Churches ad hoc
A Divine Comedy

Herman Krieger

With a Foreword by Kern R. Trembath
Churches ad hoc

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Most if not all readers will be amused by what lies inside this volume. Most will be, but for a wider variety of reasons than many books enjoy. And if you are among the latter, "amuse" will turn out to be too weak a word. "Beguile" will be more likely.

The first time you read this book, you will know that it is one of those that you will return to again and again in the future. Is it a book of photography? -- of art more generally? -- of puns? -- of religious architecture? -- of questionable, comic, and at times tragic religious architecture? The answer, of course, is "yes." Hence its beguiling nature and consequent beckoning to regular revisitation.

Herman Krieger describes himself as a non-
practicing Jew who has not been to synagogue since he was 12. Would that all religious education "took" as well as his! The most obvious and, in many ways, most delightful interaction that he will quicken in you is that between caption and photo. And most of the captions will, in turn, be drawn either directly or indirectly from Jewish and Christian scriptures. Herman thus nicely illustrates the ancient insight, voiced by Ignatius Loyola but universally true, "give me a child until he is six and he will be a Catholic forever." Religious truths, often embodied in text but always pointing beyond the text to experience itself, rarely go away for good. At worst, they hibernate. In the gentle humor that is the conversation between caption and photo, this book might well awaken hibernating truths in you as well. Another beguiling level of meaning, therefore: not, "Will this re-awakening happen?" but rather, "Did Herman intend it?"

The puns in this book, that is, the multi-layered conversations between image and caption, are witty. I mean this in the widest possible sense,
what the Oxford English Dictionary laboriously reminds us is "that quality of speech or writing which consists in the apt association of thought and expression, calculated to surprise and delight by its unexpectedness; the utterance of brilliant or sparkling things in an amusing way." *Wit* is thus the conjunction of the author's insight and foresight that opts to use humor as the conduit to the receiver's mind. How could anything other than *wit* better account for the effects of "The High and the Lofty," "Littergy," and the adjacent, "The Pope's Answer to Luther," and the "Sign of the Crossing?" These are not simply pictures with headings; indeed, they are sermons whose spiritual precision is the more appropriated (and enjoyed) the more that one patiently awaits it. Priests at Notre Dame have been known to be fired for exceeding 10-12 minutes per sermon. It was not until well after 10 minutes, though, that I finally got the point of the sermon titled "Auto da Fe" (hint: look carefully at the car model and then at the bumper sticker). Jesus could not have been more concise.
What this volume ultimately is, then, is a book about what the catholic tradition terms "sacramentality," the insight that God's presence is mediated by any and all parts of creation, and hence that God is permanently as close, or as far away, as the individual wishes God to be. It is not that God is ever far away, though. All that the individual can accomplish is to recognize, or resist, that permanent adjacency. More than this is not given to us to do. Herman's volume shows us how perilously close that divine adjacency is on a daily basis. Easy to overlook, isn't it? Hence, all the more delightful to acquire.

A final illustration of this that I hope you will not resent. While embarking from vastly different shores, Herman and I share much of our respective journeys. We are both graduates of the University of California at Berkeley. We are both avid bicyclists, a habit nurtured at that same University. Computers are the primary "how" by which we serve our professions and our constituencies. We are both drawn to the subtle, the common, and the
humorous as the means by which religion is seen as universally evident. I say this not to elevate myself to his level of insight, attentiveness, or artistry, but instead simply to add one closing picture to this volume. Thank you, Herman, for including me in it. Kern R. Trembath, Assistant Chairman
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The University of Notre Dame

PREFACE

The genesis of *Churches ad hoc* was the photograph I made of a cross that seemed to rise up out of a tree. The cross, located in a park overlooking Eugene, Oregon, created a controversy regarding the separation of church and state. Proponents of the cross called it a war memorial. Others saw it as a religious symbol. I titled the photograph "Propagation on the Mount". Thus began the series of captioned photographs
with a cross as the unifying element. The series was first exhibited at the PhotoZone Gallery in Eugene.

*Churches ad hoc* was introduced on the Internet in 1996. Since then, references to it have appeared in a large number of Christian, as well as atheist, web sites. Each group seems to find a reflection of their own views in the captioned photographs. Excerpts from the series have appeared in places as diverse as the Internet edition of *The New York Times*, a Methodist church calendar, a rock band cassette cover, the religion pages of the Stockholm *Svenska Dagbladet* newspaper, and a Cornell Law School poster for a national conference on *The Consitution and Religion: Theory and Practice*.

I take photographs to amuse myself as well as the occasional spectator. Exhibiting photographs for mutual pleasure is similar to a comedian telling jokes to an appreciative audience. But comedy is more serious than photography.
Viewers who see more in my photographs than I do probably have better vision, and I welcome their compliments. Those who see less than I do may be right, and I remain partially open to their criticism.
Propagation on the Mount
Society of Feathered Friends
Far Eastern Orthodox
For Whom the Bells Toll
I will never forget you. 
See, upon the palms of my hands I 
have written your name; 
Isaiah 49:15-16

Dedicated to the Unborn

Fetal Position
Central United Methodist Church

Jazz Sunday May 28
“Blues Street Band”
Breakfast 8 AM Worship 10:30 AM

When the Saints Come Marching In
Church of the Rising Son
Defender of the Faith
Waiting for Godot
Holy Roller
Auto da Fe
ACTORS’ GUILD
AND
CHURCH OFFICE

1 EAST 29th ST.

Getting Their Acts Together
Christopher Wren House
Sermon on the Mount
Half-creed
Library of Congregation
Mass Transportation
CryptoCoptic
CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

WELCOME

WORSHIP SERVICE
SUNDAY 900-AM
SATURDAY 500 PM
COUNTRY WESTERN-SERVICE.

Ro-Deo
Pima St. Baptist Church

Keyboard Player Needed, Contemporary Worship 795-7646

Must be PC and Know Thy Apples
Road to Repentance
CHRISTIAN DEAF CHURCH

Waiting for a Sign
ST. MARY’S IN THE MOUNTAINS:
THE CRADLE OF CATHOLICISM IN WESTERN NEVADA


ERECTED IN 1991 BY THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER OF ALHAMBRA

It Started with 30 Pieces of Silver
Sanctuary
T.G.I.F.
In ADT We Trust
Many are Called, Few are Dialed
Requiem
MISSION APOSTOLICA
DE LA FE
EN
CRISTO JESUS

SERVICIOS

MARTES 7:00 PM
JUEVES 7:00 PM

350-857

Latino Rites
Atlas Shrugged
And Nobody Stopped to Pray
Toot for Tet
Plenty of Gas and Hot Air
Forgive Us Our Trespasses
What you mean, Paleface?
For Whom the Bell Tolls
Unisextarian
Young Zion
Commercial Break
Abandon Windows All Ye Who Enter Here
Flights of Fancy

Moments of Miracles
The Power and the Glory
Key to the Kingdom