

ICONS IN TRANSFORMATION



A visitor to the exhibit

WHAT WILL
OUR CHURCH
LOOK LIKE?

When I first was approached about this great opportunity, I couldn't imagine so many pieces of art in our churches – and abstract art at that! So I called several of the rectors who had hosted this exhibit and all said the same thing – it was the greatest experience they had had in a long time. It brought people together to work on the undertaking and gradually people began to reflect on the art. It brought forth many emotions and many interesting conversations ...and when it was time for the exhibit to move on...many wished it would stay longer!

Beyond the effect on the congregation – many who had never been in these churches came to see and meditate on the amazing modern art. The priests told me that many who had come to the exhibit told them that this was the first time they had been in a church for many years – and mostly they had only visited churches when they traveled!

Although having the exhibit was a successful fundraiser, what most of the churches found was that it brought them new friends, who would never have come to the Episcopal Church without the exhibit. So - we wait in expectation, much as we try to do throughout the entire Advent season.

Rev. Amanda

ICONS IN TRANSFORMATION

How am I inspired by almost
1000 years of tradition and
what the icon stands for?

Mila working on the
Crown of Thorns



What fascinates me most in the art of icons is the deep sensitivity they radiate. When I am looking at an icon I am irresistibly attracted. Looking into the eyes of Maria's icon feels like an encounter with the unknown and boundless deep. Something awakens inside me – I can just be quiet, just lose myself in its depth, just listen... An unexpected insight can flow through me – an impulse, God's presence is there. Quiet but present.

I am a member of an orthodox church where the icon has a central place in liturgy. For me it means a link with my culture, my heritage and a guide to a new direction in my creative process. My work starts with a process by painting layer upon layer on a wooden panel. This is a technique which is similar to a thousand years of traditional icon painting. ...

Today we dare to approach holiness in a completely different way; religion is more open to personal interpretation. For this exhibition, I have been working with different techniques: painting, installation and sculpture using collage. Here I am already bending the rules which define a traditional icon. Even though the motive, form and composition in my work departs from (or violates) tradition, it is the point from which I am beginning to push the boundaries. The icon has a spiritual power which comes from the icon itself, a kind of light. To create and capture a light has always been the most difficult and greatest challenge to artists through the centuries. This exhibition is my attempt to capture it in my own way.

Ludmila Pawlowska