

Sacred Landmarks Partnership of Northeast Ohio Accomplishments 2000 – 2006

Introduction

The Center for Sacred Landmarks (CSL) at the Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs at Cleveland State University provided the model and plan for the creation of the Sacred Landmarks Partnership of Northeast Ohio (SLP). This process initially included the establishment and networking of sacred landmarks research initiatives at the four universities that form the Northeast Ohio Research Consortium: University of Akron, Kent State University, and Youngstown State University – successfully expanding the current capacity for research, documentation, educational outreach and program development from a local context at Cleveland State University to a regional context for northeast Ohio. Funding from the Northeast Ohio Research Consortium supported the planning and implementation of the Partnership and sponsored much of its work. Later, Lorain County Community College and Ursuline College strengthened our partnership by creating their own Sacred Landmarks Initiatives.

Accomplishments

During its first year of existence (AY 2000 - 2001) the Partnership completed several successful, collaborative projects, as follows:

- Partnership members worked together to develop the Sacred Landmarks Forum: “Sacred Landmarks: keystones of Urban Communities” which was produced in collaboration with the Cleveland State University Library during April 19 -20, 2001. A total of \$4000 was received in corporate and foundation support of the forum and accompanying gallery exhibition.
- A gallery exhibition, “Urban Landscapes: Sacred and Transient,” featuring photographs of houses of worship by award winning *Plain Dealer* photographer Mike Levy, opened at the University Library Special Collections Gallery and The Thomas F. Campbell, Ph.D. Exhibition Gallery, and ran through October 1, 2001. This exhibition was produced in concert with the Sacred Landmarks Forum.
- The Foster Armstrong Award, jointly given by the Cleveland Urban Design Collaborative and the Sacred Landmarks Partnership, was created to recognize excellence in urban design and revitalization. The Rev. S. Michael Franz was the recipient of this award. This award was presented as part of the Sacred Landmarks Forum.
- The following colloquy was presented at the Urban Affairs Association 31st Annual Meeting in Detroit, Michigan: “Urban Sacred Landmarks Confront the Past to Build the Future: Sacred Structures as Research, Preservation, Pedagogical, Planning, and Development Resources.” Partnership members from Youngstown State University and Cleveland State University contributed to this event.
- Each of the SLP members engaged in an ongoing, extensive surveying and databasing effort concerning houses of worship in its immediate area. The areas surveyed included Cuyahoga (especially Cleveland), Mahoning (especially Youngstown), Medina, Portage, Stark, Summit (especially Akron), and Tuscarawas, and Wayne counties. Telephone and mail surveys were conducted, and images in both slide and digital format were taken. This survey work continued for all five years of NEORC funding of the Partnership.
- The results of the above mentioned surveying effort were put on the Web in the form of a GIS interactive map and database in partnership with the Northern Ohio Data and Information Service (NODIS). The Partnership/NODIS site helps to organize and integrate the databasing efforts of SLP members. The URL for this site is as follows:

http://nodisnet1.urban.csuohio.edu/imc/imc_mapstart_RSL.htm Work on this site continues to the present.

Building on the successes of its first year, the Partnership members, either individually or collaboratively, achieved the outcomes listed below during 2001 - 2002:

- Expanded and refined the Sacred Landmarks Regional Database and interactive map.
- The gallery exhibition, "Urban Landscapes: Sacred and Transient," featuring photographs of houses of worship by award winning *Plain Dealer* photographer Mike Levy, became a traveling exhibition around the northeast Ohio region and was shown at the Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, the Massillon Museum, the Bierce Library Gallery, University of Akron, and the Stocker Gallery, Lorain County Community College.
- Delivered sacred landmarks forum presentation "Designing Sacred Places in the Urban Context" at CSU.
- Organized the President's Luncheon at Youngstown State University for religious leaders of the community. The group also viewed the Michael Levy exhibit installed at the Butler Institute.
- Facilitated the inception and planning of a sacred landmarks book project for Kent State University Press (*Cleveland's Urban Landscapes: The Sacred and the Transient*) based on exhibition photographs by Mike Levy. The book was published in Fall, 2003.
- Redesigned the format for the Sacred Landmarks Monograph Series to emphasize that it is a product of the Sacred Landmarks Partnership and developed a comprehensive marketing plan.
- Guided the successful creation of a new Sacred Landmarks Initiative at Lorain County Community College.
- Created a virtual exhibition based on the award winning gallery exhibition "For Everything a Season: Jewish Ritual Art in Cleveland" (<http://www.csuohio.edu/art/gallery/JewishRitualArt/>).
- Created a web site "sacred art exhibitions at Cleveland State University," in partnership with the CSU art gallery (<http://www.csuohio.edu/art/religiousart/>).
- Helped found the St. Stephen's Neighborhood Improvement Organization to enhance community development on Cleveland's near west side.
- Received \$37,898 from the Cleveland Catholic Diocese to do a five parish inventory of sacred vessels and stained glass windows as a pilot study of a diocese-wide sacred art inventory.
- YSU's Maag Library Sacred Landmarks Archive was established, accompanied by a web site. It contains oral histories, historic photographs, booklets and other historical documents, many accessible electronically. Central Christian Church donated a collection of their records and photographs, along with a check to catalogue them.

During 2002 - 2003, the Partnership members, either individually or collaboratively, added the following outcomes to the list of previous achievements:

- Created a national-level partnership with the journal *Faith and Form* for the collaborative production and national distribution of a Sacred Landmarks Monograph.
- Published *A Brief History of Religion in Northeast Ohio* by Dr. George Knepper, the fourth title in the Sacred Landmarks Monograph Series. This monograph was distributed throughout northeast

Ohio through bookstores, and was brought to the attention of a large audience by numerous public service announcements on Public Radio. In addition, the Partnership arranged for an authors reception and also for book signing at two bookstores, one in Cleveland and one in Akron.

- Initiated and implemented a sacred landmarks art contest for the Mahoning valley region that involved students from seventh through twelfth grades, and integrated the project as part of the regions' Scholastic Art Competition.
- Created a YSU Sacred Landmarks web site, with links to the CSU NODIS site, and other similar sites, such as Historic Resources and Stained Glass sites, etc.
- Compiled on archival paper, produced and distributed a report of the entire collection of Sacred Landmarks Ohio Historic Inventory Forms for Youngstown, Ohio
- Extended the sacred landmarks traveling exhibition of Michael Levy photographs, with a several months long showing at the *Plain Dealer* Gallery and at the Cleveland Restoration Society.
- Obtained permission to hold an exhibition featuring Mike Levy's photographs of African-American churches and congregations in the Campbell Gallery of the Levin College, with plans for the exhibition to serve as the beginning of a second traveling exhibition and book project.
- Continued to build the regional database and web site.
- Hosted the national conference of *The Interfaith Forum on Religion, Art, and Architecture (IFRAA)* at the Levin College, Cleveland State University, and designed and presented tours of several of Cleveland's houses of worship. The keynote address for this conference described the Sacred Landmarks Partnership and its work.
- Received additional funding (\$35,011) from the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland for ongoing work on the diocese-wide art and cultural inventory.
- Received \$10,000 in collaboration with the Center for Neighborhood Development from the Cleveland Foundation to interview Hispanic clergy and hold focus groups for the purpose of enhancing social service delivery and partnership building among Cleveland's Hispanic faith communities.
- Received approximately \$6000 in donations from individuals.
- Generated over \$1000 in sales of monographs.
- Received national-level publicity in the form of an article in the journal *Faith & Form* giving significant coverage to the Center for Sacred Landmarks and the Sacred Landmarks Partnership.
- Made presentations concerning the work of the Partnership at the national Urban Affairs Association conference, Teaching Public Administration conference, and the Federation for Community Planning annual meeting.
- Published papers in the following outlets: *Stained Glass*, Conference Proceedings of the 26th Annual Teaching Public Administration Conference, and *Planning and Action*.
- Participated in curriculum development on the theme of sacred landmarks for the Cleveland Museum of Art's distance learning department.

During 2003 - 2004, the Partnership members, either individually or collaboratively, added the following outcomes to the list of previous achievements:

- Received \$11,000 from the Civic Foundation for support of the Sacred Landmarks Monographs Series.
- Received additional funding (\$28,620) from the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland for ongoing work on the diocese-wide art and cultural inventory.
- Helped to initiate and facilitated the implementation of the photography exhibition *African American Faith Communities*, by Michael Levy, in the Campbell Gallery, Levin College, and the *Plain Dealer* lobby gallery.
- Published the Sacred Landmarks Monograph *Sacred Meaning of the Christian Art of the Middle Ages*, by Stephen N. Fliegel, Curator of Medieval Art, Cleveland Museum of Art. This monograph was featured in the November, 2004, *CMA Members Magazine* in its Holiday Shopping section. Moreover, the monograph was produced in partnership with the journal *Faith and Form*, and was distributed nationally to their membership of more than one thousand.
- Wrote, produced and delivered to regional secondary school audiences the distance learning program *Form, Function, and Faith*, with the Distance Education department of the Cleveland Museum of Art. The program uses elements of ecclesial art and architecture to teach math and science concepts.
- Co-sponsored the exhibition *The Buddha Project: Visual Manifestations of Buddhist Thought in the Western World*, with the CSU Art Gallery. *The Buddha Project* received a 2004 Award of Achievement Honorable Mention by *Northern Ohio Live* magazine.
- CSU Center for Sacred Landmarks Director M. Tevesz was a co-recipient with the Cleveland Restoration Society of a 2004 Ohio Historic Preservation Office Public Education and Awareness Award for the February, 2004, program, *Celebration of Shiloh Baptist Church*.
- Presented a second regional Sacred Landmarks Forum "Preserve, Rebuild, Reuse!", on September 19, 2003, held at Youngstown State University, with concentration on the preservation and adaptive reuse of houses of worship. Save-the-date cards, brochures and forum totes were again all designed by the YSU project manager.
- Completed compilation of 370 Mahoning County photos for insertion onto NODIS SLP map site.
- Reference binders of color photographs of all Mahoning County and Trumbull County Sacred Landmarks were compiled and indexed.
- Completed all digital photography and compilation of 262 Trumbull County photos onto CD for insertion onto NODIS SLP map site (each Trumbull County Congregation was surveyed with at least a two-page survey form, photographs [1-16 per congregation] and site visit); created Trumbull County database.
- A comprehensive upgrade for the YSU web site was completed, with Trumbull County Sacred Landmarks Web Site pages created, and multiple ways for researchers or the public to search for religious institutions: via location, denomination or name of the congregation. County and city maps were used, and enlargeable photographs of every institution included with its respective information.
- Sacred Landmarks Art Awards (\$100, \$75, \$50 for High School; \$50, \$35, \$25 for Junior High), were judged at the McDonough Art Museum, and presented at the Regional (5 county) Scholastic Art Awards Ceremony at the Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown.
- Photographed and completed comprehensive surveys of each Stained Glass window in (Youngstown's) St. John's Episcopal Church on Wick Ave.; photographed and completed comprehensive surveys of all stained glass in First Christian Church, also on Wick Avenue.

- Creation of database containing 607 Summit County houses of worship, with over 300 photographs.
- Completed planning and materials collection for four workshops for (Akron area) clergy and congregants demonstrating preservation and use of historical documents and other material of long-term value.
- Expanded database and GIS map development to include Wayne County. This includes listing all sacred landmarks, completing surveys, adding information to the data base, and photographing the sites.

During 2004 - 2006, the Partnership members, either individually or collaboratively, added the following outcomes to the list of previous achievements (all work completed by May 31, 2006):

- Published (2005) a monograph featuring the ecclesial art treasures of northeast Ohio as exemplified by the work of the Romeo Celleghin Studio (*The Art of Romeo Celleghin. Preserving Our Religious Art Heritage: A Cleveland Case Study*). This monograph, along with the Fliegel monograph, has been prominently displayed and marketed on the Cleveland Museum of Art's Museum Store Web site.
- Wrote, produced and delivered a second, new, sacred landmarks distance learning program in partnership with the Cleveland Museum of Art. This program, *Diversity, Neighborhood, and Urban Issues*, focuses on the urban ecology of houses of worship in the context of evolving neighborhoods. Its target audience is regional secondary school students.
- Inaugurated the "Catalogue Series" (part of the Sacred Landmarks Publications Series) in 2005 in partnership with the Cleveland Artists Foundation by co-sponsoring the exhibition *Joseph Motto: A Jazz Age Journey from Cleveland to Florence* at the Beck Center, Lakewood, and by co-publishing the exhibition catalog.
- Partnered with the Lorain County Sacred Landmarks Initiative and Lorain County Community College as co-sponsor in the presentation of an exhibition on the religious heritage and art of Lorain County, as a partner with Lorain County Community College. This exhibition, *Celebrations of Faith: Lorain County's Religious Heritage 1809 –2005* was presented in the Stocker Gallery and set an attendance record. Co-published the exhibition catalogue as part of the Sacred Landmarks Publications Series (Catalogue Series).
- Partnered with John Carroll University in the presentation of the exhibition *African American Faith Communities* at the JCU library.
- Partnered with Ursuline College and the Cleveland Catholic Diocese in an exhibition of liturgical vestments and stained glass window facsimiles at the Ursuline College Pilla Center.
- Continued to partner with the Northern Ohio Data and Information Service in order to facilitate data entry and increase the user-friendliness of the Partnership's interactive, web-accessible database and map.
- Received additional funding (\$28,437) from the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland for ongoing work on the diocese-wide art and cultural inventory.
- Received \$25,000 from the Commission on Catholic Community Action to do a survey of social services provided by faith-based organizations in Cleveland's Ward 17.

- Completed Columbiana County Sacred Landmarks Database, and created new, searchable YSU Columbiana web site pages with photographs, to accompany the previous Mahoning and Trumbull County pages.
- Complete stained glass survey of 6 Wick Avenue Area (Youngstown) churches.
- Compiled 2 loose leaf reference books containing a labeled color photo on archival paper of each Trumbull County and Columbiana County Sacred Landmark.
- Established protocols for archiving records: at YSU SL Archives; at Mahoning Valley Historical Society.
- Expanded and updated the data on the YSU SLI/SLP web site.
- Delivered *Sacred Landmarks Information Collection and Dissemination* presentation at the International Conference for Social Science Research in Orlando
- Delivered *The Sacred Landmarks Initiative in the Mahoning Valley* presentation for the Mahoning Valley Leadership Conference, held at the Youngstown Center of Industry and Labor
- Produced the Third and Fourth Scholastic Art Sacred Landmarks Awards programs at YSU.
- Partnered with Ursuline College in the creation of the Ursuline Sacred Landmarks Project, which became the newest (and 6th) member of SLP.
- Expanded archival training in preservation and documentation to additional Akron-area communities, including an oral history/ethnography component, working with religious communities to identify elders in their congregations who carry with them the group memories.
- Researched and photographed village landmark churches throughout the northeast Ohio region and are anticipating a mid-2006 publication of the results in the inaugural issue of the "Portraits of Faith Series," part of the Sacred Landmarks Publication Series.

Summary

The Sacred Landmarks Partnership received a total of \$362,382 from the Northeast Ohio Research Consortium during 2000 – 2006. This NEORC funding from has allowed the creation and effective functioning of the SLP, including the inception of five new sacred landmarks initiatives spanning the region. The partnership now consists of six institutions of higher education that extends across northeast Ohio from Mahoning County to Lorain County, and whose "catchments area" includes urban, suburban, and rural houses of worship. The Partnership has combined research and public service efforts of all its members in the successful planning and implementation of regionally significant projects. These projects have resulted in highly tangible deliverables which include eye-catching publications, gallery exhibitions, web-accessible databases, conferences, and distance learning modules. In addition, support from NEORC has impelled partnership members engage in their own successful fundraising from other sources, with over \$185,000 having been gained through grants and donations thus far. Based on the credentials provided by its deliverables and success in obtaining grants from other sources, it is both the hope and expectation of SLP members that the NEORC funding has created an enduring and self-sustaining entity that is of considerable value to the northeast Ohio region. Please visit the following web sites for additional information: <http://urban.csuohio.edu/sacredlandmarks/>; http://cfweb.cc.yzu.edu/sacredlandmarks/mahoning_county_churches.htm

Strengths for the Future

All of the four university sacred landmarks programs funded by NEORC developed expertise and strength

in important topic areas in the process of contributing to the overall success of the Partnership. For example, the University of Akron Sacred Landmarks Initiative not only developed expertise in survey work that contributed to the database, but also was the leader in working with congregations to help them preserve their heritage archivally. Particularly in years 4 and 5, the Akron initiative became a leader in outreach to faith communities in this way. Through a series of workshops, they designed and implemented a methodology for congregation archive preservation, made it available on CD-ROM, and educated interested clergy and congregants in its use. The resources thus developed are now available to be invested to help preserve this fragile, threatened, aspect of regional memory. The UA initiative is poised to invest its leadership in archival preservation by involving and coordinating the work of the sacred landmarks initiatives and university libraries.

Kent State University specialized in photography and data collection for the regional database/GIS map for the first four years of the Partnership. Now, during year 5, the KSU program is helping to inaugurate a new series of sacred landmarks publications in partnership with CSU through the completion of a work entitled "Village Landmark Churches of Northeast Ohio." This inaugural issue of the Sacred Landmarks Publication Series "Portraits of Faith" series, scheduled for publication in mid-2006, continues to expand the Partnership's research efforts into rural areas and make the results available in an attractive form to residents of the region. The KSU initiative is now poised in a leadership role of coordinating the research and manuscript preparation on several topical areas of regional importance with respect to houses of worship.

Youngstown State University contributed to many of the areas that are described above in the "Achievements" section. It built and maintains its own Sacred Landmarks website which describes these activities and serves the Partnership and region as an important resource.

(http://cfweb.cc.yosu.edu/sacredlandmarks/mahoning_county_churches.htm) The YSU interaction with area schools in the annual photography contests is a particularly significant form of outreach and education. Other areas in which the YSU initiative is poised to take leadership include stained glass censussing, photography, and expansion of its impressive website.

The Center for Sacred Landmarks at CSU, working with other Partnership members, has developed expertise in publishing high quality works on sacred landmarks – related topics for both regional and national audiences. Several new publishing projects are currently underway. In addition, based on its success in obtaining extramural funding in these specialty areas, the Center is poised to exercise leadership in regional inventories of ecclesial art and architecture, and also in defining and analyzing the roles of houses of worship in urban neighborhoods. In addition, collaboratively with NODIS and other Partnership members, CSL is currently looking for ways to maintain and keep current the Partnership regional database and GIS map initially generated with NEORC support.

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