The author of the book is Maurizio Tani, who is Italian and has been living in Iceland for many years and has worked as an author and Italian teacher at the University of Iceland. The book is published by Snorri Sturluson publishing company in Reykjavik.

Akureyri church has a special place in the heart of the residents in Akureyri. This is something that I can assert because I grew up in Akureyri and I have also lived there for part of my adult life. The very special location of the church on a conspicuous place, half way up a hill over the town center with over one hundred church steps leading the way from the town center up to the church, makes it the town's most noticeable landmark.

The church was designed by Guðjón Samúelsson, who was the state architect in Iceland during the design and construction of the church. Guðjón designed many of the most important buildings in Iceland during his carrier as state architect. Among the buildings he designed are the University of Iceland's main building, The National Theatre, the Catholic church Landakort in Reykjavík and the Lutheran church Hallgrímskirkja. Guðjón also designed many buildings in Akureyri other than Akureyri church. He also designed buildings in the immediate vicinity of the church, like the Akureyri elementary school building, the sports hall in Laugargötu and the oldest part of the swimming pool building. Guðjón was also the author of the first town plan for Akureyri.

The Akureyri church building has a rather particular style, with two church towers, and it was originally covered with shell sand and obsidian fragments. Obsidian is a rock formation that originates around lava flows and is therefore a typical Icelandic stone. This combination of shell sand and obsidian was commonly used for many years as an outer cover of Icelandic buildings. When the outer layer of the church building was restored in the nineteen eighties, then the builders used imported black and white marble stones because the shell sand and obsidian had been protected and it was not allowed to be used as a building material any more. This I know because I worked as a construction worker in my teen years during the restoration.

The book gives a good review of the baptismal font in the church. This font is a remake of a

baptismal font that was made by the Icelandic-Danish (Icelanders say he is Icelandic but Danes regard him as Danish) sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen (1789-1838). The original of the font is in the Nostra Signora Cathedral in Copenhagen. Bertel Thorvaldsen lived for over thirty years in Italy but it is not mentioned in the book that he is the only non-Italian sculptor who has a sculpture in St. Peter's Basilica, which I believe could be an interesting fact for the Italian reader of this book to know. Bertel was a great admirer of Rome and I remember that when I was a child I was told the story that after he moved back to Denmark he was asked how long a time it would take to visit Rome. He replayed that he had no idea because he had only lived there for thirty years.

In Akureyri church there are many very beautiful stained glass windows and these are without a doubt the most interesting artwork in the church. The book gives a very good and detailed review of these windows. Most of the windows in the apse were made between 1959 and 1960 by Fredric Cole, who worked for the Wippel & Co Company in Exeter. These windows where built upon design by Guðmundur Einarsson. Guðmundur is the father of a very well-known Icelandic painter, Guðmundur Guðmundsson, known in the arts as Erró (one intresting but not important detail not mentioned in the book is that the name Erró is artist name that Guðmundur took up during his studies in Florence and originally it was Ferró, which he later changed to Erró). The middle window of the apse is much older than the ones designed by Guðmundur Einarsson. This window is from 1853 and originally it came from Coventry Cathedral. The windows in the Coventry Cathedral where removed during World War II and they were placed in the countryside to save them from possible bombardments by German bomber plains. In fact Coventry was destructed during the war, but the windows where saved. In 1942 the windows made their way to the London antiquarian market, where they were bought by the wife of a rich Icelandic businessman and that is how these windows ended up in Iceland. One of these windows from the Coventry Cathedral was used as the center window in the apse for Akureyri church.

In the church aisle are located twelve stained glass windows designed by the Icelandic artist Kristinn G. Jóhannsson and the English artist James Cromie. These windows were also built by the Wippel & Co Company in Exeter, the same company that built the windows in the church apse. The windows in the church aisle where installed in 1969. The book gives a very good and detailed description of each of these windows and it has pictures of parts of the windows, so it is easy to walk around the church and learn about the content of the artwork.

Most of the material for the windows comes from the bible and also from the Christian history of Iceland.

Above the baptismal font is an old altarpiece from the original Akureyri church. This altarpiece is from 1863 and was painted by the Danish artist Otto Ludvig Edvar Lehmann (1815-1892).

In my opinion the most interesting things about Akureyri church are the original architecture of the building, the stained glass windows and the baptismal font. All of these things are described in detail in this book. Being a music enthusiast, I note the absence of a description of the church's remarkable pipe organ , which was made in 1961 in England. I also note that there is no mention of the church steps, which I believe are an interesting and integral part of the church's original architecture.

This short book is a very good overview of the church, its history and its artwork and in my opinion it is very nice reading for Italian-speaking tourists who wish to visit Akureyri. In the books there is also a good attempt to link the church's history and its artwork to Icelandic society and its history.

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