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Local artist prepares for show of Marian art at Marian Library/International Marian Research Institute

The Marian Library holds the world's largest collection of printed materials on the Blessed Virgin as well as an extensive collection of paintings and sculpture. The Marian Library is located at the University of Dayton in Ohio.

PUEBLO, CO – Jan Oliver, well known for both her paintings of Saints and of the Southwest, has spent the last two years painting and preparing for her upcoming show “The Fairest One of All” at the Marian Art Institute in Dayton, OH. Set to open on February 2, 2009 and running through March 27, 2009, the collection of works includes both traditional and contemporary interpretations of the Virgin Mary and includes works as large as 4 feet tall. For Oliver, who was raised Protestant but whose works reflect a good deal of Catholic influence, the process of painting these works was really a process of rediscovery. “It was an opportunity for me to reflect on and come to a better understanding of the role of Mary in my personal expression of faith as well as how The Blessed Mother is seen in the world. I can only say that after spending two years looking into the eyes of Mary as I painted my impressions of her, one can only be changed. Painting is a lot like an active prayer, it is very emotionally and spiritually moving. The process of painting these works of Mary has definitely deepened my personal faith as well as my compassion for others. Prior to this work, I had already been involved with causes to support hunger and the poor, but now my desire to use my art to raise further awareness and funds for the needs of those who are suffering is much greater. I think artists are in a powerful position to use their works to help to share a message of peace, love and social justice in the world. As artists, we can insert our images into the relentless stream of images that pour out of the media. We can counter images of violence and war with images of love and peace. We can paint a vision for the world where there is plenty, security, families that are whole, and where children, the elderly and those in need are cared for. And for me, after this process, I believe that was her message for me. I hope these works will be a joy to others and perhaps inspire others to embark on their own journey — rediscovering Mary.”

Locally, Oliver’s work is currently displayed as a part of the Own Your Own 2008 show at the Sangre de Cristo Art Center. Works included in the upcoming "The Fairest One of All" show can be viewed at the Marian Art Institute in Dayton, Ohio opening February 2nd, 2009 or by viewing the show preview on her website at www.janoliver.com/thefairestoneofall.html. Members of the press may request images or other information by contacting the artist.

For additional information about exhibit and The Marian Library/Marian Art Institute see: http://campusreport.udayton.edu/News_Digest_Article/?contentId=22473