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Woodcarved Icons by John Solowianiuk

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Woodcarved Icons by John Solowianiuk

On display January 12 - March 27, 1998.

The Marian Library Gallery
seventh floor of Roesch Library
University of Dayton
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The Artist

John Solowianiuk started carving wood at a young age, making animals and toys to trade with playmates. In 1969, he graduated with a degree in art from The University of Mikalój Copernicus in Torun, Poland. He pursued art in the medium of oil painting, not applying his woodcarving talents until 1980 when he was commissioned to paint icons and carve the *iconostasis* (altar screen) for Holy Trinity Orthodox Church in his hometown of Hajnowka, Poland. Although asked only to paint the icons, Mr. Solowianiuk decided to carve one. That first icon started a new career for Mr. Solowianiuk, who revived the Eastern European tradition dating from the twelfth century and established him as one of the best woodcarvers in Europe.

Mr. Solowianiuk's tools include a variety of knives, chisels and files. He works in bass wood, dyeing and gilding the carved icons, sometimes leaving unstained areas, revealing the natural beauty of the wood.

In 1990, Mr. Solowianiuk moved to the Cleveland, Ohio, area. Churches in the United States in which his work may be viewed are St. Stephen's Ukrainian Church in Brunswick, Ohio; the Belarusian Orthodox Church in Cleveland; St. Mikolaj American Orthodox Church, Byzantine Ukrainian Church of Pokrova, and Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Church, all in Flint, Michigan.

In 1996, Mr. Solowianiuk was an exhibiting artist at the National Folk Festival in Dayton, Ohio.

The Belarusian Icon Tradition

The Belarusian carved icon tradition dates back to the icon of Saints Constantine and Elena from the twelfth century in Polocak.

Because of wars in the late 1700s the icon-carving artists migrated to Russia. Subsequently, these icons earned great acclaim there.

In 1722 and 1832 the Russian Orthodox Synod issued directives which prohibited sculpture in the churches. These directives are still in force today. Icon carving effectively ceased. However, the churches in the United States allow this art form to be used within their architecture.

WORKS ON DISPLAY



**< Mother of God of
Ilige**

LEBANON, 24"x 18"

**Mother of God of
Czestochowa >**

POLAND, 24"x 18"



**< Mother of God
Jerusalem**

FINLAND, 24"x 18"

**Mother of God of
Wladymirsk >**

RUSSIA, 20"x 16"



**< Mother of God of
Kursk**

RUSSIA, 24"x 18"

**Mother of God of
Minsk >**

BELARUS, 24"x 18"





**< Mother of God of
Kiev**

UKRAINE, 24"x 18"

**Mother of God of
Kxerson >**

GREECE, 20"x 16"



**< Mother of God of
Krki**

SERBIA, 20"x 18"

**Mother of God of
Prodromita >**

ROMANIA, 24"x 18"



< Coptic Icon

EGYPT, 24"x 18"

**Mother of God of
Damascus >**

SYRIA, 24"x 18"





**< Mother of God of
Chernobyl**
BELARUS, 22"x 14"

**Mother of God of
Vilnius >**
LITHUANIA, 29"x 19.5"



For more information, please contact:

< The Adoration
ITALY, 17"x 24.5"



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