

## **Barbara Nicolosi – Godspy Interview**

### **When was Act One founded?**

A group of us, all from different Christian backgrounds, started Act One in 1999—January 25, 1999 to be exact, the feast of the conversion of St. Paul.

### **That’s appropriate. And it’s been a tremendous success, hasn’t it.**

Yes. In the past five years we’ve grown our faculty from four professional screen and television writers to about 80 writers and producers. Over 200 aspiring writers have gone through our intensive four-week boot camp, a program that focuses on mastery of craft, entertainment, ethics and spirituality. It’s very competitive, and just getting into the program is a sign that you have talent and potential.

With the training and tools they develop in the program, and the follow-up mentoring and ongoing formation we provide, they’re equipped to compete in Hollywood. We help them get entry-level jobs in the business as well as writing assignments from our network of production companies. About half of the 200 people are now working in the industry on all different levels.

For writers who can’t attend the program, we run the APEX Script Critique Service, where the principles of the program can be applied to their work.

Our long-term strategy is to emphasize training people rather than producing projects. We’re trying to establish an alternative to the top secular film schools. Going to one of those schools is still a tremendous advantage, but their underlying worldview is radically nihilistic. As a Christian, you can learn the craft in those places but everything you believe will be ridiculed by your professors.

With Act One, they see that it’s possible to live a holy, Christian life and master the craft and create excellent content at the same time. And they’ve created friendships and Christian community that can sustain them when they enter the industry.

### **Has the Christian presence in the industry gotten stronger in recent years?**

No question about it. I see it everywhere I go. God is doing something. Christians are waking up and getting involved in the culture. Everybody realizes that the separation of faith and art that happened in the 20th century was a really bad idea.

There still aren't a lot of happy, committed Christians in Hollywood with real power, who can approve or “green light” a project. But there are a lot of smart, creative people working in the trenches, day-to-day, finding ways to keep damaging content off the screen. These small victories are known only to God.

### **How about from the industry side—is there increased interest in faith from secular people in Hollywood?**

After 9/11, I had calls off the hook from people saying “you religious people must have something to say about this moment, about what we should do now.” It was an opening where we could witness to the joy and hope that we have as Christians. Unfortunately, it was a missed opportunity in many ways. All I could think of were the tens of thousands of people in this industry who don’t yet know me, or my

friends, or Act One, who had no where to go with this question. That's why we've got such ambitious plans to expand and promote our work.

**Should orthodox Catholics and evangelical Protestants do more to engage serious artists in Hollywood? I'm talking about the ones who are sincerely interested in truth and beauty?**

Well, yes, artists are trying to make something beautiful, for the most part. As Pope John Paul II said in his 1999 *Letter to Artists*, creative people have a special relationship with God as beauty. In their search for beauty they instinctively move into solitude and try to connect with the transcendent that's at the source of their creativity. But by beauty they mean order, things that fit together well. They don't mean pretty. And that's a distinction that the church needs to hear from the artistic community. Beauty is not necessarily pretty. Too often I hear the church saying that great art is, say, the painter Thomas Kincaid, for example—this stuff that's pretty and clean and neat. But it's schlocky.

Mother Teresa was a profoundly beautiful person, but she was not attractive in a pretty sense. The crucifixion is ugly but it's also the source of beautiful, sacred art. Hollywood appreciates that beauty and truth are one, and we in the Church can learn that from them.

**You feature a quote from Flannery O'Connor on your home page. I'm reminded of what she said about how the anguish of "unbelieving searchers" helps believers purify their own faith.**

In his *Letter to Artists* the Pope says that secular artists depict for us with power what a world without God looks like, and we owe them gratitude for that. Take a movie like *Magnolia*, or *Eyes Wide Shut*. When the industry is making an indictment of a particular world, for people in the church to say, "That's bad," because we're not even supposed to look at that, makes no sense at all.

I would say the movie *Boogie Nights*, for instance, was an indictment of the porn world and what it does to people. Most thoughtful people would look at the world depicted in *Boogie Nights* and see that it's empty, shallow, that it's missing intimacy. It's so sad; it's tragic. No way do you come out of that movie wanting to be in that world. Yet I hear people in the church say "How dare you make a movie about the porn industry—do you know there's a scene where they're having sex?" OK, is it that we not allowed to make a movie about that world? Do we say to our Christian artists there are areas of human life that are off limits to you? Because that deserves to be slammed.

To tell you the truth, I will take an R-rated true movie over a G-rated shlock movie any day. Because with the R-rated film I'm being challenged and I'm growing. I say all the time that if we turned over Hollywood to the Christians tomorrow, we'd make worse movies than we're making now.

What Hollywood needs to learn is how to entertain without violating. This is an area where the Church can offer the industry some help. [\[The following is picked up from a Zena Schroeder interview\]](#). In the midst of these R-rated films you have things being portrayed to an audience that ends up violating them. So for example, you might have a film that is exploring truth in an artistically wonderful way, but then they have a love scene in there, that frankly is violating to the audience. Or you

have violence—we're not opposed to showing violence. But you have to show it in a different way, a way that doesn't end up wounding the audience. There are certain things we don't need to see, that we can still allude to for the purpose of story. When we show sin, we don't want it to be an occasion for sin for the audience. The fact is, in situations where there's a graphic love scene, a person can lust right there in the seat of the movie theatre. We don't want to do that.

**As a father, I get most upset about the movies that are mass marketed to young people. Kids don't want to see movies like *Eyes Wide Shut* or *Boogie Nights*. It's the schlock movies that peddle meanness, stupidity and materialism that are such a counter witness to the Gospel. Shouldn't we be focusing more on the money people, the marketers, rather than the artists?**

Just to keep it in perspective, entertainment for the masses has always been crass vulgar and low. Look at the circuses of the Caesars. The difference is that it's on a mass scale now. Britney Spears can be known by a billion people worldwide. I don't know what to do with that. I don't know that it's going away.

About the 9/11 attack, the artistic community was very aware that one of the reasons they hate us so much is because of us—Hollywood—what we've sold to the world, what people consider the media pollution coming at them.

There's no question money drives the worst of the media pollution. And there's a lot of denial about it, especially about the porn industry. I saw a segment on *Sixty Minutes* the other night about how huge the porn industry is, how it's gone mainstream, and how all of the major distributors—AOL-Time Warner, DirectTV—are making a tremendous amount of money off of this. The thing they didn't show is what I see on the streets of Hollywood: young people who are homeless and mentally ill and drug addicted because they got sucked in, used up and spun out by the porn business. They came to Hollywood beautiful young people and got into this meat market that's the porn industry, and they are just chewed up and spat out. Now Hollywood does a job on people, but nothing like what porn does, where they have been violated in every aspect of their being. That was missing on the 60 minutes segment. It was all "well this is mainstream now" and how could it be wrong, it's adult entertainment, people enjoy it. But I'm sorry. Any product that is built on the destruction and violation of young people—not even mentioning the terrible effects on the viewer—they didn't show that at all.

In this regard Catholics have so much to offer to Hollywood. If we can just get out of our ivory tower and translate the Theology of the Body into words and concepts that are intelligible and applicable for people of today....

**Homosexuality is such a big factor in Hollywood, and from there it influences all of society. Is there any hope of getting the the Church's teaching—The Theology of the Body—through to people there?**

It goes back to contraception. I know I sound like a wacko when I say that, but once you took the self-donation, the possibility of sacrifice out of sex, the door was opened. It became about your own self-fixation, what you're getting out of it, because it feels good—that was it. About gays, we cut these poor people off forty years ago when the church signed on to the sexual revolution. We said you could have sex with anyone you care about. And now these people are trapped.

The pastor at my RCIA program won't even speak to our young converts about contraception—he's embarrassed. So I speak to them about it. When they hear about the Theology of the Body they start crying because it's such a beautiful ideal—two emptinesses making a whole, two people pouring themselves out. In six years, I've never yet had a couple I've worked with—and I know when I start who's living with each other—I've never had one, within three months, who are still living with each other. It's because they want to be pure, they want to be heroes, they want to be more than they are. That's what this teaching is. It's peace for these couples.

I don't know what we're going to do to heal the homosexual issue. It's so far down the path.

**You really stress the importance of Christians working within the industry, and you've been very critical of independent productions that try to bypass the industry completely, as in the Therese movie that's coming out.**

I meet people every day who are lining up, they've found foreign investors, and they're going to go off on their own and make a movie, and so on. It's a bad strategy; it's a bad business plan.

First of all, in Hollywood you have to be able to support ten movies to begin to make a profit because that's what it takes. You've got to figure that four projects will fail for every one that succeeds. So in terms of a business plan, it's a bad idea.

Second, it's also bad in terms of evangelization. The model of a group of Christians working by themselves in a little group, pumping out a movie, and then standing by waiting for the world to come to Jesus... it's doesn't happen that way.

The problem with working only with people who agree with you 100% is thinking that what God wants is what ends up on the screen. It's not. It's the journey of the work itself, the opportunity to share our life, and what we know, with the creative people in the business.

That's my argument for why Christians need to come to Hollywood, and why, as a perfect example, the new "Therese" movie is not a good idea.

There you have thirty people or fifty people working together to make that movie. These are people who, if they were working in Hollywood, would have met 5,000 people. And they could have witnessed to them, and they could have been their friends now, and been part of their network.

Instead, we—I'm talking about orthodox Christians— stay over here where it's safe, because we don't want to be polluted by *them*. And the funny thing is that in the end—the movie's crap. I'm sorry. I read the Therese script twice—I haven't seen the final result. But it's a bad movie.

This is the major problem Act One is addressing—the overall dreadful dramatic writing that we've seen coming in to the industry from godly people.

Beauty is magnitude of truth—see Aristotle—plus mastery of craft, where the elements are all in harmony. The industry is very good at the second thing. A good example is a movie like *American Beauty*—beautifully crafted, beautifully produced, beautifully acted, beautifully written, but fundamentally a lie. So therefore it's ugly

by our standards. On the other side are Christian projects like *Therese*—beautiful message, profound truth, all the right motives—badly crafted, ugly. We have to have the courage to say that you have to have mastery of craft along with a magnitude of truth.

**The growing Christian presence in the industry—where is it coming from? Are these people who have always been there and now they’re “coming out”? Are they new arrivals? Or are they converts?**

All three.

There are Christians I know like Dean Batali, a writer for “That 70s Show,” who came to Hollywood because he wanted to see people like the ones he grew up with, who had God in their lives, struggling with their day-to-day problems, up on the screen, on prime-time. That was his vision.

Then there are other people who arrive in Hollywood and quickly become aware that it’s a thoroughly secular environment in which many of the operative values -- power, celebrity, Mammon -- are completely antithetical to the Gospel. And they decide to go in the closet—“I never bring up my faith, no one knows I’m a Christian, and that’s fine.”

Then you have the other extreme, the ones who end up getting thrown out of the business because they’re *too much* in people’s faces. And they’re bitter—“ I got fired because I was a Christian.” No, you got fired because you were obnoxious. I know a few people like that.

The most powerful people are the converts. For example, John Tinker, Grant Tinker’s son. He recommitted to faith a couple of years ago. And Barbara Hall, who came in to the Church last year. She had twenty-five years in television. She worked on *Moonlighting*, *I’ll Fly Away*, *Chicago Hope*, and others. She’s a player. These people have power that takes twenty years to accumulate, so it’s neat when God brings them over.

**Barbara Hall created the new TV series, *Joan of Arcadia*, right? What’s the story behind that?**

After she converted, Barbara said to me “I want to make a show for God.” That’s what you can do when you’re an executive producer in television. You have the clout to do things for God. So she created *Joan of Arcadia*, about a girl who speaks to God. In describing the show, Barbara says that God is speaking all the time to everyone, it’s just that we’re watching Joan now because she happens to suddenly be listening.

The only reason CBS green-lighted that series is because it’s Barbara Hall. They know she’s one of them. Her conversion is below the radar. They trust Barbara because they’ve known her for twenty-five years, and she was with them in saying that Christianity is the problem. Now she’s on the other side, but they know she can deliver, and she won her time slot every week for five weeks running.

When I first started teaching Barbara Hall, the very first night we met— I met with her over seven months, three hours a week, reading the catechism—

the first night we did the beatitudes as an introduction. I'm going through them all, explaining them, and we get to the sixth beatitude and she stops me and says "Why don't you people say this stuff? I've never heard this before."

You know what Barbara said to me at our first meeting? In 25 years, I never met a Christian. Hollywood was her higher power. Her friends, her associates, everyone in television, it was a secular world. The only Christians she was aware of was the guy with the bible or the woman with the big hair you saw on TV while flipping channels. That's all they knew. For Barbara to say "why don't you people talk about the beatitudes," for heavens sake. That's not something clever or tricky. It goes to show that as Christians we're not reaching these people.

One of the reasons Barbara Hall became a Catholic, she said to me, was: "I just got exhausted with unbelief. I just couldn't keep it up anymore." She's typical of the creative community that has worn itself out since the sexual revolution, throwing itself around, doing anything it wanted, absolute license and power. And they're exhausted. So they come to faith with a deep understanding of sin.

**Barbara wrote an article for your newsletter called "The Writer and Mercy." Isn't it true that many unbelievers, and fallen away Catholics and Christians as well, have an instinct for mercy, an empathy for the broken and outcast, that is implicitly Christian?**

First, in terms of artistry, I think the Catholics, even the ones who are lapsed, have a natural sense of allegory and metaphor that comes from several thousand years of ingrained liturgy. The liturgy is real, but it's also rich in symbols. So you have the people who are fallen away—I'm thinking of a writer right now on a show who's an angry, angry ex-Catholic. He's done so much harm. But he has an instinctive sense of symbolism that gives his visual writing power. I've said to him several times, "the reason you're really good is because you were Catholic" and when we're alone he'll acknowledge it. I think the liturgical tradition is key to that.

As for mercy, I think in Barbara Hall's case, one of the reasons she emphasizes it is because she is very aware that she has been the recipient of God's special mercy. She had a long journey to faith. She spent a lot of time attacking Christianity very articulately, and making it popular to think that the Church was an instrument of evil in the world. So she's like St. Paul—"I am the worst of the apostles, I persecuted the Church." For that reason, Barbara is fascinated with God's mercy. But she also knows that it gives your writing power to constantly remember that your characters are just one step further down the road than you. It's "there for the grace of God go I." If you have that, it makes your writing fascinating for people.

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**Do you think Christians who haven't experienced this sort of darkness lack a sense of awe about god's mercy? I remember Fr. Benedict Groeschel saying something about this in [     ].**

I think that, unfortunately, a lot of orthodox Catholics and Christians are either sitting in the cave hunkered down, or they're like Jonah sitting under a Gourd plant waiting for God to vent his wrath on the world—on the ungodly—and their going to be disappointed if he doesn't. I don't see these people having sorrow for sin; I see them having indignation towards sin. And to me, that's an important difference. Sorrow for sin is "I am a part of this." Indignation for sin is "you are the ones messing up the world."

**In a column you wrote about Mel Gibson's movie, you talked a lot about how sorrowful it made you feel.**

*When I watched The Passion of Christ—and this is why I think this movie will be a moment of grace for the Church—you walk away from the movie saying: "I... am... such... a wimp. I am such a non-hero. I am so far from what I was created to be. I'm sorry Jesus." It's a very personal thing. That's why all the charges of anti-semitism are so ridiculous. Because you don't sit there watching that movie and at the end say: Those damned Jews. You don't. You sit there saying, "Oh, I am so sorry." It's a very personal kind of thing. It's compunction for your own falling short.*

*I mean, I'm an orthodox Catholic. I haven't missed mass my whole life. I go to confession. I do all this stuff. But I'm a schlep and a wimp and I am not in any sense the hero that I should be. That's how The Passion impacted me. I'm hoping it's going to shake up people and remind us: God didn't die because of them. That's what it sounds like sometimes, that we're in "the club." You know, there's sinners, and then there's SINNERS. But let's face it, the sin that's so rampant around us is very much tied to ourselves, and our own failures.*

*What about Mel Gibson? There's an interesting turnaround.*

*Mel in the past was typical of Catholics in the industry who don't let their faith affect their creative choices. They don't make the connection. Actors are particularly known for this, because for them the main thing is to work. They really want to be acting.*

So if someone offers them a job, they will take it. I've had conversations with my Christian actor friends, and they'll say, "Well, yeah I'm playing an abortionist, or I'm playing a murderer, or whatever, but if I don't do it, someone else will. Maybe I can bring some three-dimensional humanity to it." I think Mel's made 25 or 30 years of creative choices like this, and in his mind if he's fleshing out a real human being, whether they're a sinner or not, the idea is "Am I being honest in fleshing out the human being?" That's where the morality is—we're not allowed to let a bad guy be portrayed as a good guy.

What I hear people in the church saying is, "Well, she played that part!" So? Do you not believe there are people in the world like that character? Do you not believe there are, say, women out there who are prostitutes? Is it that you don't want any movie to have a prostitute in it? Is that what it is? Or they are supposed to be played how? It doesn't make any sense at all.

Look at the Bible.

Exactly. In that sense, I can't really blame them for their choices.

Now Mel's gone beyond that?

In the last decade Mel has become an unbelievably powerful and creative force. He can greenlight a project, he can open a movie, in a way that only about ten people in all of Hollywood can. Now he's become aware of that power on a whole other level, and thank God, he's saying, "What am I doing with it?"

When he has creative control he makes movies that in some sense are responsible... Braveheart, for instance. For many people, that movie was a moment of grace, a really powerful movie about heroism. It's not my style but I have to acknowledge that there are many good things about the film... great things even. Signs also, and now The Passion. In some ways it's a moment of grace for the church that we do not deserve.

When I was watching The Passion I thought, in this particular moment, where we're coming out of the priest sex scandal and all the rest, the Church in a slumber—we've negotiated terms with the world in every quadrant, we've just settled in. We're not leaven in the dough, we are the dough. We're mostly indistinguishable from "the world" in so many places, in every profession. All of a sudden this movie comes out. It's going to rank with some of the greatest works of devout art that the Church has ever produced. I have absolutely no problem saying that. It's right up there with the other masters of their art forms. We don't deserve this film.

It was great to read in The New Yorker article that 350 Jesuits at Loyola Marymount gave the movie a standing ovation...

Yes, the Jesuits applauded! And so many people were saying to me "well, he's only been showing the movie to conservative Catholics." Excuse me, 350 Jesuits at Loyola applauded...

What is it about this movie that's so good?

I think the best things are the scenes that are not in the Bible. I would say that's true about most great sacred art. We're most moved by what the artist fills in from their imagination, and they show us something that might have happened that is fully in the spirit of the story.

One of the scenes that stayed with me the most is after the scourging of Jesus. Jesus is taken away from the courtyard, which was just mobbed with people and now it's empty. Mary, his mother, who had been following him, comes in, and she's there with John and Magdalene. There are puddles of blood—Jesus's blood— all around them, in the place where he was chained up. Mary throws herself on the ground, takes her veil, and she starts sopping up the blood of her son. And you know she knows what this is. It's both a

Marian moment, and it's a profoundly eucharistic moment. Now, did it happen? Who knows? Probably not. But the artist's imagination is able to make you stop and realize—this is not just any blood. It's so powerful!

Those moments are going to enter into people's consciousness beyond just the literal depiction of the story. We needed something more right now. We need the artist's imagination to prod us beyond the details of the story that we've heard a million times. And that's what this movie is.

Do you think Hollywood be surprised at how well *The Passion of Christ* does at the box office? Are they aware of this Great Awakening out there?

Yes, they are absolutely are. It's not just that they're conscious of it; they're part of it. For instance, Artists & Entertainment just opened up a branch to make movies for Christian moviegoers. Fox has started a branch to develop Christian story lines.

My friend's doing a show now for Showtime. His partners are Patrick Stewart and Morgan Freeman and it's about *Simple City*, a project in Washington DC. It's about these five black guys in prison who had a conversion to Christ, and they go back home and reform a whole community. It's a true story. Showtime bought the pitch because it's really well done. It's an edgy show, and it's got at least two stars attached who are prominent Christians. This is going to be a fun line-up on Showtime. You have *Queer as Folk* followed by *Simple City*. But isn't that where we're headed? It's the Gospel and sin, right up against each other. You have to choose a side.

The sacred and the profane—that's a very Catholic idea. But today it seems that many orthodox Catholics don't want to be soiled by the profane. You find the tendency to say "don't come into the Church until you're already cleaned up." It's like having to get sober before attending an AA meeting. Do you agree?

We have an elitist strain in us because we have a more sophisticated faith. For example, when I spoke to the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, my sense of the people there listening to me was: "hmmm, this is very interesting, we'll hear more from you on this some other time." Just like the Athenians to St. Paul. I must have had twenty people tell me "Well, I never watch television, it's all garbage." Someone actually said to me, "Well, if the masses like it there must be something wrong with it." I said to him, you know Father, sometime things are popular because they're great, like soap, or the wheel. So please don't say to me, "I like the fine arts." The fact is film is a merging of the four classical art forms, which is why it's so powerful. It has all the power of painting, of music, of literature, and performance, all of which have captivated people for ten thousand years. Put them together, and that's cinema. To disdain it because it's lowly—well, I don't have time for people who say that. Evangelicals get this. They get that this is a powerful art form.

How has the Catholic-Protestant divide played itself out within *Act One* ?

Act One is a fully interdenominational effort. But that's mostly because a couple of us Catholics have stubbornly stayed at the table, and dragged other Catholics with us. That presence is helping to heal the divide.

We have a sign in our office that says: "The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing," and the main thing is the 98% that we have in common. What we have in common is that my worldview is centered on Jesus, my life is about pleasing him. Once you have that, the other stuff—how I pray, the community, the style of worship—we don't stress it because it tends to separate us. We got this from Pope John XXIII—in essentials unity, in the rest, diversity, in all things charity.

I'll tell you, if God wants to fix the Reformation, Hollywood's a great place for it to happen, because then it would go out on all the screens across the world. I've had five kids initiated into the Catholic Church because Act One is an interdenominational program, because it allows us to expose the rest of the Christian community to, for instance, the Theology of the Body, and how it applies to entertainment. Or to the mystics, someone like Thomas Merton.

There was recently a very successful young director—he's going to be huge. He's reading Chesterton on the sly because his wife is an elder at a Presbyterian Church. He says to me, "I'm reading this book *Orthodoxy*—but I can't talk to you about it!—not yet! And I'm like, any time you're ready!

Catholicism is such a more articulate religion than evangelicalism is. We're fully integrated. We can speak about psychology and mysticism without any problems, but this is a problem for evangelicalism. But the idea is for Catholics to stay at the table. Don't go away and form a colony.

I find that the organized Catholics in Hollywood—they don't think there's a problem. They tend to only be interested in social justice, they tend to be Liberal Democrats, and they tend to dissent from everything the Church teaches. I love all these people. But they don't think there's a problem. Or if they do think there's a problem, it's that you still can't show gay marriage on television. On the evangelical side, you don't have to deal with that.

My Catholics tend to be extremely reticent about ever mentioning the fact that they're Christian. The specifically Catholic presence in the industry is just sad. It's very sad. If I had waited for that to develop I would never have started Act One. It was only because Evangelicals said to me: "here are offices, here is free rent, here's a staff, do your thing," that I was able to get started. On the Catholic side, it's just not the same. But it's worked out. It wasn't the way I had planned to go, but it's been good. We're are fully in a Taize model [A Catholic/ecumenical spiritual community].

What advice do you give to young Christians about evangelizing the industry?

There so much that needs to be done; it can be an overwhelming. I say this to my

Christian artists who have a desire to evangelize, to do good. I tell them: your task is a humble one—it's to break up the ground. In many cases, that's it. The ground has gotten hard as a rock, and you're here to make their hearts fleshy.

You don't have to renounce what you've been called to do as an artist, and go out and become a preacher, or an apostle, or a baptizer. God will complete your work by sending these other people. You just keep doing your work, breaking up hard hearts, and that's enough. The Church should let artists do that. We just need to be in the middle of this community, being who we are, being open about our faith.

When do you start speaking to people about Jesus, when you know he's the answer they need? I'm talking about those situations where there's nothing else for them, they've done it all, and they're either going to kill themselves or find Jesus? The answer is that I have to still wait for them to ask me. I've found that's much more powerful. But you pray for them; you make sacrifices; you stand back and you hope that they're going to eventually say "I just don't know what to do, what would you do if you were me?"

What's Act One's time frame?

In terms of Act One's mission, it's very hard to do what we've been talking about doing. It's going to take 25 years to get artists who have their theological act together and who also have mastered the craft.

We're addressing the four main problems we see in Christian writers starting out in the entertainment industry: a lack of artistry and a failure to understand the real power of the medium; a lack of respect for the industry and its professional standards; the absence of a network of like-minded professionals to form, mentor and hire Christians; and the lack of a specific Christian spirituality and ethics to address the particular challenges of the artist's vocation.

Mastery of the craft takes two to three decades. Let's face it. We're way behind. You're not going to see the results, but your kids will see some, and your grandkids will see it. But there's a new renaissance happening all around us. God is calling his people back into the arts, and that's good.