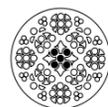


## THE CENTRAL SQUARE



The tilted central square – the original one having been lost over the centuries – is the creation of E. Hosch. At its centre, God the Father is shown seated on a throne bearing the inscription “1897-1899. RESTAUR[...] EHOSCH LAUSANNE”. He is surrounded by four episodes taken from Genesis: the separation between light and darkness, between dry land and the seas, the creation of the sun, the moon and the fish, and finally the creation of animals, of man and of woman.



GOD THE FATHER  
Photo Alain Kilar 2016.

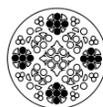
## THE TERRESTRIAL YEAR: SEASONS AND MONTHS



Many suggestions have been put forward as to the original composition of this iconographic ensemble: on the basis of medieval illuminations, the central figure was probably ANNUS (Year), surrounded by SOL (Sun), LUNA (Moon), DIES (Day), and NOX (Night). The only remaining ones are: SOL (male figure driving a quadriga, a reference to Apollo, a god of antiquity), LUNA (female figure on a chariot drawn by two horses, also inspired from antiquity) and NOX (woman standing against a background of foliage). Today, this medallion bears the inscription TERRA – this is an incorrect interpretation by Hosch, due to the absence of TERRA, probably long since disappeared. These panels were redistributed among those of the zodiac group, obviously as gap fillers.

APRIL  
Photo Alain Kilar 2016.

## THE ZODIAC AND THE ART OF DIVINATION

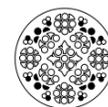


The outer circles contain five medallions each; in a cruciform sepal design. Originally, they depicted the twelve signs of the zodiac, the four Elements (Air, Fire, Water, Earth) and their corresponding divinatory practices (Geomancy, Hydromancy, Aeromancy, Pyromancy). Of these divinatory practices, only the last two remain. Following the same anti-clockwise reading order used for the terrestrial year, and starting from the circle on the right:

- at the centre, DRAGON AER (Air, female figure breastfeeding a dragon) surrounded by ARIES, TAURUS (modern), PIROMA[N]CI[A] (divination through fire, female figure surrounded by two fires), GEMINI;

PISCIS AQUA (WATER)  
Photo Alain Kilar 2016.

## THE RIVERS OF PARADISE, MONSTERS AND WINDS

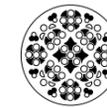


Between Earth and Universe are the four rivers of Paradise described in Genesis; they point to the four corners of the Earth; are depicted as marine and river gods inspired from antiquity; and are surrounded by peoples from distant lands:

- bottom right, at the centre, PHISON (modern; Pishon) surrounded by SATIRI (modern; satyr) and PINGMEI (Pygmy, a dwarf brandishing his sword against a crane);
- top right, at the centre, TIGRIS, CINOMOLOGI (dog-headed man) and OCULOS IN HUME[RIS] (headless monster with eyes on its chest);
- top left, at the centre, GEON (Gihon), TET[RA]COLI (Four-Eyed archer) and GANGRIDA (Apple-eater);

TIGRIS. AUSTER ZEPHIR (SOUTH-WEST WIND)  
Photo Alain Kilar 2016.

## ORNAMENTAL FLORA AND FOLIAGE



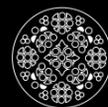
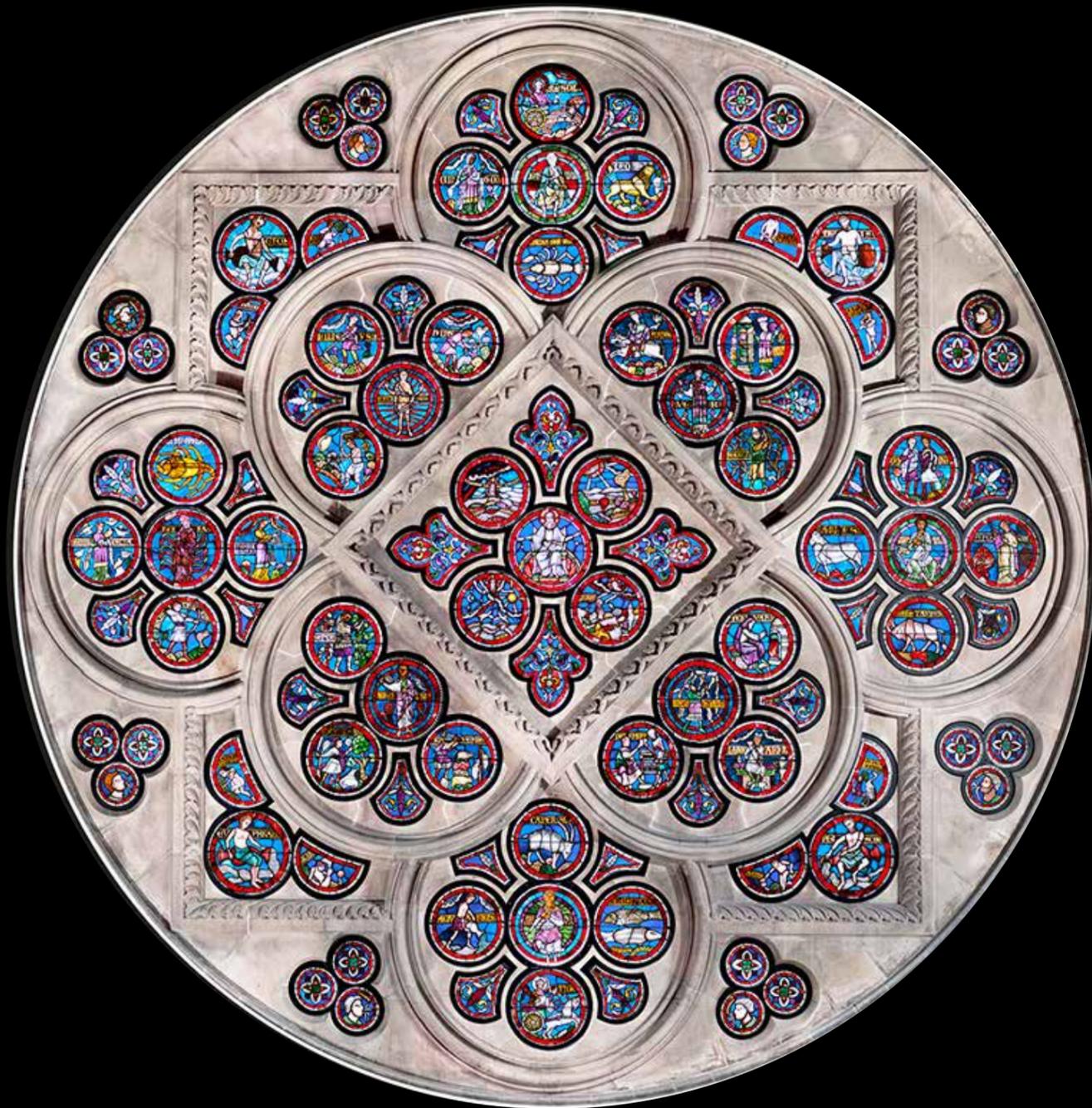
Ornamental panels are inserted in apertures of different shapes: fleur-de-lis or large palm-leaf in the central square, small drop shape panels in the semi-circles, with additional spandrels in the outer-circles, and small sepal-style medallions at the rim. There are 44 ornamental panels, 11 of which were created by Hosch. These stylised motifs have a blue background with red and white outlines. The larger palm-leaf panels are more complex; they are decorated with leaves, rinceaux and volutes evenly distributed around a central axis; exceptionally, the background for the leaves at the tip of the panel is a mottled red. The palm-leaf panels

LARGE PALM-LEAF FROM THE CENTRAL SQUARE. ROSETTE



## LAUSANNE CATHEDRAL THE ROSE WINDOW

display two different types of motifs, one with two central leaves, volutes and secondary leaves; and the other of a simpler style, with single central leaf and volutes. The spandrels display one single leaf; and the small outer medallions a rosette. There may well have been a predetermined hierarchy between the centre and the outer rim. Furthermore, the meaning of this foliage may be other than purely ornamental, and relate to how time and the world were viewed. From Paleochristian times, plants associated with the rivers of Paradise recalled the loss of the Garden of Eden.

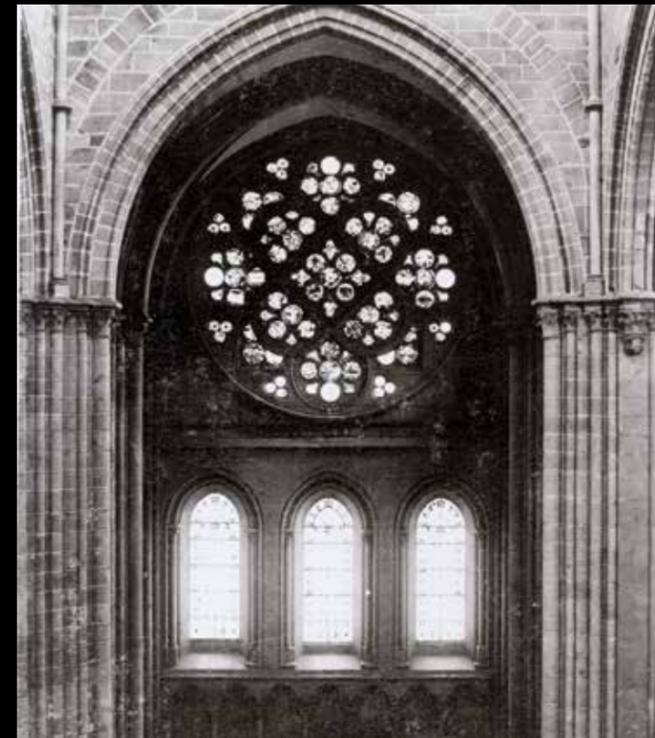


The rose window is 8.05 metres in diameter. It is the main feature of the elevation of the south transept. Its 105 medallions are encased in a salient stone tracery and bordered with a double circle; dating back to circa 1205. Most of the molasse blocks were restored with sandstone from Obernkirchen (Germany) in 1908. This particular stone setting follows a precise and rare geometrical design; so rare in fact, that it is found drawn out in a sketchbook dated around 1220-1230. Its basis is the "square bisection" (dividing the square in half and making it rotate), squaring the circle and circling the square, as it were. It expresses the medieval view of the world, an *imago mundi*: the material world, the tilted square at the centre, inscribed with a cross – that of Christ;

GENERAL VIEW OF THE ROSE WINDOW  
Photo Alain Kilar 2016.



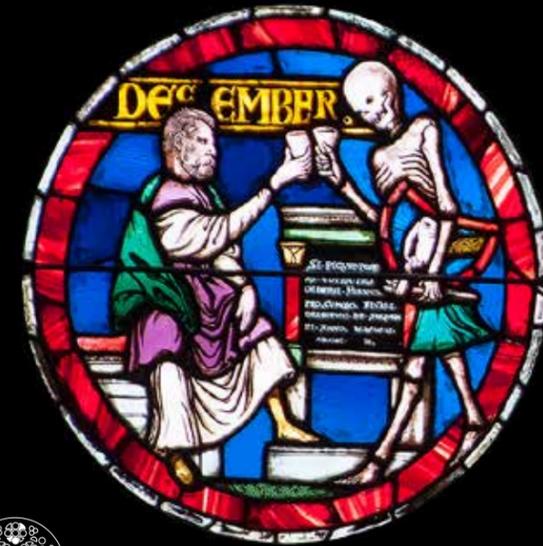
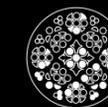
and circumscribed within the wider circle of the universe created. The panels illustrate this same theme; they carry inscriptions that help identify their different subjects. They were set into place after the completion of the stone tracery and could be the creation of French glass master and artist Pierre d'Arras. However, as it stands today, the rose window bears the hallmark of Edouard Hosch (1894-1899). He carried out restoration work on the basis of studies led by art historian Professor Johann Rudolf Rahn. The glass master filled in the gaps, re-arranged the medallions and created a new central subject.



In 1520, Etienne Capyenz, glass master and painter, carried out repairs still visible today in some of the unpainted glass, especially the inherent red and blue coloured glass of the medallions, and in the head of *Nox/Terra*. Possibly during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, some extraneous medieval medallions were set in; belonging to the cycle of life of Saint John the Baptist, and two other odd medallions made up of fragments of heraldic lions dated circa 1760. These were utilitarian repairs, customary at the time and intended as replacements for damaged components, or gap-fillers. Major restoration work, however, dates back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The rose window had been subjected to

JOHN CURCHOD, THE ROSE WINDOW BEFORE RESTORATION BY HOSCH, CIRCA 1890  
ACV, Records from Lausanne cathedral.

prolonged neglect; in 1817, Monnet, a Lausanne glass master, undertook a major renovation. Under the supervision of architect Henri Perregaux, he disassembled the medallions in order to reset most of the lead comes, etch the glass, replace glass components from previous repair works, and fill in gaps with coloured glass bought in Lorraine. And finally, he created fifteen ornamental panels, and reinforced the stone tracery with mortar, which will later be stabilized with metal reinforcement. From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, academics studied the rose window and elaborated projects that were repeatedly postponed.



Finally, in 1891 protective measures were taken. Edouard Hosch who was originally from Basel, but had resided in Lausanne since 1875, removed the panels because of the unstable stone tracery. Three years later, he was put in charge of the restoration of the rose window; in so doing, he mostly followed the principles formulated by Rahn in 1879. This, however, did not apply to the central square; it has at its centre the figure of God the Father, surrounded by scenes from Genesis and not by the Evangelists as suggested by the historian. The extraneous medallions were discarded, so were Monnet's gap fillers and panels; these were replaced by thirty new compositions. After a precise *in situ* recording of the glass components, the medieval glass panels were

DIAGRAM OF THE ROSE WINDOW WITH THE MEDALLIONS REPLACED BY HOSCH, DECEMBER  
Photo Alain Kilar 2016.

disassembled, the metal framework (*ferramenta*) replaced, and most panels re-leaded. Post-medieval additions were removed, except for some 16<sup>th</sup>-century glass identified as such; in total, about 2'100 pieces were incorporated into the ancient panels. Hosch signed his restoration work in the central square and in the month series. In the December medallion he is depicted raising his glass with the creator of the rose window, a skeleton holding under its arm the medallion of a headless creature; with at the centre of the medallion, a commemorative plaque dated 1897 which reads that one must drink to the health of the restoration work. The panels were put back into place in 1909, after the rebuilding of the stone tracery.



The restoration work on the rose window formed part of a wider consolidation plan for the south transept and its foundations. It involved the positioning of tie rods in the elevation and the boring of micro-piles into the ground. If there is a consensus view as to the general meaning of the window – a cosmological vision – the initial arrangement and the theme of the medallions, lost over the years, have been subject to debate since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; suggestions, however, remain hypothetical. And therefore, the arrangement put in place by Hosch has been maintained. The stained glass panels were studied in depth, then, in 1995,

they were removed, cleaned and reinforced. Their metal frames were renewed, the chassis was doubled with protective glass frames on the outside, and the panels on the inside; this allows for preservation of the glass and protection against much of the pollution. The radii of the medallions show some slight variations corresponding to two main groups linked to the composition of the rose window and its meaning. The radii of the new metal frameworks have been made to match so as to allow permutations within each group – should new studies provide conclusive evidence for a different composition.

CLAUDE BORNAND, THE ROSE WINDOW BEING FITTED WITH NEW PROTECTIVE METAL FRAMES, JANUARY 1998  
ACV, Records of Lausanne cathedral.