

— Doyle

K GEORGE KRATINA • SCULPTOR

6/24/62

Designer to Architecture and Industry

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Father Irenaeus, a few observations I hope will be helpful-----

The idea of a polychromed ceramic sculptured reredos challenged a design problem to relate to the crucifix above, the space of the room and the color light problem of the stained glass walls on the east and west sides of the room; in an atmosphere of the Franciscan oneness.

The glory of the crucifixion as related to St Bonaventure and his writings on the one hand, and the profound direction in St Francis' life was our inspiration. The visitation of the Seraph and the receiving of the stigmata is the glorious moment of St Francis on Mount Laverna—all of the man with God—; while the inspiration of the visitation was a great light to St Bonaventure, the Seraphic Doctor, awareness with God.

These experiences which took place on the heights of Mount Laverna amongst its caves, and rugged beauty; and the shelter built by St. Francis in the presence of the trees, flowers, rocks, and birds served as our background. Floating in the upper middle in a sculptural form stronger than the rest of the reredos, the splendor of the Seraphic visitation haloed against a background of mystical blue.

The colors of the sculptured reredos are relegated to the stained glass, marble and wood of the Friary. Pleasantly it takes on the atmosphere of the color of the windows and sun to enhance the colors of the polychromed ceramic sculpture. A planned design to take on the environment and to influence the Friary structure.

The scale of the whole room set forth in the reredos instills an atmosphere of the all-beautiful creator in which man strives to be worthy. The spirit rather than the immediate size of the sculpture dominates.

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The sculpture was executed in my studio in Old Chatham, New York and fired by the Federal Seaboard Terra Cotta in Perth Amboy, New Jersey and installed at the Friary by Jack Rowe, contractor of Olean, New York.

There were efforts on my part to make this work worthy and in this I struggled but did not give in to the pressure until the work revealed itself to me. There was no choice but to give it the time it needed; and from this experience I now have a great desire to do a sculpture of Christ the Teacher.

It took one and onehalf years to complete. The final ceramic sculpture 30 feet by 10 feet was divided into 51 pieces so that it could be fired. It weighs thirteen thousand pounds, but in its final setting has no weight, no problems but rather the humble spirit of man to reach up.

The "whole" was motivated by depth that Brother Cajetan and Father Brian Lhota conveyed and by their great simplicity of Faith kept me in the challenge of inspiration; an experience most rewarding. My thanks to an experience rare and rewarding.

To you all-----Amen

George 4/14/62

*Father Sam sending copies to
Brother Cajetan & Father Brian Lhota.*

*I hope this is of some help - words are not my
fort -*