

CHICAGO AND NEW YORK ARTISTS BLASPHEME CATHOLICISM

Chicago's Woman Made Gallery and New York's Slowinski Gallery recently displayed art work that defames Roman Catholicism. The Chicago exhibit, which began January 25 and ended February 23, featured many displays and was titled "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary." The New York exhibit, which began February 14 and ended March 2, showed one of the Chicago displays titled "The Annunciation." Both were graphically demeaning of the Virgin Mary, Our Blessed Mother.

The Chicago exhibit displayed the work of Susan Edwards' "Mary and Her Dog, Yellow." Edwards posed the question, "Why do people believe that she conceived a child without having sex yet can't accept that she might have had a dog?" In a display by Mary Ellen Croteau, a statue of Mary was covered with newspaper headlines that read, "Man indicted in wife's slaying" and "Rape victim dies of stab wounds." The Woman Made Gallery offers a blasphemous display every year, following Christmas. According to gallery spokeswoman Beate Minkovski, "We do a show like this after the holidays because people need sobering up."

Jennifer Karady's "The Annunciation," which was also shown in New York, is a photograph of the archangel Gabriel dressed in white with large feathers; Gabriel is shown offering a pregnant Mary a wire coat hanger and in the background is a decaying church. According to Karady, her depiction affirms "every woman's right to choose motherhood as well as her right to control her own sexual identity." The New York gallery also featured a postcard of a nun who has the face of a pig surrounded by barebreasted nuns beating schoolchildren.

The Catholic League released the following statement to the press on this matter:

"If the displays leave little doubt as to what message is being conveyed, the commentary by the offending artists makes it plain that their desire is to assault the sensibilities of Catholics. Both the Chicago and the New York exhibits show once again that there is a deep problem of anti-Catholicism among some members of the artistic community. Their hatred could not be more explicit and their contempt for elementary standards of decency could not be more evident.

"The Catholic League joins with Cardinal Bernardin of Chicago in terming this kind of exhibition 'inappropriate and offensive.'"