

Jerusalem: Ideas and Images

An Online Exhibition



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Introduction



Eduardo Mazzonna, *Three Religions, Three Sacred Sites*, 2013.

Although the city of Jerusalem is a concrete place with geographical boundaries, it is also a malleable concept carrying a multiplicity of meanings within different cultures, histories and religions. Simultaneously embodying the past, present and future, Jerusalem is perceived on the one hand as a utopia—a placeless, ideal Promised Land—and on the other hand as a site whose ownership has been contested since biblical times. In a sense, critically approaching the subject of Jerusalem parallels a physical encounter with the Holy City: one experiences the journey there, the historic landscape and its symbolic appropriation, the political strife, the return home, and eventually the optimistic hope and desire for a peaceful future.

From 2014 to 2019 Dr. Loren Lerner, Professor of Art History at Concordia University in Montreal taught a course “The City of Jerusalem: Ideas and Images” on the art and architecture of Jerusalem. Each year the best essays and works of arts by the students were published online in the [Jerusalem Art History Journal: An Undergraduate eJournal/Histoire de l'art à Jérusalem : cyberrevue étudiante de premier](#). In 2019, Lerner turned the in-class lectures into PowerPoint with Voice lectures and placed them [online](#). As a tribute to the students in Lerner's class this virtual exhibition developed in 2021 features twenty-two artworks and text excerpts selected from the journal.

The artworks and artistic sources of inspiration are organized into these six galleries.

- ◆ **Gallery 1: Archaeology, Architecture and Belief**
- ◆ **Gallery 2: Faces Real and Imagined**
- ◆ **Gallery 3: Configurations of Conflict**
- ◆ **Gallery 4: Bridging the Earthly and Heavenly Realms**
- ◆ **Gallery 5: Journey to Jerusalem**
- ◆ **Gallery 6: A Shared Jerusalem: Commonalities and Differences**

This virtual exhibition innovatively examines how the art, architecture and material culture of Jerusalem have been shaped by the various ethnic and religious groups that have visited or resided in the city throughout its prodigious history. We hope that by exploring the works in this exhibition you will discover a dynamic and captivating city that is both real and imagined, earthly and sacred, divided and shared.

Curatorial Remarks



Noa Ogilvy, *Jerusalem of Gold*, 2018. Detail.

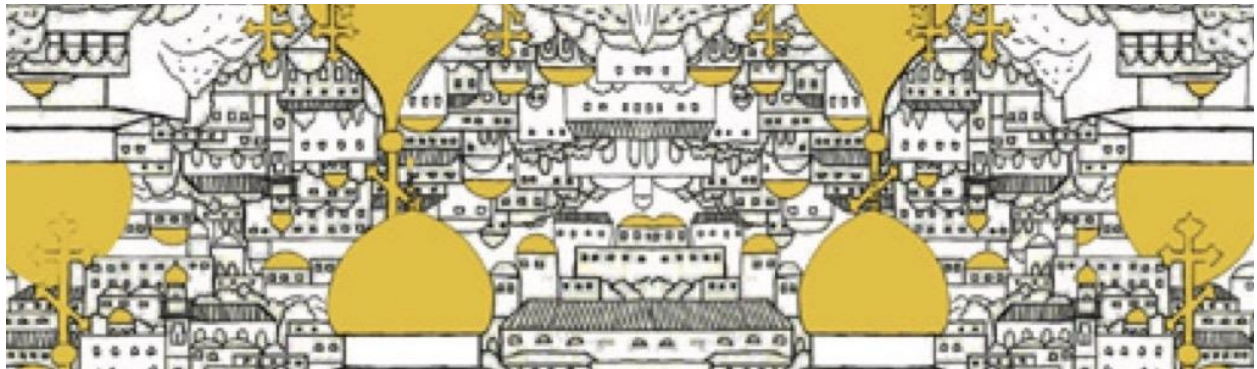
Jerusalem: Ideas and Images is an artistic examination and celebration of the city of Jerusalem.

Each of the twenty-two featured artists creatively worked with unique parts of Jerusalem's history, spirituality, geography, and people. The result is a virtual exhibition which creates an artistic mosaic reflecting the real-life diversity and complexity of one of the world's most multifaceted cities.

It is my hope that these works of art, spanning artistic mediums, subject matter, and emotions, will leave viewers with a greater appreciation of, and interest in, the ideas and images of Jerusalem.

Noa Ogilvy, September 15, 2021.

Acknowledgements



Trang Phan, *Terre Sainte*, 2016.

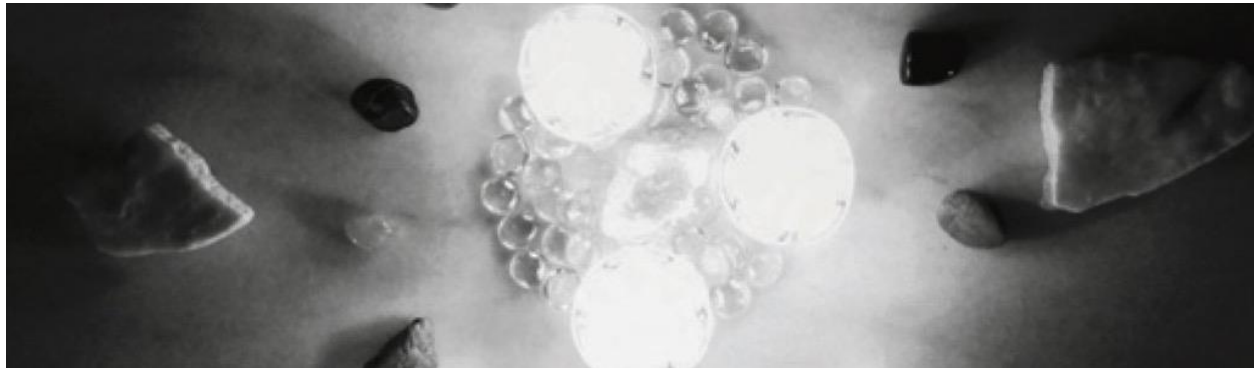
We gratefully acknowledge the support of the [Azrieli Institute of Israel Studies of Concordia University](#), Montreal and its Director, Dr. Csaba Nikolenyi for this virtual exhibition, *Jerusalem : Ideas and Images*.

Noa Ogilvy (BFA, Major in Studio Arts and Minor in Israel Studies at the Azrieli Institute, Concordia University; and MA in International Affairs specializing in Security and Defence Policy, Carleton University, Ottawa) is the curator and designer of the exhibition. Dr. Loren Lerner, Professor Emerita, Art History, Concordia University, is the editorial consultant.

We thank Benjamin Clement, Agnes Dakroub, Sabrina Ghaya, Deanna Hewitt, Christopher Johnstone, John Lanthier, Emilie Lefebvre, Nicole Lin, Alyag Makhassian, Eduardo Mazzonna, Noa Ogilvy, Gabby Orellana, Charlotte Parent, Kristina Parker, Elise Peters, Trang Phan, Clayton Ross, Florence Seymour-Provender, Pamela Simard, and Faith Wiley who created the artworks and wrote the essays. These were first published in the online journal, [Jerusalem Art History Journal: An Undergraduate eJournal/Histoire de l'art à Jérusalem : cyberrevue étudiante de premier](#).

The artists were students in Lerner's Art History course "The City of Jerusalem: Ideas and Images" [now available online](#).

Gallery One



Benjamin Clément, *The Circle, the Stone*, 2018. Detail.

Archeology, Architecture and Belief

A response to visions of the past that originate from the study of artifacts, physical remains and monuments of emotional, cultural, historical and religious value.

Featured Artists

- ◆ *Charlotte Parent*
- ◆ *Benjamin Clément*
- ◆ *Nicole Lin*
- ◆ *Emilie Lefebvre*

Charlotte Parent



Charlotte Parent, *Convergence*, 2013.
Oil-based pen on Plexiglass, 15 x 20 in.

Convergence is my response to an important issue in contemporary Jerusalem, namely the nationalist approach that is characteristic of – yet not exclusive to – Israeli archaeology. This approach overlooks the layered past of Jerusalem, privileging one history of the city over another, and thus creates contentious issues within the discipline and between the Israeli/Jewish and the Palestinian communities. Archaeology in Jerusalem is deeply politically and religiously engaged. I used three sheets of Plexiglas to create an unusual representation of Jerusalem. I drew maps of the old city of Jerusalem and some of its major buildings in different epochs, and grouped them so that I would have three maps of Jerusalem: the First and Second Temple periods and the Roman period; the Byzantine rule to the Crusader Kingdom; and Ayyubid rule to the present day. The transparency allows the viewer to see all of Jerusalem's histories as one. As such, *Convergence* is a plea for a more global viewpoint of history of Jerusalem and a recognition of the major ethnic or religious groups that have imprinted footsteps on its soil.

Charlotte Parent



Unknown, *Madaba Map*, sixth century.
Mosaic, Madaba.

The Madaba map has Jerusalem as its centre. The depiction of the Holy City is simple but revealing: along the main cardo, the horizontal street, with its colonnades, two main buildings can be identified: the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in the centre of the old city and the Nea Church. Although this early map is inaccurate, the image was created to show Christian presence and sovereignty in Jerusalem.

"Israeli Archaeology in Jerusalem: National Heritage, Identity, and Partiality" complete Artist Essay can be read here.

Benjamin Clément



Benjamin Clément, *The Circle, the Stone*, 2018.

Judaism, Christianity and Islam, the major religions in the Holy Land all seem to have a particular relationship with rocks and stones. For instance, the Stone of Unction in the entrance of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is venerated by Christian pilgrims who believe it is where Christ was anointed after his crucifixion. The Muslim Dome of the Rock is built on top of the Temple Mount where the prophet Muhammad is believed to have ascended to heaven. The same site is also sacred for the Jewish people who believe that it is where Abraham prepared the sacrifice of his own son to prove his devotion to God. For *The Circle, the Stone* I took stones that I collected during various travels and organized them in a way that resembles a circular map of Jerusalem. The three candles represent the faiths that have inhabited and shaped the city; the seven stones refer to the seven gates of Jerusalem; the twelve gems relate to the twelve original tribes of Israel; and the pile of forty pebbles in the centre alludes to the chaotic blend of people that visit and interpret the city every year.

Benjamin Clément

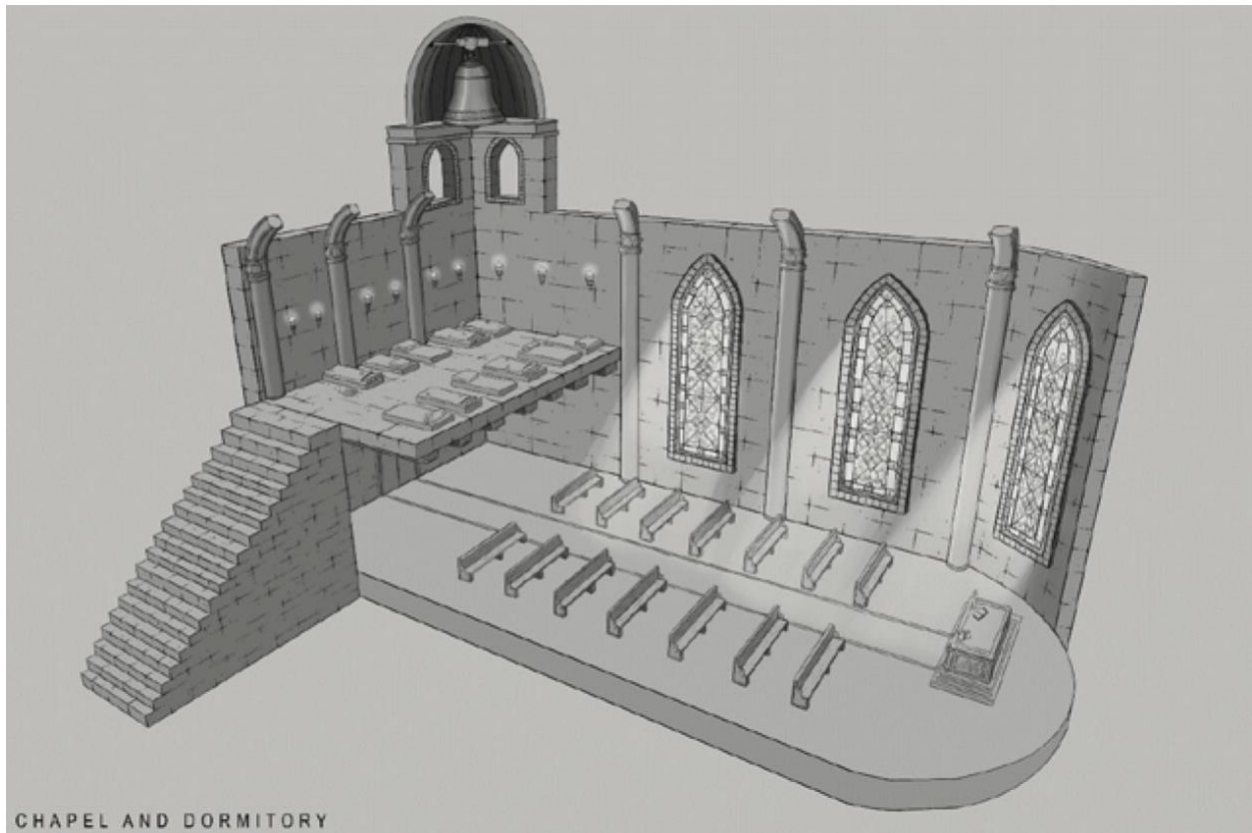


Magdalena Abakanowicz, *Negev*, 1987.
Limestone. Israel Museum, Jerusalem. Photo: Adam Bartos.

In the Christian faith, the number seven is believed to represent a pattern of perfection. The seven disks may refer to the seven gates of Jerusalem or the seven days of creation. A significant element in Abakanowicz's is the small indent she added in the centre of some of the stones. The navel-shaped indentation may refer to the shared belief amongst Christians, Muslims, and Jews that Jerusalem represents the "navel of the Earth." This belief can be traced back to the second century BCE and connects Abakanowicz's artwork to ancient circular maps of Jerusalem that represent the city as the centre of the world.

[*"The Circle, the Stone" complete Artist Essay can be read here.*](#)

Nicole Lin



Nicole Lin, *Illustrated Reconstruction of the Chapel and Dormitory*, 2018.

The Crusaders of the Kingdom of Jerusalem were primarily Christian Franks who conquered Jerusalem in 1099 and ruled the city for nearly two hundred years until 1291. The Crusaders set up their headquarters at the southern end of the Temple Mount, adapting existing structures and building new ones to suit their needs. They converted the Islamic shrine, the Dome of the Rock, into a Christian church and took up residence in the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Yet, despite their numerous building projects, there is currently little archeological evidence of the Crusaders' presence in the city. Based on descriptions from the German pilgrims, John of Würzburg and Theoderich in the twelfth century and remainders of Crusader buildings in Acre and Bayt Jibrin, I attempted to reconstruct two of the Crusaders' long-destroyed buildings on the Temple Mount to illustrate their daily life, decorative art, and architecture. Dedicated to their religious and military duties, the Templar members of the Poor Knights of Christ and of the Temple of Solomon that originated at the time of the Crusades lived simple lives following a monastic routine. With these digital reconstructions, I offer a glimpse of a lost period of the city's complex history.

Nicole Lin



*Elbow Column and Smooth-leaf Capital, St. Mary of the Germans, Jerusalem, Crusader Period, 12th century.
Israel Museum, Jerusalem.*

This was one of several fragments of Crusader artifacts of column capitals I used as a reference because it was found in the Church of Saint Mary of the Germans in Jerusalem. The capital was likely made at the Temple Area Atelier, a prestigious workshop that was dedicated to creating decorative sculptures and architectural pieces for the newly built constructions in Jerusalem. Many of such pieces were later removed from their original installations in Crusader structures and incorporated in mosques, fountains, and other buildings.

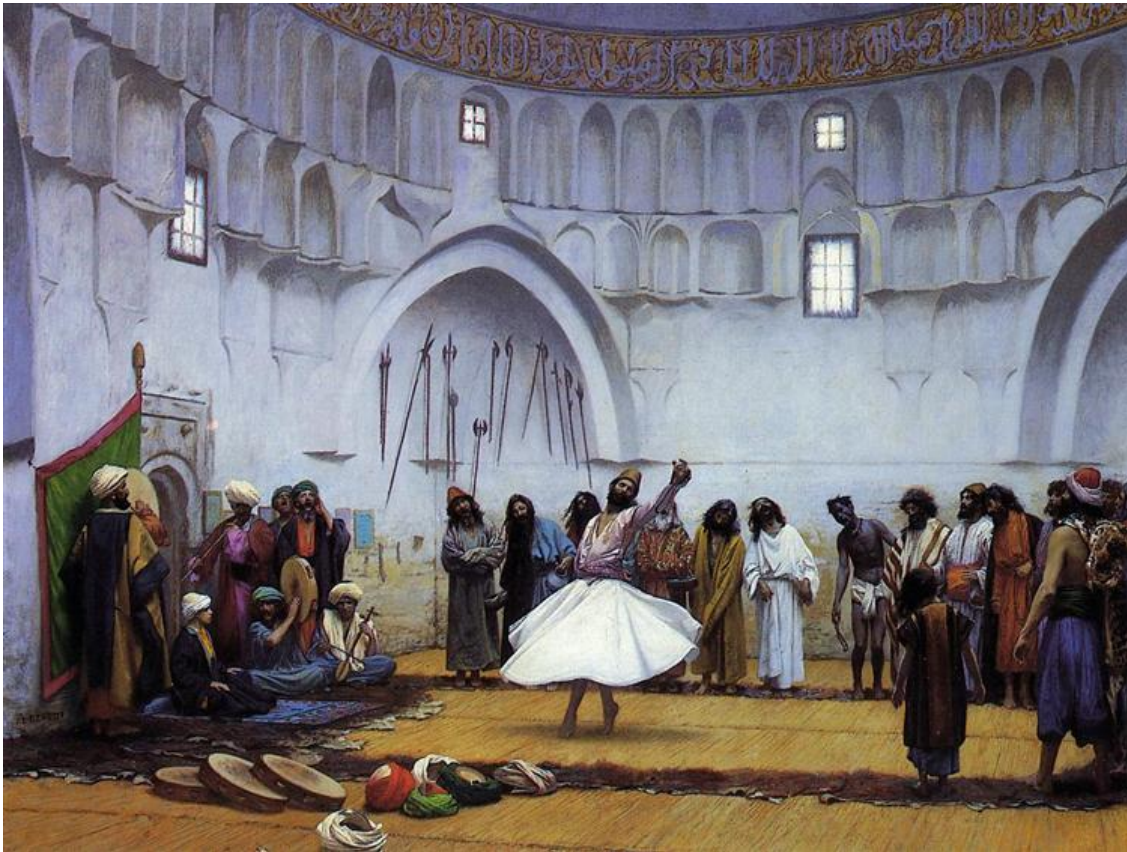
[“Illustrating Crusader Presence on the Temple Mount” complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Emilie Lefebvre



Emilie Lefebvre, *Dome Skirt*, 2014.
Cotton and Ribbon.

When designing my artwork, I knew I wanted to create a portable object that would symbolize the Dome of the Rock. For inspiration, I looked at the traditional costume worn by the Whirling Dervishes, also known as the Mevlevis. Dervishes are part of a branch of Islam called Sufism, which is a more mystical side of the religion. They wear a garment called a tenure on the occasion of *Sema*, a religious ceremony where the Dervishes spin in order to reach a state of enlightenment. I decided to incorporate the patterns of the Dome of the Rock in my skirt. For the circle in the middle to represent the golden cupola, I chose a bright golden yellow. For the octagon, I selected a white and blue fabric imprinted with a design that resembles the building's tiles. Similarly, the green ribbon echoes the colour of these tiles. Finally, the simple untreated cotton that lines the skirt resembles the white stone of the Dome's lower exterior.



Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Whirling Dervishes*, c.1895.
Oil on canvas, 72.5 x 94 cm. Private collection.

During the *Sema*, the tenure which represents the shroud of the ego, spins and lifts, enhancing its wearer's movements and emphasizing the rhythm of the music. The circular movement of the skirt captured in Jean-Léon Gérôme's painting was the basis of my design. The Sufis wear simple garments as a sign of their rejection of the physical and material world and to attain peace. The *Sema* is a ritual that comes from the teachings of their leader Rumi a 13th-century Persian poet, Islamic scholar, and Sufi mystic. One day Rumi, as he was walking down the street heard a sound coming from a goldsmith beating gold into a thin leaf that was used for ornaments of various kinds. In this constant banging he heard "Allah, Allah." Rumi started spinning, and entered a state of trance. This trance is the Sufic interpretation of the moment described by the Prophet Muhammad "I have a time with God and during this time neither angel or prophet can intrude." Thus, the trance reached during the *Sema* is the moment when the Dervishes have a direct undisrupted connection with God.

["Transcendence and Protection: The Whirling Dome" complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Gallery Two



Christopher Johnstone, *The Face of Jerusalem*, 2014. Detail.

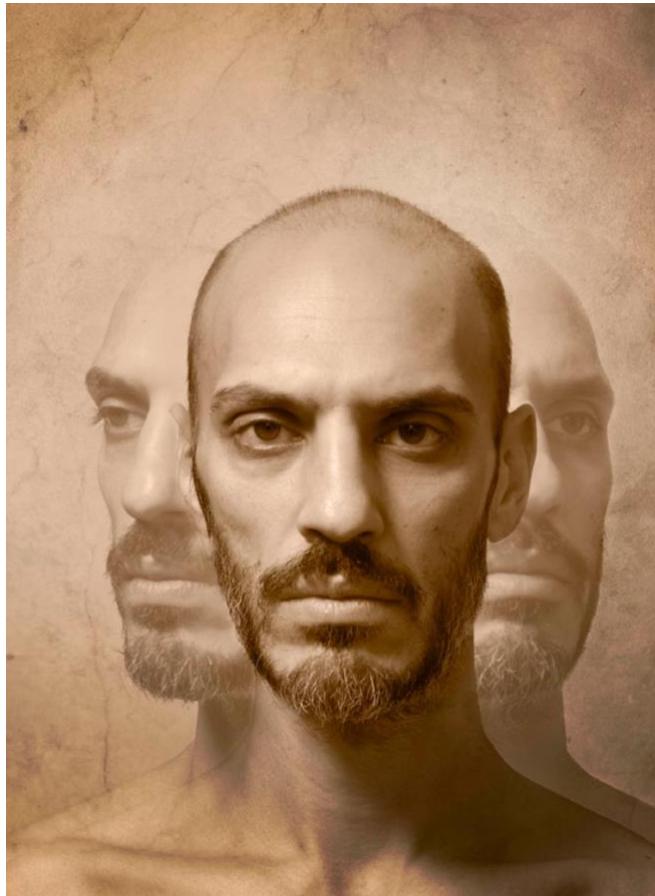
Faces Real and Imagined

Uncovers the diverse ways the artistic creation of a face interacts with myth and reality through the use of visual imagery.

Featured Artists

- ◆ *Christopher Johnstone*
- ◆ *Noa Ogilvy*
- ◆ *Sabrina Ghaya*
- ◆ *Shannon Pomeroy*

Christopher Johnstone



Christopher Johnstone, *The Face of Jerusalem*, 2014.
Digital photography.

I am fascinated with the fact that three religious cultures that identify as so different exist in Jerusalem in such close proximity. How can people who have lived so close to each other for thousands of years claim to have such different lives, led by different purposes? To me, these differences actually read as similarities and so I decided to create a photo that explores this issue. I chose to use my face as the subject as my features can easily be interpreted as those of a Jew, Muslim or Christian. In my image, the middle portrait represents the Jewish faith, and the other two from left to right are the Muslim and Christian faiths. The Muslim and Christian faces are less opaque and grow out of the middle portrait, which signifies their common beginnings. Though I have assigned a specific face to each faith, this fact is implicit rather than immediately apparent as all three faces are identical. In Jerusalem, it is hard to say for certain who is Jewish, Muslim or Christian, and therefore I chose to make my figures essentially indistinguishable. While I appreciate the traits that distinguish one culture from the next and believe them to be essential to the very fabric of the city Jerusalem, I find these nuances to be quite subtle, much like the differences that mark the citizens of Montreal, my home city.

Christopher Johnstone



Anonymous photographer, Mr. Sakfi in Four Different Positions, Bethlehem, 1922. Photograph.

My project was influenced by this photograph of Mr. Sakfi. Initially, I wanted to create multiple portraits of myself sitting around a table sharing something in common, such as a meal. My idea was to use food as a symbol of what people inevitably share when they live in the same region. In this way, food serves as a metaphor for public space, agriculture and the infrastructure of Jerusalem that all citizens depend on no matter their religious background. These aspects of daily life form a shared city culture which should then result in a more community-based sentiment. In the end, I decided not to fully mimic the anonymous photographer's picture as I did not want to date my image with costumes, which would clash with my intention of creating a timeless piece.

["The Face of Jerusalem" complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Noa Ogilvy

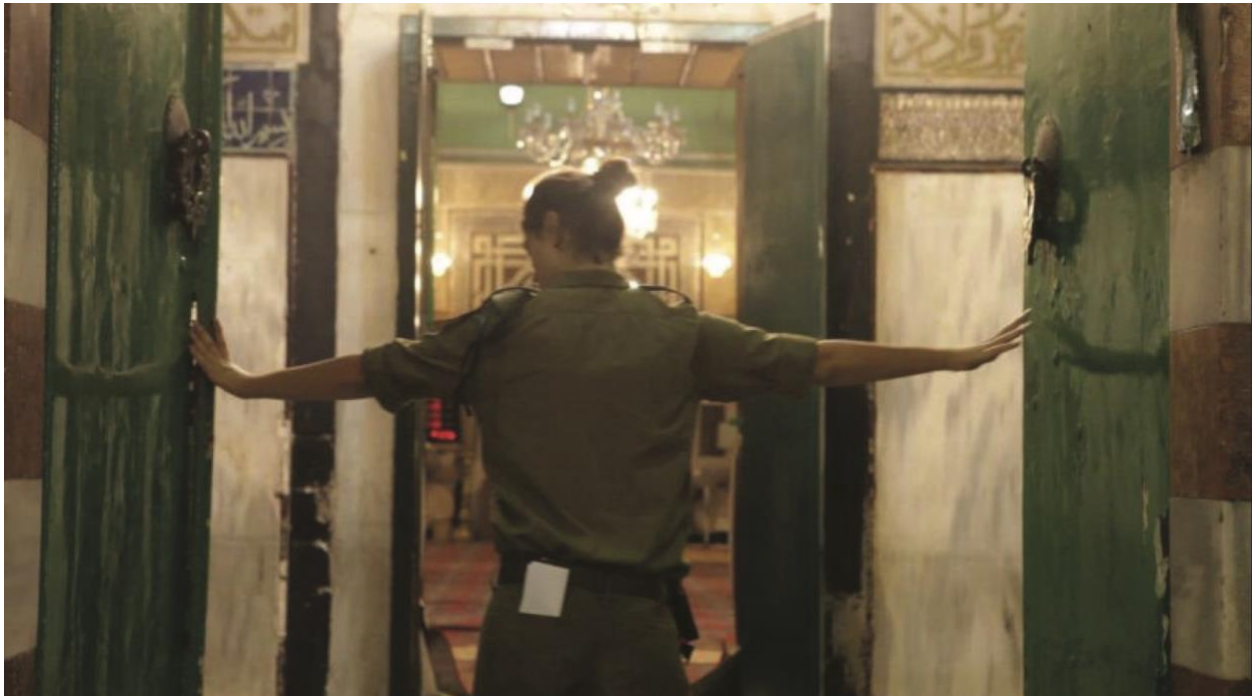


Noa Ogilvy, *Jerusalem of Gold*, 2018.

The Arab-Israeli Six Day War of 1967 had a profound impact not only on Israel but on the entire Middle East. For the first time since the State of Israel's birth in 1948 Israel had sovereignty over a united Jerusalem. The military victories in Jerusalem during the Six Day War were photographed extensively, and in many of the photographs soldiers can be seen standing next to or on top of sacred sites. In particular, many photos from the archives of the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) focus on the military's relationship to two sites: the Western Wall and the Dome of the Rock in the Old City. One of the lasting consequences of the war was that a strong Israeli military presence was established in Jerusalem. The military became the facilitator of interactions between individuals (religious, secular, tourists, etc.) and these sacred sites.

Jerusalem of Gold is a multimedia collage that examines the relationship between the IDF and the complexities of religious coexistence in Jerusalem during and immediately after the 1967 Six Day War. I painted Yitzhak Rabin and Moshe Dayan in oil, seemingly floating behind a large collage in the shape of the city of Jerusalem with her new borders after the Six Day War. The collage is comprised of pictures of soldiers in the fight for Jerusalem, particularly in the battle for the Old City. The objective of the work is to pay homage to this moment in Israeli history, acknowledge the complexities of religious co-existence in Jerusalem, and examine the tight relationship between the IDF and Jerusalem's sacred sites.

Noa Ogilvy

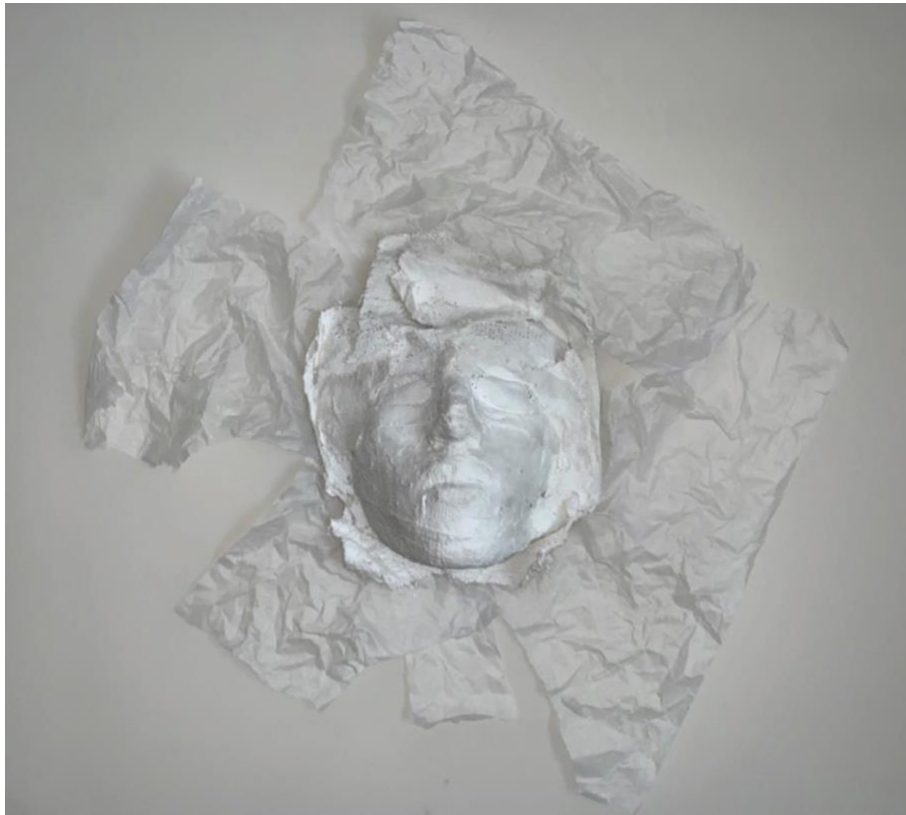


Nira Pereg, *Abraham Abraham*, 2012.
Single-channel HD video, sound, duration: 4:25 min. loop.
Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

I created *Jerusalem of Gold* in dialogue with Israeli artist Nira Pereg's video work, *Abraham Abraham*. Pereg shows how space is shared by Muslims and Jews at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron, a holy site for both faiths. As the description on the Israel Museum website explains, the site is divided into a mosque and a synagogue, and ten times a year the space is given entirely to Muslims or Jews to use. This periodic transformation takes place under the watchful eyes of the IDF who observe the entire procedure.

["Jerusalem of Gold" complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Sabrina Ghaya



Sabrina Ghaya, *Trace: Facing the Impacts of Iconography in Jerusalem*, 2018.

The majority of religious drawings, paintings, and sculptures do not acknowledge Jerusalem's diverse population. *Trace: Facing the Impact of Iconography in Jerusalem* stems from my study of three nineteenth-century paintings that differ in their representation of the ethnic identity of Jesus and fellow citizens: William Holman Hunt's *The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple* (1854–60); Maurycy Gottlieb's *Christ before His Judges* (1877–79); and Henry Ossawa Tanner's *Nicodemus Visiting Jesus* (1899). In my relief sculpture I depict a face emerging from a blank, flat surface. This is not a modern recreation of what Jesus Christ's image should look like, nor does it contain biblical references. Instead of dictating a biblical, social, or political narrative, *Trace* hopes to raise questions regarding historical art practices; to help re-centre the contemporary world's view of Jerusalem's identity within a more hybrid context. I modelled the mask in *Trace* after my own face, so that the work functions as a metaphor for my personal concerns regarding Euro-Christian iconography and the visual images of Jerusalem's people. My objective was to explore how Western Christian art could be more inclusive of the cultural diversity of Jerusalem. Given the transparency of my work I invite other artists to fill in the blanks and consider the impact of past representations of Jesus Christ on modern perceptions. Above all, my purpose in creating *Trace* was to highlight our responsibility to actively re-assess the *traces* hidden in our history.

Sabrina Ghaya

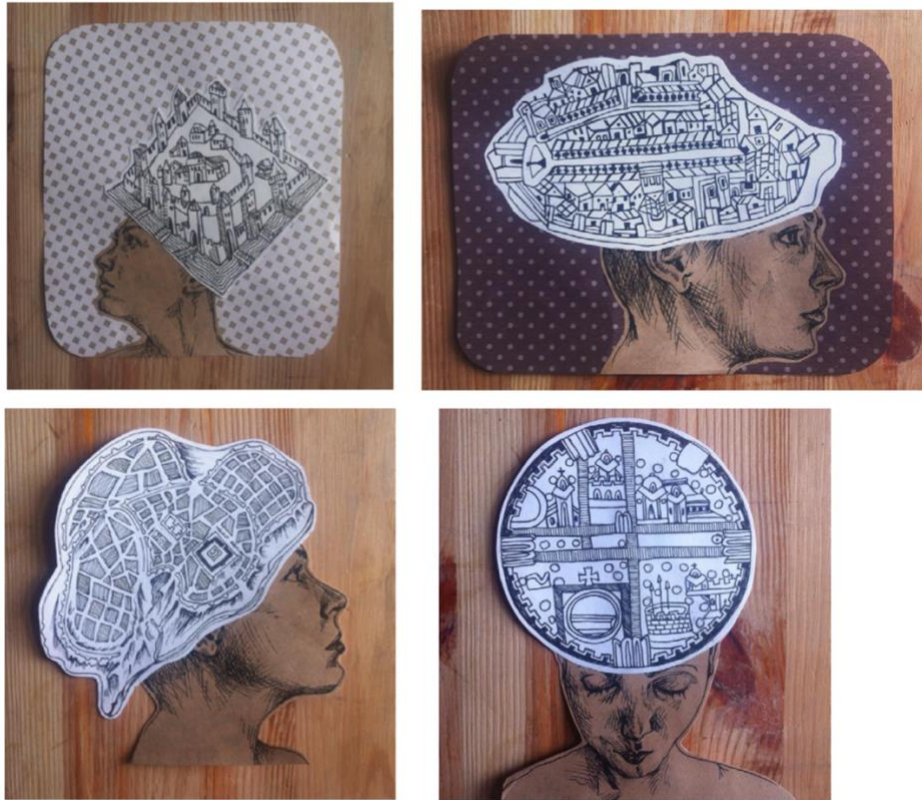


William Holman Hunt, *The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple*, c. 1854–1860. Oil on canvas, 70 x 45 cm. Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

The first work that sparked my interest in Western artists' rendering of Christian iconography was Hunt's *The Finding of the Saviour in the Temple*. This biblical scene marks the moment in which after a long conversation about scripture with the seven rabbis, the young Jesus becomes aware of his prophecy. While Hunt pays strong attention to Jewish-Middle Eastern culture in his depiction of the rabbis and the setting, the young Jesus is portrayed with blue eyes, a delicate nose, a fair skin tone with rosy cheeks, and auburn blond hair. The subordinate status of a Jewish appearance could not be embodied in Christ's depiction, regardless of the obvious Jewish Middle Eastern ethnicity of Jesus. In other words, even though Hunt painted a setting of ethnographic accuracy "rarely reached" and "rarely aimed" at by others, his image of Jesus nevertheless exists within a European imperial framework.

["Trace: Facing the Impact of Iconography in Jerusalem" complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Shannon Pomeroy



Shannon Pomeroy, *Self-Portraits with Maps of Jerusalem*, 2014.
Collage.

While topographical knowledge of Jerusalem's roads and squares can be gleaned from Crusader chronicles as early as the Middle Ages, accurate visual archetypes gave way to schematic maps to evoke symbolic values in favour of geographical clarity. In these maps prominent structures like the Dome of the Rock and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre become "loci of memory, non narrative, non-chronological organizers, as Old Testament, New Testament, and historical events are layered together at each site." I am intrigued by these maps and aerial views because they provide an uncommon perspective of a city and illustrate the human impulse to articulate the world in a schematic, simplified visual language. Inspired by this, I created a handful of mixed media pieces. Each work is composed of inked self-portraits that are adorned with decorative headdresses which, upon further inspection, are revealed to be maps of Jerusalem from different historical eras. I executed these drawings to express my personal discomfort towards the ease with which we enter distant parts of the world. By virtue of their rococo aesthetic, the portraits point to the wealth or status associated with tourist souvenirs and the fetishization and "othering" involved in travel business. The maps adorn my head like lavish geographical trophies, as though I am entitled to boast my status as an "experienced" witness of Jerusalem simply after plugging in relatively easily accessible images of the city.



Map of Jerusalem, 12th Century.

Psalter Fragment. Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, Ms. 76 F 5.

Throughout Jerusalem's rocky history, cartographic visualizations evolved and today have been appropriated by the tourist industry. Tourist maps emphasize specific sites by portraying a hierarchical scale of importance. A distorted mapping of space can also be observed in older models, such as medieval monastic maps that were employed as visual aids for a type of mnemonic meditation, inciting contemplation through geometric cues. Indeed, maps have always displayed the geographical understanding of their makers, visually privileging certain spaces over others. My map images are derived from the *Madaba Map*, the first known depiction of Jerusalem, this colourful 12th century plan of the Old City from a Psalter, a simple illustration from the 13th-14th century by Nicolas of Lyra, and a 17th-18th century Venetian rendition.

["A Digital Pilgrimage to the Holy City: An Art Series" complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Gallery Three



Agnes Dakroub, *Escape Goat*, 2018. Detail.

Configurations of Conflict

Considers the reactions of artists to lived experiences, failed attempts at reconciliation, and the use of religion as a tool to justify violence.

Featured Artists

- ◆ *Agnes Dakroub*
- ◆ *Clayton Ross*
- ◆ *John William Lanthier*

Agnes Dakroub



Agnes Dakroub, *Escape Goat*, 2018.

Christianity, Islam, and Judaism are unified by their belief in the story of Abraham who almost sacrificed his son instead of a lamb to prove his devotion to God. In the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) Abraham's son Isaac asks his father "where is the lamb for the burnt offering" to which his father replies "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son" (Genesis 22:7-8). In Christianity, in the New Testament, John the Baptist saw Jesus and said "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world!" (John 1:29). In Judaism Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac atones for the sins of the Israelites and confirms their belief in God; in Christianity the Crucifixion of Jesus atones for the sins of mankind and confirms the belief that Jesus is the son of God. In Islam, Eid al-Adha, the Festival of the Sacrifice, honours the readiness of Ibrahim (Abraham) to sacrifice his son. To commemorate God's intervention, Moslems ritually sacrifice lambs every year. The antithesis of sacrifice gave way to the main concept of *Escape Goat*. My work shows two lambs positioned in a chokehold as they engage in a game of tug of war with the goat in the middle. Contrary to the warm, Mediterranean climate of the Holy City, I place these figures on a mountain of snow. I selected this topography to circle back to the story of Abraham and his son, which occurs atop a mountain. I included this immobilized, cold substance in my work to portray the menacing, unchanging situation of a conflict that seems to only be getting worse. *Escape Goat* represents a clear lack of compromise, which, when translated into real life, comes at the cost of human beings.

Agnes Dakroub



Menashe Kadishman, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, 1982–84.
Corten steel, 60 x 41 x 49 cm. Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

The Sacrifice of Isaac, one of numerous artworks by Menashe Kadishman depicting sheep, was influenced by the artist's shepherding experiences as a youth. These artworks “address the violence of society and the destructive orientation of civilization.” These same self-destructive tendencies are exhibited in the actions of my *Escape Goat*. The goat who is usually associated with the qualities of a redeemer, takes on morbid, almost suicidal tendencies in both *The Sacrifice of Isaac* and *Escape Goat*.

[“Escape Goat” complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Clayton Ross



Clayton Ross, *The Paradox of Belief*, 2018.
Acrylic paint, photograph, 61 x 91.4 cm.

Throughout history, religion has been used repeatedly in the justification and promotion of radical and violent behaviour, arguably in the pursuit of individual gain and collective cultural repression. Jerusalem is among the oldest cities known to humankind; it is the birthplace of three of the most prominent monotheistic religions in existence—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—all of which lay claim to the city, its structures, and its surrounding areas. The pretence of salvation has mobilized millions of followers for thousands of years to commit what some may consider impious acts in the name of what they believe to be “God,” the supreme being and creator of humankind and the universe. This historically documented religious turmoil in and around Jerusalem has led many people, including myself, to question religious faith and the existence of “God.” The inspiration for *The Paradox of Belief* is my creative understanding of the flawed human condition. Is the one whom many call “God” all-powerful and all-loving, yet apathetic to watching our violent history continue to repeat itself? The artwork that I have created is meant to raise questions about the turmoil and human suffering that Jerusalem has endured for the sake of what I argue to be human gain in the name of faith. It consists of a photograph of an installation piece comprised of a prayer bench, with items randomly littering the base that relate to faith, greed, power, and oppression. My intention is not to discredit religious belief or the existence of “God,” but rather to raise the question of what a supreme and all-powerful being thinks of the arbitrary use of religion to commit heinous acts of violence against our fellow humans.

Clayton Ross



Joshua Neustein, *How History Became Geography*, 1990.
Wood podium, hand painted map on paper, cut glass and crystal chandelier, 540 x 241 x 241 cm, Israel Museum, Jerusalem.

There exist many works of art that relate to the theme of my own artistic creation, as well as to my understanding of Jerusalem's history, such as Joshua Neustein's *How History Became Geography*. Neustein's work explores how the history of conquests and oppression wrought by various peoples and cultures has created an ever-changing landscape within Jerusalem and its surrounding areas—a phenomenon that is still present today. News outlets in the West have familiarized most of their readers to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Israeli expansion into what was previously Palestinian land. This appropriation continues to propel the changing geography of the region.

[“The Paradox of Belief” complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

John William Lanthier



John William Lanthier, *Villa Dolorosa*, 2014.
Acrylic paint on canvas, 16 x 20 in.

My painting refers specifically to the Via Dolorosa in Old Jerusalem, the purported path that Christ was forced to take on the way to his crucifixion. I have depicted the dominant symbols of the three monotheistic religions: the Christian cross, the Islamic crescent and star, and the Jewish Star of David. The arrangement of these symbols, repeated ad nauseam around the margins of the canvas like the walls of the city, is meant to indicate the overwhelming religious context that is imposed on Jerusalem's populace. The last step in my production process was to cover my hand with red paint and walk across the surface of the canvas repeatedly with my fingers leaving trails of faux-gore. With this brutal act of creative desecration, I tried to put myself within the mindset of the unnamed victims of past violent experiences and those who perpetuated them, mostly invisible now within the tourist-friendly city. As Yehuda Amichai, the eminent Hebrew poet has so succinctly written, "Jerusalem is built on the vaulted foundations of a held back scream." This reminds us that the city is impregnated with a history of violence—a dark context that is difficult, if not impossible, to ignore. The implications of this besmearing of my painting with blood are manifold. This includes a reference to the foul concept of 'blood libel' established by the Church's anti-Jewish reading of Matthew 27:25 "His blood be upon us and our children." This sentence has been used as justification for the slaughtering of countless Jews throughout time, in revenge for their assumed complicity in the condemning of Christ, that horribly culminated in the Holocaust.

John William Lanthier



Mordecai Ardon, *Ardon Windows or Isaiah's Vision of Eternal Peace*, 1984. Stained glass. Lobby, Jewish National and University Library, Jerusalem.

I created *Villa Dolorosa* slowly through an accumulation of two-dimensional renditions of three-dimensional architectural forms that I layered like the stones of ancient edifices. Through abstraction, I sought to avoid the falsehood inherent in the literal reconstruction of memories of the past from present visual evidence. My choice was inspired in part by Mordecai Ardon's symbolic and geometric stained glass windows. The left panel of *Isaiah's Vision of Eternal Peace* shows the paths taken by the nations to Jerusalem; the middle panel depicts Jerusalem with the city wall visualized as the Dead Sea Scroll of the Book of Isaiah; and the right panel is the realization of Isaiah's vision with guns beaten into spades that float above them.

["Villa Dolorosa" complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Gallery Four



Élise Peters, *Jérusalem, le coeur de monde*, 2013.Detail.

Bridging the Earthly and Heavenly Realms

Explores the ways Jewish, Christian, and Muslim art and architecture express the belief of Jerusalem as the epicentre of the physical and spiritual world.

Featured Artists

- ◆ *Élise Peters*
- ◆ *Trang Phan*
- ◆ *Paméla Simard*
- ◆ *Gabby Orellana*

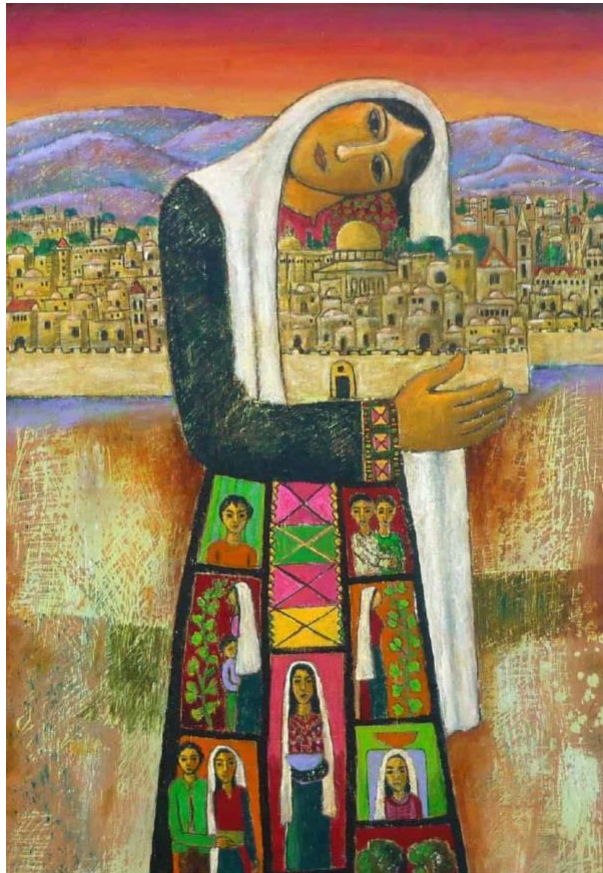
Élise Peters



Élise Peters, *Jérusalem, le cœur de monde*, 2013.

Je m'intéresse à Jérusalem en termes de location. Cet endroit que l'on définit comme le centre du monde selon la vision de la bible. La création d'une toile, *Jérusalem, le cœur du monde*, aura pour but d'illustrer cet attachement à la ville de Jérusalem dans notre vie contemporaine, aux problèmes qui dérivent autant pour sa structure que l'idée spirituelle qui nous y rattache. Ce centre du monde tant convoité représente pour la plupart un endroit d'invulnérabilité, un désir de s'assurer de la maîtrise d'un monde. Les peuples anciens considèrent l'ordre du monde comme étant structurés autour d'un centre délimité par une clôture. Ce monde correspond à l'ordre idéal de la création. Sur ma toile, nous pouvons voir un corps humain cartographié ou les passages abstraits de l'extérieur entrent à quelques endroits du nord au sud en passant par l'ouest et l'est. Jérusalem est très fragile et je me suis servie de l'un de ses plans pour l'illustrer et la transférer à l'intérieur de mon œuvre. L'idée du centre de la terre et de la périphérie apporte les termes de l'inégalité, de domination et de pouvoir. La question de centre de la Terre est aussi celle de notre relation à la vérité. Il est vrai que l'inconnu, et la différence font peur, mais elle est sans limites. Rester dans le confort et la routine devient monotone. Encore aujourd'hui il est question de guerre et de conflits. Nous souhaitons tous que ces tragédies cessent pour qu'un jour, une réconciliation ait enfin lieu et que la paix règne sur toute la terre.

Élise Peters

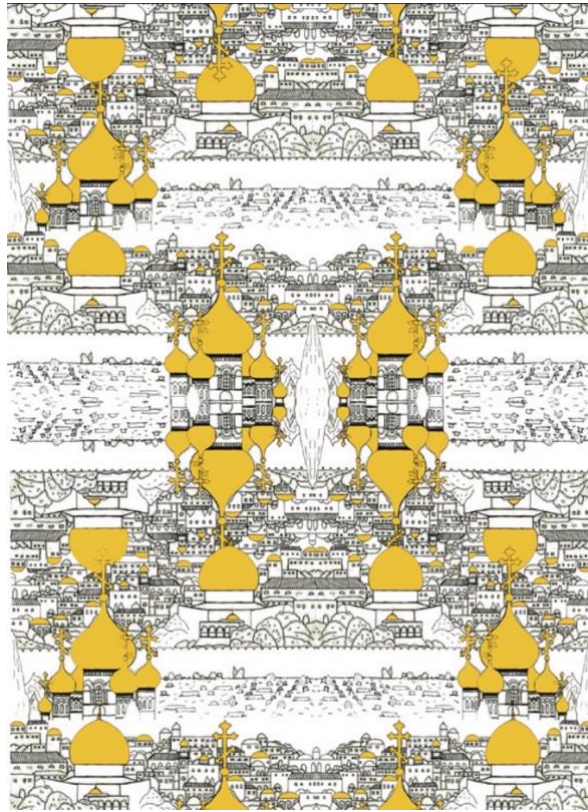


Nabil Anani, *Mother's Embrace*, 2013.
Photo: Nabil Anani.

Dans mon œuvre, je veux illustrer cette tension entre l'intérieur de la ville et l'extérieur. Nabil Anani m'a beaucoup inspirée avec sa toile *Mother's Embrace*. Le connu, le rassurant, ce centre du monde qui assure la puissance. Par le biais de la forme humaine, je lie la cartographie de manière métaphorique pour illustrer une circulation typographiquement sanguine, une évolution dans le temps, l'agrandissement de territoire. Dans la bible, c'est l'image d'un arbre cosmique qui se trouve dans le désert. L'arbre est au milieu d'un jardin qui a l'aspect d'une oasis, et représente la vie. Pour ma part, je vois un lien avec l'organisme et le lieu sacré de Jérusalem. La surface de notre corps qui est la peau symbolise les limites de cet espace sacré. Les frontières du monde connues.

["Jérusalem, le coeur de monde" complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Trang Phan



Trang Phan, *Terre Sainte*, 2016.

Crayon, encre noir sur papier II, 21. x 27.9 cm.

En dessinant *Terre Sainte* j'ai réalisé qu'on ne voit pas souvent des motifs de ville sur tissu, mais plutôt de la végétation et des animaux. J'avais l'impression que plus le dessin avançait, plus les heures passées composaient un moment spirituel avec la ville de Jérusalem. C'est comme si j'étais connectée spirituellement à différentes religions parce que je dessinais le Dôme du Rocher, l'Église Sainte-Marie-Madeleine et muraille de Prière. L'expérience était plutôt virtuelle parce que je ne suis pas à Jérusalem et je ne fais pas de rituels comme par exemple le pèlerinage où les gens vont marcher sur les lieux sacrés. Cette recherche que je fais est plutôt personnelle et imaginaire et je me suis d'une certaine façon crée un vécu avec la mémoire virtuelle et visuelle de l'importance de ces lieux cultes. Je me suis servi de l'application Adobe Photoshop comme outil pour réaliser ce design par ordinateur. Mon œuvre d'art sur papier peut être réalisée d'abord en utilisant du bois pour créer les motifs et ensuite les transférer sur tissu en utilisant l'impression textile comme technique. L'option nécessite beaucoup d'équipements dont des cadres de sérigraphies, de l'émulsion pour faire le transfert d'image, des lumières UV, chambre noire, etc. C'est donc pourquoi j'ai choisi le papier comme matériau. J'ai mis la couleur jaune ocre puisqu'elle est proche du doré et celle-ci fut utilisée sur le Dôme du Rocher et l'église SainteMarie-Madeleine. On voit bien cette dorure lorsqu'on regarde la ville de Jérusalem de loin.

Trang Phan



Anonyme, *Textile with Foliated Scrolls*, 13–14e siècle.
Coton, bloc à impression et teinture par réserve, 21,6 x 15,2 cm.
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

L'impression au bloc est une des techniques artisanales utilisée dans le monde de textile. L'emploi de celle-ci fut influencé par l'ère romaine, mais sa vraie provenance vient plutôt de l'Inde datant du 3e 4 siècle. Cette technique consiste à tailler un motif sur du bois, d'appliquer de la couleur et de le transférer sur tissu par la suite. On utilise le bois de sycomore, le frêne, le poirier qui sont caractérisés par leur essences dures à grain fin. La méthode d'étampage peut se faire en plusieurs fois pour créer un beau motif à répétition. Ces blocs de bois ne servent pas seulement à imprimer ; on peut manier des mordants ou organiser un mélange à réserve comme la cire. Sur la pièce de tissu au MET il est bien prouvé par analyse que l'utilisation de l'impression au bloc et par teinte à réserve est employée sur le textile. On voit la conception du tissage avec les déchirures et l'usure de celui-ci et qui aident à voir le métier du tisserand par les trames du tissu en lin.

["Le fil du temps" complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Paméla Simard



Paméla Simard, *Lumen*, 2016.
Erable, diam. 33.02 cm.

La dichotomie entre la divinité (intangibile) et la matérialité fut mon point de départ. Ce qui m'a le plus interpellé est la possibilité d'élaborer des méthodes de visualisation alternatives et des réalités transcendantales. J'ai développé une série de questions qui, tout au long de mon projet, ont été d'une importance fondamentale : Comment est-il possible de représenter la divinité? Comment la matérialité peut-elle provoquer une expérience sensorielle qui traduit la puissance des idéologies religieuses? Comment s'appropriier l'intangibile? Comment le façonne-t-on? Comment représenter ou même évoquer la puissance divine à travers une illustration, sans rabaisser cette dernière la restreignant à un support matériel? En poursuivant mes lectures, j'ai élargi mon horizon de recherche vers le thème de la lumière cosmique. Dans le texte "Between Logos (Kalima) and Light (Nur): Representations of the Prophet Muhammad in Islamic Painting," l'auteure aborde le concept de la lumière divine. Particulièrement, les concepts de golden aureole, cosmic entity, celestial, pre-existential reality et existential being sont devenus partie intégrante de ma recherche puisque je cherchais à matérialiser les éléments intangibles vers une forme sculpturale. La forme des halos raconte le parcours de la lumière divine, celle qui habite le corps d'un saint et qui en émane. En les contemplant, j'ai l'impression qu'ils sont en mouvement. Leur forme circulaire n'est pas seulement synonyme d'entité cosmique qu'elle fait référence à la notion platonicienne du mouvement de la pensée.

Paméla Simard



Anonymous, The Saint Matthew Capital, 1170s. Calcaire, 42,2 x 54 x 47 cm. Terra Sancta Museum, Basilica of the Annunciation, Nazareth.

L'artéfact *The Saint Matthew Capital* s'est avéré être la clé de ma recherche. Le détail qui a particulièrement retenu mon attention est le halo de Saint Matthew taillé dans la pierre. La minutie de l'exécution de l'artiste est tout aussi remarquable qu'elle a suscité ma curiosité : ce dernier a rendu les détails architecturaux d'une façon parfaitement complémentaire au halo. En d'autres mots, l'arc se dressant au dessus de la tête de Saint Matthew occupe une courbe très similaire à celle de son auréole. Se pourrait-il qu'il y ait une analogie importante entre les éléments architecturaux et la forme des halos? J'ai poursuivi ma recherche et creusé différents documents d'histoire de l'art sans réellement pouvoir établir un fil conducteur solide entre ces deux éléments. En consultant le livre *l'Art Gothique*, la réponse s'est révélée d'elle-même : les rosaces des églises gothiques. Leur forme circulaire, manifestée à travers un ensemble de courbes tout aussi géométriques les unes que les autres, transmet elle aussi la notion du divin en tant que lumière qui transcende la réalité matérielle. À l'inverse des halos, les rosaces ne sont pas exclusivement symboles d'émanence de lumière, mais bien celui de médiateur cosmique, d'une entité architecturale par laquelle la lumière jaillit.

[*"Lumen" complete Artist Essay can be read here.*](#)

Gabby Orellana



Gabby Orellana, *A Night Journey, Volume I (Page 1)*, 2015.
Ink on watercolour paper.

A Night Journey, Volume I is a three-page comic strip exploring the first of two parts – the Isra and the Mi'raj – of Prophet Muhammad's Night Journey in the Qur'an. My interpretation aims to show that the narrative is an adaptive and shifting work that lends itself as an accessible entry point into Islam and its relationship to Jerusalem. The title of my work, *A Night Journey, Volume I*, represents a rejection of the idea that one version of the myth must supersede all others. My intention is to highlight the spiritual message of the tale rather than considering it as a fixed canonical work. One may choose to approach the folktale as an historical account of actual events or simply as a fictional tale that symbolizes religious traditions of the past; however, the fact remains that the story is grounded in real locations imbued with symbolic meaning, creating a sense of wonder and utopianism in the mystical yet plausible world visited in the fantastic tale. In my comic, the familiar setting of Jerusalem invites non-Muslim viewers on this spiritual journey grounded in the earthly realm. For my comic strip I created a written script of spoken passages accompanied by a plan of actions that would take place in specific panels. I also included small concept sketches of how the key panels would potentially look. I then proceeded to faintly pencil in the content of the pages, taking care to measure and compose each section based on the importance of the narrative action. Finally, I went over each pencil line with ink, varying the width of the line in order to emphasize the pictorial planes and certain details such as the ornamentation.



Anonymous, *On the Way to Jerusalem*, from the *Mir'aj Nâmeh* 1436.
Bibliothèque nationale, Paris.

The Persian miniatures in the *Mir'aj Nâmeh* initially inspired me to translate the myth into a comic strip, as there are strong visual similarities between the two mediums. I was particularly interested in the relationship between figure and background in Persian miniatures. As part of my research I studied facsimiles of the Persian miniatures illustrating Muhammad's Night Journey in the *Mir'aj Nâmeh* (Book of the Ascension of Muhammad). This Turkish Islamic manuscript was produced in the city of Herat in Khorasan (modern Afghanistan), and was commissioned by Shâhrukh Mîrza (1377–1447), son of Timur (late 1320s/1330s–1405), who founded the Timurid Empire in Persia and Central Asia. I also examined the written versions of the myth by Ibn 'Abbas (ca. 619–687), Muhammad's cousin and a Qur'an scholar. I documented symbolic and recurring elements of the narrative that have survived despite its many different translations and adaptations, and recorded other anecdotal details I felt would enrich my comic.

[“Muhammad's Night Journey: Comic Visual Exploration through a Western Perspective” complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Gallery Five



Florence Seymour-Provencher, *The Checkpoint*, 2015. Detail.

Journey to Jerusalem

Approaches the Holy Land from the viewpoints of people who physically or metaphorically journeyed to Jerusalem, including religious leaders, pilgrims, refugees and tourists.

Featured Artists

- ◆ *Alyag Malkhassian*
- ◆ *Florence Seymour-Provencher*
- ◆ *Faith Wiley*

Alyag Malkhassian



Alyag Malkhassian, *The Forty Orphans (Page 1)*, 2015.

I have delved into my own family past, and discovered a captivating connection between my Armenian great-grandfather, Jerusalem and Ethiopian royalty. The musical band Arba Lidjotch consisted of forty Armenian orphans living Jerusalem, including my great-grandfather. They were discovered and adopted by Ethiopia's regent Haile Selassie I (1892 - 1975) and became the first royal Ethiopian brass band. In the aftermath of the Armenian Genocide (1915-1918), the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem (the bishop of the Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church in Jerusalem), Yeghishe Tourian (1860-1930), was faced with the task of housing over eight hundred Armenian orphans from Dayr al-Zur and other parts of Syria. Selassie decided to adopt the members of the band who were between the ages of twelve and eighteen and bring them back with him to Addis Ababa. Formally resembling a gospel, *The Forty Orphans* is an illuminated manuscript of the story of my great-grandfather, Hovannes Megrdoch Malkhassian. My aim was to mimic real manuscripts and to experience what it is like to create illuminated miniatures. Key passages from my great-grandfather's memoirs lend the narrative in my work greater authenticity and emotion. I wrote the text in Armenian to stay true to tradition and to create an authentic work for myself and my family. Although my manuscript features religious elements that are integral to the narrative, I chose to make it a secular work because religious difference has been one of the primary causes of war throughout Jerusalem's history. The image of the Cathedral of Saint James or Saints Jacobs Armenian Cathedral, a 12th-century Armenian church in Jerusalem's Armenian Quarter, for example, is not meant to portray it as a place of religious worship but as the setting where Selassie and my great-grandfather met.

Alyag Malkhassian



Christ's Entry into Jerusalem, from the Melisende Psalter, 1131–1143. Parchment, 21.5 x 14.5 cm, Egerton MS 1139, f. 5v, British Library.

I was inspired by the Melisende illuminators in the scriptorium of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. A good many of the images which illustrate scenes more typical of Eastern Orthodox liturgy were painted by Basilius who was probably an Armenian Catholic. I have studied some of the thirty thousand Armenian illuminated manuscripts that exist around the world. In 2013, I visited the Armenian Museum in Matenadaran, where ten thousand of them reside, and was amazed by the beauty and details of these tiny books.

***“Armenian Illuminations: Strange Connections between Nations”
complete Artist Essay can be read here.***

Florence Seymour-Provencher



Florence Seymour-Provencher, *Chronicles of a Naive Backpacker in Jerusalem; A Lesson in Modesty*, 2015.
Watercolour and ink, 15 x 30.5 cm.

Chronicles of a Naive Backpacker in Jerusalem is a graphic account of the adventures of a young woman visiting the Holy Land. Although the city is historically fascinating, I fear that it has become a touristic spectacle, which devalues its religious properties. Having travelled around Eastern Europe and Asia, I have come to the realization that although it is not my intention to offend people of local cultures, I often do. No matter how prepared I feel am for a new adventure, I always feel ill-informed. Therefore, the naive, blue-haired character in *Chronicles of a Naive Backpacker in Jerusalem* is loosely based on my own backpacking experiences, but also anticipates my visit to Jerusalem as a curious tourist. My project consists of a cover and three pages of illustrations on heavy watercolour paper. I used India ink, watercolour and pen for the black outlines of the drawings. Each page contains a separate story relating to modesty, ownership or chaos.

Florence Seymour-Provencher



Muhammad visits hell in this fifteenth-century Persian illumination. Reproduced from “Islamic Depictions of Mohammed in Full,” *Muslim Issue*, last modified December 1, 2012.

The first strip titled *A Lesson in Modesty* is inspired by an illumination in a fifteenth-century Persian manuscript of the *Mirāj Nāmeḥ* in which Muhammad visits hell. This illumination depicts women being hung by their hair and tortured by a demon for exposing their hair in public. It is a violent image that reveals the extent to which modesty is valued in Islam. My response to this picture was to replace the burning women with my naive backpacker wearing revealing clothing in *A Lesson in Modesty*. On the right side, leaders from the three monotheistic religions in Jerusalem frown at her immodesty. Luscious long legs and arms are reaching up from the flames, all victims of Western dress in a foreign and conservative setting.

[“Chronicles of a Naive Backpacker in Jerusalem” complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Faith Wiley



Faith Wiley, page one of *Histoire d'Esme*, 2013.
Watercolour and ink on paper, 11x 15 in.

I am interested in the style of manuscript illuminations in books like *Histoire d'Outremer*, Archbishop William of Tyre's history of the First Crusade and the Latin settlements in the Levant as far as 1184. I want to examine the types of stories these manuscripts tell, and imagine parts of the story that would not have been considered important enough to be included in a book. I noticed that the characters commonly focused on in the stories were adult men. This led me to create a girl of ten who would have lived in the twelfth century and travelled to Jerusalem as a pilgrim. I chose this story because instead of being an adult male she was a female child, about as far away as possible from the depictions normally shown of crusaders or pilgrims in manuscripts. I named her Esme, because it is an old French name meaning "beloved." I chose to depict moments that humanize her story. I found these themes interesting because they are the little human moments that are not important to the dominant narrative of the crusades as a very important and heroic endeavor. I drew my style partly from the manuscript illuminations I was studying. By focusing on a traditionally marginalized segment of the population (children and females in general), and portraying them using the same medium that is more often used to create images of men, I hope to imagine the untold stories of the marginalized and remind the viewer that the typical crusader and pilgrim illuminations are not exhaustive, and in fact fail to represent many of the people affected.



“Crusaders Infiltrate the Walls of Jerusalem,” from William of Tyre’s *Histoire d’Outremer*, 13th century.

One picture I drew inspiration from is “Crusaders Infiltrate the Walls of Jerusalem,” from William of Tyre’s *Histoire d’Outremer*. This is a visually dense illustration, full of people, buildings, and war machines all crammed into a rectangular composition. The people are small, and it is hard to make out their individual characteristics. They are climbing walls of what looks like a castle at the bottom and a church on top. Large rocks have been shot into the air by a trebuchet and are visible along the right side of the image. In the top left corner the feet of Jesus are shown ascending off the page in a cloud. I borrowed parts of this image for my first page. I wanted to draw an imaginary Jerusalem as the pilgrims would expect it to be. This image is obviously not a realistic depiction of Jerusalem, as the architecture looks Gothic. My first page was meant to be a depiction of how they imagined that their journey to Jerusalem would be, and what it would look like when they got there.

[“Histoire d’Esme: An Imagined Story of a Ten-year Old Pilgrim to Jerusalem in the Twelfth Century” complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Gallery Six



Deanna Hewitt, *Peace and Chaos in the Holy Land*, 2015. Detail.

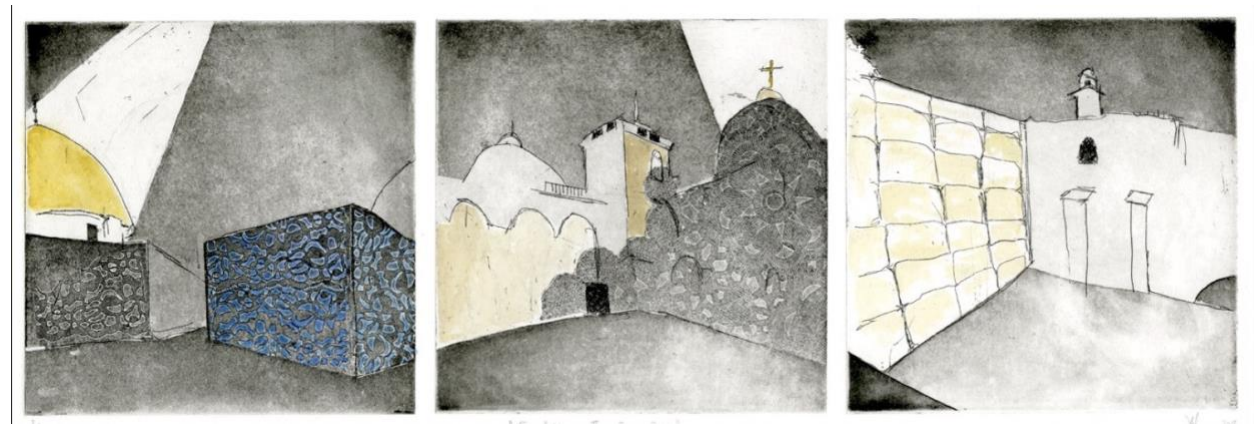
A Shared Jerusalem: Commonalities and Differences

Engages with Jerusalem as a place that offers the possibility of peaceful coexistence.

Featured Artists

- ◆ *Eduardo Mazzonna*
- ◆ *Kristina Parker*
- ◆ *Melodie Ratelle*
- ◆ *Deanna Hewitt*

Eduardo Mazzonna



Eduardo Mazzonna, *Three Religions, Three Sacred Sights*, 2013.

From my point of view, the best way to really understand a city or country is to study its architecture. For this reason, I decided I would make a work of art depicting buildings that are often considered to be Jerusalem's most important and sacred sights, and as I am a Print Media major, I thought it would be best to communicate my knowledge using the form of a print. The city is shared by Christians, Muslims, and Jews, therefore the architecture is accordingly varied in style, structure, and use. The three main structures I decided to include in my work are the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Dome of the Rock, and the Western Wall. In order to produce a successful piece of art, both aesthetically and conceptually, I had to figure out how and why these structures were built, what separated one from the other, and how they represent the religious beliefs of the cultures that use them. After an in-depth study, I realized that light, colour, shape, and decorative elements all seem to have played a huge role in the construction of these structures. To produce my work of art, I chose those components that are most significant to the structure and made them the central aspects of my print. Within the depictions I have created, my goal was to put on display not only architectural features of the structures but also the religious beliefs that influenced them. By doing this, I am giving the viewer the opportunity to associate visual aspects and religious beliefs simultaneously.

Eduardo Mazzonna



"Jerusalem stone." Wikipedia.

The Western Wall is known for its immense stones. *Meleke* is the name given to these pale limestone, the so-called "Jerusalem stones" which are a symbol of Jewish identity. In comparison to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Dome of the Rock, the Western Wall focuses entirely on its construction. Although the stones are most significant to the Western Wall, we must not forget that no one would be able to see them without light. Similar to how light is essential to the Christian faith, the Jews also believe that they need light to illuminate sacred places. In her article "Sacred Landscapes and the Phenomenon of Light" Barbara A. Weightman refers to Judaism and other faiths and states that: "Natural light, deftly manipulated, reveals, clarifies, and structures emanations of the divine in sacred places. At once awed and mystified by light and shadow, supplicants are inspired to commune with the holy." As there is nothing more important to this site than its immense stones, I have decided to make them the center of attention in my depiction of the Western Wall. I made the wall the brightest to show the presence of light. I also included the pale yellow color of the stones to show their belonging to the city of Jerusalem.

["Three Religions, Three Sacred Sites" complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Kristina Parker



Kristina Parker, *Balance is Golden*, 2014.
Brass and copper alloy.

Given the significance of craft and the decorative arts to the cultures of Jerusalem, I have chosen to create a prototype design for a necklace that references artefacts that belong to Phoenician, Jewish, Christian and Muslim histories. This piece consciously strikes a balance among its various spiritual symbols in order to demonstrate that the thread of gold is a poignant metaphor for power, spiritual connection and light, which is common to all four faiths. I wish to reflect on the continual unearthing of new archaeological “truths” to suggest that, as history is reread and rewritten, a future state of balance and stability is perhaps possible. My piece is intended as a prototype for a more refined design. In place of using gold, the prototype is formed of brass and copper alloys. Three pendants with motifs cut into a sheet of *dixgold* (a copper and nickel alloy) hang from a curvilinear brass wire that bends over itself in the centre to form a semi-circular shape. The coexistence of influences across religions and time periods is central to the meaning and understanding of the necklace I created. The brass wire in the shape of a Phoenician palmette can also be read as a rising sun. This symbolizes the coexistence of the three monotheistic religions, which are each represented by a pendant suspended from the wire. Linked to artefacts found in the city of Jerusalem, to different periods in the ancient history of the Near East, and to current political events, my piece revisits Jerusalem’s cultural history in an attempt to create a balanced, decorative and meaningful form.

Kristina Parker



*Gold Menorah Medallion, ca. 4th-7th century CE.
Gold, 10 cm in diameter. Hebrew University of Jerusalem.*

The central pendant is based on a medallion that was uncovered at the foot of the Temple Mount in 2011 by archaeologist Eilat Mazar from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Mazar believes this medallion etched with a menorah, shofar and Torah scroll, and the gold coins and jewelry also found, were abandoned upon the Persian conquest of Jerusalem in 614 CE. The design that I cut into the brass circle closely follows the menorah pattern of the gold Temple Mount artefact. It is characteristically presented with three feet attached to its base and seven candle branches, which is consistent with the description of the Temple candelabra.

***“Balance is Golden: Facets of Jerusalem in Jewellery Design”
complete Artist Essay can be read here.***

Melodie Ratelle

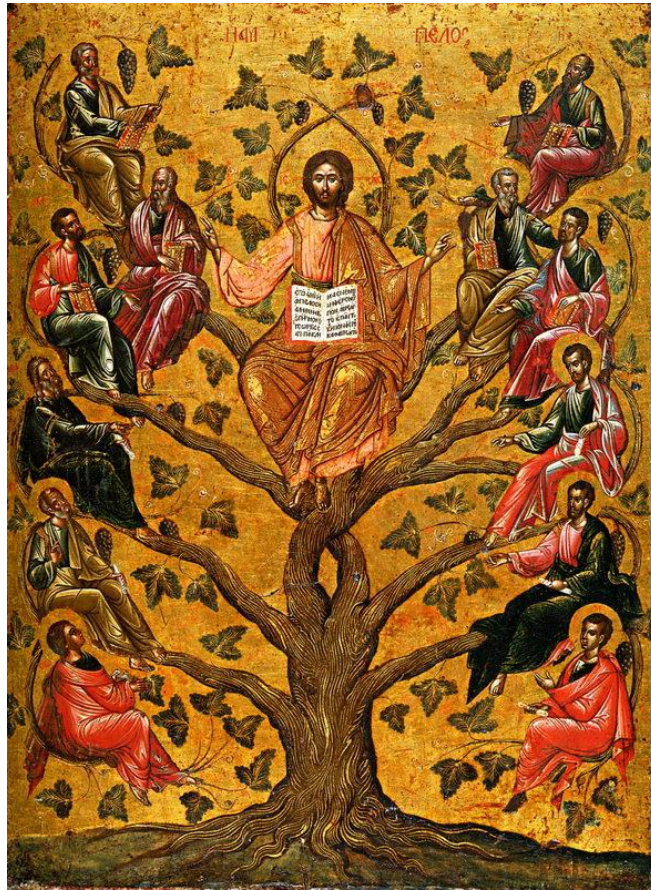


Melodie Ratelle, *Planting Religions*, 2015.

Linen, handmade lokta paper, glass and metal beads, 40.6 x 40.6 cm.

My research on the symbolism of specific species of vegetation in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, the three prominent religions in Jerusalem, has culminated in my artwork *Planting Religions*, which explores the parallels between the enduring religious and social struggles in the Holy Land and the competition of plants in the wild. Although this might seem like a negative view of both nature and humankind, there is a sense of harmony among the symbols representing each religion in my work, suggesting the possibility of the acceptance of religious diversity and collective survival in Jerusalem. *Planting Religions* draws comparisons between the civilized world of art and religion and the uncivilized world of nature. My work incorporates prominent symbols and styles of vegetation in Jewish, Christian and Islamic art. The design on the left is the Jewish menorah, which strongly resembles a plant found in Jerusalem called *Salvia palaestina*. The centre of my piece features an Islamic design inspired by the decoration on the dome of the Shah Mosque built between 1611 and 1629 in Isfahan, Iran. In accordance with the Hadith, sacred Muslim architecture generally does not contain figurative imagery, but instead often features patterns informed by nature. On the right-hand side of *Planting Religions* is a grape tree representing the blood of Christ. *Planting Religions* does not speak only of competition between Judaism, Islam and Christianity, as it is also a symbol of something we all share. Like plants, we have our needs as humans on this planet and there are ways to see our similarities rather than our differences in order to achieve progress. I chose to create a mosaic because this decoration made of coloured, small pieces of mineral, glass, tile, or shells is found in the art and architecture of the three major religions of Jerusalem.

Melodie Ratelle



Anonymous, *Eastern Orthodox Icon of Jesus Christ as the True Vine*, 16th c. 35 x 39 cm. Byzantine & Christian Museum, Athens.

On the right-hand side of *Planting Religions* is a grape tree representing the blood of Christ. In the Christian faith sacred wine is used in rituals as a symbol of Christ. Sharing a cup of wine with his disciples at the Last Supper Jesus said to them “this is the blood of my covenant, which is poured out for many.” The Eastern Orthodox Icon of Jesus Christ as the True Vine shows Christ as the strong trunk and the twelve apostles resting on his branches.

[“Planting Religions: An Artwork” complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)

Deanna Hewitt



Deanna Hewitt, *Peace and Chaos in the Holy Land*, 2015.
Digital illustration.

Peace and Chaos in the Holy Land explores Jerusalem's constant search for peace within the context of the history of warfare in the Fertile Crescent. Peace and destruction have always coexisted in the world, in the same way that light comes with darkness and life comes with death. My work references Jerusalem's continued efforts to balance these opposing notions in the search for harmony. I have referenced a variety of works in order to create this piece, most notably the sphinx figures uncovered at the ruins of the ancient Assyrian city of Nineveh (in modern day Iraq) by Sir Austen Henry Layard (1817 - 1894), the labyrinth of Chartres Cathedral in France and a sculpture by Yitzhak Danziger (1916 - 1977) entitled *Nimrod* (1939). By placing these figures around and over the labyrinth of the Chartres Cathedral - a symbol of pilgrimage to the Holy Land - in my work, Jerusalem becomes a potential unifier of multiple cultures that share a common belief in the importance of the city. My illustration also symbolizes the internal struggle within the Middle East itself through the interactions of the four creatures. *Peace and Chaos in the Holy Land* was created digitally using Adobe Photoshop CC and a Wacom Cintiq Companion Hybrid graphics tablet, which allowed me to draw directly onto my tablet screen in a more naturalistic way than other digital illustration programs allow. After sketching each creature using black lines, the shapes were shaded in black and white before being digitally manipulated to create a variety of hues within each form. These were then painted over using the brush tool in a manner similar to traditional painting.



Labyrinth at Chartres Cathedral, 12th c.
Stone, 12.6 x 12.3 m. Chartres Cathedral, Chartres, France.

Chartres Cathedral in France (1193–1250) is the home of the last surviving of seven original labyrinths that were placed in French Christian cathedrals between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. These labyrinths were created as sites of pilgrimage, most commonly symbolizing a journey to the Holy Land, although other sources suggest it represents a journey towards God. Visitors travel inwards toward God, resting in His presence or in meditation at the centre of the labyrinth before finally returning along the same path with their newfound wisdom. The labyrinth featured in my illustration follows the same layout as the one at Chartres Cathedral, and is intended to symbolize Jerusalem as a centre of peace in the world. Despite its tumultuous history, Jerusalem remains a place of unification through the commonality of religious worship. This is represented in the composition of my work, in which all the creatures revolve around Jerusalem at the nexus of the labyrinth. The human figure is placed directly in the centre, over Jerusalem, as he tries to calm the other creatures. As such, my illustration is a call for unity between religions through a shared love of Jerusalem.

[“Peace and Chaos in the Holy Land: Research Creation” complete Artist Essay can be read here.](#)