Rouen: Cathedral Stained Glass And Ste. Jeanne-D'Arc

Michael Watt Cothren
Swarthmore College, mcothre1@swarthmore.edu

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Child, who presumably also appeared on the predecessors to this portal, are represented as the fulfillment of prophecy at the summit of the Tree of Jesse. The style of the sculptures shows the influence of Italian Renaissance motifs: allegorical figures join Old Testament prophets and the costumes are rich in Classical allusions.

The arrangements of the façade may have been motivated by liturgical considerations, as in English screen façades. There is documentary evidence that from early times the gallery located over the central portal was used for choristers in the liturgy of Ascension Day. This 'singing gallery' survived the 16th-century building campaign, when the central portal received its elaborate sculptural decoration.

The transept portals were both planned and executed under Archbishop Guillaume de Flavacourt (1276–1306). The north transept Porte des Libraires, which is the earlier, is located in a courtyard that joined the cathedral to the archbishop's palace. An elaborate, many-figured sculptural programme places the Virgin, who appeared on the trumeau, at the centre of the Last Judgement. On the interior wall her parents and the parents of John the Baptist refer to her miraculous birth, while on the exterior she is attended by female saints; above, angels escort an unusually large number of Blessed to the Throne of Mercy. In its infusion of Marian themes into Last Judgement iconography the Porte des Libraires breaks the traditions of High Gothic portal schemes, where the two cycles are usually kept separate. Its programme appears to reflect Rouen's enthusiastic endorsement of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and also to express the contemporary tendency to emphasize the role of intercessors in salvation.

The south transept portal, the Porte de la Calende, is equally unusual in the number of figures that populate the interior and exterior of the terminal wall. On the lowest zone the Old Testament stories of Joseph, Job and Judith prefur the Sacrifice of Christ that unfolds in the Passion cycle on the tympanum (for illustration see TYPANUM). Standing figures of Christ and the Apostles on the interior, and of saints and martyrs on the exterior, complete the programme which, like the north transept portal, stresses affective rather than didactic aspects of traditional iconography.

The style of the transept sculptures appears to owe much to contemporary developments in Parisian sculpture and manuscript illumination, but it is probable that many of the sculptors themselves were drawn from Normandy. Their influence can be felt in Norman sculptural ensembles and individual cult statues throughout the succeeding decades in such places as Notre-Dame, Mantes, and the abbeys of Jumièges and Fécamp.

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For further bibliography see §(i) above.

DOROTHY GILLERMAN
2. STE JEANNE-D'ARC. Consecrated in 1979, this Post-modern church built by Louis Arretche on the Place du Vieux-Marché to mark the spot where Joan of Arc was burnt to death, is a showcase of 16th-century French glass painting. Installed along the east wall of this imposing modern space are 13 windows from the choir of St Vincent, destroyed by bombing in 1944. Dating from the 1520s, the iconographic programme of these multiple-light windows focuses on the Life of Christ; the life, lineage and triumph of the Virgin; and local saints. According to Lafond and Perrot, ten of the windows were executed by three or more local artists, probably working in a large workshop. The remaining three windows (the Triumph of the Virgin, Corporal Works of Mercy and Life of John the Baptist), painted by Jean and Engrand Le Prince, are among the greatest examples of French Renaissance glass painting. Although questions have been raised concerning the harmony or discord created by the windows and their painting, the small scale of St Maclou is concealed by the monumentality of its proportion and design. The plan consists of a three-bay nave with a non-projecting transept, two straight choir bays and an ambulatory with four radiating chapels. The axial pier of the choir hemicycle, the absence of an axial chapel and the polygonal porch of the west façade are new features in Norman Gothic architecture. The old-fashioned three-storey elevation is given new vitality by continuous, flat-nosed fillet mouldings rising from clusters of tall, elegant fillet bases. On the exterior, the diagonal-faced buttresses and polygonal façade (see fig. 6) create diagonal recessions culminating in the lantern tower, which forms the focus of both the exterior massing and the interior space. The fully developed transept façades of rose windows, galleries and gables and the double tier of flying buttresses belie the church’s small scale.

The style of the St Maclou master differs strongly from the contemporary Flamboyant architecture of the cathedral and St Ouen Abbey. While consciously imitating the Rayonnant parts of Rouen Cathedral in the design of the elevation, north transept façade, porch and lantern tower, he carefully translated them into his own personal vocabulary of forms: the flat-nosed fillet mouldings, fluid tracer patterns and an insistence on diagonality in buttress design, characteristics that developed in the Norman Vexin in churches such as Notre-Dame, Vernon, and Notre-Dame, Le Grand Andely. This new vocabulary had an immediate impact on the architecture of Rouen and Normandy and continued to appear in buildings until the early 16th century.

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MICHAEL W. CO THEREN

3. ST MACLOU. The church, which was first recorded in the 10th century, was rebuilt after the early 13th-century fire, and finally included within the city walls in 1253. In 1432 Archbishop Hugues d'Orgues issued an indulgence for the repair and rebuilding of the church. The present Flamboyant structure, built of limestone and constructed almost entirely at the expense of the middle-class merchant families living in the parish, was dedicated on 25 June 1521 by Archbishop Georges II d'Amboise. The wooden spire of the lantern tower, 83.85 m high, was built in 1517 by Martin Desperrois (fl 1510-18); it was destroyed by storms in the 18th century and replaced by the present stone spire in 1869. The choir (reopened in 1981) and the lantern tower suffered considerable damage in 1944.

Although numerous master masons are associated with the building works, the homogeneous style suggests that they adhered to original designs of the 1430s. These are traditionally attributed to the otherwise unknown Pierre Robin, who was paid in 1436-7 for drawings of the church. The small size of St Maclou is concealed by the monumentality of its proportion and design. The plan consists

6. Rouen, St Maclou, west façade, 1432-1521