

*The Anastylosis Project*, by Mary Griep

Art selection and commentary by [Lil Copan](#) in the [January 17, 2018](#) issue



Drawings of Chartres Cathedral in France and the Grand Mosque in Divriği, Turkey, from *The Anastylosis Project*

Mary Griep's *The Anastylosis Project* presents detailed small-scale drawings of great buildings which somehow convey the wonder and significance of the buildings themselves. *Anastylosis* is a Greek term meaning "the restoration of a ruined building by reassembling the constituent parts." It's a word that might have been created just for this project, in which the exterior of Chartres Cathedral was studied, photographed, and painstakingly drawn to create a 10-foot-by-14-foot wall display. Re-creating the cathedral at scale (24:1 inch) is a feat of art, mathematics,

reverence, and patience. Griep, longtime professor of art at St. Olaf College, worked on the project for 18 years, exploring 12 sacred spaces built in the 12th century, including a Catholic cathedral, a Norwegian stave church, a temple at a Mayan ruin, and a Byzantine building. "I am not trying to represent the monuments but rather to meditate upon them and reflect their long and numinous lives," Griep writes. "The act of drawing on such a scale is a contemplative act that mimics the role of these buildings as a way of concentrating attention."