

COLORADO MUSEUM UNDER FIRE; VILE JESUS ART SMASHED

Last month, we learned that the Loveland Museum in Loveland, Colorado was hosting an exhibit that featured a piece by a Stanford University professor, Enrique Chagoya, called "The Misadventures of the Romantic Cannibals." The artwork depicts a man performing oral sex on Jesus. It was part of an exhibit, "The Legend of Bud Shark and his Incredible Ink," that was scheduled to run through November 28.

Immediately, we wrote to Colorado Governor Bill Ritter and to the Colorado state legislature asking them to justify this use of tax-supported dollars. We pointed out, that on July 1, Ritter signed legislation establishing Colorado Creative Industries. A week later, this enterprise announced grants to various organizations and government agencies, among them being the Loveland Museum; it received \$8,500.

We received a call from Ritter's office saying that the monies for the museum were earmarked for some other exhibit. However, we stuck to our guns, supplying his office and the media with evidence to the contrary.

Our central point was this: how can it be that there are no dollars to fund religious programs with public monies, but there are dollars to fund anti-Christian hate speech?

While this issue was being debated, a Montana truck driver, Kathleen Folden, took a crowbar to the Plexiglas case that housed the artwork and then ripped it to pieces. Bill Donohue released another statement to the media, saying, "Had the art depicted a man performing fellatio on Muhammad, the museum may have been blown up by now. So it is lucky that Ms. Folden is a Christian."

Donohue also noted the way those who defended the obscene art

responded to Folden. "I am appalled by the violence," said Loveland's director of Cultural Services Susan Ison. Donohue observed, however, that she was not appalled by the portrayal of Jesus having a man perform oral sex on him. Indeed, she simply called it "very complex."

Similarly, Bud Shark, the organizer of the display, was more upset with those who protested this obscenity than he was with the art. He also played fast and loose. "The controversial image has been demonized as 'pornographic,' 'obscene' and 'depicting Jesus in a sex act' when none of this is true." But if Shark were right about this, then why did those who work at KDVR-TV decided to blot out the oral sex part when they showed it on air?

Following this incident, museum officials pulled the exhibit. Had they any decency, they never would have allowed it in the first place.