



In celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, the Dadian Gallery presents an exhibition exploring the legacy of this profound schism on contemporary artists.

**October 16 – December 15, 2017**

**Reception & Artist Talk:  
Tuesday October 31, 12:30 - 1:30 pm**

# Curator's Statement

The *ReFORMATION* exhibition lives in between the secular context of “art” and the religious context of “devotional imagery.” It combines the work of young artists who are beginning an art practice, the work of adults in other careers who make art, and work by more experienced artists who have a record of showing their work in many contexts. All of the participants share an interest in Christian practice in a Protestant context, that either promotes their religious tradition, uses Christian references to subvert Christianity, or even challenges it to look to its Roman Catholic roots.

Norman Strike and Nancy Zabaloieff created objects that can be categorized as devotional imagery, as they communicate a personal narrative using traditional Christian imagery and text. While Zabaloieff's collage of paintings uses many symbols to express how her faith has led her out of a forest of personal darkness, Strike incorporates Mt. Fuji and a Shinto temple as enduring images of Japanese culture that survives the 2011 tsunami. He sees this survival as a sign of Christian hope in his own life. For each, their personal Protestant faith is sincerely held.

Noah McWilliams, Zac Benson, and Hannah Correlli each interrogate their religious faith in more critical ways. McWilliams grew up in a mixed religious household and he meditates on the authority of his inherited religious stories and myths. His installation wrestles with God's ethical authority given God's often-violent nature in the Bible. Zac Benson is *Torn Between One Way and Another*, in his work of Hebrew lettering of the Ten Commandments engraved on corkboard and wooden frames. The eternal Word is carefully engraved on non-archival materials and wood that will ultimately decompose. Underneath the Hebrew verses are short phrases in English that relate to each commandment that indict our contemporary culture. Correlli depicts *The Moment She lost Her Faith* in the shower as a young person. Her work expresses the tension of impurity and purity, childhood innocence and adult experience, the waters of baptism that confirm faith and the waters of her shower that gave her the courage to admit her lack of faith.

Jerry Holsopple, Miraim Keeler, and Christine Stoddard each retrieves Catholic or Orthodox devotional strategies for their Protestant communities. Holsopple trained with Orthodox iconographers to enrich his photographic practice and focuses on images of Mary as a model of faith to be emulated, not venerated. Keeler questions the effectiveness of therapeutic categories to lead to real healing and wonders if medieval Catholic notions of sin might be better. We may think 21st-century life has moved beyond the behavior of 16th-century Europe, but her paintings show us, in a humorous and approachable way, that maybe not. In her studies, Christine Stoddard has become a feminist and finds that as a Protestant, she might be “#TeamMary.” Her silent film of theatrical devotion to Mary overlaid with traditional devotional imagery of Mary leaves one wondering if she is serious about Mary’s power to be a female role model, or if this devotional image is a thing of the past.

Whatever the purpose, each of these artworks of *ReFORMation* lives in a complex time in history, when galleries and museums, churches, private devotional shrines, and even art studios host a process of sacralization. If art is no longer tied to any one religion nor to any religion at all, but functions as sacred to those who value it as examples of cultural taste, the Dadian Gallery lives in a strange hybrid space. It sometimes functions to both sacralize the objects within it as devotional Christian imagery and to sacralize the images or objects as contemporary examples of artistic taste. It is, therefore, potentially both a religious space and a secular one. The mixing of these categories in the functioning of a Christian Art Gallery that is also a Fine Art gallery, seems the most salient legacy of the Protestant Reformation.

Patrick Beldio, Guest Curator

# Works in the Exhibition

Noah McWilliams, *Between Fires*, steel, 3D lenticular image,  
tulle, pipe insulation, 2017

Christine Stoddard, *Team Mary*, video, 2017

Zac Benson, *Torn Between One Way and Another*, photograph, 2017

*Looking at Life Through Rose Colored Glasses*, photograph, 2017

Norman Strike, *Peace I Leave With You*, linocut collage, 2013

Nancy Zabaloieff, *The Path to the Right*, acrylic on canvas, 2017

Miriam Keeler, *Envy*, oil on canvas, 2014

*Pride*, oil on canvas, 2015

*Anger*, oil on canvas, 2014

*Greed*, oil on canvas, 2015

Hannah Correlli, *The Moment I Lost My Faith*, dirt, soap, shower  
curtain, cotton sheet and recycled materials, 2017

Jerry Holsopple, *New Day*, mixed-media, 2017

*Eyes*, mixed-media, 2017

*Stranger*, digital print on wood panel, 2017

*The Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion is a program of Wesley Theological Seminary. The Center sponsors a variety of cultural events which explore the intersection of art and religion. All contributions are tax-deductible and gratefully accepted.*

To be added to the gallery mailing list please send an e-mail with your name and email address to [agray@wesleyseminary.edu](mailto:agray@wesleyseminary.edu). In addition to receiving gallery announcements you will also receive the Henry Luce III Center for the Arts and Religion's quarterly newsletter.



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