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# **Cody: “Art is a bridge between humanity and God”**

In celebration of the Jubilee for Artists, 15 to 18 February 2025, we interviewed Cody, an American artist who studied sacred art in Florence.

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## **How did your artistic journey begin?**

I was born and raised in Hawaii. I moved to Italy when I was eighteen. I had graduated and wanted to pursue

an artistic path, and Florence is home to an important art school: the Sacred Art School.

I studied sacred art there for three years, and after completing my studies, I became a professor at the same institution.

### **Do you have a favorite artwork or artist?**

I don't have a single favorite piece or artist. In general, I like 20th-century French art, while among Italian artists, I admire Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael.

### **What is the relationship between your faith and your art?**

When I was younger, I wasn't very religious. My family was Protestant, but I rarely attended religious services. However, whenever I could, I would step into churches to admire the art inside.

In Florence, I met many young Catholics, and thanks to them, my wife Mary (who was my girlfriend and a fellow student at the time) and I felt the desire to draw closer to Christ and become part of the Catholic Church.

We started reading the Bible to get to know Jesus better and deepen our relationship with Him. From that moment, we understood that the Lord is truly present in the Eucharist and that He is the center of everything.

Ever since then, I have always felt the desire to serve the Lord through my work.

As an artist, I want to share beauty and, through it, help people draw closer to Jesus Christ. And in fact, every time I am commissioned to create a sacred artwork, it is both an honor and a great responsibility.

## **Can art be considered a tool for evangelization?**

Yes, a work of art helps us contemplate the mysteries of faith. A sculpted angel, for example, is not just a physical object: it reminds us of the presence of angels and the communion of saints. The same is true for a crucifix on an altar, which evokes Christ's sacrifice and helps us meditate on it.

Sacred art is not just economically valuable; it is profoundly meaningful. It serves as a bridge between humanity and God. As Dostoevsky said, "The beauty that will save the world is Christ."

## **Which church in the United States and which in Italy have impacted you the most?**

I have had the privilege of creating some works for churches in

Minnesota designed by Emmanuel Masqueray, a French artist and architect. I really admire his architecture; it has a unique character.

In Italy, I am fascinated by the Florence Cathedral because it houses Michelangelo's Bandini Pietà, which holds special meaning for me. The devotion Michelangelo conveys has always been a great inspiration.

Many believe he was not very close to the Lord, but in his crucifixes, his depictions of the deposition, and the Pietà itself, his desire to be near Jesus is evident. I share that desire.

**Is there a particular work of yours that you feel especially connected to?**

I recently created a sculpture of Mary, Mother of Fairest Love. The statue is life-size and made of marble, and the process was long. From the commission to the sketch,

the model, and the final statue, it took five months, but it was absolutely worth it.

## **What does the Jubilee for Artists mean to you?**

Art and architecture play an essential role in faith. Now more than ever, it is important to keep religious tradition alive, to strive to convey beauty, and to bring people closer to the Lord.

The fact that there is a Jubilee dedicated to artists is very meaningful to me. It highlights the fundamental role of art, which is not just a passing trend but a true language that has always been used to communicate beauty, especially in the Christian world.

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