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Abstract Icons

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The University of Dayton's Marian Library is featuring the paintings of Christina Saj, a New Jersey artist who re-creates traditional icons of Mary, the mother of Jesus, using geometric shapes and bold, vibrant colors.

"Form Seeking Expression - Marian Artistic Creations" is on display April 19 through June 18 in the Marian Library on the seventh floor of the University of Dayton's Roesch Library. It's free and open to the public. Hours for the Marian Library are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday;

Saturday and Sunday by appointment by calling 937-229-4214.

The variety of Marian icons throughout the world has influenced Saj's work. Many of her pieces show these influences as well as reflect narratives from the lives of Mary and Jesus.

About Saj's work, New Testament scholar Rachel Nicholls said: "Her style reflects both aspects of her training - a use of abstract form and color, which draws on the heritage of early 20th-century modern art, and the use of some of the forms, conventions and themes in icon painting. This combination is startling - Saj's great achievement is to create a kind of synthesis between these traditions, rather than simply borrow motifs or techniques of each."

"I have worked to create paintings in which symbols could be recognized and reinvented so they may reflect the character of the time in which they were created," Saj said.

Works on display and notecards will be available for purchase.

The Marian Library/International Marian Research Institute is an international center of study and research on Mary. The academic program serves an international student population including laity, religious and clergy, and grants theological degrees in affiliation with the Pontifical Theological Faculty Marianum in Rome. The library holds the world's largest collection of printed materials on Mary as well as an extensive collection of artwork and Nativity scenes.

For more information on the Marian Library/International Marian Research Institute visit <http://www.udayton.edu/mar> (url: <http://www.udayton.edu/mary>) y.

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