

Statement of artist Cory Bonnet re Notre Dame

I believe historic buildings are physical links to the past, portals into the lives and stories of all who lived, loved, worked, suffered, celebrated and died in them.

When they are lost, so too are those stories.

The tragic fire of Notre Dame Cathedral is an extremely powerful example of this phenomenon. The loss was felt by millions.

It is my hope to create beauty out of tragedy—out of the ashes—by using the burned, water damaged, or otherwise unusable wood from Notre Dame Cathedral, as a painting support for a portrait of the beloved Notre Dame.

To illustrate my method, below is a recent painting on material salvaged from the abandoned Sts. Peter & Paul Church, as part of my “Sacred Spaces” series.

Presented are pictures of the church, the salvaged church pews used to build the panels, and the finished 152 cm x 135 cm painting.

Sts. Peter & Paul is a former Gothic style, Roman Catholic church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The parish was active from 1860 to 1992.

German and Lithuanian immigrants established the parish in the village of East Liberty with their own money, land and labor. Before the 1992 de-sanctification, Sts. P&P ushered its parishioners through the Civil War, WWI, the Great Depression, WWII, Korea, the Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam. For over 100 years filled with turmoil, it was the constant...a place of refuge and peaceful reflection, shelter from societal storms.

The now crumbling church stands watch over East Liberty, its future uncertain.

My work:

This article by the National Trust of Historic Preservation is a good overview:

<https://savingplaces.org/stories/a-pittsburgh-oil-painter-preserves-his-city-using-salvaged-materials#.Xlv1ARYpCEc>

A recent interview on CBS Pittsburgh Today:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=RhGimw0lhJ0>

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Discarded pews in the abandoned Sts. Peter & Paul Church, Pittsburgh, PA



Pew preparation & panel assembly.



Panel of salvaged church pews, ready to paint.



Sts. Peter & Paul Church, Pittsburgh, PA

salvaged church pews 152 cm x 135 cm © Bonnet 2019