office, class, or storage. Then this data was merged into a geographic information system (GIS) to provide a visual overview of campus use (see Figure 1). The basement, first, second, third, and fourth floors of 709-721 Catharine Street were included. The GIS map provides an assessment of spatial capacities and needs for the Fleisher Art Memorial. The majority of campus space is allotted for classroom use. The next most space is allotted for storage use while the least amount of campus space is allotted for office use. This current configuration reflects the mission of Fleisher as an arts education institution. However, if there is more need for classrooms or offices, there is flexibility in redistributing some of the existing storage space.

Enrollment in Fleisher art classes during the fall of 2009 session was completely full. The demand for Fleisher's offerings is apparent in the turnout for all their events, openings, speakers, and particularly art classes. Programming includes free classes for children, teens, and adults. Registration for the free classes for children is allotted by lottery. And due to the popularity of all the free classes, maximum enrollment numbers were set this fall. Additionally, all the workshops which require tuition were also full and had at least eight people on the weight-list. Total enrollment of the 16 fall workshops was 315. Classes range from ceramics to print-making. Tuition assistance is available when needed.

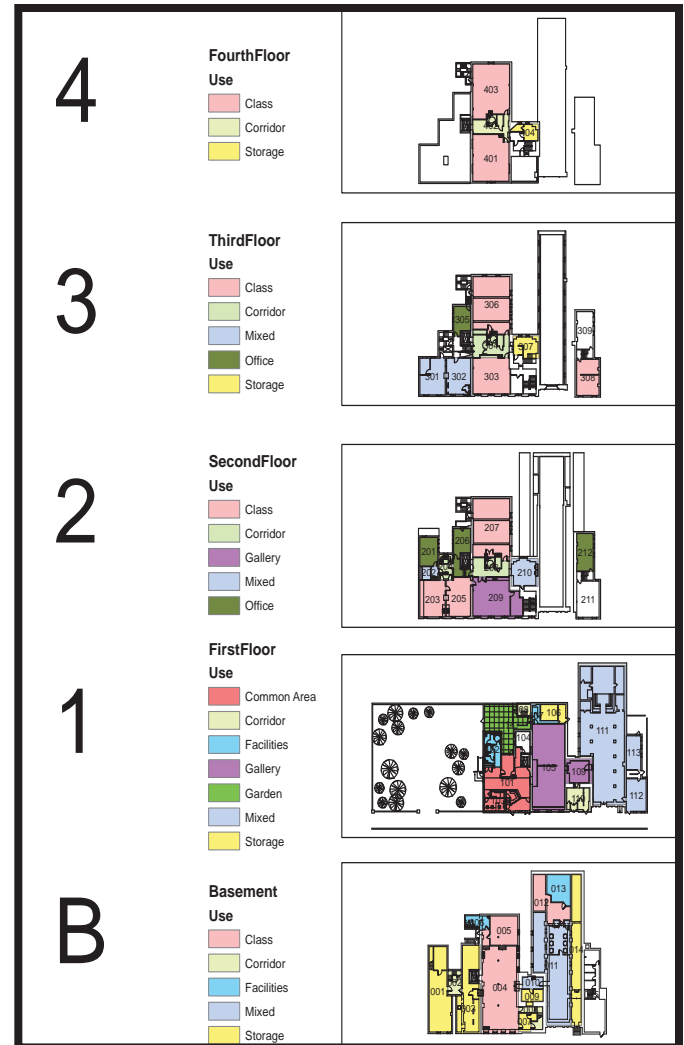
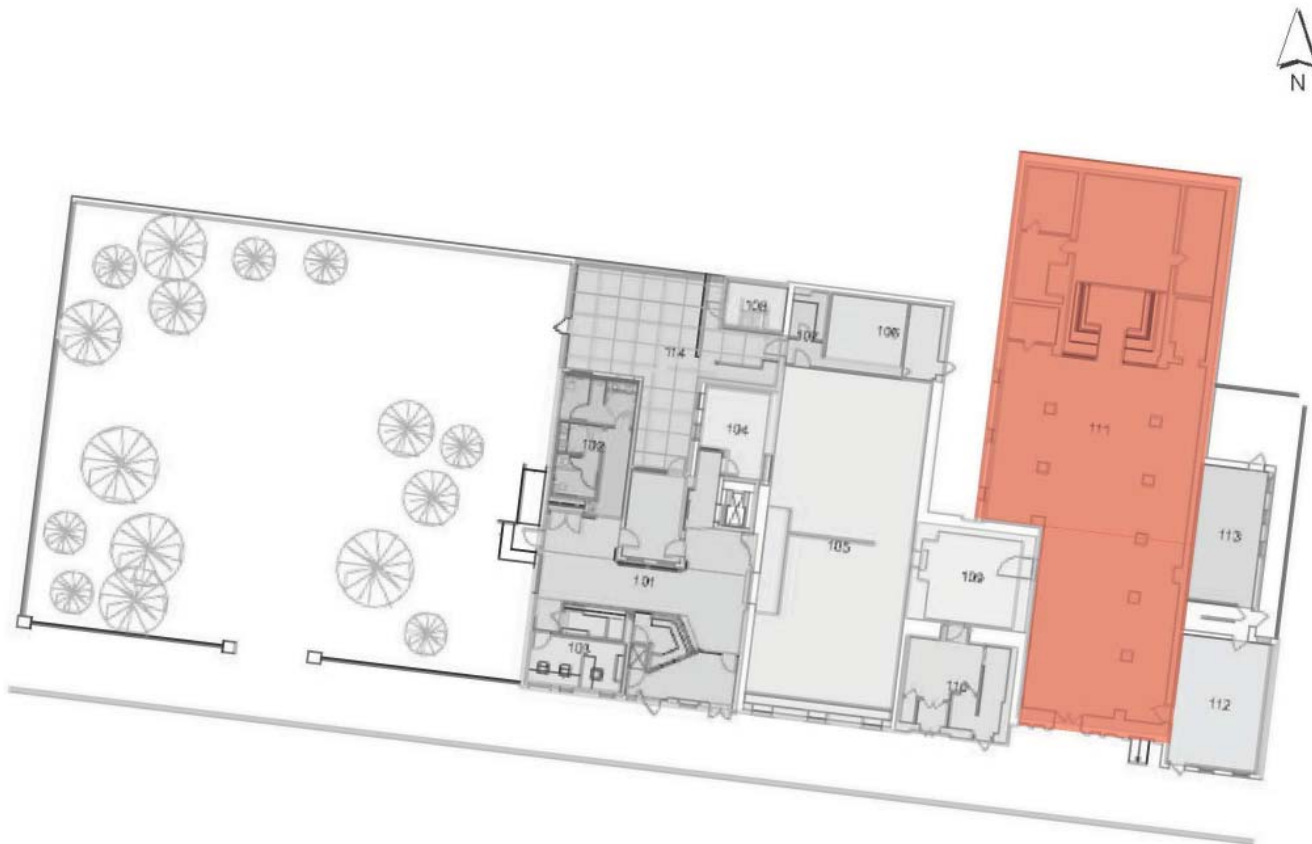


Figure 3.2.1. Campus Use Survey, 2009. Credit: Authors.



## 3.3 CAMPUS CONTEXT



**Figure 3.3.1. Map of first-floor on the main campus, highlighting Sanctuary.**

The Fleisher campus is comprised of the main facility on Catherine Street, adapted from the row-homes, the historic St. Martin's school and the Church of the Evangelists, now referred to as the Sanctuary. The most recent addition to the school is the Christian Street property, referred to as The Center for Works on Paper, which opened in January 2002. This space expanded Fleisher's programming options and availability for exhibitions in the gallery.

Most visitors enter Fleisher through the entrance in the adapted rowhouse to the north of the Sanctuary on Catherine Street. To access the

Sanctuary from this point, you must travel through the contemporary exhibition space on the ground level, and enter through one of the original doors that existed from the tower of the church into the Sanctuary. The tower now serves as a gallery on the first level, and one of the major stairwells used to access other levels of the building.

In 1982, a connection was made from the Sanctuary to the newly purchased rowhouse to the south, where the Louis Kahn Lecture room was then installed by artist Siah Armajani.

Between 2004 and 2005, Fleisher underwent





extensive renovations throughout the complex to update facilities for classroom, office and operational purposes. The Sanctuary and Kahn Room were left untouched during this renovation. A new lobby and reception area were incorporated into the space, along with improvements to the facility-wide sprinkler system, an elevator providing access to all five studio levels, air-conditioning for all studios, centralized corridors with restrooms on each floor, and expanded exhibition spaces.

One would have originally entered the Sanctuary through the portico entrance on Catherine Street, through the Samuel Yellin iron gate that exists there currently. The main center of the space is the nave, bordered by east and west aisles, of which contain a series of wall paintings related to the building's original use as an Episcopal church. Moving further back into the building, there is an oratory pulpit, composed of elaborated marbles and a corresponding rood screen, serving an architectural boundary between the general mass and the sacred space. Past the rood screen, is the region known as the choir that moves into a square apse. This apse is referred to within the 1906 guidebook as being one of the defining features that differentiates it from its Italian Renaissance precedents.

To the west are rooms originally meant to house the organ for the church, and to the east, a storage space and former chapel. The Kahn room is situated to the east of the building, and operates as an artist installation. Other intended uses include lecture space, community meeting center and gallery.



## 3.4 HISTORY OF THE SANCTUARY

### ***The Church of the Evangelists:***

The Sanctuary of Fleisher Art Memorial began life as the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Evangelists constructed in 1885-6. This building was the third church inhabited by the congregation of the Church of the Evangelists in South Philadelphia. In 1839, the congregation purchased, altered and consecrated a small church on 5<sup>th</sup> Street above Catharine Street. When Rev. Samuel Dubrow took over the position of rector in 1855, the congregation sold the earlier church building and constructed a new brick church with a spire on Catharine Street above 7<sup>th</sup> Street, at the location of the current Sanctuary.<sup>1</sup> The congregation used the 1855 church building on Catharine Street until Rev. Henry Robert Percival (1854-1903) became the rector in 1880. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Percival served as the Assistant Rector of Christ Church, Philadelphia until 1880, when he requested a church of his own from the Episcopal Diocese of Philadelphia. He received the small parish of the Church of the Evangelists, which had fallen into debt in the 1870s.<sup>2</sup> Although the congregation had already decided to sell the property, Percival worked to discharge the church's debts with the help of his well-connected, wealthy friends and family and collected the funds to construct a new church at the same location on Catharine Street.

During his travels to Italy as a young man, Percival came to believe that the Catholic basilica plan was the best architecture to foster Christian devotion. Working with Louis C. Baker of the architectural



**Figure 3.4.1. Facade of the Church of the Evangelists. Credit: Guidebook to the Church of the Evangelists, 1904.**

firm of Furness, Evans, & Co., Percival envisioned a church that drew from Italian Renaissance precedents to create a serene atmosphere for worship. Choosing specific Italian churches as references, Percival wrote, "It will have the same relative proportions of the Cathedral at Pisa, the square pillars will be like those in St. Mark's, Venice and the Sanctuary shall be square as in the Cathedral Orvieto."<sup>3</sup> The cornerstone for the new church was laid in June, 1885 and the completed Sanctuary was dedicated on March 24, 1886.



**Figure 3.4.2. Cathedral Orvieto, Umbria, Italy. c. 1290.**  
Credit: ArtStor.

The Church of the Evangelists belonged to a broader period of Protestant religious introspection and spiritual identification in the late nineteenth century. As scholar T.J. Jackson Lears explains, this movement was brought about by the triumph of modern culture that had begun to promote a sense of “moral impotence and spiritual sterility” among Americans.<sup>4</sup> At this time, American Protestantism was beginning to redefine itself against the shadow of Puritanism, and leading church figures, like Percival, argued that liberalized Protestantism had accommodated itself too much to secular habits, losing much of its emotional power. By turning away from contemporary ecclesiastical

neo-Gothicism in favor of a Catholic Italian Renaissance motif, Percival revealed a yearning to create a more intense spiritual relationship with God through the recapturing of the “real life” of pre-modern craftsmen.<sup>5</sup> Percival himself wrote:

“Why was this style adopted in preference to English Gothic? The answer is, because a good and correct building in this style could be built for far less sum of money, and that a good Romanesque building was deemed much to be referred to the bastard abominations, called Gothic, which are very costly, and are eyesores to those possessed of any architectural skill.”<sup>6</sup> Judging from the richness of materials and artworks that comprise the Sanctuary, the cost of Gothicism was less of a hindrance for Percival than the psychological and aesthetic response of what he called “Romanesque” architecture. The simplicity of the design allowed for deeper spiritual understanding and artistic elevation.



**Figure 3.4.3. Nave of the Sanctuary. Credit: Guidebook of the Church of the Evangelists, 1904.**

Combating a dying congregation and hoping to reinvigorate religious fervor, Percival appealed to



Anglo-Catholicism in the church's architecture to strengthen the conviction of the current worshippers and inspire the surrounding community to become involved in the church. The church exhibited the Victorian sense of aestheticism, which aimed to provide temporary refreshment amid surrounding urban chaos. The sanctuary reinforces this therapeutic "otherness" from the outside with its elaborate marble, lavish artwork and stained glass windows throughout the space. This kind of high decoration is characteristic of High Church, and the church's architectural influences trace back to Renaissance Catholic church antecedents in Italy. Overall, this "elevation" in the church's atmosphere pushed followers to move away from "broad" congregations and submit to a High Church authority, in a period where High Church Anglicanism was far more socially acceptable than Roman Catholicism.<sup>7</sup> Lears writes, "American Anglo-Catholicism frequently led to legitimization of the secular order but to rebellion against it- a rebellion that, like other dissents from modernity, often remained intertwined with the culture it attacked."<sup>8</sup>

For Percival, each architectural and artistic feature of the church represented a very specific ideal in Christian theology. The nave, where the congregation is situated during services represents present life "wandering amid the allurements of sin, yet looking to the cross for salvation."<sup>9</sup> This section lays in contrast to the chancel, which represents the life to come, divided by the rood screen, a symbolic representation of Christ's sacrifice for the redemption of mankind. While rood screens tend to be less typical during this period in American church architecture, A.W.N. Pugin's understanding of the Eucharist was greatly reflected in his strong

defense of the rood screen, in which he felt "expressed the great divide between the sacrifice of the Mass and the worshippers, between the priest and the people."<sup>10</sup> The extension of this



**Figure 3.4.4. Rood Screen and Altar of the Sanctuary. Credit: Guidebook of the Church of the Evangelists, 1904.**

belief is represented in the increasing elevation of the chancel over the nave moving deeper into the building, thus stressing the significance of the ordained clergy as successors of the apostles. The Church of the Evangelists was also heavily influenced by individual members of the congregation who donated funds for specific building features to honor or memorialize friends and family. The stained glass windows along the nave, designed by Lavers-Barrand and Westlake of London, were donated as memorials to the Helmuth family, brothers and sisters of Percival's mother. The rose window on the south elevation of the Sanctuary was made in Roermond, Holland and donated in memory of Mrs. Prichet of St. Louis by her daughter.<sup>11</sup> The porch was donated by Mrs. Mary K. Helmuth in honor of her husband, Dr. William S. Helmuth, while the two roughly hewn pieces of stone supporting the columns of the porch



were purposely left uncarved to represent twin lions worn away by time, weather, and human touch – an addition that evoked “the changelessness of our faith,” according to Percival.<sup>12</sup> Several of the capitals topping the piers are also unfinished, as the funds for their completion had not been donated by the time of Percival's death in 1903.

In addition to the lavish architectural features, the Church of the Evangelists was filled with works of art that enhanced the serene atmosphere of separation from the streets of South Philadelphia. The walls of the Sanctuary are covered with wall paintings completed by parishioners and commissioned artists under Percival's direction. The east elevation starting from the south end contains five separate scenes painted by members of the congregation: St. Benedict, St. Francis of Assisi, the Martyrdom of St. Thomas A'Beckett, St. Louis IX, and the Plague of London. The west side of the nave contains a single wall painting of Earth after the Fall of



**Figure 3.4.5. The Annunciation by Robert Henri. West Chapel of the Sanctuary. Credit: Authors.**

Man, most likely painted by a parishioner.<sup>13</sup>



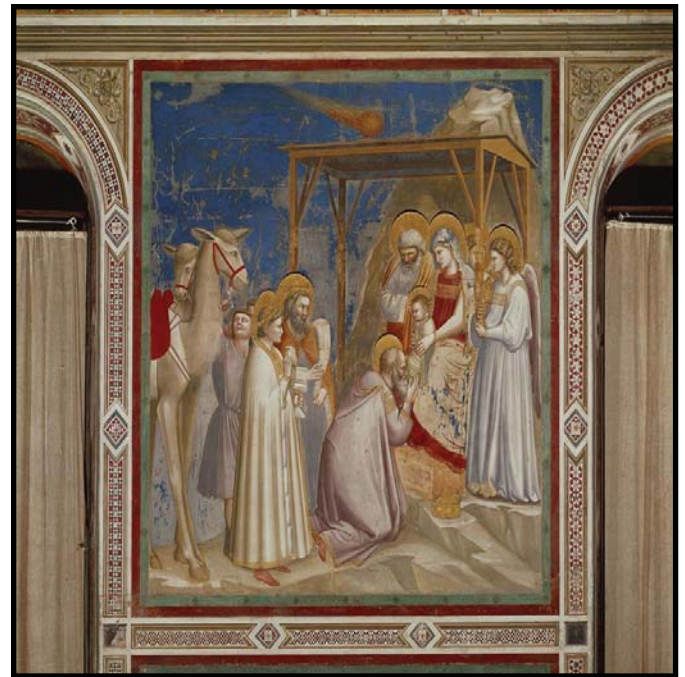
**Figure 3.4.6. The Annunciation by Fra Angelico. c. 1440-5. Credit: ArtStor.**

The chapel on the west side of the Sanctuary, known as the Lady Chapel under Percival, is covered with wall paintings completed by the artist Robert Henri. Henri (1865-1929) began studying at Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1886, after his family moved to Atlantic City, New Jersey to escape his father's manslaughter conviction in Denver, Colorado. In 1888, he traveled to Europe, visiting Italy and France before enrolling in the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in 1891. He returned to Philadelphia in 1892 to resume his studies at the Academy and began teaching at the School of Design for Women. In October 1892, Henri met Rev. Percival of the Church of the Evangelists, and Percival asked him to visit the Sanctuary to plan a series of murals for the chapel on the west side of the church.<sup>14</sup> Henri accepted the commission and produced several sketches of his proposed subjects which were approved by Percival. Of the four murals in the chapel, two were original compositions of St. John the Divine and the Flight of the Holy Family. The two others were based on 15<sup>th</sup> century Italian frescoes: the Annunciation by Fra Angelico and the Procession of the Magi by Bennozo Gozzoli.<sup>15</sup> Henri began painting in the winter of 1893, using oil paint



applied directly onto the finished wall surface. In April 1893, the Philadelphia Inquirer reported on the nearly finished commission and called the murals “eminently successful.”<sup>16</sup> Although Henri hoped to attract some patronage through his work at the Church of the Evangelists, he never received any mural commissions as a result of his work. By 1900, he had moved to New York, where he spent much of the remainder of his career and where he was particularly influential as an art teacher for the next generation of artists.

The wall paintings in the apse were also based on Italian Renaissance frescoes, with five of the eight paintings completed by Nicola D’Ascenzo (1871-1954). Born in Italy, D’Ascenzo moved to the United States with his family at age 11. Although he originally trained as a carpenter, D’Ascenzo began attending general art courses at the Pennsylvania Museum School of Industrial Arts in the 1880s.<sup>17</sup> One of his earliest artistic commissions began in 1887 at age 16, when he assisted his art instructor Boero with the murals above the choir at the Church of the Evangelists. Initially, D’Ascenzo painted only the borders around the murals while Boero worked on the main subjects, but following a disagreement with Rev. Percival over the composition of the murals, D’Ascenzo was awarded the remainder of the commission.<sup>18</sup> He completed five murals: the Visitation of Our Lady to St. Elizabeth, the Nativity, the Marriage at Cana, the Laying Out of Christ for Burial, and Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene. The Laying Out of Christ was based on a mid-15<sup>th</sup> century fresco by Fra Angelico, while the remaining murals referenced Giotto’s early 14<sup>th</sup> century frescoes in the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua, Italy. The remaining three murals were



**Figure 3.4.7. The Epiphany by Giotto. c. 1305. Chapel Scrovegni, Padua, Italy. Credit: ArtStor.**

completed by Anne Leeds, who studied painting at the Academie Julien in Paris, and her brother, Rev. Canon Webb, who served as Percival’s assistant rector.<sup>19</sup> D’Ascenzo went on to teach at the Pennsylvania Museum School of Industrial Arts and became well-known for his work with stained glass, including the Seven Ages of Man window in the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C. The murals in the Sanctuary remain some of his earliest known work in Philadelphia.

The chapel on the east side of the Sanctuary was known as the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre during Percival’s tenure. Above the door way, a copy of Della Robbia ware created by the Italian firm of Cantagalli in Florence was given in memory of Ellen Ross. The original tile floor and marble on the walls were donated by Henry Mercer of Doylestown, founder of the Moravian Tile Company.<sup>20</sup> The pulpit was modeled on similar pulpits in Southern Italian churches and was constructed of marble found in



**Figure 3.4.8. Chapel of the Holy Sepulcher (West Chapel). Credit: Guidebook of the Church of the Evangelists, 1904.**

Italy and Spain. The rood screen was constructed in Paris, modeled after the screen in St. Mark's in Venice, Italy and was a gift of Mrs. Samuel Keyser in memory of her husband. The choir stalls behind the rood screen are made of oak with hinged seats known as "misericord."<sup>21</sup> The oak benches in front of the choir stalls were used by the choir boys.

Other movable objects in the Sanctuary included the original reredos, painted by Mary Alice Neilson and based on an altarpiece by Carlo Crivelli in the National Gallery in London, which Percival requested as a model. Neilson also completed several of the icon paintings on the piers of the Sanctuary. The first organ in the

Sanctuary was a Haskell. In 1920, this organ was donated to St. Titus Mission in Elmwood.

After Percival's death in 1903, Dr. Charles Wellington Robinson became the Rector of the Church of the Evangelists. Without Percival's charismatic leadership the congregation of wealthy parishioners from other Philadelphia neighborhoods began to diminish. In 1904, Dr. Robinson founded St. Martin's College, a charitable house and school for local boys, in an effort to connect the congregation with the surrounding South Philadelphia immigrant communities.<sup>22</sup> Located in the building on the west side of the Sanctuary, this school ran until 1911, when the Church of the Evangelists was desecralized and closed by the Episcopal Diocese of Philadelphia.

Even after the closing of the Church of the Evangelists, the architectural influence of Percival's church spread. After her brother's death, Percival's sister, Catherine H. Percival moved to Oregon and joined the local Protestant Episcopal church of St. Mark's in Portland. When St. Mark's demolished their sanctuary in 1925 and began construction on a new church, Catherine donated \$50,000 for the reconstruction of the church with the stipulation that it be a replica of the Church of the Evangelists in Philadelphia. St. Mark's followed her wishes and constructed their church based on the floor plan and interior design of the Church of the Evangelists, including the use of murals on all of the walls. Today this building continues to serve as a church with an active congregation that is now part of the Anglican Province of Christ the King in the Diocese of Western States.<sup>23</sup>



### ***Graphic Sketch Club:***

The church building on Catharine Street remained closed for over ten years, until Samuel Fleisher



**Figure 3.4.9. Portrait of Samuel S. Fleisher. Credit: Collection of Fleisher Art Memorial.**

bought the Sanctuary in 1922 to expand his Graphic Sketch Club. Fleisher was an influential figure in Philadelphia's social reform movement in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. He was concerned with the well being of the working-class citizens of Philadelphia's poor neighborhoods and held a strong belief that social reform and the betterment of society could be achieved through exposure to the arts.

By offering children the opportunity to study and create works of art, Fleisher hoped to educate the next generation of informed, productive citizens. Samuel Stewart Fleisher was born in Philadelphia on November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1871. He was the third of five children born to Simon B. Fleisher and Cecelia Hofheimer, who were known for their avid interest in music and fine arts.<sup>24</sup> Simon was the son of Jewish immigrants from Germany who settled in Philadelphia. In the late nineteenth century, Simon and his brother, Moyer, founded a woolen mill located in southwest Philadelphia.<sup>25</sup> Most of their fortune was acquired from the profitable success of the mill. Moyer retired from the company in 1884. Samuel Fleisher joined the family business following his graduation from the University of Pennsylvania in 1902, where he attended the Wharton Business School. He would later be appointed Vice President of the company, which was then known as S.B. and B.W. Fleisher Manufacturing, after Samuel's older brother, Benjamin W., joined the business.

In 1898, Samuel Fleisher founded an art reform club focused on providing free art classes to underprivileged boys in the surrounding South Philadelphia neighborhood.<sup>26</sup> Fleisher's Graphic Sketch Club held its first classes at the Jewish Union building located at 422 Bainbridge Street. As enrollment increased and expanded to include adults and girls, Fleisher decided to acquire a larger space for classes. In 1906 he moved the Graphic Sketch Club to 740 Catharine Street, which provided space for classes until 1915, when the club was relocated to the former St. Martin's College located on Catharine Street and empty since the closing of the Church of the Evangelist in 1911. In 1922, Fleisher purchased the Sanctuary





and began the creation of a campus for his school dedicated to arts education. Not only did the former church provide ample space for art classes, it also provided an opportunity to display Fleisher's private art collection. By converting the former Church of the Evangelists in an art gallery and classroom, Fleisher sought to connect religious worship with the study and creation of art. Just as Christian devotion was meant to educate and elevate worshippers, Fleisher believed that art could create ethical, informed citizens.



Figure 3.4.10. Violet Oakley reredos, 1927. Credit: Authors.

In addition to the wall paintings, Fleisher added his own art collection to the Sanctuary. The building was filled with Russian icons, purchased by Fleisher's brother, Edwin, and European religious statuary from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>27</sup> Fleisher also commissioned new works of art for the Sanctuary, including the Samuel Yellin wrought iron gate installed in 1934 and the reredos by Violet Oakley. Born into a family of artists, Violet Oakley (1874-1961) began sketching at a young age and was encouraged in her pursuit of an artistic career. After traveling in Europe, Oakley returned to Philadelphia in 1896 to study at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and at the Drexel Institute with Howard Pyle. By 1902, Oakley had received a commission to produce a series of murals for the Pennsylvania State Capitol Building in Harrisburg. This work totaled 43 murals, based on historic and patriotic events, completed over the course of 25 years. At a 1926 special exhibition of her murals for the Supreme Court Room in the State Capitol Building, Fleisher was particularly impressed with her painting of Moses carving the Ten Commandments and commissioned an altarpiece for the Sanctuary to honor his mother. Oakley chose as the subject of *The Life of Moses* and placed the Pharaoh's daughter holding the baby Moses on the central panel as a tribute to Fleisher's mother. After the subject was approved by Fleisher, Oakley executed the 17 by 8 foot reredos while living in Florence, Italy and shipped the completed work to Philadelphia in 1927.<sup>28</sup> Much of Oakley's work consists of similar site-specific installations of stained glass or wall paintings that depict historic or religious scenes, such as the Great Women of the Bible mural series at First Presbyterian Church of Germantown.



**Figure 3.4.11. Portuguese Chapel (East Chapel).**  
Credit: PMA Bulletin, 1960.

### ***Fleisher Art Memorial:***

After Samuel Fleisher's death on January 20, 1944, the Graphic Sketch Club became the Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial, as specified in his will. The majority of his estate was left in trust for the continuation of the school under the direction of the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Art, and much of his personal art collection remained in the Sanctuary. In 1944, the president of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, J. Stoddell Stokes, appointed the Museum's Secretary and Treasurer, Julius Zieget, as the Executive Director of the Fleisher Art Memorial. Zieget worked to expand the collection of statuary and painting in the Sanctuary, including the purchase of new works of art by contemporary artists with an annual budget of \$3000 to \$5000 for that purpose.<sup>29</sup>

Historical collections also continued to fill the Sanctuary. In 1955, the window on the east side of the Sanctuary door was replaced with a La Farge window donated to Fleisher Art Memorial by Mrs. Efreim Zimbalist. The three

panels, showing Art, Music, and Education, were first suggested to La Farge by his friends, Edward Bok and Rudyard Kipling.<sup>30</sup> While many of the delicate wood or polychrome works of art were removed from the Sanctuary to protect them from the lack of temperature or humidity controls in the building, remnants of this collection remain in the South German 14<sup>th</sup> century crucifix above the rood screen and the Moses sculpture by J. Wallace Kelly in the apse.

In 1960, the chapel on the east side of the building, originally used as the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre, was transformed into an exhibition of 18<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese religious art by the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Dedicated on February 25, 1960 in the presence of the Portuguese ambassador to the United States, the chapel displayed Portuguese altarpieces and devotional objects, including 18<sup>th</sup> century blue and white scenic tiles, called *Azulejos*, which remain in the chapel today.<sup>31</sup>

Fleisher Art Memorial also continued Fleisher's mission to provide free or low-cost art classes to residents of the neighborhood. In 1963, attendance for free evening art classes averaged 200 students nightly. The attendance for Saturday morning classes for students ages 11 to 18 ranged from 300 to 350 for each session. Enrollment in all classes totaled over 3000 students for the year.<sup>32</sup> With this large enrollment in classes, the organization also expanded their facilities by purchasing a row house at 721 Catharine in 1958 and at 709 in 1981. This expansion, which places Fleisher Art Memorial as the anchor of the block of Catharine Street between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Streets, maintained Fleisher's original intention to create a campus for his art school in South Philadelphia.



### **Notes:**

1. John Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884*, Vol. 2 (Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co., 1884).
2. Irene N. Zieget, *History of Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial, 1886-1963*. (Philadelphia: Fleisher Art Memorial, 1963), 5.
3. *Ibid.*, 7.
4. T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Anti-Modernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1981: 5.
5. *Ibid.*, 6.
6. Henry Percival, *Guidebook to the Church of the Evangelists*, Philadelphia. Philadelphia: Charles W. Robinson, 1904: 14.
7. Lears, 199.
8. *Ibid.*, 200.
9. Percival, 13.
10. Seasoltz, 190.
11. Zieget, *History of Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial*, 13.
12. *Ibid.*, 9.
13. Henry Percival and Charles Wellington Robinson, *Guidebook to the Church of the Evangelists*. (Philadelphia: Leeds & Biddle Co., 1904), 20.
14. Bennard Perlman. *Robert Henri: his life and art*. (New York: Dover Publications, 1991).
15. Percival and Robinson, *Guidebook to the Church of the Evangelists*, 22.
16. "Local Art. Decoration of a Chapel in the Church of the Evangelists." *Philadelphia Inquirer* (April 1893). Quoted in Perlman, Robert Henri.
17. Lisa Weilbacker, *A Study of Residential Stained Glass: the work of Nicola d'Ascenzo Studios, 1896-1954*. Thesis in Historic Preservation, 1990.
18. Helen Henderson, "Gothic Sunlight," *Philadelphia* (August 1948).
19. Henry Percival and Charles Wellington Robinson, *Guidebook to the Church of the Evangelists*. (Philadelphia: Leeds & Biddle Co., 1904).
20. Percival and Robinson, *Guidebook to the Church of the Evangelists*, 38.
21. *Ibid.*, 40.
22. *Ibid.*, 41.
23. *Historic Alphabet District: Community Design Guidelines Addendum*. Bureau of Planning, City of Portland. Sept. 5, 2000.
24. Leonard, John W. *Who's Who in Pennsylvania: A Biographical Dictionary of Contemporaries*. New York: L.R. Hamersly & Company, 1908.
25. Morais, Henry Samuel. *The Jews of Philadelphia*. Philadelphia: The Levytype Company, 1894.
26. Unknown. *Biography of Samuel S. Fleisher*. *Fleisher Art Memorial*. 2001-2009. <<http://www.fleisher.org/about/fleisher-bio.php>> 21 Sept. 2009.
27. Zieget, *History of Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial*, 17.
28. "The Violet Oakley Exhibition," *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin*. Vol. 75 No. 325 (June 1979).
29. Zieget, *History of Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial*, 16.
30. *Ibid.*, 20.
31. Robert C. Smith, "A Portuguese Chapel at the Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial," *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin* Vol. 56, No. 268 (Winter, 1961): 48.
32. Zieget, *History of Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial*, 27.



## 3.5 HISTORIC DESIGNATION

The Fleisher Art Memorial was listed on the Philadelphia Historic Register on March 30, 1965. The three linked buildings that are listed are 711-719 Catharine Street; from east to west, the first building is the Sanctuary; the second is the former St. Martin's College building, the third is a rowhouse built in the 1850s. This designation provides protection against inaccurate or unsympathetic alterations and unnecessary demolition. The historical integrity of the exterior of the complex is protected, but the interior is not protected by this designation.

In 1983, the Fleisher Art Memorial was listed on the National Register of Historic Places for both its historic and architectural merits (see appendix). The same three buildings were listed along with the fourth rowhouse, 711-721 Catharine Street. However, a National Register listing provides only recognition and no legal protections for the buildings.

On September 13, 2005, a new marker honoring the Fleisher Art Memorial's contribution to the history of the Commonwealth was dedicated by Fleisher and the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (see Figure 1). The Hon. Babette Josephs (state representative, 182nd District) and Wayne Spilove (chairman, Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission) attending the unveiling.



**Figure 3.5.1. John Louchheim, Fleisher's Executive Director Thora Jacobson, Hon. Babette Josephs, and Wayne Spilove, 2005. Credit: James G. Mundie, [www.fleisher.org/about/marker.php](http://www.fleisher.org/about/marker.php)**



## 4.0 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Sanctuary of Fleisher Art Memorial is a 120-year-old haven for artistic expression in southeast Philadelphia. From the Church of the Evangelists to the Graphic Sketch Club to Fleisher Art Memorial, the Sanctuary has been repurposed as a space for art education, centered on the common theme of art as a restorative force in the community.

Built as the Protestant Episcopal Church of the Evangelists in 1884-6, the Sanctuary first served as a sacred place where art and architecture elevated and sustained Christian worship. Minister of the Church of the Evangelists, Rev. Henry Percival and Louis C. Baker of the architectural firm of Furness, Evans & Co. designed the Sanctuary as an expression of the congregation's religious beliefs. By turning away from contemporary ecclesiastical neo-Gothicism to Catholic Italian Renaissance influences, Percival revealed a yearning to create a more intense spiritual relationship with God by crafting an atmosphere of serenity amid the surrounding urban chaos. The Sanctuary reinforces this therapeutic "otherness" from the outside with the elaborate marble, lavish artwork and stained glass windows throughout the space. Percival filled his church with commissioned works by well-known artists, including murals by Robert Henri, while the congregation added their own artistic vision to the space by painting additional murals, commissioning stained glass windows from the English firm Lavers, Barrand and Westlake, and decorating the chapels.

When Samuel Fleisher purchased the Sanctuary



**Figure 4.0.1. View fo Sanctuary, looking South. Credit: Guidebook of the Church of the Evangelists, 1904.**

in 1922 to expand his Graphic Sketch Club, he continued this tradition of encouraging artistic expression. Fleisher's use of the Sanctuary as part of his art school represented an important trend in American culture after the fall of High Church organizations in the late nineteenth century. As industrial development pushed forward, churches lost their significance and were replaced with other types of public buildings for the community. The museum predominated as the space of aesthetic worship, where works of art manifested not only creativity but could stimulate aesthetic experience as a replacement for religion. Under



Samuel Fleisher direction, the Sanctuary replaced religious worship with aesthetic worship and became a space that celebrated art as a way to reform and elevate South Philadelphia's citizens. Fleisher displayed works of art from his collection and commissioned contemporary artists to create new works that responded to the Sanctuary, such as the reredos painted by Violet Oakley in honor of Fleisher's mother. Just as Percival's congregation commissioned and created works of art for their church, Fleisher and the members of the Graphic Sketch Club brought their own creativity to the Sanctuary and transformed the space into a gallery to inspire artists. The Sanctuary represented a calm, sacred interior that deliberately contrasted with the busy, crowded streets of South Philadelphia's immigrant communities.

Today, the Sanctuary serves a multitude of functions for Fleisher Art Memorial. The calm atmosphere belies the active use the Sanctuary receives from stakeholders, with activities that range from drawing classes to dance lessons to concerts. Residents enjoy the exhibits put on by the Fleisher Art Memorial and appreciate the unique "gravitas" of the Sanctuary compared to the rest of the school. One resident remarked that having a space with artwork such as the Renaissance and medieval statues provides an art historical context for the art classes that take place within the space. Some view it as a local place to appreciate the "history of Christian iconography," though there is no confusion that the space is now secular in nature. In fact, the most popular regular event housed in the space is a Cambodian dance troupe that performs in the Sanctuary. Residents are also careful to point out Fleisher Art Memorial's significance to the

rest of the city, too; "everyone knows where it is." While continuing to provide artistic outlets for the neighborhood's residents, Fleisher Art Memorial also provides civic services. It has been the local polling location since the closing of a nearby industrial school and community members use the space to house meetings of local groups, such as the Friends of Palumbo Park. From its earliest days as the Church of the Evangelists to its current use at Fleisher Art Memorial, the Sanctuary is a space that connects to and serves its community.



# 5.0 PRESERVATION METHODOLOGY

## 5.1 RESEARCH

## 5.2 DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

## 5.3 PRESERVATION PHILOSOPHY



## 5.1.1 COMPARABLE SITES

To develop an understanding of the role of the Sanctuary at Fleisher Art Memorial, the team explored sites with comparable educational programming, architectural histories, and issues incorporating new uses in historic sacred places. Two types of sites were chosen for this study: arts and cultural institutions within historic sacred places and arts education organizations with programming similar to that of Fleisher Art Memorial. Each comparable site was evaluated for its similarity with Fleisher Art Memorial, its approach to arts programming, and possible ideas for incorporation at Fleisher Art Memorial. These comparables are designed to spur creative thinking about opportunities for expanding the role of the Sanctuary in programming at Fleisher Art Memorial.



Figure 5.1.1.1. ArtistLINC Philadelphia Forum in Sanctuary, 2005. Credit: Fleisher Art Memorial.



Figure 5.1.1.2. Poster advertising Bindlestiff Family Circus at Fleisher Art Memorial, 2008. Credit: Fleisher Art Memorial.



Figure 5.1.1.3. Gallery at Fleisher Art Memorial. Credit: PhillyCulture.com





## 5.1.1.1 ELDRIDGE ST. SYNAGOGUE

### ***Similarity with Fleisher:***

Challenged with trying to provide broad programming in a historic, religious site, the Sanctuary at Fleisher Art Memorial School struggles with respecting its sacred material fabric while attempting to optimize opportunities for its creative unifying mission. The tension between secular and sacred is pervasive in National Historic Landmark Eldridge Street Synagogue and Museum, as it has continuously maintained an active Jewish congregation, while also providing a broader range of secular events and interpretations to the public. This issue, which saturates both spaces, raises particularly poignant issues about the types of programming and material intervention that can take place in a historic religious site. Eldridge Street, from its most recent plans of incorporating a contemporary artist window installation on its East wall, to its delicate provisions between its represented religious community and its broader history within New York immigration, presents an example of how well structured interpretation and intervention could benefit Fleisher.

### ***Brief Description:***

Construction on Eldridge Street Synagogue began September 24, 1886 and was completed on September 30, 1887, making it the first structure built as a Jewish synagogue within the City of New York.<sup>1</sup> Between 1880 and 1890, more than 60,000 Jewish immigrants were living in New York City's Lower East Side, with the population reaching close to half a million by 1910.<sup>2</sup> The



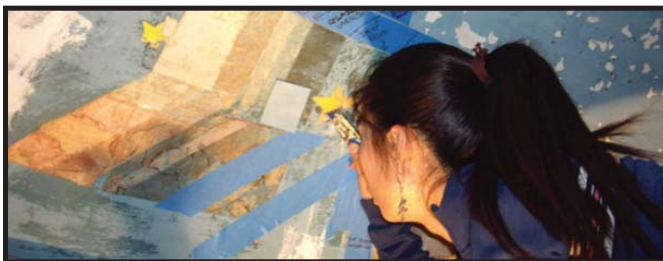
**Figure 5.1.1.1.1. View of East Window, intended to be re-design by artists Kiki Smith and Deborah Gans, 2009. Credit: <http://www.eldridgetreet.org/>.**

synagogue on 12 Eldridge Street, one of among 60 synagogues serving the city by the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was an architectural masterpiece of its time designed by Peter and Francis Herter, exhibiting a 70 ft high-vaulted ceiling, stained-glass rose windows, intricate-metalwork lighting and extensive stenciling and faux-finishing on the walls. As European Jewish immigration dwindled and the Great Depression weakened the contributions of the congregation, the synagogue building became harder to maintain, resulting in the much smaller congregation moving their



practice into the smaller chapel downstairs. For next 25 years, the main sanctuary remained empty until the local group, Friends of Eldridge Street Synagogue, later the Eldridge Street Project, led an effort to restore façade in 1984, and fully restore the interior over an eighteen year span. Currently, the building serves as the headquarters for the Museum at Eldridge Street and the home of Congregation Kahal Adath Jeshurun.

The interior restoration, completed in December of 2007, represented an important phase in the museum's development, when for the first time the physical fabric of the building became an integral part of the site's interpretation. Along with the development of a public tour on Immigration and the Lower East Side called "Home Sweet Home", the Museum at Eldridge Street also began compiling information for a tour on the architectural and historical significance of the building.<sup>3</sup> Along with providing public tours, the museum also hosts a broad range of events from lecture series, to Klezmer bands to fostering discussions about art, religion and the surrounding community.<sup>4</sup> In addition to these events, the museum houses a Limud (Learning) Center in the building's lower level, of which includes interactive exhibits created by Potion Design related to the history of the Lower East Side and synagogue practice and design.



**Figure 5.1.1.1.2. Conservator working on the restoration of surface finishes. Credit: <http://www.eldridgestreet.org/>.**

Valuing a dialogue between past and present within the synagogue space, the museum has made the decision to replace the glass cube area of the east wall that previously housed a rose window with an artist installed stained glass window by artist Kiki Smith.<sup>5</sup> This bold preservation decision introduces new material fabric into the building that, while it is unrelated to the methods and the period of significance for the building, unifies the past with contemporary audiences and makes a deliberate modern imprint on the space.

### ***Possible Ideas for Fleisher:***

- Interpretation of local immigrant history within the Sanctuary by knowledgeable enthusiastic guides.
- Incorporation of temporary or permanent artist installations to respond to the building and relate it to a contemporary audience.
- Unification of a religious past with a secular future by integrating both within the institutional programming.

### ***Notes:***

1 "Eldridge Street Synagogue," NPS Form 10-900, National Register

2 Lynne Lavelle. "Eternal Light," Traditional Building Magazine (December, 2008): 80.

3 Correspondence with Amy Stein-Milford, Project Director of the Museum at Eldridge Street, [1 October 2009]. Project is currently ongoing and will be prepared by a consortium of historic preservation graduate studies from Columbia University, Pratt Institute and University of Pennsylvania.

4 Events as listed on the Museum at Eldridge Street website. [www.eldridgestreet.org](http://www.eldridgestreet.org) [28 October 2009].

5 Amy Stein-Milford, correspondence. To be released in the press within the month [November, 2009].



## 5.1.1.2 TMORA ART GALLERY



**Figure 5.1.1.2.1. Tmora Museum of Russian Art.**  
Credit: <http://www.tmora.org/>.

### ***Similarity with Fleisher:***

Adaptively re-using a church to form an art exhibition and event space, many issues arise in relation to preserving historic fabric and providing modern accessibilities, such as increased wall and gallery space for its new use. Tmora Russian Art Museum has met some of these concerns through a near complete renovation of the interior space, leaving traces of its historic past through the remnants of the wooden truss system in the ceiling and general floor plan of its church predecessor. Overall, the museum utilizes its historic structure while very clearly carving out an identity for itself, through its addition of a “hung gallery” space for provide a second viewing floor and its programmatic decisions for event space rental. Fleisher, as a former Episcopal Church re-used for a modern community art school, represents a similar kind of space transition with Tmora. Also, both spaces function for event rental

as a way to supplement income for the institutions, but because Tmora distinguishes what events can and cannot happen within their space, the organization ultimately defines itself against the building’s religious past.

### ***Brief Description:***

Tmora Russian Art Museum, founded in 2002, currently presides in the adaptively re-used 1935 Spanish Colonial Revival Church. Tmora is an institution whose mission is “to preserve and display historically and artistically significant examples of Russian art and artifacts;”<sup>1</sup> in order to meet this goal within a historic sacred structure, a large re-construction of the interior space was conducted to incorporate modern amenities, climate control and proper lighting for the new purpose. The building, of which had a significant history within the community, required extensive re-working to become a suitable museum, while providing as a strong aesthetic and identifiable asset for the institution.

The building was originally built as the Mayflower Congregational Church in south Minneapolis, later serving as the Enga Memorial Chapel from 1974 to 2004 and eventually assumed its identity as the site of Tmora after construction completed in May 2005.<sup>2</sup> Julie Snow Architects were in charge of the restoration, of which was described as “transform[ing] the church, and yet the spirit and serenity of the original ecclesiastical architecture remain.”<sup>3</sup> While maintaining the ceiling truss system, four supported arches with Kasota



stone details of both sides of the nave and the semicircular apse, the design refigured the floor plan to convey a sense of openness that is better suited for a museum atmosphere. In order to incorporate more gallery space on a second level without disrupting the space with more columns or a lowered ceiling, a mezzanine was added, held aloft by pairs of steel rods suspended from the ceiling structure. Both floors are integrated into the nave through thin supports and Starfire-glass railing. While providing much needed exhibition capacity, the raised gallery still manages to preserve a sense of openness within the 35 by 66 feet nave space. The goal, as described by project architect Craig Roberts was "...to do a redesign that would not get in the way of the art. We wanted to expose the structure on the inside, and then let it pull back."<sup>4</sup> Ultimately, the changes made were very deliberately chosen based on the programmatic needs of the building. As such, the space is aesthetically evocative and gives a sense of its past, while meeting to many needs of a modern museum structure.

Programming for Tmora ranges from exhibitions to lecture and film series to facility rental. The museum offers not only a beautiful, historic space for events, but provides a full array of professional audio/visual equipment and services. The facility offers catering, but it must be handled by D'Amico Catering, Inc., an outside event-catering service. While the institution can be rented for adult-oriented activities, such as community or business meetings, policy makes the exception:

"The museum does not accept events involving any form of religious celebrations including weddings, baptisms, confirmations, bar/bat mitzvahs, or memorial services..."<sup>5</sup>

This is a particularly interesting exception, as



**Figure 5.1.1.2.2. Hanging gallery installed within Sanctuary space at Tmora Museum..Credit: <http://www.tmora.org/>.**

it divorcing the former use of the space as a church/religious venue from its current past. This decision ultimately aims at giving Tmora an identity completely separate from the religious aspects of the building.

### ***Possible Ideas for Fleisher:***

- Generating the period of "Samuel Fleisher's Occupancy" within the Sanctuary as the building's main period of significance by deliberating choosing not to host events of a religious nature.
- Expansion of gallery wall space and room capacity through the addition of a "hanging" metal gallery.
- Removal and concealing of non-architectural features, such as wall paintings and furniture, to give the space more flexibility, universal appeal for different art exhibitions and events.

### ***Notes:***

1 Tmora Russian Art Museum [Brochure], 2009.

2 Mason Riddle, "Amazing Grace: A local art museum goes to



church," *Architecture Minnesota* (Sept.-Oct., 2005): 34.

3 Ibid: 35.

4 Ibid: 36.

5 Timora Russian Art Museum [website: [www.timora.org](http://www.timora.org)]  
[29 October 2009]



## 5.1.1.3 UNION PROJECT

### ***Similarity with Fleisher:***

This former Baptist Church facing disuse and deterioration was transformed by a non-profit organization in 2001 into community arts center for the Highland Park neighborhood in Pittsburgh, PA. As with Fleisher Art Memorial, Union Baptist Church was a landmark sacred place that was no longer being used for religious services. The non-profit Union Project's mission "to create connections and opportunities for learning through the arts" fits with Fleisher Art Memorial's dedication to art education and reflects a similar need to transform a former sacred place to a new use.

### ***Brief Description:***

In the late 1990s, the Baptist congregation worshipping in Union Baptist Church had diminished in size to the point that they could no longer care for the large building. The congregation left the building and put it up for sale, but the structure fell into disrepair as no one stepped forward to buy Union Baptist. In 2001, a group of concerned neighbors formed an advisory board to discuss possible reuses of the structure. They determined that with an affordable asking price and landmark location, the building could be used for many different purposes. Union Baptist sits at a prominent intersection in the Highland Park neighborhood and is well-known by several different communities in the neighborhood. With these assets, the advisory committee decided to incorporate a non-profit, the Union Project, to provide Highland Park with a neighborhood



**Figure 5.1.1.3.1. Union Project, former Union Baptist Church, Pittsburgh, PA. Credit: [www.unionproject.org/](http://www.unionproject.org/).**

center for community-based arts programming.<sup>1</sup> The Union Project purchased the building in 2001 and began working toward restoration and incorporating new uses into the space.

Today the space includes a ceramics studios used for classes for adults and children, a café and a stained glass restoration studio. The building is also used as rental space for meetings and events. One of the largest challenges at the Union Project centered on funding for the restoration of the building. The building contains over 100 stained



glass windows that needed restoration with an estimate cost of \$1 million. Even with grants and fundraising, the Union Project was unable to direct that much money toward the restoration. Instead, the non-profit hired a local stained-glass artist and restorer, Catherine Berard, to teach a stained glass restoration course using the building's windows as the course material.<sup>2</sup> Today, these courses, called GlassAction, have expanded to include work on windows in other historic structures, and they remain some of the most popular activities at the Union Project.

### ***Possible Ideas for Fleisher:***

- Use of the materials of the building for art courses. At Fleisher Art Memorial, this could include restoration of the murals or design of new stained glass windows.
- Focus on connections with the neighborhood.
- Reuse of a historic sacred place for multiple purposes with a flexible use of space.

### ***Notes***

1. Union Project, "History," <[www.unionproject.org](http://www.unionproject.org)>, 2009. (Accessed 3 Oct .2009).

2. Mary Frances Stotler, "Students work to restore Union Project's stained glass," Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. 12 June 2004. <[www.pittsburghlive.com](http://www.pittsburghlive.com)> (Accessed 10 Oct. 2009).



**Figure 5.1.1.3.2. Stained glass restoration course at the Union Project. Credit: [www.unionproject.org/](http://www.unionproject.org/).**



## 5.1.1.4 FIRST UNITARIAN CHURCH

### ***Similarity with Fleisher:***

This Unitarian Church in Philadelphia, PA represents the possibilities of space rental in historic sacred places. As with the Sanctuary at Fleisher Art Memorial, First Unitarian uses rental of their sanctuary for concerts as a way to bring new audiences into the church and to increase their income for programming and preservation of the building.

### ***Brief Description:***

First Unitarian Church at Chestnut and 21<sup>st</sup> Streets in Philadelphia was designed by Frank Furness in 1889. Faced with restoration and maintenance needs on the church campus, the active Unitarian Universalist congregation began to rethink their approach to programming. As a diverse, urban congregation with a large church, First Unitarian wanted to increase the use of the building by those outside of the congregation to expand their service to their Center City neighborhood. Their current community-based programming strategy uses the large sanctuary, chapel and parsonage as a way to include new audiences in the preservation of this historic sacred place.

One example of this new programming is the permanent rental agreement formed by the

congregation with R5 Productions, an indie rock concert production company in Philadelphia. R5 Productions uses both the main sanctuary and the smaller chapel for concerts several times a month. This rental agreement provides the congregation with a steady stream of income that they reinvest into programming and maintenance of the building.<sup>1</sup> The congregation provides a safe space for concerts, and R5 Productions works with the congregation to ensure that the historic building is not damaged during the concerts. The concerts also introduce a new audience to the sanctuary, which broadens the potential support for preservation of the building, while the space provides distinctive concert experience that benefits the production company and the congregation.



**Figure 5.1.1.3.1. Exterior of Furness-designed First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia. Credit: [www.philauu.org/](http://www.philauu.org/).**





***Possible Ideas for Fleisher:***

- The unique sense of a sacred space is an asset for the concert program at First Unitarian Church and a draw for concert-goers.
- New audiences introduced to a historic sacred place.

***Notes***

1. Anna Maria Jakubek, "Rock Fans and Churchgoers Share Common Ground," 14 March 2008. <[www.philauu.org](http://www.philauu.org)> (Accessed 3 Oct. 2009).

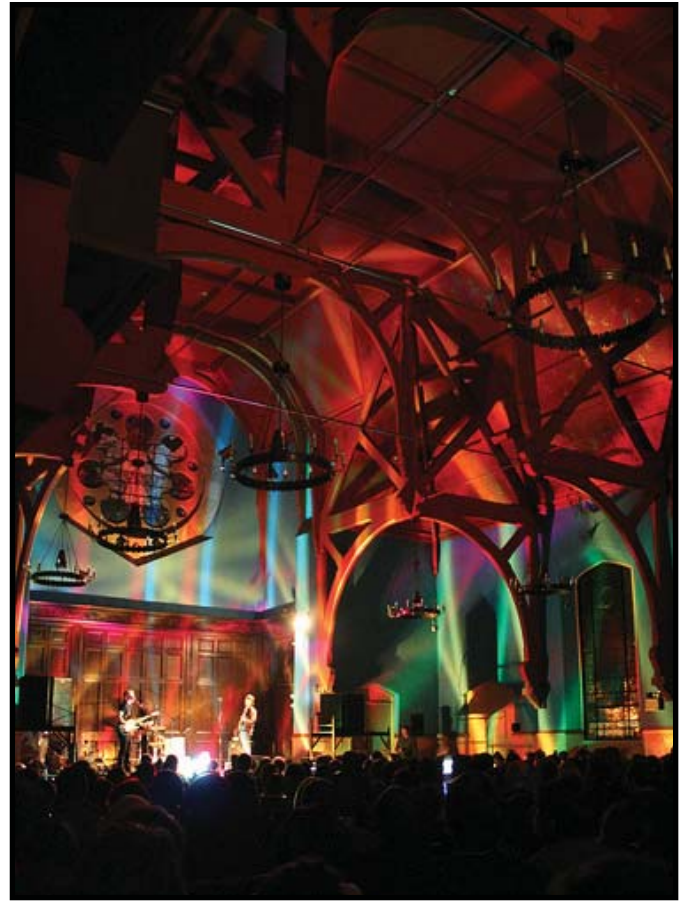


Figure 2. R5 Productions Concert in Sanctuary, 2007.  
Credit: [www.philauu.org/](http://www.philauu.org/).



## 5.1.1.5 ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM

### ***Similarity with Fleisher:***

Challenged by a static collection of art and architecture, the Gardner Museum has created an art education program that encourages visitors to consider the connections between the art museum and the art studio. This intersection between contemporary art and a historic collection reflects the current state of Fleisher Art Memorial as an organization dedicated to helping students create art within the framework of an institution entrusted with the care and use of historic buildings and works of art.

### ***Brief Description:***

Opened in 1903 by Isabella Stewart Gardner, the Gardner Museum in Boston, MA reflects the collecting choices of one patron of the arts. While the collection of the Gardner remains largely unchanged since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Museum's Education Department focuses on the connections between contemporary art and the historic collections as a way to enrich their art education programs. The Gardner's education programs emphasize links between the creation of works of art and their display and conservation, while encouraging visitors and students to respond to the historic collections with creative acts of their own.

The Museum's artist-in-residence program offers artists a chance to respond to Gardner's collection, the historic architecture, or Boston's



**Figure 1. Gallery program at Gardner Museum.**  
Credit: [www.gardnermuseum.org/](http://www.gardnermuseum.org/)

Fenway neighborhood. These artists-in-residence produce exhibits connecting the history of the institution with their own work and participate in education programs with local public schools. Beginning in 1996, the Gardner established long-term partnerships with several Boston public schools to create an art education program that links creating art with looking at art. Students visit



the Museum several times within the academic year, discuss specific elements of the Gardner's art and architecture, create their own works of art, and exhibit their final products at the Gardner.<sup>1</sup> The program is very site-specific, using the Gardner's art and architecture as catalysts for conversations about the multiple layers of meaning present in works of art and subsequent artistic responses to the site. Within its rich institutional history and layers of significance, the Sanctuary at Fleisher Art Memorial provides an opportunity for creative, contemporary responses to historical art and architecture and for further educational partnerships with local public schools.

***Possible Ideas for Fleisher:***

- Discussions of multiple layers of history and conservation choices used to interpret works of art and architecture.
- Site-specific approach to art education that makes connections between contemporary art and the historical collection.
- Partnerships with local public schools.

***Notes***

1. Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. "Eye of the Beholder: Contemporary Artists and the Public." 2000. <[www.gardnermuseum.org](http://www.gardnermuseum.org)>.



## 5.1.2 SITE DOCUMENTATION

A crucial first step in any preservation effort is site documentation. This serves as a record of existing conditions and provides documentation for the future should anything be altered. Site documentation can be performed in multiple ways. We opted for visual representations of the space in the form of a movable objects inventory, historical recreation photographs, and architectural drawings.

### ***Inventory***

An inventory of movable objects currently within the Sanctuary was taken to help Fleisher understand what is in the space and what can be moved within/removed from it. This will demonstrate the flexibility of the space. To fully understand the potential of an area it is best to first clear all clutter. A documentation of these objects is important not only because it inventories what is available for use, but it also demonstrates what is unnecessary in the space.

### Inventory Methodology

All significant movable objects within the sanctuary were photographed. Each was assigned a unique ID number within a Microsoft Access database. A form was created for each unique object. Form fields included:

- Unique ID number
- Name of the object
- Description of the object
- Date of the object

- Location origin of the object
- Whether it was originally part of the Church of the Evangelist or the Fleisher collection
- Category (what purpose does the object serve?)

Much of the description information for movable objects was derived from a 1963 publication entitled "The History of the Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial."<sup>1</sup> The database is searchable, printable, and editable. For the full inventory, refer to Appendix G.

### ***Historical Recreation Photographs***

To further document the space and understand its evolution, historical photographs from the 1904 Church of the Evangelist Guidebook were recreated in their present context. When placed side by side, the 1904 vs. 2009 photographs clearly demonstrate change over time.

### Recreation Photograph Methodology

The guide book of the Church of the Evangelists of Philadelphia, published in 1904, was used as a base for a set of photographs recreating various views printed throughout the book. The guide book consists of text and photographs of the interior and exterior of the Church of the Evangelists taken just before 1904 which provides a thorough historical perspective of the church. Recreations of the historical views are an important aspect of this project because they provide visual evidence of the changes that have occurred throughout the life of the former Church of the Evangelists, and provide a clear view of the original elements of the church that can be used to



determine the significance of different aspects of the interior.

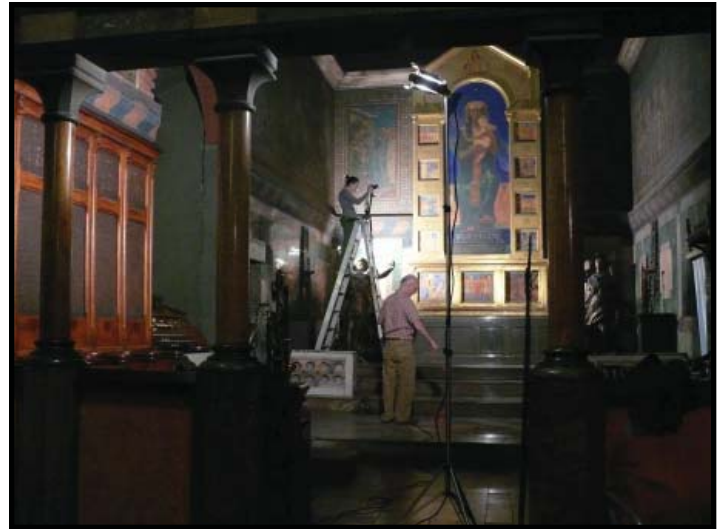
When the photographs were taken for the recreations it was very important to set up the camera and tripod in the same position and angle as the set from the guide book. However, some of the recreations have a slightly different angle due to limitations of the building. The views from the guide book were photographed in black and white, large format, which allowed for a different perspective than what could be achieved using a digital SLR camera which was used for the recreations. The recreations were photographed in color to distinguish the changes. The historical photographs were extracted from the guide book and placed side by side the recreations which provide an excellent comparison and examination of how the church has changed from 1904 to 2009. Refer to Appendix C for historical recreation photographs.

### ***Architectural Drawings***

Measurements were taken of the interior elevations of the sanctuary and translated into AutoCAD for the production of architectural drawings. A combination of measuring methods was employed to ensure accuracy. Field sketches were made with the assistance of measuring tape. In addition, a total station was used to obtain elevation measurements in areas beyond our reach. Refer to Appendix A for drawings.

### ***Notes:***

1 Zieget, Irene. "History of the Fleisher Art Memorial". Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial: Philadelphia, 1963.



**Figure 5.1.2.1. Adjusting the lights for elevation photography, 2009. Credit: Authors**



## 5.1.3 STAKEHOLDERS

Through our investigations, we gleaned what issues were important to those that care about the use and future of the Sanctuary. The intent was to understand better the variety of opinions and thoughts regarding the space and to ensure their voice was heard and contributed to the choices made throughout our studio process. This stakeholder research proved invaluable in guiding our discussions on the significance of the site; which in turn lead to the crafting of principles which incorporate the common threads gleaned from these interviews.

To better understand the Fleisher Art Memorial organization, we read their recently crafted strategic plan. This document was a comprehensive review of Fleisher goals and aspirations which also gave a sense of where they currently are as an organization. Additionally, the plan provided details regarding their budget and indicated the nonprofit is financially sound. After reading the plan, we researched the current members of Fleisher's Board of Directors and discovered their diverse backgrounds and connections to the community. Several members hold positions at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, some are lawyers, architects and the current Board President is an artist.

The next step was to read and summarize the interviews conducted by the Penn Praxis team over the past summer. These interviews of the Fleisher staff and Board of Directors provided our foundation with which we could better understand

how people felt about the space and what was at play with the space. The Sanctuary is a statement in itself and most that know the space have an opinion regarding its current condition and its future. One consistent thread in discussions involves some type of change to the space to widen its effect in the community. We distilled each interview down to a one-line-summary to clarify what was most important to each person.

Next, we created a diagram mapping out the relationship between each stakeholder to the sanctuary and to each other. Our goal was to create something that could help us efficiently reach out to the appropriate stakeholders when issues were identified that required decisions or specific input. This diagram resembles a solar system with the Sanctuary located in the center. Different groups and individuals were placed throughout the diagram based on their connection to the Sanctuary, i.e. Fleisher staff was placed closer to the "sun."

Utilizing the value of that diagram and the information gained from the summer interviews, we interviewed (or re-interviewed) appropriate Fleisher administration, staff, and users of the space. The interviews were conducted in person, over the phone, and via e-mail. This collection of information provided further proof of the strength and variety of opinions regarding the Sanctuary. These stakeholder interviews were summarized (see appendix) and reviewed to look for more common points or new considerations



to incorporate into our larger group's discussions. Additionally, a questionnaire form was created for conducting written surveys if needed.

This next step also included attending lectures, classes, and a neighborhood group meeting. Events in the Sanctuary arranged from a forum with the community building artist Lily Yeh to an anatomy lecture with a live model (see Figures 1 and 2). Also, it was helpful to understand the patterns of use and how much more the space is used on the evenings and weekends than weekdays. The space is also rented out occasionally, but we have not had the opportunity to attend a private event (but did hear mention of a wedding one weekend). Attending an introduction to drawing class in the Sanctuary provided a living example of the tradition of arts education created by Samuel Fleisher's Graphic Sketch Club. Different events attracted different attendees but the space was generally laid out similarly with seating focusing towards the pulpit area.

After attending events at the Sanctuary and



**Figure 5.1.3.1. Fleisher Educational Forum with Lily Yeh, 2009. Credit: Authors.**



**Figure 5.1.3.2. Fleisher Introduction to Drawing Class with David Berger, 2009. Credit: Authors.**

conducting further interviews, we summarized these interviews and looked for common issues brought up by many or all of the stakeholders to present to our group and at the midterm presentation. Based on our research we also compiled a list of items in play in terms of the physical space of the sanctuary. This list guided our decision-making process when discussing the significance of these elements and ranking them in terms of whether there was room for them to change or not. Our process was driven by the knowledge obtained through our stakeholder research.

***Common stakeholder issues:***

- Value needs to be utilized by school and/or rental functions.
- The space must change from cold, intimidating to vibrant, inviting.
- New lighting is key.
- The Sanctuary ought to be more engaging, whether in school or wider community.
- Interior should change, but question



is how much.

- Unique features should be used as assets rather than liabilities
- Increased rental usage likely means expanded kitchen facilities – Where?
- Could the Kahn Room space be better utilized?
- How can the sanctuary's religious character be reconciled with its secular usage?

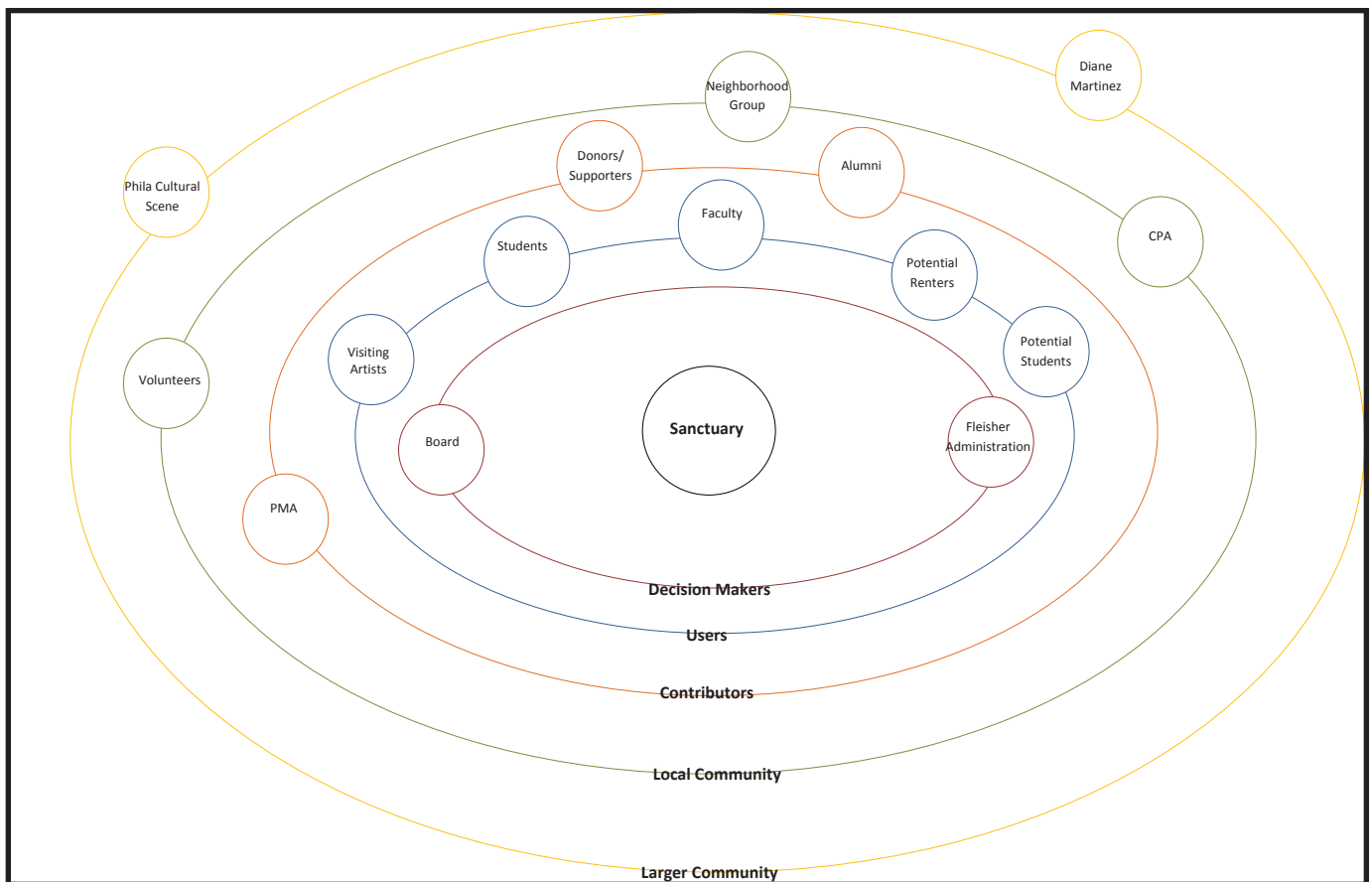


Figure 5.1.3.3. Mapping of stakeholders. Credit: Authors





## 5.2 PRESERVATION STRATEGY

After data had been collected pertaining to the site's history, inventory of objects, use, occupants and comparable institutions, the team embarked upon a series of analytical strategies in order to determine the best design, programming and interpretive decisions for the Sanctuary. While the process was often circuitous and self-informing, the method presented reveals the basic chronology of these discussions.

After generating the Statement of Significance, the team had developed a concrete assumption of value to which all future decisions would be tied. Most important in this statement, was the understanding that the Sanctuary has always and should continue to serve as a space for art education, that change has been a consistent theme in the room's development and that its connection within the neighborhood is a vital component of its current and historic use. Using this as a base line, the team conducted a S.W.O.T. analysis of the space, which included the creation of lists documenting the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the site. The space's strongest strengths included its structural soundness, aesthetic qualities and its relevance to local history. Weaknesses included improper lighting, extensive damage due to the wall-paintings and awkward space flow. There exist great opportunities in the creation of an identity for Fleisher through the appropriate use of the Sanctuary for the school's programming, as well as for outside-rental revenue. Most threatening to the space is continued under-utilization of the

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Structurally sound</i></li><li><i>Aesthetically pleasing</i></li><li><i>Relevance to local history</i></li><li>Rich materials</li><li>Flexible use</li><li>Unique</li><li>Good neighborhood</li><li>Rental property</li><li>Large</li><li>Location in relevance to art institute</li><li>Pulpit and rood screen</li><li>Acoustics</li></ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Lighting issues</i></li><li><i>Damaged frescoes</i></li><li><i>Space flow</i></li><li>Design (the apse)</li><li>Doesn't stand out on the block</li><li>Pulpit and rood screen</li><li>Façade needs work (i.e. repointing)</li><li>Currently serving as a storage space</li><li>Leaking roof</li><li>Religious connections</li><li>Not a class space</li><li>Occupancy limit</li><li>Temperature/humidity controls</li><li>Need for hidden storage</li></ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Potential beacon for Fleisher</i></li><li><i>Open potential for programming</i></li><li><i>Revenue through rentals</i></li><li>Limestone capitals and stained glass windows as commissioned art</li><li>Café — artist salon (daytime use)</li><li>Good neighborhood</li><li>Childcare</li></ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Remaining under-utilized</i></li><li><i>Creating non-sustainable needs</i></li><li><i>Losing the character</i></li><li>Damage to material fabric due to programming</li><li>Juggling religious past vs. current use</li><li>Becoming a storage space</li></ul>

**Figure 5.2.1. List of S.W.O.T. Analysis, with top choices italicized, 2009. Credit: Authors.**

space, coupled with neglect through unsustainable needs and loss of character due to ill-informed design decisions. While this analysis was useful, it did not relate to the real issue at hand- What to do with the space? This required a much heavier focus on the physical architectural elements that currently occupy the Sanctuary and the generation of a value system.

The team conceived of this step through levels of "Tolerance to Change," in which the low level would imply that little be done to change or move that feature, while the high level would imply high flexibility to a different use. This list was in no way envisioned to be a binding proposal, but instead an instructive tool for determining the embodied values that different features of the Sanctuary



held. While the list was built on values determined within the Statement of Significance and the current use and needs of Fleisher Art Memorial. After touching upon each feature of the space, the team decided to focus on the mid-range tolerance objects, as they presented unique problems that required a more developed thought process for intervention.

Simultaneously, there developed a need to define our preservation method through a succinct list of principles that would guide any interventions made to the space. These principles were informed by our S.W.O.T. analysis and attempted to address the space's strengths and opportunities, while protecting against weaknesses and threats. Guiding principles for the preservation of the Sanctuary included:

1. Engaging historic fabric to relate to contemporary audience.
2. Increase accessibility of art in the space to everyone.
3. Sensitively modernizing systems to increase use.
4. Protecting historic fabric.
5. Promote the mission of the Fleisher Art Memorial.
6. Reconcile religious context and programmatic efforts.

In order to develop our design proposals for the most contested elements of the Sanctuary, the team generated a matrix which included different options of intervention for each element, mapped against the set of preservation principles that had

been determined earlier. Based on the ability for each decision to touch upon as many of the principles as possible, the design options were ranked. These decisions were then highlighted, and elaborate upon as proposals for future changes to the Sanctuary.

The team analyzed the site in terms of strengths, weaknesses, potential opportunities, and impending threats to the building.



## 5.2.1 TOLERANCE MATRICES

Building Features in the Sanctuary have three periods of significance: the Church of the Evangelists (1886-1911), the Graphic Sketch Club (1922-1944), and the Fleisher Art Memorial (1944-present). Current conditions of the building features range from good to poor, based on the integrity of the historic material.

### ***Building Features with Low Tolerance for Change***

Identification Number	Low Tolerance for Change	Period of Significance			Current Condition
		Church of the Evangelists	Graphic Sketch Club	Fleisher Art Memorial	
1	Columns, Arches, Load-bearing Walls	X	X	X	Good
3	Relationship b/w Stone and Wood Floor	X			Fair
2	Commissioned Stained Glass	X		X	Good
4	Facade	X	X	X	Good
5	Yellin Wrought Iron Gate		X		Good
6	Oakley Reredos		X		Good
10	Truss System	X			Fair
7	Icons Painted on Columns	X	X		Good
8	Altar Wall Paintings	X	X		Fair
9	Trompe l'Oeil Walls	X			Fair



**Building Features with Mid Tolerance for Change**

Identification Number	Mid Tolerance for Change	Period of Significance			Current Condition
		Church of the Evangelists	Graphic Sketch Club	Fleisher Art Memorial	
18	Non-sculpted Capitals	X			Good
11	Rood Screen	X			Good
12	Choir Seating	X			Fair
14	Tile/marble Floor	X	X	X	Fair
15	Crucifix		X		Good
16	Nave/Chapel Wall Paintings	X	X		Fair-Poor
17	Cantilevered Pedestals above Rood Screen		X		Fair
13	Pulpit	X			Good

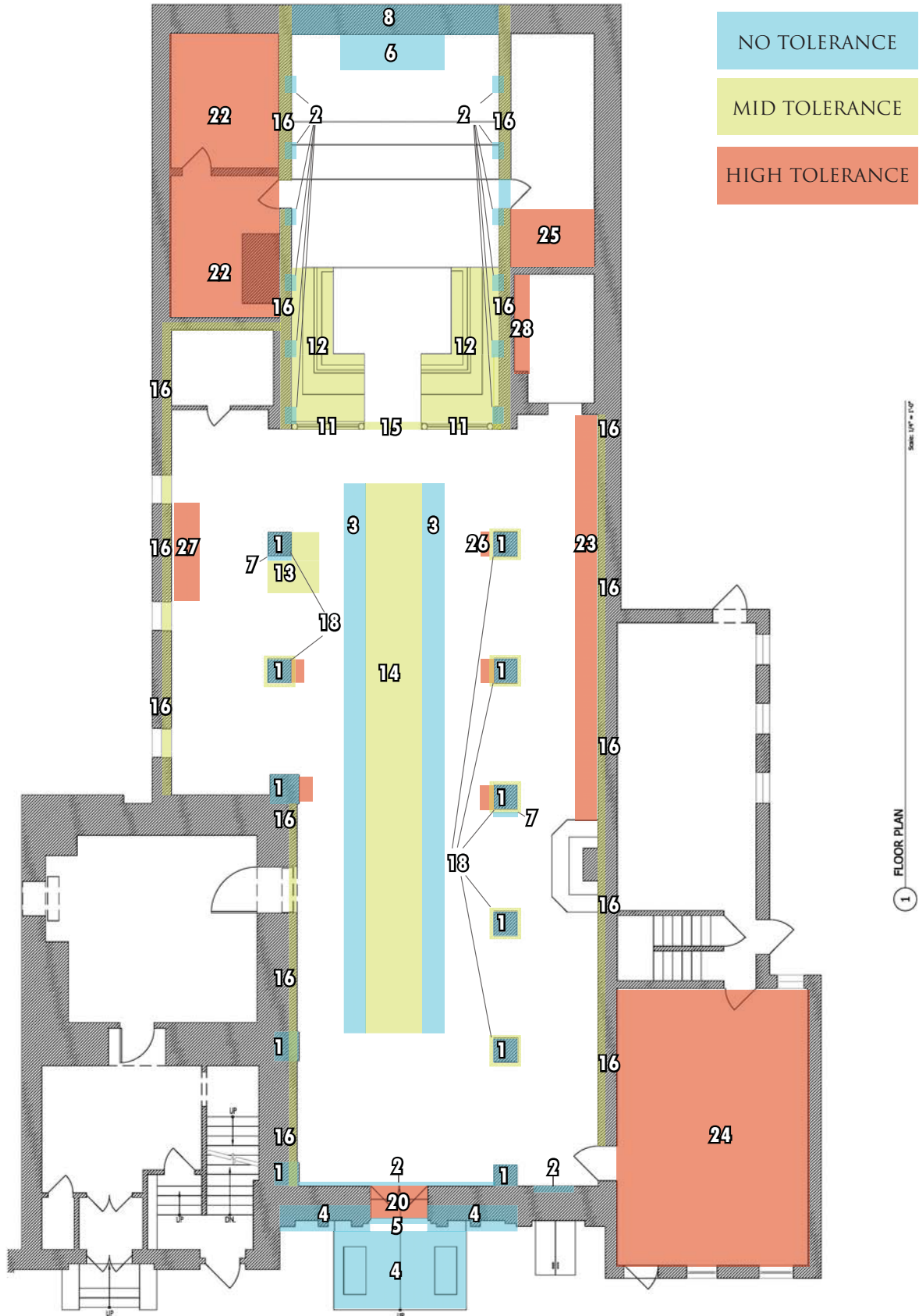
**Building Features with High Tolerance for Change**

Identification Number	High Tolerance for Change	Period of Significance			Current Condition
		Church of the Evangelists	Graphic Sketch Club	Fleisher Art Memorial	
19	Non-commissioned Stained Glass	X			Good
20	Fire Doors			X	Good
21	Chandeliers/Spotlights			X	Fair
22	Organ/Pipe Rooms	X			Fair
23	Perimeter Wooden Benches	X			Fair
24	Kahn Room			X	Good
26	Statuary on Piers		X		Good
27	Display Pew		X		Fair
28	Tiles in East Chapel			X	Good



# THE SANCTUARY AT FLEISHER ART MEMORIAL PRESERVATION PLAN

HSPV 740-201: PRESERVATION STUDIO





## 5.3 PRESERVATION PHILOSOPHY

As a dynamic organization that strives to engage a diverse community in the creation of art, Fleisher Art Memorial serves as both a community center and an arts education facility. At the heart of the Fleisher campus, the Sanctuary encompasses the organization's past and serves as a meeting place and retreat for students, staff, neighbors, and visitors. As such, uses of the Sanctuary must respect the significant histories represented in the materials of the building, and preservation choices in the Sanctuary must be relevant to the needs of Fleisher Art Memorial's present and future.

The Sanctuary should be treated as an integral component in day-to-day operations and special events at Fleisher. Creative use of the Sanctuary for classes, exhibitions and events should be encouraged as a way to engage the building's historic fabric with Fleisher's mission to provide opportunities for arts education for all. Sensitive changes to the Sanctuary can be made to accommodate these uses. When introducing new systems or uses into the Sanctuary, alterations should be evaluated for their impact on materials significant to the narrative of Fleisher's history. Architectural features or objects identified as having low tolerance for change should receive particular attention when assessing potential alterations. More flexible areas within the Sanctuary identified as having high tolerance for modification can accommodate innovative changes that respond to Fleisher's history and support the organization's future.

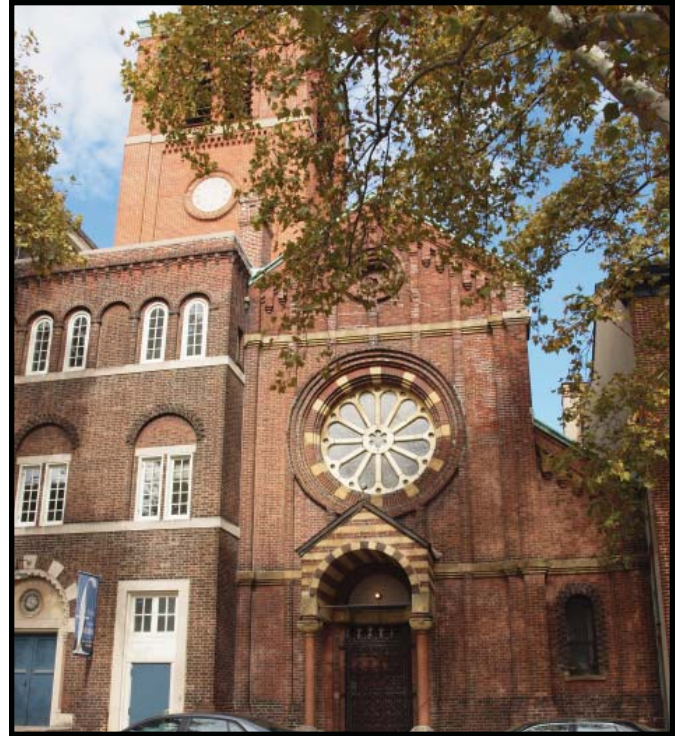


Figure 5.3.1. Facade of Sanctuary. Credit: Authors.



Figure 5.3.2. Interior of Sanctuary. Credit: by the authors.



## 6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

### *A Need for Change*

With its 2009 Strategic Plan, the Fleisher Art Memorial expressed a desire to expand its impact as an arts education organization. In order to do this, Fleisher's resources need to be developed to accommodate a growing program. One of the organization's most underutilized resources is the Sanctuary. The existing sanctuary space is dark and inflexible. Changes in layout and systems within the Sanctuary will allow for greater and more varied use of the space. The following recommendations are suggested to increase the programming functionality of the Fleisher Art Memorial Sanctuary. Recommendations have been divided into three categories:

1. Conservation
2. Design
3. Programming.

Each recommendation reflects one or more of Fleisher's stated goals (see **figure 6.0.1**). The recommendations have been prioritized within their categories and given a priority distinction of high, medium, or low. Priorities of recommendations are determined by the following criteria: tolerance, invasiveness, feasibility, and impact on programming. An ideal recommendation with a high priority rating concerns an element with a high tolerance for change, requires little material invasion, is highly feasible in terms of cost and method, and either greatly improves programming and/or does not deter existing programming. In instances where all criteria cannot be met, the variables are weighted on a case by case basis.

**Goal 1:** To provide exceptional arts education experiences that are meaningful, innovative, and relevant

**Goal 2:** To build sustained participation in Fleisher programs among currently uninvolved groups

**Goal 3:** To strengthen and revitalize Fleisher's exhibition program to provide vibrant and engaging presentation and arts education opportunities

**Goal 4:** To raise Fleisher's visibility as a regional destination for making and experiencing art

**Goal 5:** To develop Fleisher's resources to accommodate sustainable and responsible programmatic growth and improvement

**Goal 6:** To build an organizational culture of learning and accountability

**Figure 6.0.1: Fleisher Art Memorial Goals, as stated in the 2009 Strategic Plan**



## 6.1 CONSERVATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The interior of the Sanctuary is in good condition, but there are elements of the historic fabric that need attention if they are to persevere and be appreciated in the way they were intended. Of particular concern are the interior elevations. These elevations are sandstone, brick, painted plaster and lath, and wall murals. The sandstone and painted plaster and lath walls appear structurally sound, but suffer from heavy soiling. The first conservation recommendation discusses methods of cleaning these walls so that they may be represented as originally intended.

Another issue of concern are the wall murals within the apse and along the east and west elevations. To accurately record the current state of the wall paintings in the Sanctuary, images were taken using digital photography. Due to the poor lighting of the Sanctuary, the photographs were corrected using Photoshop. After correcting the images, a photomontage was created for each elevation. Using CAD drawings, the photomontages were then inserted into the elevations to allow for scale and a cohesive representation of the frescos within the surrounding architecture.

In addition to photographic documentation, a brief conditions survey was compiled documenting the current conditions of the paintings, including noted variations in their design. The major issue plaguing all the wall paintings in the sanctuary is heavy soiling which coupled with the poor lighting scheme is responsible for obscuring the images.

Other widespread issues in varying degrees of severity include water damage and staining, paint loss and cracking.

Using images from the 1904 Guidebook to the Church of the Evangelists as a comparison, it becomes apparent that several small changes have been made to the wall paintings on the East aisle wall. Greater detail regarding the specific alterations and conditions of these wall paintings will be discussed at a later point within the report. The East wall is not the only one which has experienced changes to the design of the wall paintings; those on the West Wall and in the Lady Chapel also show evidence of past alterations. The West Wall displays the Earth after the Fall of Man. The painting is populated with serpentine trees and snakes, all of which are painted in hues of blue and green. Its position with regards to roofing structures has allowed for the painting to experience little to no damage due to roof system failure as is present in other areas of the Sanctuary. Despite the heavy degree of soiling, the painting exhibits relatively little damage. Although there is no water damage to the plaster or the paint; there are nail holes present throughout the length of the fresco.

While the West Wall has sustained little damage or alteration, the Procession of the Magi exhibits evidence of previous restoration and cleaning attempts with a possibility of having been over painted at some point. This section and the other





portions of the Magi fresco exhibit the generalized soiling throughout the rest of the Sanctuary; yet the brick arches surrounding the windows are in generally good condition save for the far left window which exhibits pronounced efflorescence and in the lower portions of the brickwork, disintegration and powder formation. Much of this deterioration is related to the water infiltration which occurs due in part to the poor roofing system.

The frescos behind the rood screen suffer from excessive soiling which obscures the images from view. However because of the location of the frescos on the sides of the wall and the lack of roofing issues, the frescos have been kept relatively intact with very little damage such as loss of paint, water staining or cracks. This is not to say that there are no conservation threats, but these will be addressed later in the conservation changes portion of the report.



## 6.1.1 CLEANING INTERIOR

### ELEVATIONS: HIGH

Within the Sanctuary, the masonry walls and the trompe l'oeil surfaces above the beltcourse have been heavily soiled from years of gas lighting, burning of church candles, and exposure to city pollution. Issues with the roof leaking have also contributed to the soiling of interior walls. Cleaning of the wall surfaces will expose the details of the interior, help to brighten the room, and will aid in the intended appreciation of the space. Sensitive cleaning of the interior elevations will protect the historic fabric and make the space more accessible to Fleisher as an organization and to the community as a whole. In addition, cleaning will develop the Sanctuary as a resource to Fleisher and make the space more open to programming and more sustainable for future.

Cleaning methods should be sensitive to the delicate substrates, but effective enough to remove the soot and dirt build-up. Below the beltcourse, the interior masonry elevations are sandstone. Above the beltcourse the walls are plaster on lath, painted to give a matching appearance to the stone below. This technique is referred to as "trompe l'oeil," or "trick of the eye." Careful consideration should be given to the need for a uniform appearance across varying surfaces. The upper trompe l'oeil pattern was intended to seamlessly match the lower stone courses, so methods of cleaning should be effective on both surfaces without making it obvious that they are not the same material. Because the surfaces are not alike, it is likely that a different cleaning method or variations of a particular cleaning method should be used on each surface.

Because the walls are sensitive and because they are interior elevations, conventional cleaning methods may not be appropriate for the Fleisher Sanctuary. Sand blasting and high-pressure water systems are too abrasive for these particular substrates. Also, the amount of water required for a water pressure system is too great for an interior. Use of such a system would risk flooding the interior, causing damage to the basement below. Also, water would be difficult to contain and might threaten the delicate condition of the wall murals within the space. When dealing with historically sensitive materials, the best approach is that which is as gentle as possible.

The Sponge-Jet® system is a preliminary recommendation for the cleaning process. This system blasts tiny sponge particles toward the soiled



**Figure 6.6.1. Soiling on south elevation of Sanctuary, 2009. Credit: by the authors**



### The Sponge-Jet Process:

**Sponge Media** abrasives are available in 20 types for any application. All provide dry, low dust, low rebound blasting.

**Sponge-Jet Feed Units** propel Sponge Media abrasives to the surface. A centralized panel provides adjustment of blast pressure and media feed rate allowing for precise control.



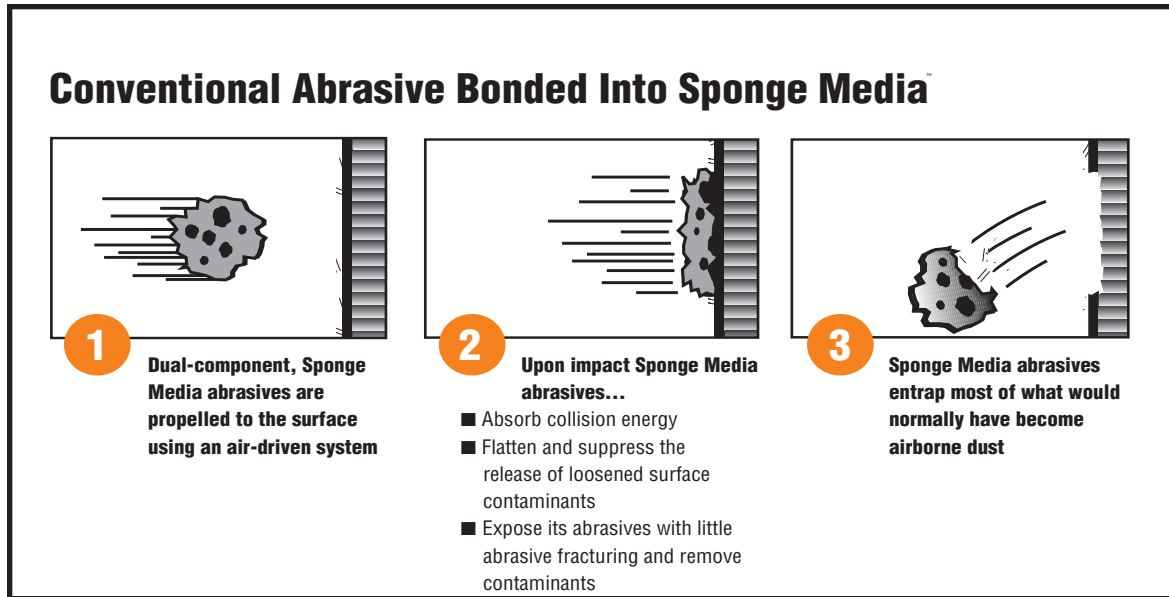
**Figure 6.1.2. Illustration of Sponge-Jet® system, 2009. Credit: www.spongjet.com**

surface at a specified pressure. When the sponge particles make contact with the surface, they trap contaminants and release them from the wall with minimal dust and little to no effect on the substrate. A Sponge-Jet® Feed Unit is an air-driven system that delivers the sponge media to the surface and allows the user to control pressure while maintaining precision. Varying types of sponge media can be used by the discretion of a trained operator. Most appropriate for substrates as sensitive as those in the Sanctuary would be the White Sponge Media™ or the Blue Sponge Media™ (see figure). Use of this media will result in little to no residue but will still effectively clean the surface. The varying sponge medias will allow for modification in the cleaning process when dealing with the differing surfaces. This may help to maintain the desired uniform look across surfaces. A tent system around the concentrated area is typically used to contain the ricochet of sponge media. This helps to control the sponge particles and dust and allows for quick clean-up should the area need to be used soon after cleaning. Sponge-Jet® cleaning is faster than manual cleaning as it can clean as

fast as 2 square feet per minute.<sup>1</sup> Also, the sponge media is recyclable and therefore creates little waste. A Sponge-Jet® recycler classifies and cleans the collected sponge particles for reuse.

In a case study, Sponge-Jet® was employed to clean the interior masonry walls of a New York landmark church. The walls of the church, like those within the Fleisher Sanctuary, were sandstone. The quick clean-up of the Sponge-Jet® process allowed the church to remain functionally during the cleaning schedule (although due to the noise of the Feed Unit and general safety precautions, the process cannot take place simultaneously with public functions).

Overall, the pneumatic Sponge-Jet® system provides precise control of media with limited overblast and little dust accumulation, and has minimized impact on both the substrate and surrounding public activities. It is faster than hand-tooling, captures potentially harmful pollutants from the soiled surface, creates little waste, and allows for quick clean-up.<sup>2</sup> Because of these defining characteristics, Sponge-Jet® is the recommended system for cleaning of the



**Figure 6.1.3. Explanation of surface soil removal via sponge media, 2009.**  
Credit: [www.spongejet.com](http://www.spongejet.com)

interior surfaces (not the wall murals) in the Fleisher Sanctuary. Before any cleaning begins, however, this system, as well as others should be tested on sample areas and evaluated for their efficacy and effect on the underlying substrate. If this system proves damaging beyond a reasonable degree to the substrate, an alternative method should be chosen. The goals of the cleaning process should be to restore the appearance of the surface to its original aesthetic, remove contaminants from the surface, preserve the acoustics of the space, and to cause as little damage as possible to the historic sandstone and trompe l'oeil.

#### Notes:

1 "Sponge-Jet® Industry Overview: Surface Preparation for Historical Restoration Applications." Sponge-Jet®, 2003. 15 Nov. 2009. <[www.spongejet.com](http://www.spongejet.com)>.

2 "Sponge-Jet® Introductory Brochure." Sponge-Jet®, 2007. 15 Nov. 2009. <[www.spongejet.com](http://www.spongejet.com)>.



**Sponge Media™ for Sensitive Substrates**

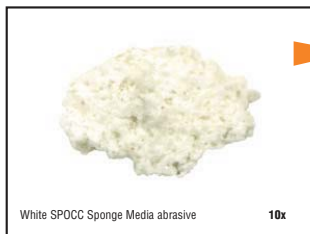
**REDUCE**  
**90% OF**  
**THE DUST**  
**90% OF**  
**THE REBOUND**  
**90% OF**  
**THE WASTE**

**For sensitive substrate restoration, cleaning, and selective stripping**

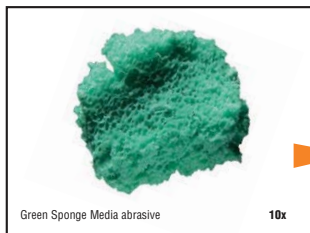
Whether removing dirt, exfoliation, soot, char, single layers of coating, oil or other contaminants, Sponge-Jet offers a dry, low dust, low rebound, reusable solution. Quickly achieve desired results on the most sensitive surfaces.

**White Sponge Media™**

Providing a unique sensitive substrate solution with minimal to no profiling. Used on a wide range of historic restoration and general industrial applications.



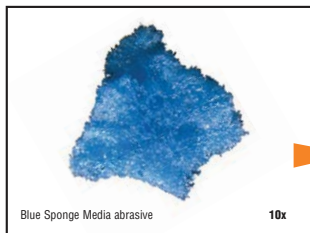
WHITE SPONGE MEDIA TYPE	PROFILE	CLEANING AGENT
<b>White SPOCC Sponge Media</b>	<b>&lt;6 micron (&lt;.25 mil)<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Spherical Precipitate of Calcium Carbonate</b>
<b>White Plastic Sponge Media</b>	<b>None<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>30/40 Mesh, type II Plastic Urea</b>
<b>White Glass Bead Sponge Media</b>	<b>&lt;6 micron (&lt;.25 mil)<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>60/80 Mesh, Glass Bead</b>
<b>White Melamine Sponge Media</b>	<b>&lt;6 micron (&lt;.25 mil)<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>40/60 Mesh, type II Melamine</b>



**Green Sponge Media™**

Grease and oil removal from hard substrates or heavy machinery without damage to hoses or fittings. Smoke and soot removal from most industrial surfaces, especially concrete and steel.

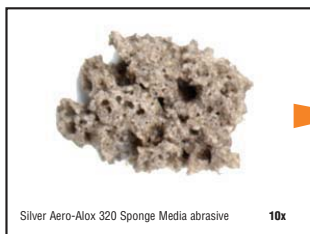
GREEN SPONGE MEDIA TYPE	PROFILE	CLEANING AGENT
<b>Green Sponge Media</b>	<b>&lt;6 micron (&lt;.25 mil)<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Very Mild</b>



**Blue Sponge Media™**

Uses the pure cleaning power of sponge with no added abrasion; to remove soot, smoke damage and other light residue from ultra-sensitive, water-intolerable substrates.

GREEN SPONGE MEDIA TYPE	PROFILE	CLEANING AGENT
<b>Blue Sponge Media</b>	<b>0 micron (&lt;0 mil)<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>None</b>



**Silver Sponge Media™**

Combines one of the world's most effective and versatile abrasives (aluminum oxide) with the durability and recyclability of Sponge Media in a range of grit sizes to address virtually every application.

SILVER SPONGE MEDIA TYPE	PROFILE	CLEANING AGENT
<b>Silver 500 Sponge Media</b>	<b>&lt;6 micron (&lt;.25 mil)<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>500-Grit Aluminum Oxide</b>
<b>Silver Aero-Alox™ 320 Sponge Media</b>	<b>&lt;12 micron (&lt;.5 mil)<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>320-Grit Aluminum Oxide</b>
<b>Silver 220 Sponge Media</b>	<b>&lt;25 micron (&lt;1 mil)<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>220-Grit Aluminum Oxide</b>
<b>Silver 120 Sponge Media</b>	<b>±25 micron (±1 mil)<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>120-Grit Aluminum Oxide</b>
<b>Silver 80 Sponge Media</b>	<b>±50 micron (±2 mil)<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>80-Grit Aluminum Oxide</b>

<sup>a</sup>On mild carbon steel

Visit Sponge-Jet, Inc. at [www.spongejet.com](http://www.spongejet.com) or call **603-610-7950** to learn more about the Sponge Blasting™ System  
©2007 Sponge-Jet, Inc. All rights reserved. The data provided here and elsewhere is based on historical experience and theoretical determination and is intended to indicate general characteristics only. Sponge-Jet, Inc. disclaims all warranties, expressed or implied, including warranties of merchantability and fitness for any particular purpose or use.

**Figure 6.1.4. Available sponge media for sensitive substrates, 2009.**  
Credit: [www.spongejet.com](http://www.spongejet.com)

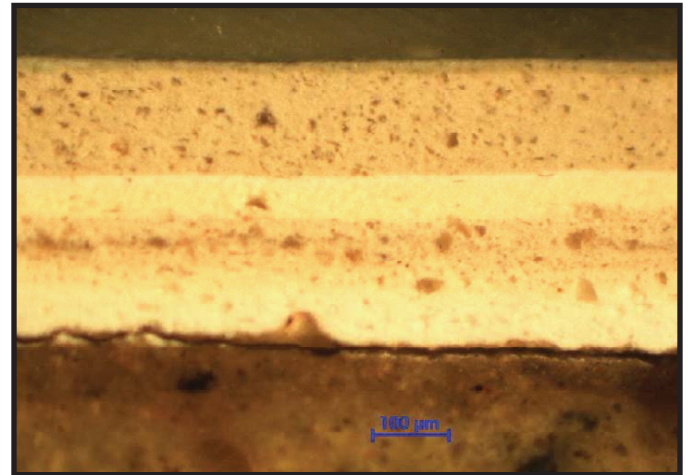


## 6.1.2 CONSERVING THE APSE PAINTINGS: MEDIUM

Conserving the wall paintings in the apse would make the Sanctuary more inviting, decrease the darkness users associate with the space, and restore material that is significant to the Sanctuary's character. The paintings were commissioned in 1887 by Percival, and he hired a local art instructor named Boero to paint them. He was assisted by his sixteen-year-old student Nicholas D'Ascenzo, who is responsible for most of five of the eight paintings. The other three were painted by Anne Leeds and her brother, Rev. Canon Webb, Percival's assistant rector.

The murals were not actually painted onto the walls; rather, they are unique in the Sanctuary for being painted on canvas that is applied to the masonry. The painted borders around the murals hide their edges. Unfortunately, this somewhat complicates their conservation. Destructive analytical techniques will likely be necessary. First, a professional conservator will need to take small samples of the paintings for microscopic cross-sectional analysis for a visual of the layers of adhesive, canvas, and paint. The integrity of the canvas and adhesive will determine if the murals need to be removed or if they can be conserved in situ. Obviously the latter is preferable, as it is usually the less expensive option and there is a significantly higher chance of damage to the mural during removal, transport and re-installation.

There are minor signs of canvas detachment along the lower edges of some of the murals, but currently the adhesive bond looks stable, making it a probable candidate for in situ preservation.



**Figure 6.1.2.1: Example of microscopic cross-section. Credit: M. Colahan.**

Otherwise, the paintings overall appear to be in excellent condition: there is no indication of paint flaking or water damage, as in other parts of the Sanctuary. There is obvious surface soiling from years of soot from altar candles, and there is no evidence of prior conservation treatments so one must assume they have not been cleaned thoroughly since their installation. X-ray fluorescence (XRF) and diffraction (XRD) analyses are simple tests that can determine the chemical composition of the paint used on the murals and will dictate what sort of products should be used in their cleaning.



## 6.1.3 EAST WALL PAINTING

### CONSERVATION: MEDIUM

Based on alterations to the original design of several of the wall paintings, it was decided to focus specifically on the wall paintings of the East aisle. These frescos arguably have the most artistic value within the space. While other frescos in the sanctuary are based on historic paintings, these particular frescos are singular works. Depicting events which the congregation and Percival believed to be significant, they help to inform the viewer of the beliefs and values important to the members of the Church of the Evangelist congregation. Based on the descriptions provided in the Guidebook, "As the nave sets forth fallen man in his wanderings, as the Lady Chapel sets forth the heavenly mysteries of the Mother and Son, as the chancel is full of the glories of the life of the Incarnate God, so the wall of the long aisle shews forth the flowers of the Sacred Passion, the lives of God's elect."<sup>1</sup>

The Plague of London shows significant soiling and discoloration in addition to damage due to the failure of the roofing systems and water infiltration. Indeed, a top section of the wall is missing entirely. The paint has almost completely worn away in sections of the fresco, much of which is localized to the right hand side boarder. The boarder design itself appears to have been altered at some point between the photographs taken in 1904 and the present.

The wall painting of St. Benedict shows the clearest evidence of past alterations. The boarder around and above the doorway have a different



**Figure 6.1.3.1. Plague of London Wall Painting, 2009. Credit: Authors.**

colored paint applied to details which alludes to the door's later appearance in the sanctuary as it was added in 1980. A large crack is present around the doorway. Also, the paints in this section of the fresco have a more lustrous appearance than that elsewhere on the East wall.

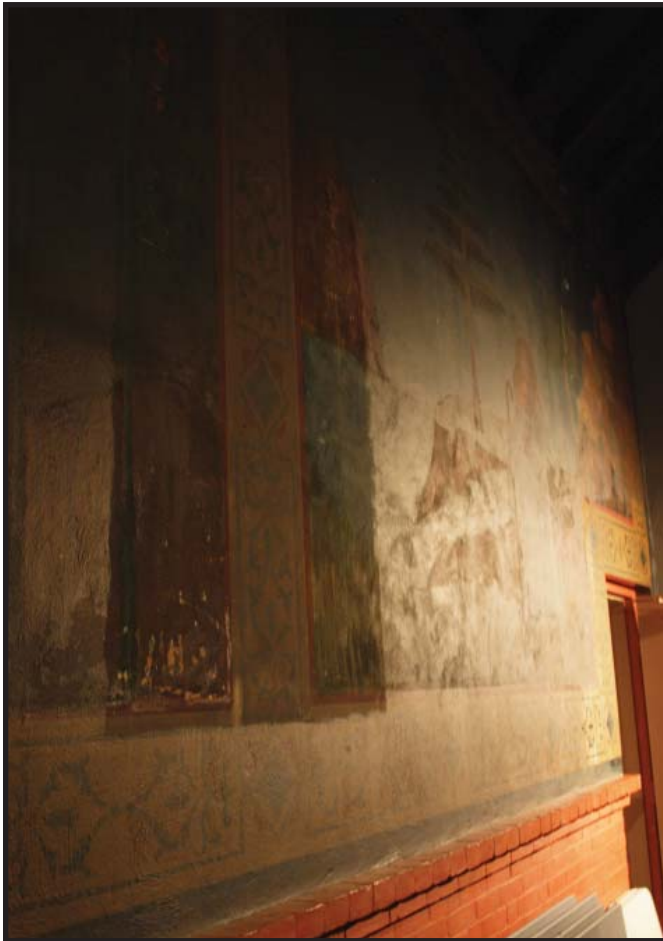
Variance in color is not limited to the areas surrounding the doorway; indeed there are isolated areas in which the blue of the sky is darker



**Figure 6.1.3.2. Border detail, 2009. Credit: Authors.**



suggesting later over painting to hide damaged areas. Overall, the wall painting appears to have a coating applied to it which is not present on the majority of the mural, there is a large void with very clear witness marks forming a rectangular shape, possibly the result of a hanging carpet or art piece,



**Figure 6.1.3.3. Void in coating. 2009. Credit: Authors.**

both of which were frequent installations during Fleisher's use of the space as an art sanctuary.

The border design between the wall painting of the Plague of London and the Procession of Louis IX has been very obviously altered. Where the boarder was once two diamonds wide , now only one remains. Also, there was no line at the axis. At present, discoloration due to soiling is the

most notable condition and due to the location of the fresco and the failure of the roofing system there is evidence of water damage. Presence and pattern of the drips suggests water soluble varnish or paint.

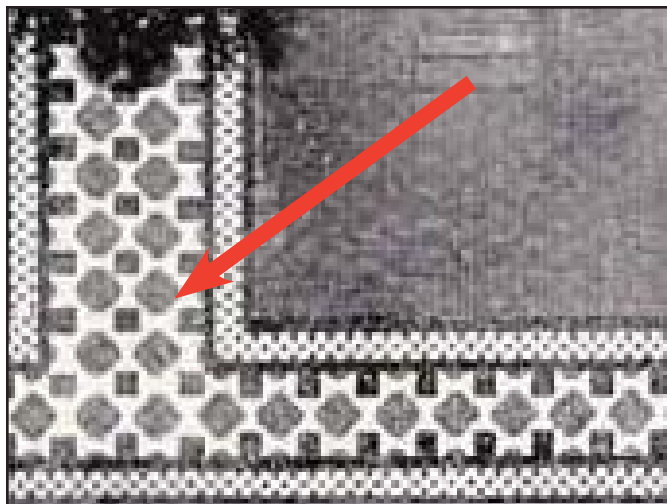
No historic photographs exist documenting the condition and the design of the entire Louis XI wall painting. Some illustration is provided in textual form in the description in the 1904 guidebook, it is said to show the procession of St. Louis XI. Of all the wall paintings in the nave of the Sanctuary, this particular one displays the most extensive and complete damage as much of the left hand side has been washed away due to water infiltration. Of the remaining visible portions there is some evidence of alterations, specifically to the church located on the right hand side of the fresco. Originally drawn to resemble the Sainte Chapelle in Paris, the resemblance has almost been completely lost. The thickening of the spire in addition to the removal of some of the tracery windows is evidence of later alterations, most likely as a response to the increasing water damage of the wall.

During examinations of the wall paintings two separate campagins, an faint earlier campagin appears to be a true fresco and the pigments engrained in the plaster. A thick paint layer has been applied over this earlier campagin, although the exact time of this over painting is unknown. Evidence of this earlier campagin can most clearly be seen in the Plague of London and Procession of Louis IX panels, especially near the borders.

### **Recommendations**

It needs to be determined if these frescos are





**Figure 6.1.3.4. Original border detail, 1904. Credit: Guide Book to the Church of the Evangelists.**

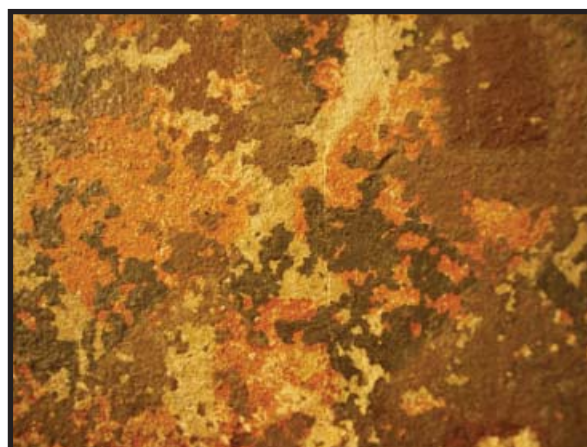
indeed true frescos or if they are a different type of wall painting such as secco, fresco- secco, or oil paint on plaster. Therefore, samples should be taken from selected areas on each mural; these areas exhibit representative conditions and are located in discreet locations so as not to damage the overall aesthetic of the murals. Samples will include the substrate to provide a chronology of the plaster/ fresco and help inform as to the nature of the paintings.



**Figure 6.1.3.5. Current border detail, 2009. Credit: Authors.**

Once the samples have been collected, they will be examined using cross section microscopy. Viewing the cross sections through microscopy will provide integral information regarding the nature of the murals, helping to confirm if they are indeed true frescos or some other form of wall painting. Cross section analysis also allows for the identification of layers in plaster or repairs made. After the samples have been examined through microscopy it is our recommendation that they then be sent for further analytical testing, such as FTIR (Fourier Transform Infrared Spectroscopy), SEM (Scanning Electron Microscope) and XRD( X-Ray Diffraction) all of which will provide information regarding the composition and nature of the pigments. This will ultimately inform the conservation plan for the wall paintings.

Overall It is our hypothesis that the recently discovered earlier campaign is a true fresco and therefore is still visible beneath the later over paint campaigns, especially in the Plague of London and the Procession of Louis IX. The overpaint layer in these two panels shows the highest degree of deterioration and failure; most likely due to the fact that these same panels have suffered the most



**Figure 6.1.3.6. Two wall painting campaigns, 2009. Credit: Authors.**



water damage. As a result, moisture is unable to escape due to the impermeable overpaint whereas the original 'fresco' campaign remains intact; this is due in part to the nature of the fresco making process.

**Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> Percival, Henry R. Guide Book to the Church of the Evangelists: Philadelphia. Philadelphia: Church of the Evangelists, 1904.



## 6.2 DESIGN CHANGE RECOMMENDATIONS



**Figure 6.2.1. View of Sanctuary from the Choir, looking South. Credit: Authors.**

The design change recommendations are intended to build off of and improve upon both the preservation and programmatic needs of Fleisher. These recommendations incorporate Fleisher Art Memorial's goals, and the preservation philosophy that our team developed. Each design change is designated in terms of priority, based on issues of tolerance, feasibility, and cost and impact on programming. The design change recommendations are of high, mid or low priority. Some of the recommendations may seem somewhat radical; however, these design changes are intended to provoke creative thinking about how the space and how it could potentially be used.

The design change recommendations address issues of lighting and exhibition and gallery space

which incorporate goals of expanding use of the Sanctuary, as well as the need to unite the greater Fleisher campus with the Sanctuary. The recommended design changes that will be addressed in detail include; updated lighting systems, addition of glass fire doors, relocating the pulpit, roodscreen, and choir seating, significant changes in the Kahn room, integrating a hanging walkway, and retractable walls, and elevating the statues that currently line the nave. Proposed alterations to the aforementioned elements were measured against our established principles in order to guide and prioritize our recommendations. The most controversial change proposals and whether or not they meet our guiding principles are illustrated in the Design Development matrix (refer to Appendix I).



## 6.2.1 LIGHTING GUIDELINES:

HIGH

The lighting scheme in the Fleisher Art Memorial sanctuary is one of the most perceptible and contentious design elements of the space. Consisting of a medley of various fixtures, the lighting is comprised predominantly of spot and track lighting, as well as clamp photographer lights dispersed intermittently through the space. Lighting fixtures in the sanctuary are a mixed bag in terms of functionality; some of the spotlights do not function, and lighting is very hot and concentrated in some areas and nonexistent in others, leaving a very uneven light distribution in the space. This is exacerbated by the seemingly random and disorganized orientation of some of the fixtures. The lights are controlled by dimmer switches located on the south wall of the west aisle; there is also a separate dimmer pad in the basement in addition to the circuit breakers. In addition to the poor functionality of the fixtures, they are also visibly unappealing and disparate from the overall aesthetic of the art and architecture of the sanctuary.

The lighting in the sanctuary has been addressed in the Kise Straw Kolodner Preservation Plan, both by consulting mechanical engineers Bruce E. Brooks & Associates and lighting consultants Crowell Design. While brief, Brook's report does address the issue of low lighting in the sanctuary. No alterations are suggested for the fixtures, however more energy efficient bulbs are recommended, in addition to occupancy sensors. The Crowell report takes a more comprehensive approach to lighting alterations. Utilizing the

existing tracks, Crowell recommends replacement of just the track heads with new fixtures and metal halide bulbs that throw more light and are considerably more energy efficient. In addition, they recommend the introduction of small bracket lighting above the murals along the aisles.

Crowell's report has many advantages; it brings much needed light to architectural elements and spaces that were previously too dim. It also allows for the reuse of existing hardware, which cuts costs and facilitates installation; wiring is already in place and no addition holes will have to be drilled or conduits run. However, the report also suggests that the basement dimmer panel be relocated due to harsh conditions; this may require rewiring of the structure anyway, so the cost of rewiring added or relocated fixtures may not be as high relative to the rewiring of existing fixtures. In addition, care must be taken in the use of certain types of lighting (i.e. metal halide) as it may result in a much 'cooler' color than is appropriately for the space. Most importantly however, the specified fixtures' utilitarian feel are incongruous with the overall aesthetic of the space.

### **Methodology**

In general, we agree with Crowell's overall statement of the lighting condition. However, our recommendations incorporate a more thorough evaluation of lighting needs for the sanctuary space with regards to both preservation and programming needs. It is important that it be stated that we are



NOT lighting designers! The design ideas herein represent what we as preservationists feel would creatively integrate our goals. Before any actual design alterations are made, a professional lighting design firm should be consulted to both verify the feasibility of the recommended lighting schemes, and to optimize the energy efficiency of the system while adhering to the preservation principles outlined herein.

The design of an effective lighting scheme requires a thorough understanding of the performance of the structure and its varying components. Physical dimensions, color and reflectivity of the surfaces, furniture layout, and the cleanliness of the reflective surfaces are all variables that determine what fixtures and bulbs are used and in what arrangement. For instance, more lighting (number of fixtures, intensity of light, etc.) would be required in a dark space than a room with whitewashed walls. However, direct lighting of a wall mural that has been coated with lacquer may cause distracting glare on the more reflective surface. The required lighting is also dependent upon the ultimate function of the space; codes are available indicating required minimum light levels in various types of rooms. For instance, auditorium seating areas require a much lower level of light (15 footcandles) than a classroom meant for drafting (100 footcandles). In addition to these components, the overall effect of the desired lighting scheme must be considered. In particular, the new design should be examined in relation to historic precedents within the space, specifically with regard to the emphasis and dimensionality of architectural elements. With specific regard to Fleisher, the question should be asked: is it possible to achieve an acceptable programmatic lighting scheme while adhering to the

original lighting design intent?

The design considerations can be classified into three subcategories: the enhancement of the architectural fabric itself; the generation of a program specific lighting scheme; and the generation of a general preservation lighting scheme. All of these elements must be considered and weighed in the design of an appropriate lighting system for an historic space. As they may not always be compatible, we look to our preservation philosophy and principles in order to assess the relative significance of each.

### ***Recommendations***

Three design options were considered for the Fleisher sanctuary—an historical reconstruction of a previous lighting period; a modern lighting system; and a contemporary variation on historic lighting. The first option would involve selecting a period in Fleisher's past and replicating the fixtures. This option, while possibly the most appropriate with regard to the aesthetic of the sanctuary, causes some complications. Firstly, there is the question of which era to replicate. Though the era of the Graphic Sketch Club is perhaps the most significant, the era of the Evangelists is arguably more appropriate because the building was constructed at that time. In either case, knowledge of the fixtures is extremely limited. Not only would replications be inauthentic, but they would also be highly conjectural.

The second option involves the introduction of contemporary fixtures. This option allows for maximum flexibility in terms of both fixtures and configuration, and is perhaps best suited from the vantage of programmatic concerns. In addition,



there are a number of new(er) lighting techniques available that may be well suited for architectural highlighting (i.e. track lighting, strip lighting, etc.). However, by introducing a completely new lighting scheme, we run the risk of overlighting and completely negating the original intent of the architect. The final option consists of a sort of compromise between historical configuration and contemporary fixtures. The intent is to simulate (in a more modern fashion) or allude to the historic fixtures and fabric of the sanctuary. This would involve a more traditional placement of fixtures which are reminiscent of historic ones, but also distinctly contemporary. This option allows for two things: one, a synergy with the history of the space without being inauthentic; and two, optimized lighting performance that could not have been achieved historically.

In summary, because of not only the varied history but also the varied functionality of the sanctuary, the lighting of the sanctuary can, and should, be flexible; it should also respect (and emboss) the overall design and aesthetic of the space. We believe this can be achieved by some combination of the aforementioned options two and three. By using strategic contemporary fixtures in more traditional configurations, in conjunction with less obvious modern accent lighting, we can accomplish our goals of highlighting the significant architecture within the space, retaining the feel of the space as a sanctuary, and providing acceptable lighting levels required for a number of programming functions.

The implementation of our design recommendation can be carried out in a number of ways. Some suggestions have been listed and illustrated in the

following pages. In so doing, it is important that we distinguish between various locations within the sanctuary when considering lighting design options, as tolerance for change varies greatly throughout the space. For instance, the nave, aisles and altar spaces represent not only the areas of highest visibility, but they also contain the vast majority of significant and intolerant features. Areas such as the Kahn room, the organ rooms, and the side chapel have been designated as having a high tolerance for change, and therefore lighting in these areas may be considerably more flexible. Having said that, it is crucial to the unity of the space that the lighting have at least some commonality from one area to another, whether it be through the use of similar fixtures, configuration or even color.

### **Nave**

The nave encompasses the large, central aisle of the sanctuary. It extends nearly 67 feet along its length, spans just under 18 feet across, and stretches nearly 42 feet in height. The current lighting scheme consists of ineffective track lighting, with the only natural light entering through 18 small clerestory windows. The nave's dark finishes (particularly the ebony stained roof trusses) exacerbate the overbearing darkness within the space, rendering the sanctuary more reminiscent of lightless pre-Romanesque architecture than the Renaissance style evoked in the wall paintings and colorful décor. The rather intricate roof trusses in particular (presumably painted dark to evoke a sense of intimacy) can barely be distinguished from the ground.

Historical photographic documentation of the nave depicts the space as a brighter space, with



minimal lighting fixtures, save candle sconces that extend from the statuary shelves at every column, pillar candles atop the rood screen, and four crystal chandeliers hanging above the choir in the altar area. The finishes are also considerably cleaner, contributing to the brightness of the space. Additionally, chains and loops hang from the bottom chords of the trusses, suggesting the presence of hanging light fixtures at one point. The general vibe is one of an intimate but comfortably lit space.

Because the nave is the main meeting space, the range of illumination will be broadest in this area. Various levels of illumination can be obtained with a combination of different fixtures and independent lighting controls. A list of possible options is tabulated below:

	Chandelier lighting (hang from truss)
	Sconce lighting (below column capital)
	Pendant lighting (hang from arch apex)
	Uplighting (top of bottom truss chord)
	Uplighting (top of column capital)
	Uplighting (top of cornice)

The first two options involve the reintroduction of lighting fixtures that we know to have existed within the space at one point. These fixtures need not be reproductions (actual or conjectural); in fact, it is preferred that the new fixtures are contemporary so as to distinguish them from the original fabric. The third option does not represent a previously existing fixture, and is therefore less desirable; however, it does provide necessary down lighting and may be considered, provided it is congruent with the other fixtures. The last three options consist of introducing hidden lighting at various locations that serve to accent various architectural

features without becoming design elements themselves. These can be accomplished with a number of fixtures such as small track lighting or strip lighting, provided they are not apparent from the vantage point of the occupants.

These options can be mixed and matched with one another, provided that the overall achieved lighting scheme is appropriate for the space and the function. The matrix below indicates just a sample of combinations that may be effective; however, it is our general recommendation that the hidden accent lighting be used on an as needed basis, and that the lighting scheme rely predominantly on the fixtures that allude to those historically in place.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Option 1	X					
Option 2	X					
Option 3	X					
Option 4	X					
Option 5						
Option 6						

**Altar**

The altar area is located to the north of the nave, separated from the front section of the sanctuary by the rood screen and by a gradual 3 foot change in elevation, rising towards the Violet Oakley reredos that abuts the back wall. The altar space fits an area of approximately 18 feet wide by 35 deep and 42 feet tall, with 6 clerestory windows that provide a minimal amount of natural light. In addition to the reredos (which is arguably the focal point of the sanctuary), the altar area is lined with elevated wall paintings and elaborate marble walls.



Based on historic photographic documentation, the altar area was once adorned with four rather ornate crystal chandeliers—two on each side, directly above the choir. Candles also contributed to the lighting, both at the altar and atop the rood screen. At present, the altar area is lit by a medley of spotlights, generally directed toward the Oakley reredos, and in mixed condition. The reredos is highlighted sufficiently, but at the expense of the other finishes in the space. In general, the altar area is off putting to visitors because of its dark feel (exacerbated by the presence of the rood screen).

There has been much discussion about how best to make the altar area more functional and inviting; we believe that an appropriate lighting screen is crucial in this endeavor. As such, it is logical that the lighting in the altar area be generally an extension of the lighting scheme in the nave. The following table illustrates a similar list of options for the altar.

	Chandelier lighting (hang from truss)
	Sconce lighting (below column capital)
	Pendant lighting in front of reredos
	Uplighting (top of cornice)
	Uplighting (top of bottom truss chord)
	Uplighting (top of column capital)
	Uplighting spotlights (on reredos)
	Track downlighting towards reredos (hidden)
	Post lighting (atop rood screen)

Given the significance of the reredos to Fleisher, it has been concluded that it should remain the focal point of the sanctuary. The addition of options 7 and 8 are intended to provide dramatic lighting of the reredos by either uplighting from either the floor or altar elevation (option 7) or downlighting

from the roof structure (option 8). The accent pendant lighting in option 3 may also serve this purpose if similar pendants are to be hung from the arches in the nave. The reredos may also be lit by the addition of post lighting atop the rood screen, if Fleisher chooses to leave it in place (option 9).

Although performances may not be the primary function of the space, it is important to consider the possibility that the altar area may be utilized in that capacity. It is therefore necessary to address the design of lighting for a variety of performances, ranging from theater productions as well as musical concerts (instrumental and vocal), and ceremonies (bar/bat mitzvahs, weddings, etc.)

It is the hope that the selection of the initial lighting plan for the altar space should be sufficient to provide localized lighting on the stage area, independent of the audience. It is our recommendation that additional specialty lighting (colored, moving, etc.) should not be installed permanently and should be provided by the renter, as various types of performance call for varying equipment. It is at the discretion of Fleisher to incorporate or exclude any of this extra equipment; if they choose to do so, and if at all possible, it should be located in as discrete a location as possible, e.g. mounting spotlights on the north side of a roof truss aimed towards the stage.

### **Aisles**

The nave is flanked by two side aisles along its length. The east aisle extends the full length of the nave, measuring approximately 7 feet wide and of varying height due to the sloped roof. This





aisle is covered with murals that extend from the chair rail to the ceiling. The west aisle begins after the third column bay and extends approximately 8 feet north of the rood screen. Its walls are also covered in paintings. Neither of the aisles is equipped with functional light fixtures; this has rendered these spaces underutilized. Currently, the aisles serve as storage space for various artifacts, seating, partitions, etc. and the murals are completely overlooked.

There is no photographic record of any specific fixtures in the east aisle; however, photographs do indicate a light source that illumines the murals (although whether this was established only for photographing the space is unknown). More concrete evidence of previous lighting iterations includes the presence of two non-functioning chandeliers currently hanging from the middle roof purlin. Photographs of the west aisle indicate similar backlighting, in addition to three pendant lights in front of the altar. One large chandelier is still hanging in the west aisle; it appears to be of a similar era to those on the east side, but is not identical.

The following list again indicates design options for the aisle lighting scheme:

	Chandelier lighting (hang from purlin)
	Pendant lighting (hang from purlin)
	Sconces on columns
	Bracket lighting along top of wall

Once again, the first two options introduce contemporary fixtures in historic locations; the third option calls for sconces on the backside of the column, which may provide backlighting of the murals; and the fourth option introduces

bracket lighting above the murals for dramatic downlighting. While this is considerably less congruent with the original design intent, the possibility of temporary exhibit space in this aisle allows for increased flexibility in lighting design.

### ***Kahn Room, Organ Rooms, Side Chapel***

Because of the high tolerance for change in these spaces, the lighting plan can be considerably more flexible than in the main spaces of the sanctuary. However, the design should be in kind with the general lighting scheme of the sanctuary and should be appropriate for programming within the respective spaces. Because the pipe rooms will generally be storage space, even, bright lighting is important. The side chapel will serve primarily as exhibit space; therefore lighting should be appropriate for displaying art and should take advantage of the natural light provided by the skylight. Lighting in the Kahn room should be appropriate for the function of a green room. Ideally, fixtures in all these rooms should relate to the fixtures in the main space, but can/should be generally more understated so as not to detract from the main sanctuary.

### ***Controls***

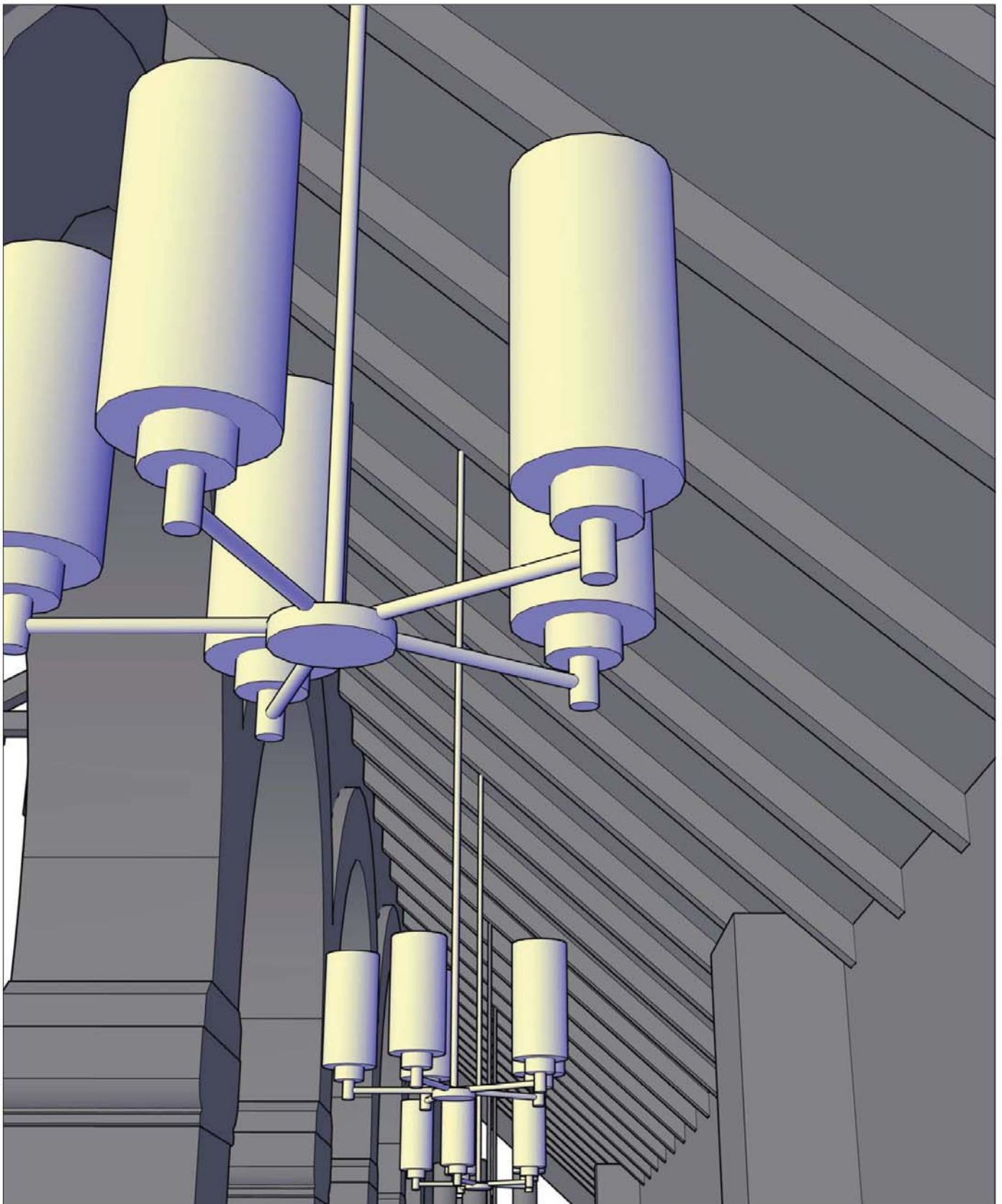
In order to optimize lighting flexibility, individual lights or groups of lights should be operated independent of one another. All controls should be operated by dimmer switches on the same console, located in a discrete but convenient location. The current location along the south wall of the west aisle is sufficient; however design measures should be taken to more effectively conceal these controls for reasons of aesthetics. For the purposes of energy efficiency, it is also

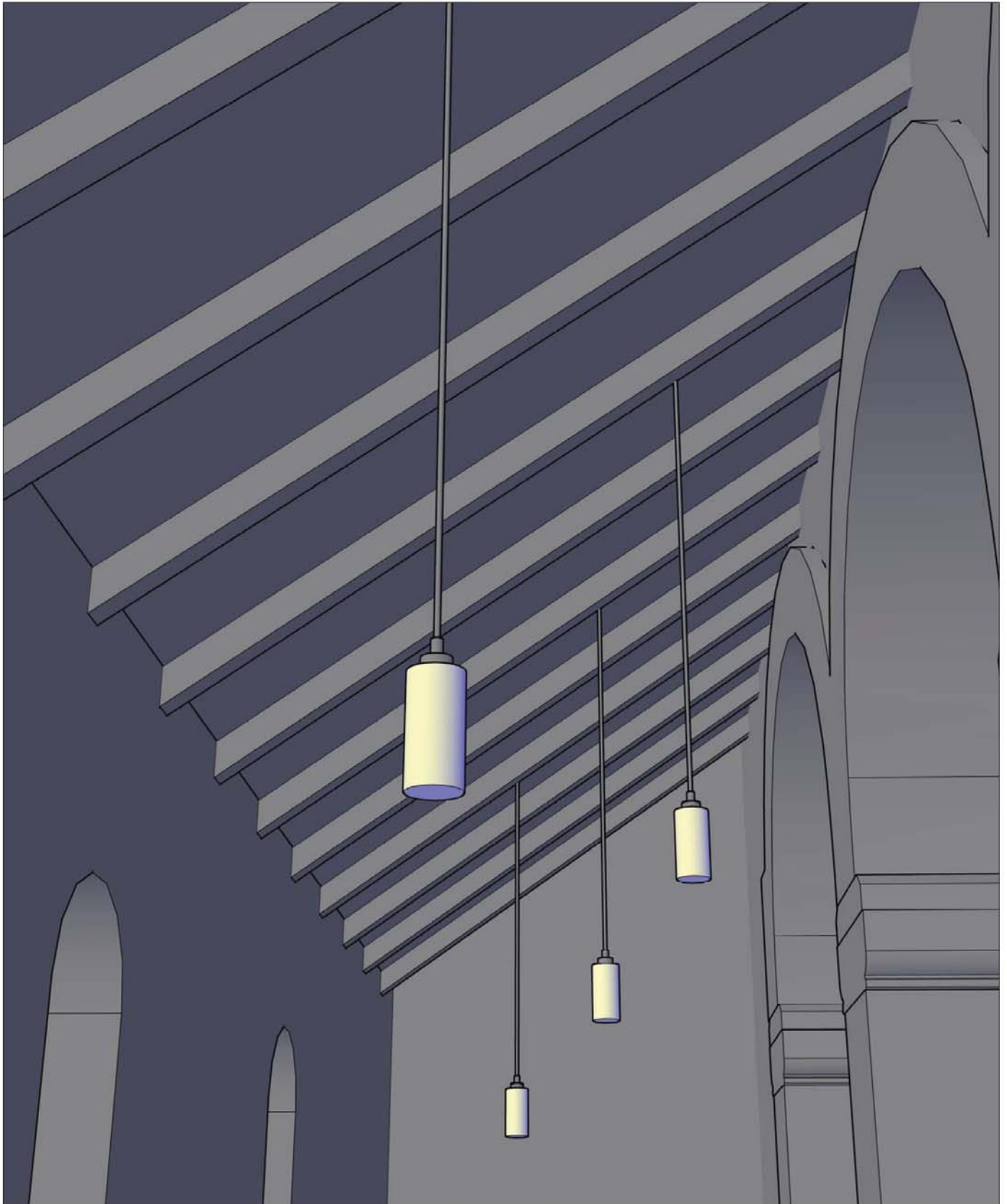


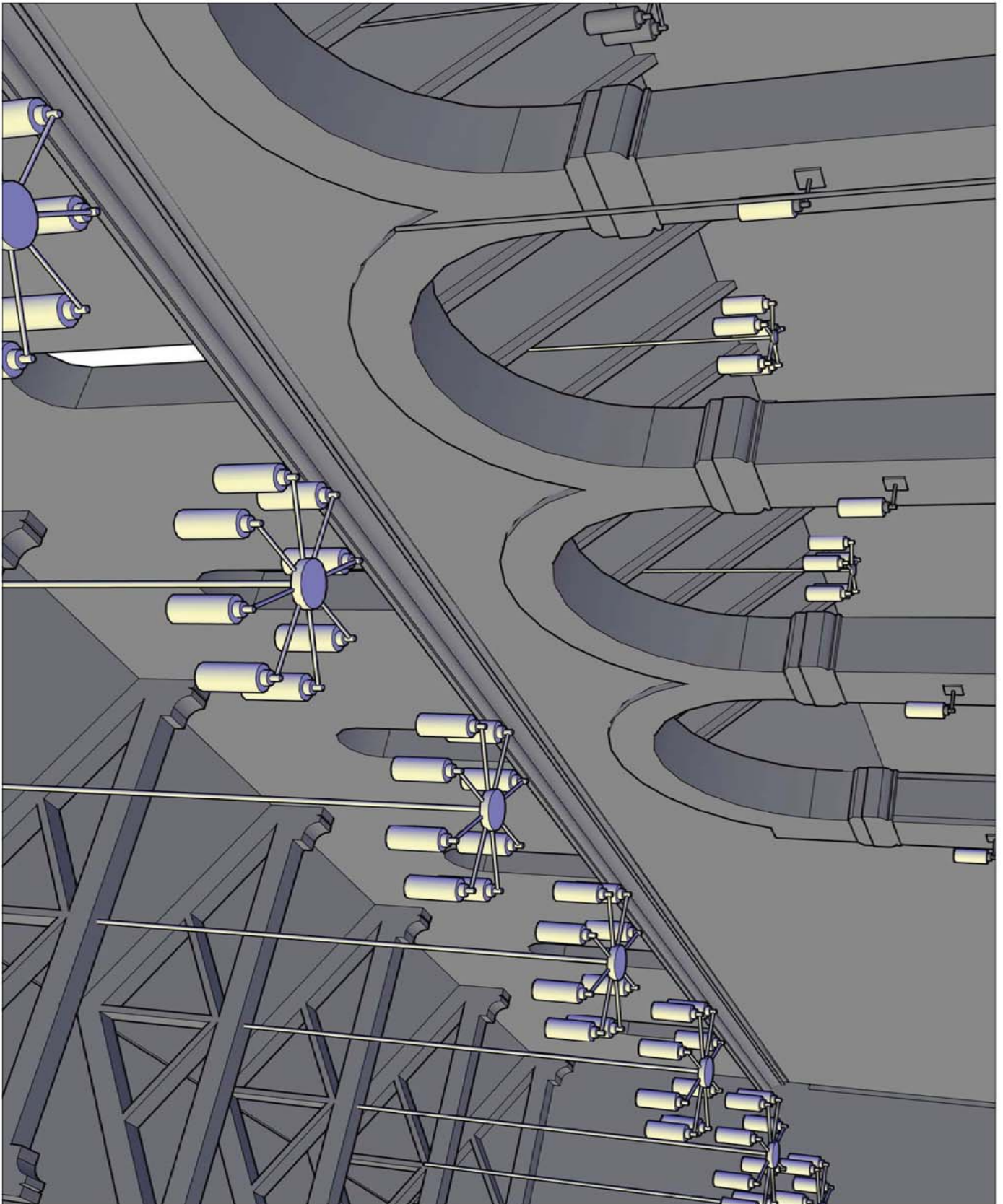
recommended that occupancy sensors or timers be installed (with manual overrides) for the fixtures, to minimize the unnecessary expenditure of power. Bulbs should also be energy efficient, and of appropriate 'temperature'; filaments can be used to alter the color if necessary.

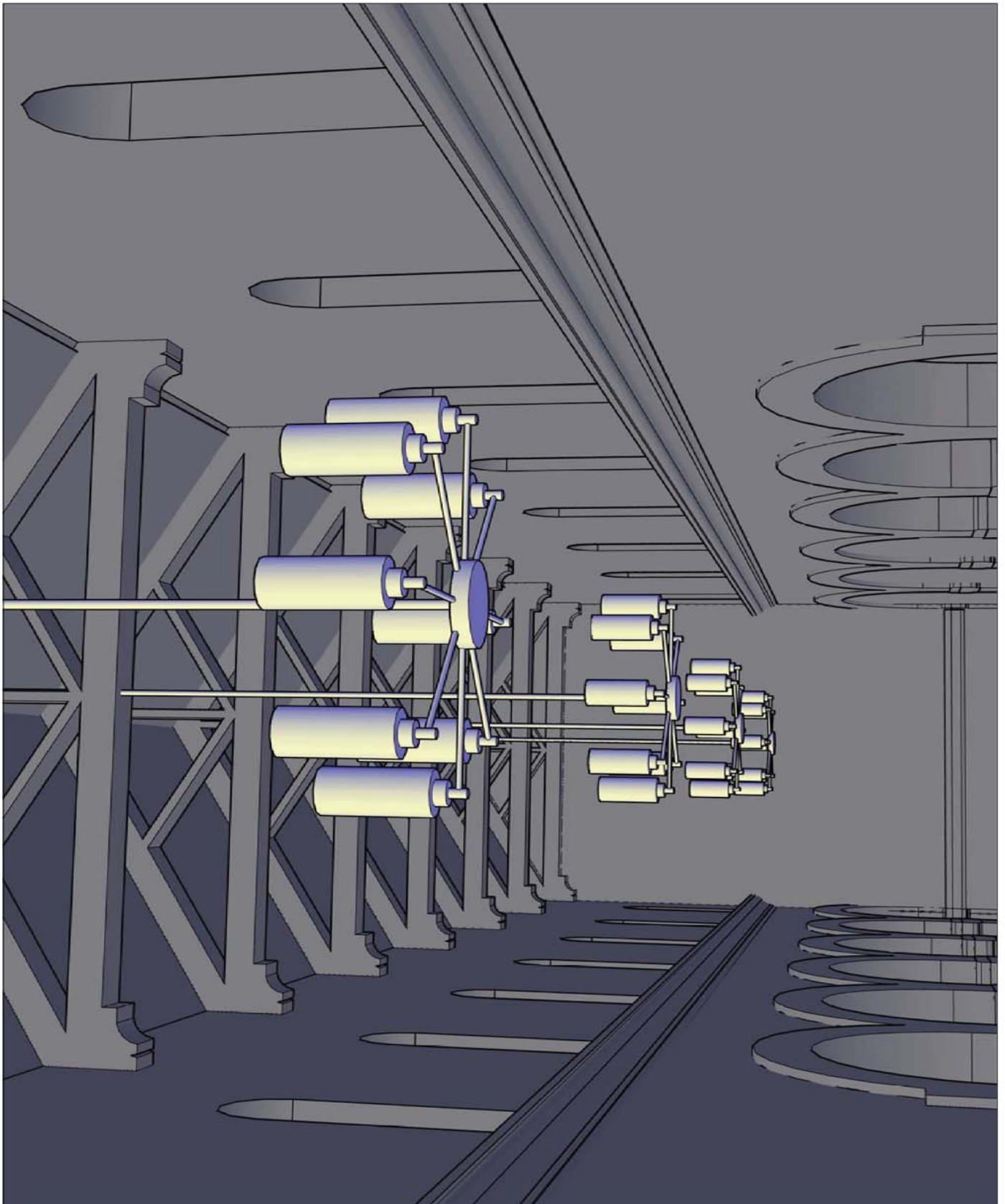
#### Conclusion

In summary, the lighting scheme suggested herein represents an amalgamation of contemporary technology and historic precedent. By placing new fixtures in more traditional configurations (reminiscent of those once achieved in the sanctuary), we make allusions to the historic lighting scheme within the sanctuary, without straying too far from the design intent of the architect, nor falsely depicting a bygone era. By combining and updating fixtures, we are able to obtain a space that can both retain the sense of intimacy and sanctuary that was initially intended by both the architect and by Fleisher, and also provide appropriate lighting levels for a number of functions.





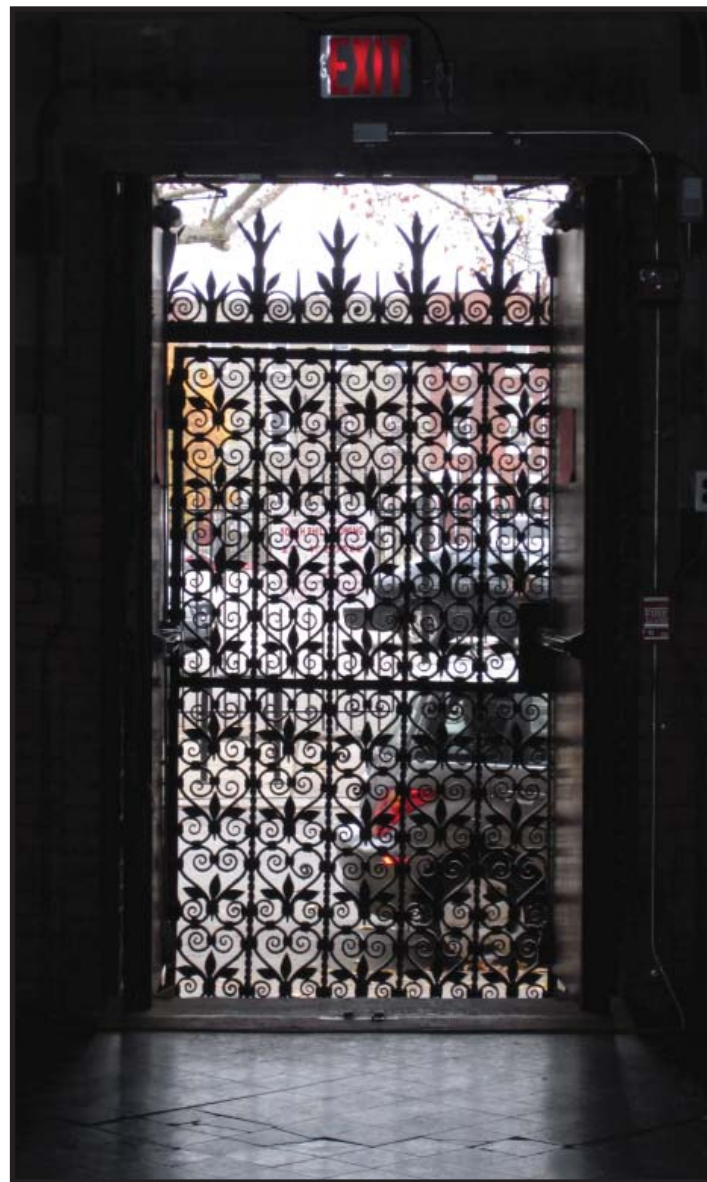






## 6.2.2 FRONT DOOR

### REPLACEMENT: HIGH



**Figure 6.2.2.1. Yellin iron gate.. Credit: Authors.**

The Samuel Yellin iron gates are important to the aesthetic of the Fleisher Art Memorial. Currently, wood-paneled doors sistered with metal fire doors seal the front (south) entrance to the sanctuary. It is recommended that glass fire doors replace the current configuration, which is rated at a high tolerance for change. The existing doors are not

original historic fabric and block the appreciation for the Yellin gates from within. Glass fire doors will adhere to codes and regulations for the space. Also, glass doors will allow a passerby to peer through the iron gate into the Sanctuary, increasing community awareness for the space.

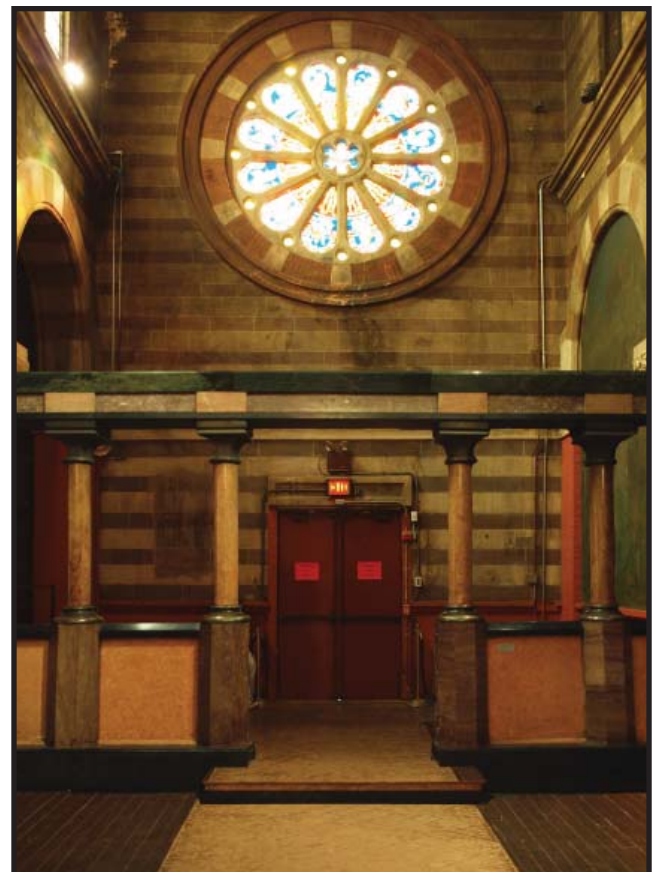


## 6.2.3 ROOD SCREEN & PULPIT: MEDIUM

In order to optimize flexibility within the sanctuary space, we have to address the numerous barriers within the space and determine how best to deal with them. The two biggest physical barriers in the space right now are the rood screen and the pulpit. While both of these elements are significant artifacts of the Evangelist period of the sanctuary, they are currently underutilized and pose considerable problems with regard to space flow and utility. Presently, the rood screen separates the nave from the apse; this, in conjunction with the change in elevation between the two spaces, renders the apse underutilized. Not only does the rood screen interrupt the line of sight to the rear of the sanctuary, but it also discourages passage behind because of its religious associations. The pulpit is also an artifact of the evangelist period. Made of elaborate marble, the pulpit is currently configured in such a way that interrupts line of sight to the rear of the nave; in addition, it is located on the west side of the nave, which makes seating arrangement for various functions challenging.

Our proposed design changes consist of relocating the rood screen to the southernmost bay of the sanctuary (see Figure), and rotating the pulpit around the column it is adjacent to. Moving the rood screen allows for the retention of historic fabric; though it would not be in its original location, by keeping the actual artifact, we can honor the previous life of the sanctuary without having it dominate the space. We believe this will help to mitigate any tension between the religious and artistic affiliations of the sanctuary, and will

allow the apse area to be opened up for use as a stage area, display area, etc. By moving the pulpit around the northwest column (Figure), we eliminate the obstacle from the nave space and are able to better utilize the pulpit. Although some detail will be concealed in the new location, we believe this an acceptable sacrifice and a better alternative to complete removal of this focal piece. In its new location the pulpit will still be able to be utilized as a lectern and will no longer interrupt space flow in the nave, allowing for more flexibility in seating arrangement.



**Figure 6.2.3.1. Proposed rood screen location.**  
Credit: Authors.



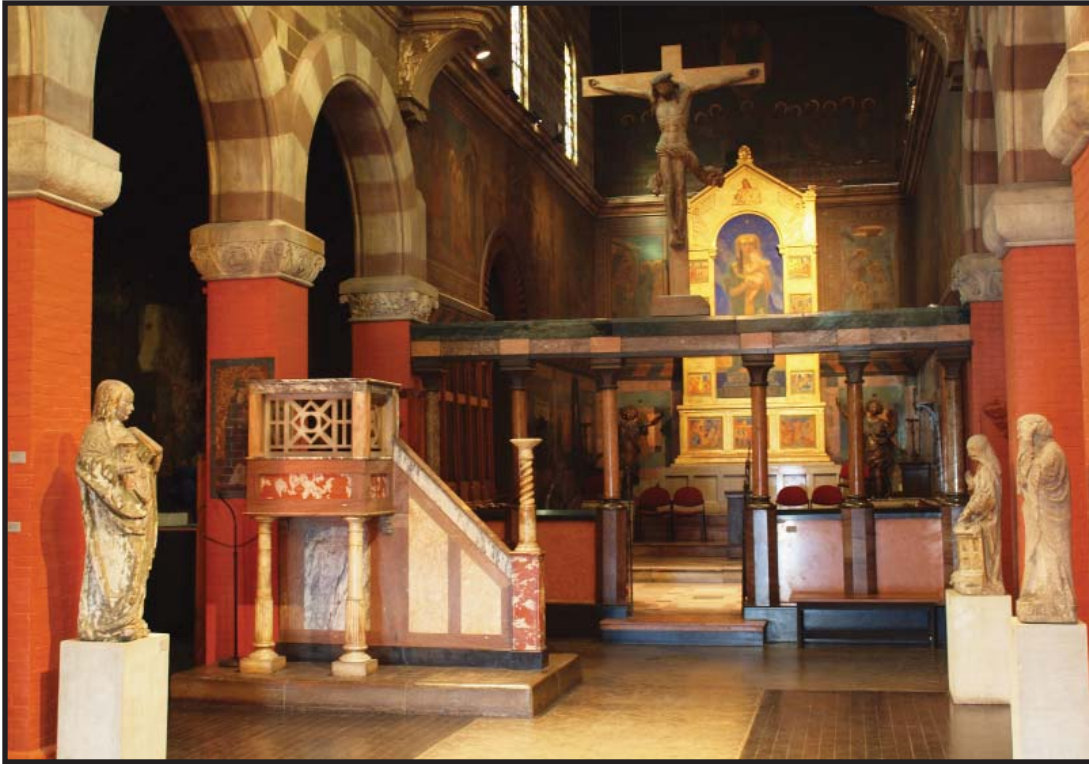


Figure 6.2.3.2: Existing Rood Screen and Pulpit Location. Credit: Authors.

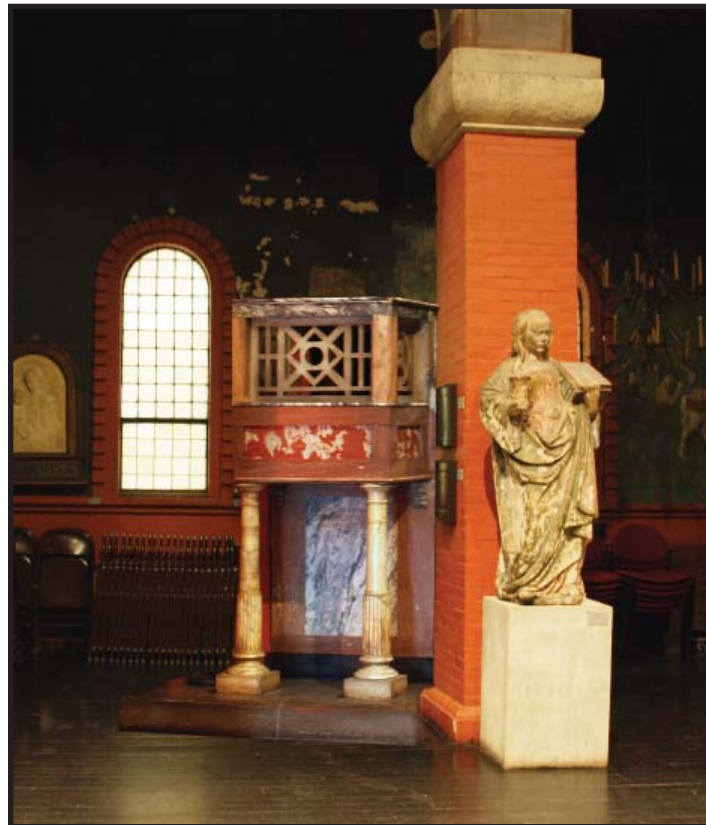


Figure 6.2.3.3: Proposed Pulpit Location. Credit: Authors.



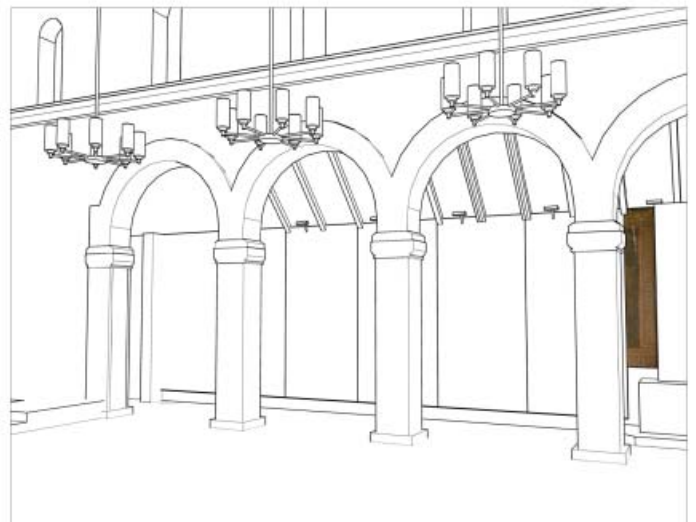
## 6.2.4 WALL COVERINGS

In order to address both the sensitive nature of the murals along the east and west aisles, as well as the need for exhibition space within the sanctuary, the team has proposed the introduction of wall coverings that would serve both of these needs. These coverings will provide a protective barrier for the wall paintings before and during conservation, and may also serve as wall space to exhibit two-dimensional artwork.

There are a number of options for the actual manifestation of these wall coverings: a simple curtain that can be pulled across the wall; moveable standing partitions that are stored elsewhere when exhibitions are not on display; stationary hanging partitions that can also be removed and stored;

or more technologically advanced options such as an automated accordion sliding wall that folds away or pop up panels that could retract into the floor (see Figures). These various options range greatly in cost and feasibility and have been tabulated below, along with design considerations and additional features that should be considered before selecting an appropriate option for Fleisher. The wall coverings should be installed in a manner which is sensitive to the historic fabric, and is therefore reversible upon the removal or retraction of the exhibition wall; while some of the design options are wholly reversible, others must be further evaluated to find the most minimally invasive way of installation.

Design Element		Design Considerations	Cost	Add'l Features
Mural Walls Covers				
Design Option 1:	Pullover Curtain	Difficulty hanging things	\$	Material
Design Option 2:	Floor Partitions	Not automated (laborious to move), need storage space	\$\$	Size
Design Option 3:	Hanging Partitions (not automated, ceiling mounted)	Visible from ceiling, detracts from aesthetic of historic roof structure	\$\$\$	Connection
Design Option 4:	Horizontal Sliding/ Accordion Partition Wall	Need space for storage of partitions	\$\$\$\$	Containment
Design Option 5:	Retractable partitions (retract into floor)	Difficulty hanging things (if screen, not rigid panel), cavity space	\$\$\$\$	





The third option is the insertion of a retractable wall that could be used to display artwork in the Sanctuary, providing a flow from the gallery to the west into the Sanctuary. The wall could be stored within the rafters or in an opening in the floor, granted there is ample room beneath the Sanctuary. When an exhibition is going to take place the wall can be lowered or raised in the center or along the east and west walls, and when it is no longer needed it can be retracted and hidden.

The insertion of a retractable wall fits into principle number two, just like the other design options. It would provide expanded use of the Sanctuary, unify the galley space to the west with the Sanctuary, and allows for the interior fabric to remain intact and unobstructed when the wall is retracted. This option is reversible upon the removal of the retractable wall; however it would require some hardware attached to the ceiling, or slots cut into the floor, that would cause minimal damage to the historic fabric of the Sanctuary.

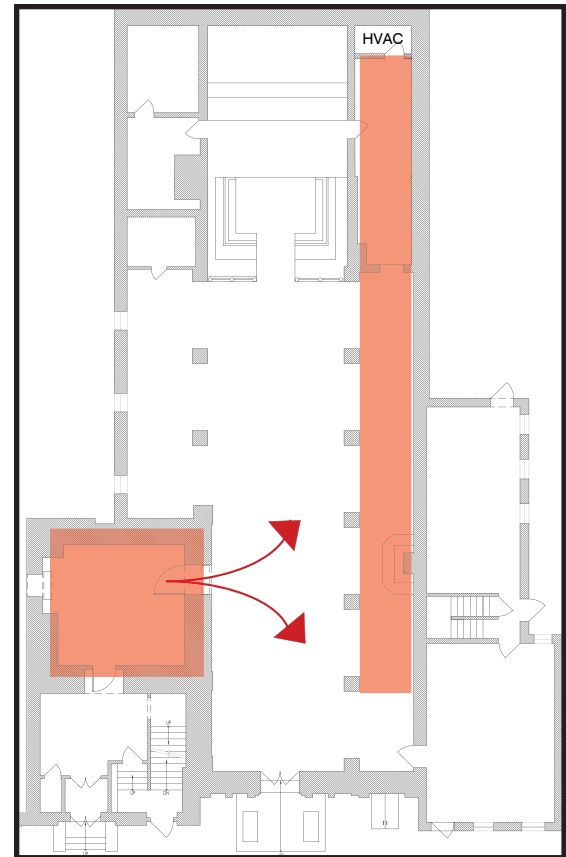


## 6.2.5 EXHIBITION SPACE: MEDIUM

For much of its history, the Sanctuary has been used as an art exhibition space. Under Dr. Percival, the Church of the Evangelists was filled with wall paintings, statuary, and stained glass donated and created by parishioners. With the Graphic Sketch Club, Samuel Fleisher's private collection of religious art inspired and educated young students in the school's art classes. As Fleisher Art Memorial, historical and contemporary art exhibitions shifted around the Sanctuary. This practice of using the Sanctuary as a gallery should continue with a flexible exhibition space in the east aisle and east chapel.

The wall paintings of the east aisle have a mid-level tolerance for change, because of their significance as works of art within the Sanctuary. The east chapel also has a mid-level tolerance, because the space has been modified several times since the congregation of the Church of the Evangelists used it as the Chapel of the Holy Sepulcher. Beginning in 1960, the chapel was used for an exhibition of Portuguese religious art curated in coordination with the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Two panels of blue-and-white 18<sup>th</sup> century tiles remain within the chapel as traces of this exhibition.

The exhibition should be connected with the gallery space that currently serves as an entrance to the Sanctuary. Fleisher receives over 7000 visitors to the gallery each year. Visitors should be invited to move through the current entrance lobby and gallery space into the Sanctuary, where the exhibition space of the east wall will be visible.



**Figure 6.2.5.1. Floor plan showing the proposed exhibition space in the Sanctuary. Credit: Authors.**

Adding exhibition space to the Sanctuary promotes Fleisher Art Memorial's goal to expand its exhibit programming and connects the Sanctuary with the surrounding Fleisher campus by encouraging visitors to continue into the Sanctuary as part of the gallery experience. Using the chapel for exhibition space should include moving the wall separating the two chapel areas back to cover the HVAC system at the back of the chapel and creating one contiguous space accessed through the east aisle or through the altar area. These changes have a mid-level priority within the preservation plan.

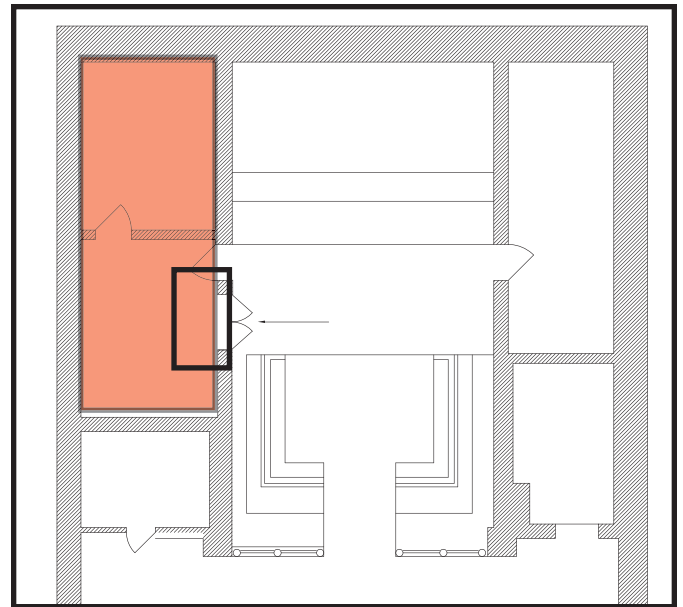


## 6.2.6 ORGAN: MEDIUM

The organ, located in the Sanctuary's apse, is a Wurlitzer theater organ with pipes that fill two large rooms on the west side of the altar. Donated to the Graphic Sketch Club by Jules Mastbaum, this organ replaced the Haskell organ used by the Church of the Evangelists which was removed to St. Titus Mission in Philadelphia in 1920.<sup>1</sup> The current organ is inoperable and will require a serious investment to repair. Because the current organ is a later addition to the building and does not promote the mission of Fleisher Art Memorial, its tolerance for change is high. While restoration of the organ would preserve some of the historic fabric of the Sanctuary, the cost is prohibitive for Fleisher Art Memorial and restoration does not promote the current needs of the organization.



**Figure 6.2.6.1. Wurlitzer theater organ in the Sanctuary, 2009. Credit: Authors.**



**Figure 6.2.6.2. Floor plan of Sanctuary apse, showing organ rooms with new access door. Credit: Authors.**

The organ should be removed from the Sanctuary and donated to an appropriate museum or musical institution for further study and restoration. The two pipe rooms should be cleared of all mechanical systems related to the organ. These rooms can then be used for storage in the Sanctuary. When the Sanctuary is used for events, chairs, tables, and other equipment need to be moved and stored in an area with easy access to the nave. These rooms have no natural light or access to the exterior, so they are inappropriate for use for events, classes or gallery space. Together the two rooms will provide 230 square feet of additional storage space for objects used during events in the Sanctuary. The current niche containing the organ should be opened to provide a larger access door into the pipe rooms, which will allow for easier movement in and out of the rooms. This recommendation promotes Fleisher Art



## 6.2.7 ELEVATED STATUES: MEDIUM

The second option deals with the five statues that currently line the nave. The statues are part of Samuel Fleisher's collection that he exhibited in the Sanctuary. Through observation of how the space is used during lectures and classes it has been determined that the statues are obstructive and could remain in the space without taking away valuable floor space for programming. This option proposes that the statues be removed from their current pedestals and become raised and placed on smaller pedestals fixed to the columns that they now sit in front of. This would create unobstructed floor space for programming and still allow for the statues to be viewed and studied from the floor.

Elevating the statues is a reasonable solution to create more visual flow within the nave of the Sanctuary. In the guide book of the Church of the Evangelists published in 1904 there is a photograph of the Sanctuary which illustrates this concept. When the Sanctuary functioned as the Church of the Evangelists, statues belonging to the church sat on pedestals attached to the columns. Two of these original pedestals still exist on column situated on either side of the rood screen in the nave facing the apse. These pedestals could be recreated to hold the statues that are in the Sanctuary now. The historical integrity of the structure would not be compromised dramatically for this design option since it only proposes attaching a pedestal to five columns. Like the elevated walkway, this design proposal satisfies principle number two.



**Figure 6.2.7.1. Medieval statue as it currently exists within the nave. Credit: Authors.**



Memorial's goal to use the Sanctuary for events, both for arts education within the organization and for rental income from outside sources. The additional storage space will ease transitions between events, using less staff time to set up and coordinate shifts between classes, lectures, and rental events. Providing dedicated, secure storage within the Sanctuary also protects the significant historic fabric of the apse and nave from damage. This design alteration has a mid-level priority within the preservation plan, because the addition of storage space is balanced by the expenditure required for moving the organ.

**Notes:**

1. Irene N. Zieget, *History of Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial, 1886-1963*. (Philadelphia: Fleisher Art Memorial, 1963), 17.





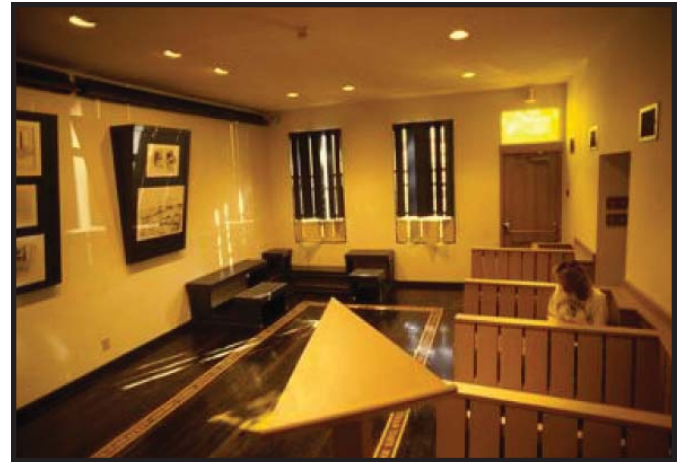
## 6.2.8 LOUIS KAHN LECTURE ROOM: MEDIUM

### ***How it currently exists:***

The Kahn Room was originally conceptualized as an artist installation dedicated to former Fleisher student and world-renown architect Louis Kahn. The room was placed in Fleisher's recently purchased row-home, located to the east of the Sanctuary at Fleisher Art Memorial. With funds from the City's Office of Housing and Community Development to renovate the building, the Fairmount Park Art Association commissioned artist Siah Armajani to create the room's installation. Armajani tried to follow one of Kahn's own principles in the design of the room—"What does the building want to be?"<sup>1</sup>

According to the Armajani, the room was to be both "useful and used," as well as serving as a work of art.<sup>2</sup> Fleisher conceptualizes the room as a "seating area and lecture space [which] evokes the adjacent [Sanctuary] space," while it functions "to serve a dual purpose as a community meeting room and as a gallery for a changing group of Kahn's drawings."<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, the room does not currently function this way.

Instead, the Kahn Room is inherently a pass through space, as it is the primary link between the building and the rest of the Fleisher campus. It turns into a make-shift green room and catering space for events, and storage for the Sanctuary during other events. It still operates as a gallery of sorts, but the drawings displayed are reproductions of Kahn's work that rarely, if ever, change.



**Figure 6.2.8.1. Louis Kahn Lecture Room, by Siah Armajani, 1981. Credit: ArtStor.**

### ***Proposed design change:***

In terms of Kahn's principle, what does this building want to be? Given the room's current function as a green room, the team proposes that the room better adapted for this use. In order to accommodate this use, in-situ furniture would have to be replaced with more flexible tables and seating. Likewise, this flexible seating could further enhance the room's function as a "community meeting room," making the room more accessible to not only groups within Fleisher, but outside the institution. This added use would not have to detract away from the room's primary function as a memorial to Louis Kahn. Rather, interpretive panels should be included to describe the initial artist installation within the space and its newly adapted use. Kahn drawings should continue to be shown, along with rotating exhibitions that deal specifically with aspects of his work. These exhibits could be accompanied by lectures and classes on



related subjects. Also, the relationship between the Kahn Room and Sanctuary is tenuous and often missed by visitors to the site. In order to strength this relationship, the room's function as a gallery can directly lead into exhibits within the Sanctuary (as proposed in the Exhibit Proposal section of this report). Likewise, fragments of the Sanctuary that can no longer remain can be re-used in the Kahn Room, i.e. the choir benches behind the rood screen.

***Rationale for change:***

This room serves a very important function within Fleisher, but is being under-utilized in its current space. These recommendations are intended to further strengthen Fleisher's goals for the space, while adapting the physical fabric to accomplish these goals. This design change is driven by Principle 5 in our preservation plan, to promote the mission of the Fleisher Art Memorial.

***Notes:***

1 "Description of the Louis Kahn Lecture Room," Fleisher Art Memorial website. <http://www.fleisher.org/about.kahn-room.php> [25 November 2009]

2 Idem.

3 Idem.



## 6.2.9 CHOIR FURNITURE:

MEDIUM

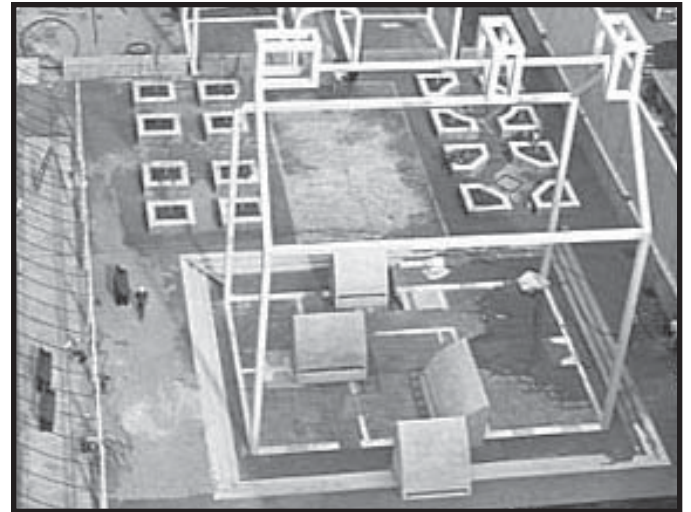
### ***How it currently exists:***

The furniture in the choir of the Sanctuary is comprised of two major components, the choir stalls and the benches that lay in front. The stalls are attached to the surrounding wall and rood screen, completed with embossed leather panels. The northern most choir chair on the east end is separately built into the wall as a secret passage into the East Chapel.

### ***Proposed design change:***

As the team made the decision to move the rood screen, the question arose as to how to handle the in-built furniture attached to the screen and choir walls. This furniture is made up of elaborately wood carved choir seats, attached to embossed panels on the wall, with a level of wooden benches directly below. The choir seats, being connected in a way that would require cutting of the historic material to separate them, were considered too valuable to destroy sections and too fragile to be used as functional seating for the space. The benches on the lower level appeared to be in good condition and could easily be re-used in the Louis Kahn Lecture Room.

The decision was made to remove the choir seats from the space, and donate them along with the set of 16<sup>th</sup> century display pews to the collections of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. At the PMA, they will be better maintained and appreciated for their design and craftsmanship. One chair will remain, as it is physically separated from the set and operates as a secret door passage from the



**Figure 6.3.9.1. Example of plan revealed through floor pavement at Franklin Court. Credit: [www.nps.gov/](http://www.nps.gov/)**

Choir into the adjacent chapel space. The Altar Boy benches should remain in the space, but in a different capacity that will allow them to be better used.

In order to mark the design change, the team proposes that the floor area under which the rood screen, choir seats and benches were positioned should have demarcations to note where each element had originally been placed within the plan. Each region should be marked by a different material that relates to their compositions, thus the rood screen floor be made with a similar marble, the choir seats with the same species of wood and the benches likewise.

### ***Rationale for change:***

As it is currently positioned, the furniture is part of the aesthetic relationship between choir and rood screen. Thus, if the rood screen moves to allow for increased use of the nave, the furniture has lost its significance within the setting, and only serves as



a hindrance to the space's use and interpretation. Given the furniture value, it should be cared for with proper humidity setting and should not be used or operated by the general public.



## 6.2.10 ELEVATED GALLERY: LOW



**Figure 6.2.10.1. Model projecting elevated gallery within Sanctuary. Credit: Authors.**

The Sanctuary is currently utilized in three ways; classroom, lecture, and special event space. The nave of the Sanctuary is lined with statues on pedestals that remain from Samuel Fleisher's private collection. The statues are a significant part of Fleisher's collection that remains; however, they interrupt the flow and use of the space during programming. There is also a lack of exhibition space in the nave, which would unite the Sanctuary with the existing gallery space to the west. It was Samuel Fleisher's intent that the Sanctuary be used for the exhibition of his art collection that could influence and inspire art students.

There are three design options that would achieve the aforementioned goals for expanded use and unity while respecting Samuel Fleisher's intent for the Sanctuary. The first option is an integration of an elevated, hanging walkway on either side of the nave of the Sanctuary, specifically the east and west walls. Although it is proposed that the walkway line the east and west walls, it would also work in the same capacity lining the north and south walls, although there are more items within the Sanctuary that would be obstructed or damaged following the insertion of an elevated walkway on the north and south walls.



The goal of inserting an elevated walkway is to provide access to exhibition space, allowing for more room for expanded use on the main floor of the nave. It would also allow for the ability to view the stained glass windows up close and experience the Sanctuary in a dynamic and different way as opposed to the view from ground level. The walkway would consist of a combination of wood and glass. The wood walkway would mirror the existing wood floor in the Sanctuary through the use of a material similar in appearance. Glass would be used as a side panel for the walkway allowing transparency so that the building can still be viewed from below, avoiding any major obstructions.

Access to the elevated walkway would be gained through the conversion of a clearstory window that currently adjoins the building to the west of the Sanctuary. The proposed door could exist in the form of a reproduction of the Yellin Iron Gate that exists on the exterior south door; this would incorporate elements from the Sanctuary and create visual cohesion of the integration of the elevated walkway and door. The iron brackets that support the walkway could also be made to reference the Yellin Iron Gate.

The elevated walkway is the most expensive and least reversible of the three options; therefore it is of low priority within the design change proposals. However, it is one option for providing more exhibition space within the Sanctuary which could unite it with the existing gallery to the west and fulfills Samuel Fleisher's intent for use of the Sanctuary as an

art exhibition space where students can learn from existing artwork. It also satisfies principle number two which proposes to increase accessibility of art in the space to everyone.



## 6.2.11 WEST AISLE PARTITION: LOW

Partitioning off the west aisle of the Sanctuary provides programming flexibility. Placing some sort of barrier between the columns provides the option of sectioning off the west aisle. This would allow a more intimate space for a smaller meeting, art class, or place for reflection; and also creating the opportunity to have simultaneous users of the Sanctuary space. However, acoustics would have to be taken into consideration. Dividing off the west aisle could also provide an area for performers to emerge from, particularly if they are performing from the chancel to an audience in the nave.

Different types of partitions could be used, ranging from sliding panels to fabric curtains. The key element would be flexibility so that the space could easily be closed off or opened to the rest of the sanctuary. Using a color and material that is sensitive to the rest of the Sanctuary appearance ensures this recommended design change is unobtrusive.



## 6.3 PROGRAMMING RECOMMENDATIONS



**Figure 6.3.1. Drawing studio. Credit: Authors.**

The following programming recommendations are intended to connect Fleisher Art Memorial's mission and goals as an arts education organization with educational opportunities in the Sanctuary. These programs encourage Fleisher Art Memorial to integrate the Sanctuary into the day-to-day operations of the organization and to connect specific programs with the historic fabric of the Sanctuary. In each recommendation, the materials of the building are used to highlight the Sanctuary's role in Fleisher's history.

By building on Fleisher's gallery programs and course offerings, these recommendations support Fleisher's goals to provide exciting and innovative arts education experiences for a wide range of audiences. Whether focused on children and families, students, or

gallery visitors, these programs accommodate Fleisher's current use of the Sanctuary and invite new ways of approaching the space. Each recommendation serves as a pilot example of potential programming for the Sanctuary and can be expanded as opportunities for additional programming emerge.



**Figure 6.3.2. Anatomy Lecture in the Sanctuary, October 14, 2009. Credit: Authors.**





## 6.3.1 ADULT ART EDUCATION:

### COURSE WITH FOCUS ON ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS WITHIN THE SANCTUARY

The Sanctuary within Fleisher Art Memorial School contains a wealth of historic material fabric related to its original construction as the Church of the Evangelists and as home of Samuel Fleisher's Graphic Sketch Club. These resources include a series of stained glass windows, free-standing and in-situ sculpture, iron working and wall painting, dating either to original church efforts or Samuel Fleisher's initial re-working of the interior. As they exist in their modern day context, there are underutilized elements of the institution that have the potential to become valuable resources for the understanding of the history of the organization, as well as course material for future programming. One such program could include a course developed to deal with one aspect of the historic material fabric, built on an understanding of historic techniques of manufacturing/installation, while also encouraging students to develop a dialogue between past and present in the space. This course would relate to Fleisher's mission by focusing on arts education, while broadening and diversifying the audience in the school's curriculum. The following report segment is a pilot for a class related to the stained glass windows, meant to instruct students on historic methods of stained glass production, conservation/restoration practices and contemporary glass-making.

#### ***Precedents:***

After consulting comparable sites, the GlassAction program at the Union Project in Pittsburgh, PA



**Figure 6.3.1.1. Students in Glass Action's Restoration course.** Credit: [http://www.unionproject.org/Glass\\_Action/](http://www.unionproject.org/Glass_Action/).

stood out as an illustrative example of future coursework at Fleisher. GlassAction runs three classes in winter and early spring, with scattered glass workshops through the year that correlate with major holiday seasons. All courses are taught by Catherine Berard and Rachelle Jones of the Prism Stained Glass studio. "Stained Glass Restoration" meets once a week for seven weeks and focuses on the process of restoring and assembling stained glass windows. "Make Your Own Window" consists of three all-day classes on Saturdays, in which students assemble their own window, to be brought home with them at the conclusion of the course. The "Adult Mosaic Class" is a beginner course that utilizes glass fragments to generate designs through mosaic.<sup>1</sup>

While these courses are considered instructive



for Fleisher's future endeavors, there is more to be learned from the philosophy behind the GlassAction program. A 100-year old gothic church was recognized for its aesthetic and educational value, and harnessed to generate awareness about the building's preservation. The synergy that revolved around the project did not merely raise money, but invigorated an entirely new audience to appreciate and invest in a local landmark through combined interests and appreciation. Although the Sanctuary at Fleisher is not in dire need of physical repair, it is a hidden gem to the community that surrounds it, often overlooked by the school's own student body.

### **Course Overview:**

Within the choir of the Sanctuary exists eight clerestory stained glass windows, all of which were imported and executed by the London firm Lavers, Barrand and Westlake. As Reverend Henry Percival wrote in the 1904 Guidebook to the Church of the Evangelists, all of the windows were memorials purchased by parishioners, and the rest of the clerestory windows, along with the ground level windows, were left plain for future donations to be made to the church. Thus the congregation played an active role in the continued beautification of the space; this same theme permeated throughout the creation of the wall paintings and is still evident in the un-sculpted capitals of the arch columns.

Fleisher, through this class, has the opportunity to make its own contribution towards to continued beautification of the space, by using these windows are inspiration for art making and appreciation. This can be envisioned in three ways:

1. Stained Glass Restoration

2. Stained Glass Fabrication

3. Art Installation responding to existing stained glass.

The first two course ideas would involve a close partnership with a local stained glass artisan/firm to interact directly with the stained glass within the Sanctuary, involving extensive study of history, technique and design of the existing stained glass. Any conservation project considered as part of the coursework should be limited to glass that is not currently installed within the Sanctuary.<sup>2</sup> While the third option would also involve input from professionals within the field and require the same knowledge of fabrication and intent, it would be a more conceptual art installation course that would use media outside the realm of stained glass to interact and interpret the windows. These would then be displayed within the Sanctuary as part of an exhibition at the end of the class. Each course option would include lectures on the techniques and fabrication of the original stained glass windows, the development of a theme that would both resonate with the historic windows while reflecting contemporary views, and the class' group contribution to actively engage and interpret the windows.

Not only would this curriculum extend the education opportunities available at Fleisher, but it could potentially inspire a new generation of people to work within this historic artisan trade through interaction with an active firm in Philadelphia.

### **Window Descriptions:**

The rose window was presented as a gift to the church and was commissioned by a studio in Roermond, Holland. The window is composed of mosaic pieces and held within the window



**Figure 6.3.1.2. Lavers, Barraud & Westlake signature on window in St. Andrew, Hasketon, Suffolk. Credit: <http://www.flickr.com>.**

frame with lead junctions. At the center of the window is a depiction of Jesus giving a sign of blessing, located within the center of the sun and surrounded by symbolic animal representations of the Christian faith.

Lavers, Barraud & Westlake were a London-based firm which operated from 1855 to 1922. The studio was commissioned to create the set of memorial clerestory windows surrounding the apse of the Sanctuary. Each of these windows has an extensive foliate border, reminiscent of medieval decorative schemes. The border converges at a peaked arch, in which the main figure of the window is situated beneath. Each figure is painted onto the glass, along with corresponding literary references and inscriptions for the dedication. The painting of canopies and draperies is particularly complex and beautiful and belongs to a style typical of depicting saints, prophets, bishops, admirals and Christ enthroned.

John La Farge was an innovator of stained-glass in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, incorporating many different techniques in one window to achieve his aesthetic. While each of the figural bodies in Allegory are composed of mosaic, described as almost a cloisonné.<sup>3</sup> The vegetation comprising the background of each panel is created through the combination of fused particles of various colored glass. Jewels form the primary border of the window, created from moulded opalescent, pressed pot-metal, and chipped or broken glass. What results is a set of subtle color gradations and tonal variance that is so representative of his work.

The synagogue window is composed of geometric patterns, of which have a tendency towards simplicity and decorativeness. This window illustrates some of the basic components of stained glass fabrication, of which would require leading of components within the frame and creating a mosaic of colored glass tiles.

### **Themes & Symbolism:**



St. John of Beverley (d. 721): Born of noble parents, he began preaching to the half-heathen at an early age. After spending living in a hermitage at Harneshow, St. John was consecrated Bishop of Hexham, where he remained for eighteen years. He was known for his better regulation of the Northumbrian Church, his diligence to his monastic community and in attending to the poor and the company of his pupils.<sup>4</sup> St. John passed away after years in retirement in the monastery established in his name.



St Henry (b. 972, d. 1024):

Deemed patron of the childless, of Dukes, of the handicapped and those rejected by Religious Order 1024. St. Henry succeeded his father as Duke of Bavaria and began Emperor upon the death of his cousin in 1002. He is known for his watchfulness over the welfare of the Church, his victories in battle, along with his great moderation and clemency. Both he and his wife, St. Cunegundes, lived in perpetual chastity, to which they had bound themselves by vow.



St. Mary Magdalene "The Penitent":



Follower of Jesus, St. Mary was a proud sinner who wept at Jesus' feet upon realizing the evils of her life. She was at the foot of the cross during Jesus' crucifixion and a humble disciple of his preaching.<sup>5</sup>

St. Anne teaching the Virgin how to Read:



A popular narrative of medieval imagination, the images of St. Anne teaching were closely tied to the importance of Grammar in life.<sup>6</sup> With regard to function, the imagery further humanized the Christian story, modeled parental care to literacy-presumably in religion and morals, modeled devotions, perhaps celebrated spiritual parenthood, such as might be represented in the parental home or in the convent.<sup>7</sup>

St. Barbara (4<sup>th</sup> century) by her tyrannical father,



Dioscorus, St. Barbara was secluded in a tower. In her solitude, she gave herself to prayer and study and secretly sought out a Christian for her spiritual instruction and Baptism. On one occasion during her father's absence, she had three windows inserting into a bathhouse in which her father was constructing to honor the Trinity in Christianity. Incensed by her conversion, her father had her mercilessly tortured, to be finally beheaded by his own hand. When her soul was bringing carried to heaven, God smote her father with a flash of a lightning bolt.<sup>8</sup>

St. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380):

Known as the patron of fire prevention, St. Catherine began to have mystical experiences beginning at 6 years old. She became a Dominican tertiary at age 16, and despite her lack of form education, St. Catherine's letters are considered among the most brilliant writings in the history of the Catholic Church. She endeavored throughout her life to heal the Great Western Schism.<sup>9</sup>



Margaret the Virgin (d. 304):

Also known as Margaret of Antioch, she was the daughter of a pagan priest, Aedesius, who scorned her for her Christian faith. When she





refused the marriage proposal of Olybrius on the contingency that she renounce Christianity, she was tortured. At one point during her punishment, Satan in the form a dragon swallowed her, from which she escaped alive with the power of the cross she bore. Some consider her the patron saint of pregnancy.

John La Farge (1835-1910):

One of the foremost decorative artists of the Aesthetic Movement in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, La Farge believed his artwork could educate the taste of the public through the creation of a more sensuous environment. Like Fleisher, La Farge was part of a social movement to “reform the environment” in order to elevate the appreciation and artistic intellect of those who were to view his work.<sup>10</sup> A Catholic himself, La Farge was commissioned by many elite High Church Episcopalian congregation, of which Percival and the Church of the Evangelists belonged. The artist explained the social function of stained glass windows as being “more readily appreciate[d] a medium...which could dazzle with immediate sensuous gratification more easily than the intellectually demanding form of easel painting.”<sup>11</sup> In this way, the Allegory of the Arts of Painting in the Sanctuary, is a literal conversion of the principles and aims of Art with a capital A, to a more readable decorative object, with aim of exposing an audience to ideas that they would otherwise have limited exposure. This “translation” is key in understanding La Farge, and in understanding the purpose of the Sanctuary in its historic and modern day development.



**Possible Partnerships for Course Instruction:**

FIRM	LOCATION	CONTACT INFORMATION
Brooklyn Stained Glass Conservation Studio	Brooklyn, NY	<a href="http://www.brooklynstainedglass.org/about.htm">http://www.brooklynstainedglass.org/about.htm</a>
Pittsburgh Glass Center	Pittsburgh PA	<a href="http://www.pittsburghglass.com/">http://www.pittsburghglass.com/</a>
Stained Glass Restoration & Custom Works	Philadelphia, PA	<a href="http://stainglassrestoration.com/">http://stainglassrestoration.com/</a> <a href="mailto:stainedglassbiz@aol.com">stainedglassbiz@aol.com</a> or 267.252.1396
Beyer Studio Inc.	Philadelphia, PA	<a href="http://www.beyerstudio.com/">http://www.beyerstudio.com/</a> ) <a href="mailto:mail@beyerstudio.com">mail@beyerstudio.com</a> or
CZ Lawrence Stained Glass	Philadelphia, PA	<a href="http://home.earthlink.net/~czlsg/">http://home.earthlink.net/~czlsg/</a> <a href="mailto:czlsg@earthlink.net">czlsg@earthlink.net</a> or 215.247.3985
Willet Hauser Architectural Glass	Philadelphia, PA	<a href="http://www.willethauser.com/">http://www.willethauser.com/</a> 800.533.3960

**Notes:**

1 "A Window to the Future: Union Project Turns Million Dollar Problem into Community Commodity," MEDA News (January, 2004). [http://www.unionproject.org/Glass\\_Action/Glass\\_Press](http://www.unionproject.org/Glass_Action/Glass_Press) [16 November 2009]

2 In preparation for the Sanctuary's centennial year in 1986, many architectural elements, including all the in-situ stained glass were restored and re-leaded along with a new lighting system, roof repair and temperature & humidity control systems. These interventions should remain functional for approximately the next hundred years. Restoration efforts were funded by Mabel Pew Myrin Trust and William Penn Foundation in 1986. Referenced on Fleisher Art Memorial website, <http://www.fleisher.org/about/sanctuary.php> [16 November 2009].

3 W.M.M. "La Farge's Stained Glass," The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin, Vol. 12, No. 1, (January, 1917): 10. <http://www.jstor.org/> [15 December 2009].

4 Richard John King, Handbook to the Cathedrals of England: Northern Division, Ely: John Murray, 1903.

5 [www.catholic.org/saints/](http://www.catholic.org/saints/)

6 Pamela Shingorn, "The Wise Mother": The Image of St. Anne Teaching the Virgin Mary" International Center of

Medieval Art (1993).

7 [http://iconics.cehd.umn.edu/St\\_Anne/St\\_Anne\\_Text.htm](http://iconics.cehd.umn.edu/St_Anne/St_Anne_Text.htm)

8 [www.catholic.org/saints/](http://www.catholic.org/saints/)

9 [www.catholic.org/saints/](http://www.catholic.org/saints/)

10 Kathleen Pyne, Art and the Higher Life: Painting and Evolutionary Thought in Late Nineteenth-Century America. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1996: 50.

11 Ibid, 66.



**Possible Sources of Funding:**

GRANT	AMOUNT	ELIGIBILITY	DEADLINE	HOW TO APPLY
America's Historical and Cultural Organizations Implementation Grants	\$1,000,000	Nonprofit with 501(c-3) status. Should encourage dialogue, discussion, and civic engagement, and they should foster learning among people of all ages. Funds are directly towards planning projects, in particular, exhibitions.	1/13/2010	<a href="http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/AHCO_ImplementationGuidelines.html">http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/AHCO_ImplementationGuidelines.html</a>
Interpreting America's Historic Places Implementation Grants	\$1,000,000	Nonprofit with 501(c-3) status. Exploit the evocative power of historic places to explore stories, ideas and beliefs that deepen our understanding of our lives and our world.	1/13/2010	<a href="http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/IAHP_Implementation.html">http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/IAHP_Implementation.html</a>
Interpreting America's Historic Places Planning Grants	\$75,000	Nonprofit with 501(c-3) status. Exploit the evocative power of historic places to explore stories, ideas and beliefs that deepen our understanding of our lives and our world.	1/13/2010	<a href="http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/IAHP_Planning.html">http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/IAHP_Planning.html</a>
Challenge Grants in US History & Culture	\$1,000,000	Nonprofit with 501(c-3) status. Designed to help institutions and organization strengthen their ability to explore significant themes and events in American history, so as to advance our understanding of how these events have shaped and been shaped by American identity and culture.	2/3/2010	<a href="http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/CG_UShistory.html">http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/CG_UShistory.html</a>



## 6.3.2 YOUTH ART EDUCATION: ART ACTIVITY SHEETS

To make the art in the Sanctuary more engaging and accessible to a younger audience, we created several activity sheets for youth art education. They can be distributed individually or expanded into a book. The activities use the Sanctuary's existing artwork and historic features to connect the space to a younger audience so that the space feels accessible to everyone. The existing artwork, artifacts and architectural elements of the Sanctuary provide abundant educational opportunities.

The project could be expanded to incorporate additional ways to start a dialogue with the space. For example, the current condition of the wall paintings in the Sanctuary is ideal for a "complete the missing parts of the painting" activity. The goal is to provide another way for visitors to see the space in a new way by encouraging an artistic interaction and by giving each item some context provide an educational component. While intended for a younger audience, hopefully the activity sheets would be of interest to all artists, including adults.

The existing activity sheets include a variety of activities: coloring sheet, "I Spy with My Little Eye" game, connect the dots, and "Design your own Rose Window." Violet Oakley's reredo of Moses and his mother is the image for the coloring sheet, which also contains a definition of a reredo. This compelling image of mother and child is timeless and a clear association to understand and appreciate. The "I Spy" game uses six particular features to seek out: the pulpit, a gate, a book, a stained glass window, a capital, and Moses.

There is an image of the object and then the hint contains some information or background on the item. In the process of exploring the Sanctuary and seeking out these items, a better understanding of the layout and richness of the fabric should emerge. In the worksheet, "Design your own Rose Window," six of the twelve segments are left blank and so that they can be creatively colored in. The corresponding information provides brief details on the making of stained glass. Lastly, the connect the dot worksheet has 43 dots, which end up creating the entrance porch of the Sanctuary. The artist is then invited to draw themselves standing inside the door.

The intention is to ask children to really look around and identify particular elements of the Sanctuary and then learn something about them. This exchange should foster a closer relationship with the space and better appreciation for its beauty. The largeness and grandness of the Sanctuary can be challenging to any visitor, not only children. However, drawing attention particular features and artwork provide ways to break down the space into something more tangible. As is fitting to the Sanctuary's history of creating art and providing an inspiring atmospheres, these worksheets ask children to create their own art while soaking up the wealth of beauty in the Sanctuary. They can leave their own artistic imprint on the space like many have before them. But these worksheets can then be taken home and indirectly, provide tools for spreading the word of Fleisher and its mission of art for all.





## 6.3.3 EXHIBITION OF HISTORY OF FLEISHER ART MEMORIAL

### **Introduction:**

The purpose of this exhibition is to interpret the history of Fleisher Art Memorial as an arts education organization and to position the Sanctuary as an integral part of the history and operation of the organization. For much of its history, the Sanctuary has been used as an exhibition space. Under Dr. Percival, the Church of the Evangelists was filled with wall paintings, statuary, and stained glass donated and created by parishioners. With the Graphic Sketch Club, Samuel Fleisher's private collection of religious art inspired and educated young students in the school's classrooms. With Fleisher Art Memorial, works of contemporary and historical art shifted around the Sanctuary as the organization expanded. This is the first time that Fleisher Art Memorial has interpreted its history in the form of an exhibition, and the use of the Sanctuary as the exhibition space serves to underscore the building's place at the heart of the Fleisher campus. By emphasizing the importance of the Sanctuary in the history of Fleisher Art Memorial, this exhibition will protect historic fabric and will engage contemporary audiences with the space. The exhibition will also promote Fleisher Art Memorial's goals "to strengthen and revitalize Fleisher's exhibition program to provide vibrant and engaging presentation and arts education opportunities" and "to provide exceptional arts education experiences that are meaningful, innovative, and relevant."<sup>1</sup> Presenting the Sanctuary's history is a creative act, as is the visitor's response to the art and architecture of the

space. At every opportunity, this exhibition should foster imaginative and interactive responses from visitors as a way to extend art education experiences into the Sanctuary.

This project builds on the work completed by PennPraxis in the summer of 2009, published as *Fleisher Art Memorial: Revisioning the Sanctuary*. The text for the Interpretive Exhibit created as a part of that project should serve as an introduction for the exhibit. What follows is an elaboration on the exhibit that focuses on activities in the Sanctuary for gallery visitors. These activities are designed to connect details of the building with themes in the Sanctuary's history. The interpretive strategy for the Sanctuary should include questions and activities that ask visitors to move around the space and to sit in different areas of the Sanctuary. When not being used for events, the Sanctuary should contain seats that allow visitors to rest in different parts of the space. Staff and students should also continue to use the Sanctuary as a stopping place within the campus.

In keeping with Samuel Fleisher's belief that art can serve to elevate and inspire, images should be the primary focus of the exhibit to encourage visitors to look closely at the Sanctuary. Rather than a one-sided history lecture, this exhibition should be a conversation between the visitor and the Sanctuary. Personal experiences and values, as well as historical meanings, help to craft each person's response to the Sanctuary, and this



exhibition should foster that exchange. Text, particularly primary source material, should be used to invite visitors to look closely at the details of the Sanctuary and to provoke questions about the role of art, the artist, preservation, and history in the creation of the Sanctuary and Fleisher Art Memorial as they exist today. Images used for these activities should be printed and laminated to allow visitors to carry the photographs around the Sanctuary.

### ***Exhibition Themes***

Within the framework of the history of the Sanctuary and Fleisher Art Memorial, this exhibition is designed around three specific themes:

- Art and Inspiration
- The Sanctuary and the street
- Transformation and preservation

Each of these themes connects the historic fabric of the Sanctuary with larger questions about art, preservation, and Fleisher Art Memorial's role in the neighborhood. While arranged as separate entities for the purpose of this report, they should not be considered in isolation from one another. Each component of the exhibition should be connected with all three of the themes.

### ***Art and Inspiration***

Purpose of the theme:

- To ask visitors to connect historical inspirations for the Sanctuary with the current state of the building.
- To present the Sanctuary as a space shaped by the choices of artists and patrons of the arts.

- To encourage visitors to consider sources of inspiration when looking at contemporary art.

### ***Architectural origins of the Sanctuary***

Materials needed:

Portable, printed images of interiors and exteriors of Cathedral Orvieto; St. Mark's, Venice; and the Cathedral in Pisa.

Text:

The Sanctuary "will have the same relative proportions of the Cathedral at Pisa, the square pillars will be like those in St. Mark's, Venice and the Sanctuary shall be square as in the Cathedral Orvieto"<sup>2</sup> - Dr. Henry Robert Percival.

During his travels to Italy as a young man, Percival came to believe that the basilica plan was the best architectural style to foster Christian devotion. Working with Louis C. Baker of the architectural firm of Furness, Evans, & Co., Percival envisioned a church that drew from Catholic Italian Renaissance precedents to create a serene atmosphere for worship. As you look around the Sanctuary, pick out some of the features of the building inspired by these Italian churches. What looks the same, and where did Percival and Baker decide to change the design?

The Church of the Evangelists was also influenced by individual members of the congregation who donated funds for specific building features, such as stained glass windows or column capitals, to honor friends and family. Multiple artists and patrons were involved in the creation of these pieces. With the carved column capitals, congregation members requested and paid for the designs, Percival approved the designs, and



Philadelphia artisans carved the stone. Notice also the uncarved column capitals and the clear glass windows. Percival intended these features of the building to be finished, but they were left uncompleted after his death in 1903. If you could donate money to Fleisher to carve a new capital, what would you want it to look like?

### *Inspirations for the wall paintings*

Materials needed:

Portable reproductions of Italian frescoes that served as inspirations for the apse and west chapel wall paintings.

Text:

The chapel on the west side of the Sanctuary, known as the Lady Chapel under Percival, is covered with wall paintings completed by the artist Robert Henri. In October 1892, Henri (1865-1929) met Rev. Percival of the Church of the Evangelists, and Percival asked him to visit the Sanctuary to plan a series of murals for the chapel on the west side of the church.<sup>3</sup> Henri accepted the commission and produced several sketches of his proposed subjects which were approved by Percival. Of the four murals in the chapel, two were original compositions of St. John the Divine and the Flight of the Holy Family. The two others were based on 15<sup>th</sup> century Italian frescoes: the Annunciation by Fra Angelico and the Procession of the Magi by Bennozo Gozzoli.<sup>4</sup> Henri began painting in the winter of 1893, using oil paint applied directly onto the finished wall surface. In April 1893, the Philadelphia Inquirer reported on the nearly finished commission and called the murals "eminently successful."<sup>5</sup>

The wall paintings in the apse were also based on

Italian Renaissance frescoes, with five of the eight paintings completed by Nicola D'Ascenzo (1871-1954). One of his earliest artistic commissions began in 1887 at age 16, when he assisted his art instructor Boero with the murals above the choir at the Church of the Evangelists. Initially, D'Ascenzo painted only the borders around the murals while Boero worked on the main subjects, but following a disagreement with Rev. Percival over the composition of the murals, D'Ascenzo was awarded the remainder of the commission.<sup>6</sup> He completed five murals: the Visitation of Our Lady to St. Elizabeth, the Nativity, the Marriage at Cana, the Laying Out of Christ for Burial, and Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene. The Laying Out of Christ was based on a mid-15<sup>th</sup> century fresco by Fra Angelico, while the remaining murals referenced Giotto's early 14<sup>th</sup> century frescoes in the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua, Italy. The remaining three murals were completed by Anne Leeds, who studied painting at the Academie Julien in Paris, and her brother, Rev. Canon Webb, who served as Percival's assistant rector.<sup>7</sup>

Each of these photographs shows an Italian fresco that inspired a wall painting within the Sanctuary. Can you find where each one is located? Did the artist alter the composition? Why do you think the artist chose these changes?

### ***The Sanctuary and the street***

Purpose of exhibition theme:

- To ask visitors to consider the Sanctuary's relationship with the neighborhood and changes that have occurred in the streetscape of South Philadelphia.



### ***South Philadelphia neighborhood***

Materials needed:

A chronological series of at least three maps of the surrounding neighborhood, showing the development of the Fleisher campus and changes in land use, buildings, and open space. Timeline of development of Fleisher Art Memorial. Photographs of South Philadelphia from the period of the Graphic Sketch Club (1898-1944).

Text:

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Philadelphia experienced dramatic changes in population, as immigrants from Eastern Europe, Southern Europe, Russia, and the American South, filled the city, including the neighborhood around Catharine Street. These new residents filled the houses and shops of South Philadelphia, turning the streets into bustling and crowded communities. The neighborhood also attracted urban reformers attempting to improve the lives of Philadelphians living in lower-income communities. With the purchase of the Sanctuary for the Graphic Sketch Club in 1922, Fleisher emphasized the power of art to transform and elevate the lives of his fellow citizens. Fleisher deliberately placed his art school in South Philadelphia to provide residents of the neighborhood with a quiet space for reflection about art. The Sanctuary has grown up with the surrounding South Philadelphia neighborhood. With the transformation of the Church of the Evangelists into the Graphic Sketch Club, the use of the building responded to the condition of the neighborhood and attempted to improve it.

Questions related to the maps:

Where have changes occurred in the neighborhood? Where has open space been created or filled in? What kinds of buildings have been added or removed? Are there other reform institutions in the neighborhood that relate to the Sanctuary?

### ***Transformation and preservation***

Purpose of exhibition theme:

- To ask visitors to recognize the changes that are layered into the fabric of the Sanctuary.
- To encourage visitors to respond to potential changes to the Sanctuary.
- To connect with Sanctuary with Fleisher Art Memorial's growth.

### ***Changes to the Sanctuary:***

Materials needed:

Photographs from the 1904 Guidebook to the Church of the Evangelists.

Text:

The Sanctuary has been a site of change and stability. Samuel Fleisher chose to both transform and preserve the Sanctuary by incorporating a new function into the church building. Fleisher Art Memorial has modified the Sanctuary to fit current needs while continuing to preserve its 120 years of history. The following are photographs from the Guidebook of the Church of the Evangelists from 1904. Where have changes occurred in the Sanctuary? What objects have been moved or removed? When objects have been removed, have they left traces behind?

The wall paintings of the Sanctuary have also changed with the building. The paint has darkened, occasional water damage has caused losses of paint in some areas, and several restoration



campaigns have resulted in alterations to the compositions. Looking to the future, Fleisher Art Memorial has the choice of covering or restoring the murals. What effect would covering or painting over the murals have on the Sanctuary? If you think Fleisher Art Memorial should have the paintings cleaned, which paintings should come first?

In addition to adding his collection of historical works of art, Samuel Fleisher also commissioned new art for the Sanctuary, including the reredos by Violet Oakley. At a 1926 special exhibition of Oakley's murals for the Supreme Court Room in the State Capitol Building, Fleisher was particularly impressed with her painting of Moses carving the Ten Commandments and commissioned an altarpiece for the Sanctuary to honor his mother. Oakley chose as the subject of *The Life of Moses* and placed the Pharaoh's daughter holding the baby Moses on the central panel as a tribute to Fleisher's mother. After the subject was approved by Fleisher, Oakley executed the 17 by 8 foot reredos while living in Florence, Italy and shipped the completed work to Philadelphia in 1927.<sup>8</sup> Much of Oakley's work consists of similar site-specific installations of stained glass or wall paintings that depict historic or religious scenes, such as the Great Women of the Bible mural series at First Presbyterian Church of Germantown. Why do you think Fleisher chose to commission a new altar piece for a building that was no longer being used as a church? How is this reredos different from the altar of the Church of the Evangelists? The East Chapel of the Sanctuary has undergone a series of changes that relate to the broader themes in the history of the building. From the Chapel of the Holy Sepulcher of the Church of the Evangelists to the Philadelphia Museum of Art's

exhibition of Portuguese religious art in 1960, this chapel is currently an open space with remaining traces of its historical uses. Can you tell which features of the East Chapel are the oldest? Which features have been added most recently? What do you think Fleisher should use this chapel for now?

### **Further recommendations for expansion of Interpretive Exhibit:**

- Begin to collect further information on former students of Fleisher Art Memorial. Where possible, display short histories and examples of their work, in connection with the exhibit of the history of Fleisher.
- Use Fleisher Art Memorial's status as a landmark in South Philadelphia to begin collecting oral histories of the neighborhood. This exhibition provides the background for interpretation of this type, while allowing Fleisher to expand its scope to include the creation of a neighborhood history center.
- Encourage Fleisher Art Memorial's artists-in-residence to consider using the Sanctuary, the history of the organization and the neighborhood as inspirations for their work.

### **Notes**

1. Fleisher Art Memorial Strategic Plan, 2009-2012; p.5.
2. Irene N. Zieget, *History of Samuel S. Fleisher Art Memorial, 1886-1963*. (Philadelphia: Fleisher Art Memorial, 1963), 7.
3. Bennard Perlman. *Robert Henri: his life and art*. (New York: Dover Publications, 1991).
4. Henry Percival and Charles Wellington Robinson, *Guidebook to the Church of the Evangelists*. (Philadelphia: Leeds & Biddle Co., 1904).
5. "Local Art. Decoration of a Chapel in the Church of the Evangelists." *Philadelphia Inquirer* (April 1893). Quoted in Perlman, *Robert Henri*.
6. Helen Henderson, "Gothic Sunlight," *Philadelphia* (August 1948).
7. Percival and Robinson, *Guidebook to the Church of the Evangelists*, 22.
8. "The Violet Oakley Exhibition," *Philadelphia Museum of Art Bulletin*. Vol. 75 No. 325 (June 1979).



# CONCLUSION

Preservation planning is grounded in the principle of making informed decisions about a building or site based on analytical research into its material, history, physical and cultural contexts, and pattern of use. This report is meant to provide such analysis for the Fleisher Art Memorial on its Sanctuary, as well as to provide a set of guiding principles to ensure best preservation practices are followed if and when decisions are made to alter the space. Those principles were informed by thorough research into the history of the Sanctuary, and the Fleisher Art Memorial in general, which allowed the group to make decisions about the significance of different materials in the space. Significance was ranked in terms of tolerance for change: the more significant something was determined to be, the less change it could tolerate.

Next, hypothetical design recommendations were made based on the preservation principles and the ranking of change tolerance. As part of the assignment for Second-Year Studio, each member of the group took on a recommendation as an individual extension of the group's work. Due to the limited number of members in the group (eight), not

all recommendations could be explored in-depth. While the group feels all the recommendations have merit, they are not intended as a checklist of things to do to the Sanctuary. They have not been evaluated comprehensively, nor are they meant to be. Instead, the recommendations should function as starting points to further creative discussions about the Sanctuary and its role within the larger Fleisher Art Memorial. (That being said, however, the group is unanimous in its conviction that all structural problems identified in the KSK report, some of which have already been remedied, should take preference over any interior design changes.)

Above all, this report hopes to impart a sense of the Sanctuary as a living, evolving space with extensive possibilities that can and should be utilized in a way that preserves its historic character while involving it more actively in the Fleisher community. This research and analysis, along with the invaluable information in the KSK and PennPraxis reports, will hopefully allow the Fleisher Art Memorial to develop a long-term plan for the Sanctuary's thriving future.

