



ST. CATHARINE'S COLLEGE CHAPEL CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

Memorial Window - North Wall (1.6m x 3.0m) 2009



Helen Whittaker was selected to submit a design for St Catharine's College Chapel celebrating the 800th Anniversary of the founding of Cambridge University in 1209. The theme given was Proverb 8, 'The Wisdom's Call' - referring to the role of wisdom as a female figure and as a guiding force during the moment of creation.

Helen's design is inspired by stained glass from the North Rose (Wheel) at Chartres Cathedral and by her interest in sacred geometry. The wheel is symbolic of St. Catharine's martyrdom and also reflects Plato's belief that 'geometry existed before the creation'; thus the light of creation bursts out from the central point of the circle. Above the circle are six angels representing the six days of creation. Below the circle stand the four cardinal virtues referring to the Wisdom of Solomon: 'for she teacheth temperance and prudence, justice and fortitude: which are such things, as men can have nothing more profitable in their life' (Wisdom of Solomon 8:7); their four opposing vices are depicted at their feet. At the base of the window two musical angels flank the memorial inscription to Neville Burston, alumnus of the College. The surrounding columns and arch reflect the architectural design of the altar, also used in other windows in the chapel, providing continuity and alluding to the long history of the University.

Helen Whittaker
STAINED GLASS
& SCULPTURE