

panels of grey granite depicting abstracted nature forms. Even today this work remains fresh, complementing the faceted geometry of the original auditorium building. The commission brought Sister Mary Charles to the attention of a broad local audience.

Her confidence in using a range of media might be partially attributed to Notre Dame's studio art program, which gave instruction to student-artists in craft-oriented forms like ceramics, enameling, stained glass, and liturgical arts, along with painting, drawing, and sculpture. At Notre Dame her 1964 MFA thesis project was a strongly modernist rendition of the Last Supper, which now hangs in the Greenview Dining Room in Somers Hall at The College of St. Scholastica.



Sister Mary Charles with her Notre Dame MFA Thesis Project in the Duluth News Tribune article "Mystery of the Eucharist Captured In Unique Religious Artwork," April 26, 1965. Photo by Earl Johnson



New Jerusalem, 1962,
lithograph on paper, 20" x 16"
St. Scholastica Monastery

Another work from that period, *New Jerusalem*, is one of only a handful of lithographs Sister Mary Charles created when she had the Notre Dame print-making studio at her disposal. The drawing is confident, the forms cleanly abstracted and attenuated. The image is both literal and surreal, a call to religious awareness, and a futuristic vision of possibilities.

Its date coincides with the year the printmaker Irving Amen was at Notre Dame. Amen became well known for his woodcuts of children and adolescents, and appears to have been the strongest influence on woodcut prints Sister Mary Charles made between 1965 and 1985. Amen stands out as a mentor; they continued to have some correspondence after her time at Notre Dame, and she owned a print of his which hung in the living room at the Barn. In a Christmas card, Amen stated, "I think myself privileged to have had students like yourself in my class."