



# Benedictine Bits

## BAC Benedictine Connections



Named after the foundress of Benedictine women in the United States, Mother Benedicta Riepp, the Benedicta Arts Center is an academic arts space dedicated to showcasing the aesthetic life on Saint Benedict's campus. Incorporating art and music into our lives is crucial to the Benedictines because the arts are viewed as a lived experience allowing us to see the beauty of God. The early sisters of Saint Benedict's Monastery brought artistic skills from Eichstätt, Germany to financially support their community and to pass along those gifts to future generations. To honor this legacy and continue the growth of Fine Arts education, the sisters wanted to create a space that emphasized the importance the visual arts can have in helping students explore, understand, and express their inner light.

In the early 1960's, construction of the BAC was fashioned with the future in mind. From helping to expand the Fine Arts at CSB/SJU to bringing artists and the community together in the Escher Auditorium, the Benedicta Arts Center has become a key component for the arts in Central Minnesota. Keeping the Benedictine roots in the forefront, the main stage bears the name of Sister Firmin Escher, who lived a life of music ministry as an instrumentalist and teacher. Also in the BAC is the versatile theater space known as the Colman Black Box Theater, named in honor of the late Sister Colman O'Connell who served as a theater professor and CSB President.

*Photographs, left to right: Mother Benedicta Riepp, Sister Firmin Escher, Sister Colman O'Connell*