

Chronicles of Diversity



Your leadership weekly **The New Seattle Public Library**

Fractured Rapture Tales Tale 20: When the land belongs to God

26 May 2004; Volume 6, Issue 21

“The purest gift is not of gold, but in art that awakens the soul.” (From the song “When the land belonged to God” by Rob Quest and Jack Gladstone)

This song is about Charles Russell, the greatest artist of the early American west. The lyrics speaks of the unbroken sod, when Russell did his work “when the land belonged to God,” and as it will be again someday beyond the horizon of time, “when the land belongs to God.”

We live in the intervening era, when the land belongs to man. But have you ever stopped to think about just what it will be like after the Rapture, the Great Tribulation, and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ? Our only true glimpse of that world comes “from art that awakens the soul.” That may be music, literature, paintings, and numerous other creations of man, but this art is inspired by God.

Art not only can awaken eternity of the soul, but it can also testify of man’s attempt to remake the world into our concept of art. In that respect it becomes a witness of society’s entropy at best, and sin, if looked at in true honesty.

The forces of creation are very powerful and together with her artful beauty man’s soul is awakened. When faced with this created reality there are basically three ways to deal with it. 1. Naturalize it. Nature is just the result of random evolutionary acts of nihilism. 2. Deify it. All nature is god and we are all one with the cosmos of life. Cows, dolphins, frogs, (gods of man’s religions) and all life are our bothers and sisters. 3. To glorify the Creator. Creation not only is the greatest example of art (God’s art) it is a store house of science, wisdom, and knowledge. In Judeo-Christian doctrine creation’s revelation stands second to God’s spoken word, the Bible.

Because of man’s sin, he is not comfortable in the witness of Creation. If necessary, by forces beyond his control, mankind can adapt to these soulful truths by using some or all the above coping

©2004; non-commercial education & forwarding encouraged, all other rights reserved

Jerry Bannon

Wonder Springs

7950 Seward Park Avenue South

Seattle, Washington USA 98118

phone: 206.660.0697

email: bannon@createleaders.org or chronicles@createleaders.org

Please forward prayer requests to: prayer@createleaders.org

Washington State Charity Number: 7529

Visit our web site at: www.createleaders.org

To subscribe to these free weekly messages please send us an email

mechanisms. But man has created a better way, and that is to flee into cities. In cities creation can be controlled, and thereby, with the right karma, the power of God. So called acts of God really aren't of God, but are just natural acts we have yet to control.

The first great city was Babel of Genesis 11. After the Genesis flood Nimrod built Babel. Nimrod, his wife, and son created the basis of our worldly religious system, as well as our economic system. Babel was also the site of man's first attempt at major urban art represented in the "Tower of Babel" Today we call that art architecture.

It just so happens, that Seattle is now celebrating the opening of a new architectural symbol of its desire to become a major world city. The new Seattle Public Library had its grand opening ceremony this last Sunday May 23rd. I had to go to the outskirts of downtown Seattle Monday, so I decided to walk to the bus tunnel and go into the new library to get a picture for the pdf version of this week's message. That trip turned into a full tour of the facility and taking of a number of photographs, one of which graces this week's pdf.

Before I comment more on how this art "awakened my soul," I would like to quote the words of about a three year old boy. They say out of the mouths of babes comes wisdom, and this was by far the wisest comment I heard during my time in and around the library.

This boy's mother was admiring one of the foam and steel chairs in a very open area that I think are called "mixing areas." This bright orange chair of cubic design was sitting in amongst others in an area of a little over a hundred square feet. The floor was stainless steel. The boy was standing on a wood looking parquet ramp that gradually connects all the book stacks. Mom said to the boy, "Come on in here and look at the chair." The young lad responded instantly and with complete honesty, "I don't want to go in there!"

So you now honestly know how the library affected a three year old boy, now for some more elaborate critique by a more aged three year old.

"the new central library. where the city gets together. celebrate!"

beginning sentences without capital letters might be effective in certain instances. starting the first sentences of a brochure about a new library, which is supposed to be a repository of man's learning, without capital letters for the first word of those sentences is just plain—; i guess, i really don't have words to express my thoughts.

celebrate! where the city gets together. by the dumbing down of the rules of sound language so as not to offend the unlearned, at the expense of the educated, is certainly egalitarianism in it's godly ascension, praise us! truly celebrate! if only in your dreams?

There are certain truths in architecture to make a place people friendly. Just like the comments of the little boy, this new library violates all those rules. There are no places for privacy, for intimacy, and warmth. The building demands that you deal with its ostentatious control over your space, your personality, and creation itself.

The library is that way by design, to make a statement. That statement is that you are being controlled by forces over which you have no power. To paraphrase the title of this message, "where the land belongs to the architect," and the pleasure of your stay is controlled by Rem Koolhaas and his team's self serving design. As the title on the Seattle Post-Intelligencer's section on the library states, it is a "Cool House." Could it be that Koolhaas designed it that way? The PI's headline writer only stated the facts, facts that most of the visitors surely shall not interpret.

Therefore, the art in this library is not in the building's design, but designing a cold building and convincing the city that it is cool, like in desirable, and getting paid handsomely for the effort. To that end Koolhaas succeeded in his chubby obelisk with amazing artistic talent.

"The purest gift is not of gold, but in art that awakens the soul." The trick, or the talent lies in the artistic ability to bypass the cognitive senses, and bring about your preconceived desire to touch the soul of the viewer. This is a cool house (Koolhaas) masterpiece without question.

Since the city already owned the land which was occupied by the previous library, the library cost of \$456 per square foot, for "dedication to knowledge and imagination." We surely didn't end up with

a windowless box and no mud brick tower reaching to the heavens. This library may not be the Tower of Babel in design, but it surely is in function. Especially when you are reminded that this great facility will only be available to you limited hours because of budget problems.

Contradiction and confusion were the result of the original tower of Babel, despite Nimrod's best intentions to do what was right in his own eyes. This cool house library does the same for Seattle and Koolhaas. It provides for anyone who may come to see, from all over the world, that same gifted opportunity. This library is man's best example in the world of that old mud tower we still hope to construct based on our superior intellect and knowledge. The genius, is our library is the repository of these same otiose gifts.

When the land again belongs to God, what will art look like? I don't know for sure, but I doubt few on the cool house design team ever considered that possibility. I really don't know either, whether Charles Russell understood his artistic gift as a gift from God. Really the only small taste of that possibility came in the a short time after the Reformation. That Realism of the wonder of nature and God's grace, which is also reflected in Russell's art, was soon replaced with Impressionism, reality with man's twist. Today, virtually anything poses as art, because it really is a reflection on the mind of the artist. That should scare one and all into repentance, for it truly is a window into the health of society.

Those who have read this column for some time know, the events that unfold leading to the second coming of Christ are not primarily God's art, they are God's science. That return, will be artistic in the concept of how it will change the hearts of all toward their eternal destiny, but it is clearly governed not by evolutionary ascension of our towers of knowledge, but civilization sinking completely into the morass of total depravity.

This brings into question the role of the church in this evolutionary march. Some say we should get in the line so that we can witness to those determined to go their own way. The Bible and Jesus doesn't teach that. Simply because in doing so we are dealing with, not so much sin and sinners, but with religion. The religion of Nimrod is still the religion of the world and sad to say most of it has been adapted into the religion of Christianity.

You can put that religion in a new cool house but make no mistake, eternally it is not a cool house, it is a hot house. When the land belongs to God, people will not worship God primarily in a Crystal Cathedral, and I'm not referring to the church in Garden Grove, California, or in an old converted store front, they will worship God in Spirit and in Truth.

The community aspect of that worship, as the land belongs to God, indicates a dramatic effect on what we consider we own. In God's truth we are to share "unbroken sod" because there really are no reasons to own it, or to put our stamp of individuality upon it, or even to build a city over it. The New Jerusalem stands above creation as the completed Revelation of God, but that in no way has eliminated a new heaven and a new earth.

The personality of each human being who ever lived, is in God's plan so unique that they can never be duplicated. In that respect we have eternity to learn from one another, or to be isolated by our sense of our own godly image. It is a choice in the mystery of God's artistic creation, that we all make that decision, based upon our conceived notion of free will or agency.

Babylon just doesn't exist in Iraq, it exists primarily in the best intentions of man. The best we can hope for is to say, "Not in my house, my home. My place is too cool for that, because the grace of God changed it forever. This land belongs to God, and we shall enjoy it with the rest of God's people for eternity."

In the not too distant future, in the fullness of God's time, all the land will be again owned by God. We are, and are to be the stewards of that land. That is a far different philosophy than using bamboo for floors in a new library. Man will not save the earth, God will save the earth for His glory. There we shall truly gather in a garden grove, to sing praise to God for His grace. The path? Oh, yes the path, is best proclaimed eternally in the art of poetry.

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—

I took the one less traveled by,

And that has made all the difference. (Robert Frost)