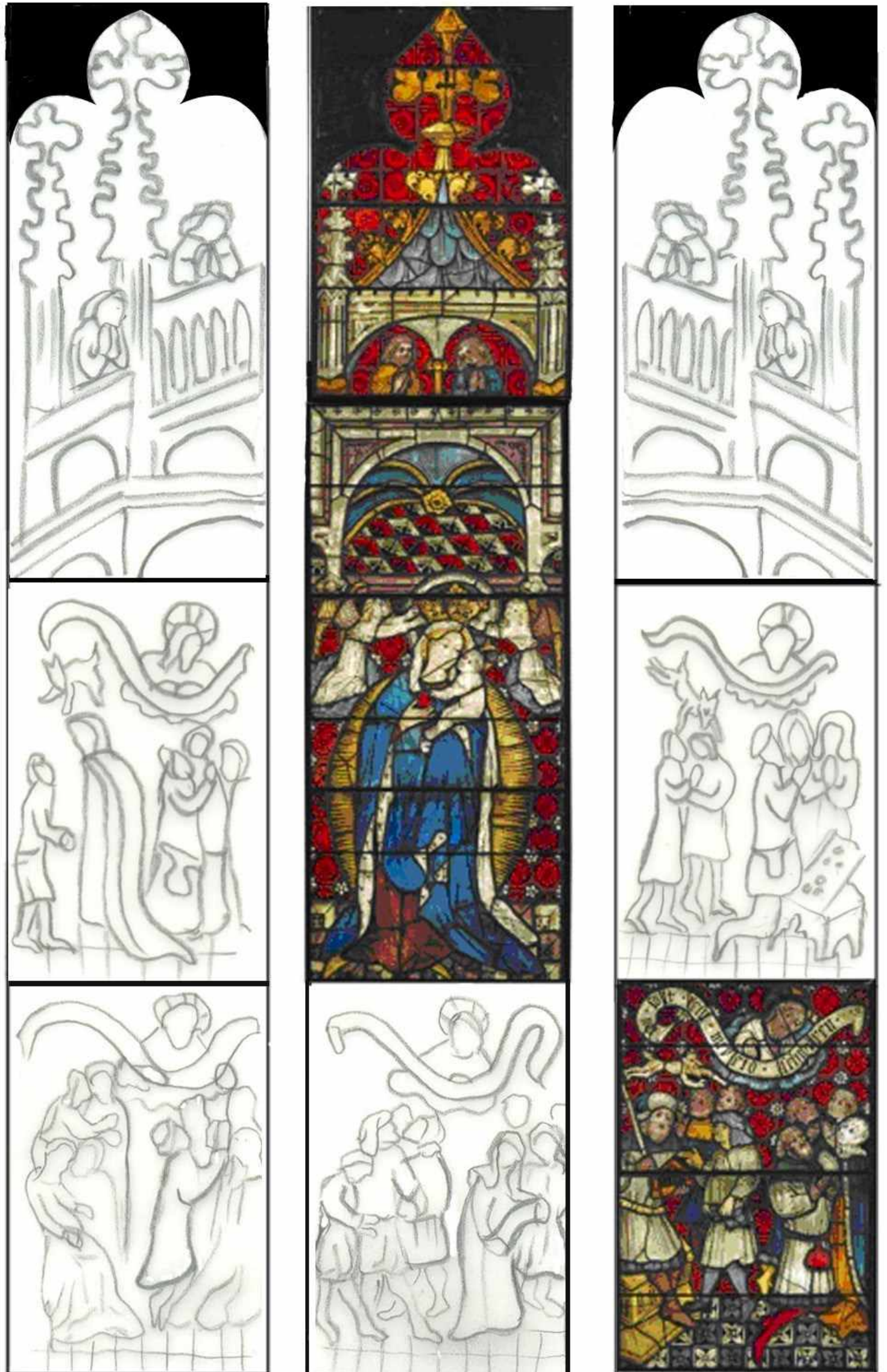


33. The Boppard Ten Commandments Windows

The Ten Commandments window was originally situated in the west window of the north aisle of the Carmelite Church in Boppard. Remarkably the entire window survives, all 42 panels! As a whole the window consists of about 20m² of glass!

Over time the panels have been dispersed and can now be found in the Burrell Collection, the Schnütgen Museum in Cologne, and Ochre Court in Rhode Island. The window was originally removed from Boppard in 1818 following the secularisation of the church during the French Revolution. The window was restored in the late 19th Century in Berlin at the Königliche Institut für Glasmalerei (Royal Institute for Glass Painting) before being purchased in 1871 by Friedrich Spitzer, an art collector in Paris.

Following Spitzer's death the panels from the Ten Commandments window were separated through auction in 1893. The image above shows how the panels may originally have been positioned within the window, according to Prof. Rüdiger Becksmann[1]. The sketches in the top half of the window are of the Ochre Court panels, and the photographed panels are in the Burrell Collection. The panels sketched in the lower half of the window are all in the Schnütgen Museum.

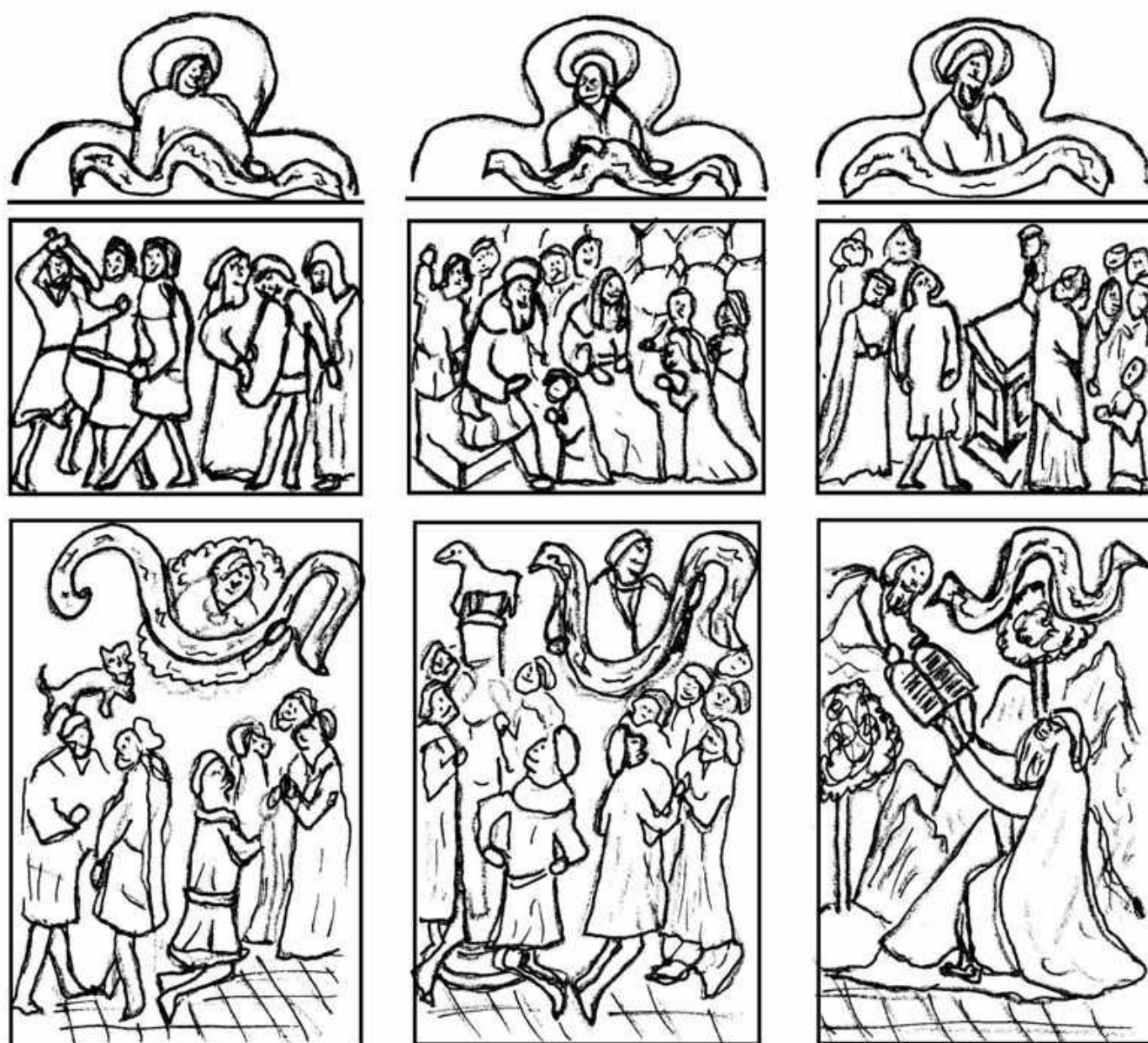


LAYOUT OF THE BOPPARD

TEN COMMANDMENTS WINDOWS – TOP SECTION

THE GLORIFICATION OF THE VIRGIN

The panels in the Burrell Collection depict the 8th Commandment and the Glorification of the Virgin. The Carmelites had a special veneration for the Virgin Mary so the Glorification of the Virgin was given prominence as the central feature of the window. The Virgin Mary is depicted holding the infant Jesus and offering him an apple, while two angels place a crown onto Mary's head. The apple alludes to the original sin in the Garden of Eden, and refers to Christ's role as the future redeemer. Beneath the Virgin from left to right would have been the 6th, 7th and 8th Commandments.



THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

The text on the scroll in the 8th Commandment panel reads, "Thou must swear no perjury". On the left is a group of suspicious looking individuals, one of which is pointing in an accusatory way at another man, appearing to bear false witness, whilst the devil hovers encouragingly overhead. By contrast the group on the right look very innocent and pious. God looks down approvingly at them. The man facing the woman has a very full red purse at his waist suggesting that good thoughts bring good rewards!



LAYOUT OF THE BOPPARD

TEN COMMANDMENTS WINDOWS – BOTTOM SECTION

- [1] R Becksmann "Learning from Muskau: The Throne of Solomon Window from the Carmelite Church at Boppard and its Donation by Jakob von Sierck, Archbishop of Trier (1439-56)" in Staudinger Lane et al (ed.) *The Four Modes of Seeing*: 2009, 111-132.
- Scroll text translations are from Jane Hayward's "Stained-Glass Windows from the Carmelite Church at Boppard-am-Rhein".
- The sketches are drawn by John Rattenbury and Megan Stacey from photographs.