

**A PROPOSAL TO FUND
THE EXPRESSION OF GOD'S GLORY
THROUGH
THE INCORPORATION OF ARTS INTO WORSHIP**

Submitted by:

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Note: Identifying information has been changed.

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Executive Summary

“When the church incorporates art into its worship, it demonstrates the breadth and depth of the Christian world-view, giving voice to legitimate expressions of existentiality.”

-Ravi Zacharias

Since its beginning, ReligiousExpression (“RE”) has followed its mission “to understand and cultivate the relationship between Christianity and the arts.” RE labors to bring about the study of Christianity and the arts, and the practice of the arts in a Christian context. The goal of RE is to help churches and other ministries to advance authentic worship and a biblical worldview through drama, visual arts, and music.

RE, a faith-based organization, got its start in September, 2002, when the founder, Dr. Vic Beyer, a Professor of Organ and Church Music at the University of Mississippi, began seeing a lack of enthusiasm or encouragement for the expression of the arts in traditional Christian settings.

RE seeks to provide opportunities for Christian artists to cultivate and utilize their talents for the purpose of honoring God and inspiring others to live for Christ so that the God would be glorified. There are many outlets for artists in the secular realm, but very few strive to bring about the worship of God or to encourage Christians to express their love of God. Os Guinness defines secularization as “the process by which religious ideas, institutions, and interpretations have lost their social significance.” The ministry of RE was born out of a desire to see America’s culture once again reflect a biblical worldview.

RE was incorporated in January, 2004 as a non-profit organization with a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. In that same year, RE received a fifteen-thousand dollar Luther Worship Renewal Grant to sponsor its first Winter Arts Ministry Conference.

Since its inaugural year, RE has ministered to over 6,000 individuals. Because of its young age and the expanding possibilities, RE is adapting to growth. Now in their second year of ministry, Larry Ricard is delegating more duties, and getting more people involved in the ministry. This has spread out the workload and strengthened the ministry.

Clients

RE targets Christian people, artists, and local churches.

Christian people – RE helps people understand that they are creative people made in the image of a creator God, leading to an increased awareness of the fact that at a certain level, all people are artists.

Artists – RE helps them achieve a new identity –viewing themselves as Christian artists, integrating their faith and their work into one coherent whole.

Local Churches – RE helps local churches understand that arts ministry should exist as a fundamental ministry area alongside other ministries.

Facilities

RE's office is located at Community Lutheran Church in Congerville, Illinois. One of the objectives of this grant is to relocate the office to a more central location in the Bloomington or Peoria area.

Staff

RE is presently an all volunteer-led organization. Many volunteers have multiple arts degrees, and have or are currently working in the fine arts. Key volunteer staff members are: Executive Director Larry Ricard, Artistic Director Ken Stalker and Board Member El Triple.

Dr. Larry Ricard is a Professor Organ and Church Music at the University of Mississippi and serves as Minister of Arts at Community Lutheran Church in Congerville, Illinois. He has served as a contributing author to *The Vibrant Church's Song*, published by Central Foulston, and to *A Tribute To Von Steuchen*, published by the French Kervok Society. He has also published in a variety of journals, including *Reformed Worship*, *CrossAccent*, and *L'Organ*. Ricard holds music degrees from the University of Alabama, the University of Congerville's College-Conservatory of Music, and the Conservatoire de Musique in Geneva, Switzerland.

Dr. Ken Stalker is Director of Music and Arts at St. Miguel and All Saints Episcopal Church in France, Illinois. As an organist, he has performed solo recitals in the central US and in western Europe. He has been involved in the Chicago Chapter of the American Guild of Organists as General Convener for the 1998 Regional Convention of the Chicago American Guild of Organists and has served twice as chair for the chapter's annual Bachathon festival. As a general church musician, he has served on the Episcopal Diocesan Liturgy and Music Committees in both East Missouri and Illinois, and has participated in training and organization of the Leadership Program for Musicians Serving Small Congregations. Stalker graduated from Southern Nazarene University, and holds Master of Music and Doctor of Music degrees from the University of Alabama. He was also recipient of the Gold Medal in organ performance during a two-year study at the National Conservatory in Paris, France.

El Triple is a member of the Dramatist Guild of America and has written more than 25 scripts and 18 books for multiple publishers. Twenty of his stage plays have received full-scale productions. He is the 2003 Illinois Artist Fellowship Winner in Playwriting from the Illinois Arts Commission. Recent publications include *Sermon Starters: 18 Lead-in Skits, Trial, Arrival, and Yuletide at Bjornshire*. Triple has a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honors in Drama from the University of Arkansas in Little Rock. He also earned a Master of Arts in Theatre from the University of Mississippi, an institution well-known for educating and mentoring performing artists. Additionally in 1993, he received an MD degree from the Arkansas Medical School, where he was selected as the Outstanding Minority Law Graduate.

Board of Directors

Currently RE has 7 Governing Board Members and 11 Advisory Board Members. The Governing Board provides direction and supervision for RE and is empowered to carry out the corporation's affairs. The Advisory Board are nationally known figures that provide counsel to the Governing Board and provide visibility to RE. One hundred percent of the Governing Board financially contribute to RE. Please see Attachment _ for a listing of Governing Board and Advisory Board members.

Resources

In the past RE has received funding from the Luther Institute of Christian Worship, Illinois Arts Commission, church partners, and individuals.

Need Statement

As America's culture continues to evolve through new worldviews, icons and values, Christians involved in ministry report greater challenges in reaching non-believers with the message of Jesus Christ. In a survey conducted by George Barna, adults were asked what they like least about their past church experiences, the third most common response, given by one-fifth of the un-churched was that "church and worship services are not compelling."¹

Many churches today have lost the holistic vision of redemption that includes all of reality – culture and arts included. Centuries ago great reformers like John Calvin articulated a theological perspective that believed the coming of God's kingdom meant the redemption of more than souls – the redemption of creation itself. This raises the question: Is the church aware of the great cultural mandate God has given us to take the Gospel into all corners of this world? The

¹ George Barna, *Grow Your Church from the Outside: Understanding the Unchurched and How to Reach Them*

church of today has not assumed the cultural mandate as it has in the past, such as during the Reformation.

Too often the church approaches culture as if it were untouchable, running wild outside God's kingdom, but this denies God's sovereign character. God's common grace can be found anywhere where truth is proclaimed, whether in the theater, art gallery, playhouse or television set. "When the church incorporates art into its worship, it demonstrates the breadth and depth of the Christian worldview, giving voice to legitimate expressions of existentiality."²

Project Description

Objectives

- To assist churches and ministries implement creative arts ministries to present the Gospel in new ways to reach unbelievers.
- To help churches incorporate art into their worship to reflect the glory of God.
- Provide individuals with opportunities to use their talents to reflect a biblical worldview.

Methods

RE would like to increase the services and opportunities it provides to meet the need for the expression of Christian beliefs through the arts in Christian organizations and provide an opportunity for Christians who have talents to cultivate and utilize their talents in biblical settings.

1. Sponsor an annual conference that addresses three issues:
 - An apologetic exegesis that provides scriptural evidence for the use of art in worship.
 - Suggestions for implementing art into church services for the purpose of evangelizing the lost, allowing more believers to participate in worship that brings glory to God.
 - Provide an overview of the process for encouraging artists and providing opportunities for artists to use their talents for the purpose of Christian worship.
2. Provide consultation and mentoring for churches that are interested in developing programming in the area of arts ministry. Adult education classes in arts ministry will be offered on a regular basis. A list of consultants in the various art forms will be maintained. Most importantly

² Ravi Zacharias, *Ravi Zacharias International Ministries*

resources will be gathered and made available for churches to equip and train its people with discernment in fine arts.

3. Produce and perform theatrically programming that will leave the audience desiring the truth and, ultimately God Himself.

1-Year Goals

- Employ an Executive Director. By making this a paid position RE will be strengthen organizationally. This position will provide administrative leadership to the ministry and is necessary to implement a stewardship plan that will secure the ministry financially.
- Implement a marketing campaign. This will include the design of all marketing materials, including a website, and the cost for producing the materials. The purpose of the marketing campaign is to increase the visibility of the ministry, to raise awareness of the need and theology of implementing the Arts into worship and educate individuals and institutions of the services provided by RE. The marketing campaign is recognized as a critical component of the long-term financial sustainability of the ministry. The increased individual exposure to RE is expected to strengthen the financial stability of the ministry.
- Secure a more centrally located office space. This space will house the Executive Director, provide a professional meeting location for individuals interested in participating in and/or incorporating Arts into Christian worship, and will also serve as a storage location materials and supplies.

Timeline

The following timeline will be implemented upon the notification of the approval and receipt of funds:

One Month:

- Employ an Executive Director.
- Interview marketing companies.

Three Month:

- Secured a centrally located office space.
- Launch the website developed as a result of the marketing campaign.
- Print marketing materials.

Events Calendar

2005

September:

- Audition for Troupes
- Resident Troupes available for 2005-06 performance season.

October:

- Fall Arts Conference

2006

January:

- Full-scale theatrical production.

February:

- Theology and the Arts Institute

March:

- Workshop with area churches begins.

April:

- Annual Banquet designed to showcase the Arts and to give the Sacred Arts Awards.

June - August:

- Performance Arts Series

September:

- "Arts Journal" premieres.

Evaluation

- To evaluate the success of RE, the Executive Director will:
- Keep track of the number of participants and partnering agencies.
 - Continue to request participants to complete an evaluation form at the conclusion of each training course and compile the results for review by board and supporters.
 - Track the number of "hits" the website receives.
 - Capture when possible individuals that respond favorably as a result of receiving printed literature about RE.

Budget

RE Proposed Budget

Expenses	Cost
<i>Personnel Costs</i>	
Salaries - 1 PT Executive Director	20,000
Payroll Taxes	1,500
Total Personnel Costs	21,500
<i>Occupancy Expenses</i>	
Rent	6,000
Utilities	1,200
Telephone/DSL	1,200
Office Supplies	650
Postage	500
Copy Machine	500
Filing Cabinet	50
Total Occupancy Expenses	10,100
<i>Program Expenses</i>	
Training Events/Conferences	25,000
Productions	23,000
Visual Arts	5,000
Total Program Expenses	53,000
<i>Marketing Expenses</i>	
Web Site Construction and Hosting	5,000
Design and Initial Printing of Marketing Materials	15,000
Quarterly Newsletter	4,000
Annual Report	1,000
Total Marketing Expenses	25,000
<i>Fund-Raising Expenses</i>	
Annual Meeting	1,500
Grantwriting	1,000
Direct Mail (Prospecting)	3,000
Total Fund-Raising Expenses	5,500
<i>Other Expenses</i>	
Accounting Services	2,000
Legal	500
Total Other Expenses	2,500
TOTAL EXPENSES	117,600

Conclusion

God created us in his image so that we would carry forth his glory in the world. We were made to be persons refracting the light of God's glory into all of life. Revealing God's glory – His majesty, dominion and power – is the ultimate pleasure for our lives. As participants in arts worthy of Him, we bring to light His truth to this culture, bearing His image, refracting His truthful character. RE is about helping churches and ministries communicate the gospel in uncompromised and unforgettable ways. RE would like to ask you to partner with us in our work by investing financially in the ministry.

Attachment 1 - 501(c)(3)IRS Determination Letter

Attachment 2 - Board of Directors

RE
Board of Directors
2005

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Others omitted.

Attachment 3 - End of the year financials.