

Newsletter from  
CHARTRES, SANCTUAIRE DU MONDE

*Association for the preservation of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Chartres*



February 2010

## A word from the president

Dear friends of Chartres Cathedral,  
Dear donors and future donors

*"The only important thing is to strive towards the goal to win the prize."*

Saint Paul, [Lettre aux Philippiens](#), chap. 3, verset 13

Only perseverance will achieve results and enable us to continue in our ongoing efforts to help conserve and restore the stained-glass windows in Chartres Cathedral.

The regained splendour and rediscovery of the stained-glass windows, those images, our humanity, recounting both great mysteries and daily life, are the reward for your generous and loyal gestures.

Therefore, let us adopt a sincerely competitive spirit to become the "athletes of our heritage", indefatigable and passionate, with the same tireless love of performance that drove the master craftsmen and pieceworkers of the Middle Ages, facing magnificent but hard labour.

Thank you for supporting, again this year, another phase of restoration work, together and with renewed enthusiasm!

Servane de Layre-Mathéus

Chartres © Rodolphe Laurent



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### And also...

New: the Chartres, sanctuaire du Monde Endowment Fund. A new way of receiving donations, legacies and life insurance payments.

**For full details go to [www.chartres-csm.org](http://www.chartres-csm.org)**

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Detail from the Noah stained-glass window, Noah's Arc, 13th century © Office of the Cathedral Rector

# Ten artists commit to helping the restoration of the cathedral

**Francisco Araya / Laurent Baude / Véronique Bigo / Pierre Buraglio  
Béatrice Casadesus / Hortense Damiron / Philippe Demontaut  
Najia Mehadji / Régis Perray / Nicolas Simarik**



Christ en volute, Najia Mehadji



Chartres/Alexandra 1, Philippe Demontaut

In 2009, ten artists created works inspired by Chartres Cathedral. Exhibited from 6 November to 19 December 2009 in St Andrew's Collegiate Church, these works are to be sold to raise funds for the restoration of the Jesse stained-glass window.

Chartres Cathedral: artistic and cultural reference point for some, discovery and creative starting point for others, with every artist exploring his or her own avenue! Photographers, plastic artists, sculptors, painters: all use an extremely rich range of artistic techniques to create a host of different viewpoints of Chartres Cathedral. Their works are testament to the modernity of this monument, a source of inspiration still today.



Aile, Véronique Bigo

"My wings for Chartres Cathedral hail the angels, archangels and cherubs that populate the sacred world of religion. The vaults of the cathedral, which their medieval builders conceived as the representation in stone of the elevation of man towards the divine, inspire in these wings the fervour to reach something greater, the sublime nature of artistic and spiritual endeavour, which carry on their eternal dialogue in this place." Véronique Bigo, catalogue for the Artists' Viewpoints for Chartres Cathedral exhibition in 2009.

## Chartres, sanctuaire du Monde gift shop

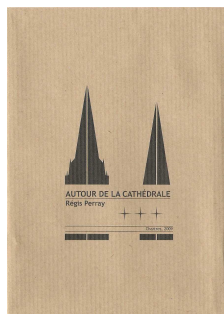
Profits go towards the restoration of the Jesse window

Order form enclosed. Purchase qualifies for a tax receipt.



See each artist's initiative in the **catalogue** published for the exhibition "Artists' Viewpoints for Chartres Cathedral".

**€10 (plus postage and packing)**



**A series of postcards** by Régis Perray "Around the cathedral" - images and memories of the cathedral as a place of everyday life and living  
**€10 (plus postage and packing)**



**A bag** made of untreated natural cotton and printed with ecological inks  
**€6 (plus postage and packing)**



**A series of 3 fridge magnets** created by young graphic artists  
**€5 for the 3 (plus postage and packing)**



If you would like to see the works that are still available for sale in 2010, go to the website [www.chartres-csm.org](http://www.chartres-csm.org). Option to buy the works with payment spread over 3 years.

# A look back at the splendours revealed in 2009 thanks to your generosity

Throughout last year, several restoration projects were completed, enabling us gradually to see the cathedral through new eyes



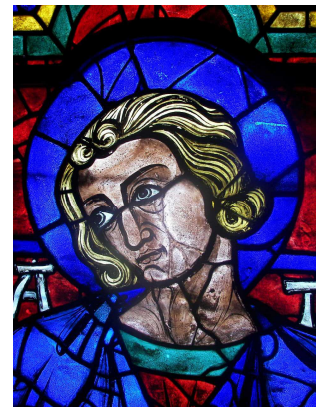
Virgin with Child, central lancet window of the south portal, details before and after restoration © Office of the Cathedral Rector



On 12 May 2009, the **restoration of the interior decoration of the Chapel of the Apostles** (axial chapel of the ambulatory) was unveiled. This project, together with that in the Chapel of Martyrs, began the phase of clearing work on the cathedral's original decoration, 80% of which survives all over the monument.



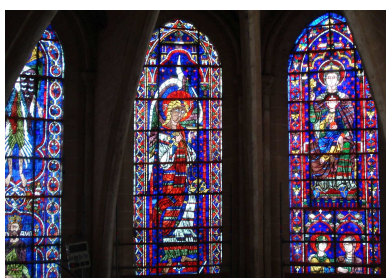
Over the summer, the **south portal's large rose window and 5 lancet windows** were revealed by restoration work sponsored by the American Friends of Chartres and Crédit Agricole Val de France.



Isaiah and Matthew, lancet window in the south portal, details before and after restoration © Office of the Cathedral Rector

Lastly, in the upper choir, the **Saint Martin double window and Count Thibaud rose window** were placed back in position in the autumn. With the scaffolding in the choir having been dismantled last November, you can now admire them in all their glory. You can also now see the original 13th-century plasterwork (a thin layer of plaster coloured by sand from the Perche) in the upper choir, which has been restored to its original light colour.

**Restoration projects are planned to continue phase by phase until 2014 in a Cathedral Plan presented to Chartres by the Architecture and Heritage Director in July 2009.**



## 2009 in figures

collected for the restoration of the Cathedral generous gestures with an average donation of **\$15,000** presented by Monika Riely, president of the American Friends of Chartres, collected thanks to the generosity of American donors **3,000 visitors** to the "Artists' Viewpoints for Chartres Cathedral" exhibition featuring works by 10 artists committed to helping the restoration work **30 school groups totalling 650 pupils** from infant and junior schools in Chartres and the surrounding area, raising awareness of the conservation work in Chartres Cathedral **12 works sold** to raise funds for the restoration of the 12th-century Tree of Jesse window

Windows in the upper choir, from the choir scaffolding, details after restoration © Alice Gamblin

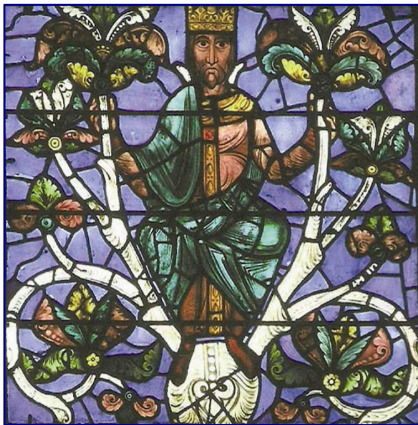
## Tomorrow's challenge: the restoration of the Romanesque stained-glass windows in the royal portal, or the conservation of the "Chartres Blues".

This year we are calling upon your hard work and your generosity for the restoration of the Tree of Jesse window. The preliminary study carried out by the Historical Monuments Department estimates the cost of the work required to restore and protect the window at €125,000 plus VAT. The association would like, with your help, to raise half of the net amount required, in other words €62,500.



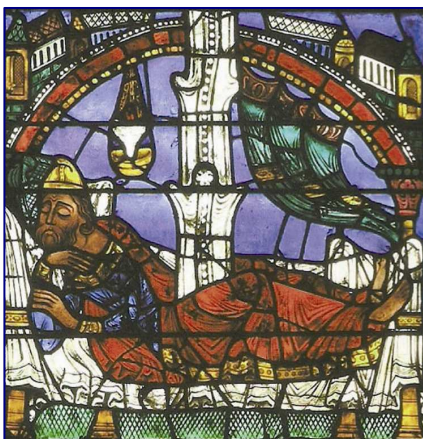
Immediately on entering the cathedral through the Royal Portal, one has to turn round to admire the three large Romanesque windows and the rose window. This set of windows, created in the second half of the 12th century, is unique. Presenting the Tree of Jesse on the right, the Life of Christ in the middle and the story of the Passion and the Resurrection on the left, it was saved from the fire of 1194 by the stone arching in the narthex, which served as a fire break. Together with "Our Lady of the Beautiful Window", these windows are the oldest in the cathedral.

The windows are magnificent at any time of day, but it is above all at sunset that one can admire the progression of colours, from the blue of the Tree of Jesse to the golds of the Window of the Passion and the Resurrection.



Observing the whole of this triptych, one notices that although the saddle bars (the flat iron bars that support the glass pieces containing the scenes) intersect at right angles, in his design the master stained-glass craftsman was able to create shapes that feature squares and circles, symbols of the earthly world and of the Eternal.

In the Jesse window, the genealogy of Christ described by Matthew at the beginning of his Gospel is represented by the image of four kings of Judah, presented in squares to evoke the earthly world. The tree rises upwards from Jesse, who is lying down dreaming, from the bottom of the window up to Christ at the top. The number of all numbers and sign of plenitude, the figure 7 is featured significantly in the composition: division into seven registers; Christ's head surrounded by seven doves, representing the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. The perfection of Christ in his humanity and divinity is thus fully affirmed.



Between 2004 and 2008, these 12th-century windows were studied to investigate the ageing of the protective resins (Viacryl) applied during the last restoration carried out in 1974 by Atelier Gaudin, to determine their effectiveness. This examination revealed that almost all of the Viacryl had disappeared. A new means of protection is therefore required.

Currently, structures in this window have deteriorated considerably due to the heavy weight of the "thin lead" used in previous repairs, which has caused deformation resulting in new fractures in the old glass. These outstanding windows must be conserved and protected at all costs to ensure the survival of the authentic

"Chartres Blues", the clear sky blue pieces with a hint of turquoise of an unforgettable colour created using pure cobalt oxide at the time the glass was made. In the 12th century cobalt oxide was extracted in what is today eastern Europe (in Saxony for example).

### 2010 Newsletter from Chartres, sanctuaire du Monde

Editor - Servane de Layre-Mathéus

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Reading committee - Jean-François Lagier and Noël Raimon

For a free copy of the newsletter, contact [carolineberthod@yahoo.fr](mailto:carolineberthod@yahoo.fr);

the newsletter can also be read online at [www.chartres-csm.org](http://www.chartres-csm.org)

Tree of Jesse window, 12th century

From bottom to top: Jesse asleep, a king of Judah, Christ, the "terminal bud"



# The law now offers a new way of receiving legacies, donations and life insurance payments: the "Chartres, sanctuaire du Monde" Endowment Fund

"To work for the long-term future and reputation of the Cathedral of Our Lady of Chartres and to bring about and foster all individual and collective initiatives likely to contribute to this" is the mission that the association has set itself since it was founded by Pierre Firmin Didot in 1992.

Since then, the progress made by the association, thanks to your continued generosity and the hard work of volunteers, has made it possible to accomplish many of the objectives set by its founder.

Since the coming into force of the Law of 4 August 2008 on the Modernisation of the Economy, the law allows us to go further. With this in mind, we are delighted to announce that **the association has set up the Chartres, sanctuaire du Monde (C.S.M.) Fund**, the statutes of which have been declared and registered with the Chartres Prefecture and published in the French Official Journal of 6 June 2009.

The purpose of the C.S.M. Fund, which wide-ranging legal powers, is to "receive and manage, by capitalising them, assets and rights of all kinds that are given to it free of charge and irrevocably, in order to contribute to the funding of conservation, restoration and improvement programmes at Chartres Cathedral, and to contemporary art works in the said cathedral."

**One significant benefit is that this enables the association to support and fund new programmes thanks to new resources, legacies, donations and life insurance payments, which are exempt from all transfer taxes when donated.**

**In this way, you will prolong the efforts and work of the association and contribute to ensuring the future continuation of its missions.**

We wanted you to be the first to receive this information, which is essential to our future and to raising the profile of a heritage that is dear to you.

We remain at your disposal to meet you and provide you with any additional information you may require.

**For more information contact:**

The Chartres, sanctuaire du Monde Endowment Fund  
16, cloître Notre-Dame, F-28003 Chartres cedex - +33 (0)2 37 36 04 63

**For a confidential chat you can call:**

Noël Raimon, president of the endowment fund - +33 (0)6 09 39 03 98

