



Stefani Sunami

The Maundy (mosaic): Christ has removed his priestly chasuble to wash the disciples' feet. Their robes are blue, the wall red, floor brownish

Praise him with mosaics and stained glass

Praise him in embroideries of silk

Praise him with enameled silver

Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord

ART FOR GOD

by Thomas F. Burroughs III

Calligraphy by Lili Cassel Wronker

In a high-ceilinged living room near Washington Square in Manhattan's Greenwich Village, a long wall of twelve mosaic panels, seemingly incandescent in their colorfulness.

A surprisingly heavy rectangle of inch-thick stained glass glows in a window; a tiny stained glass medallion rests against an Italian lamp.

Scattered about the room are striking enamels on silver. Framed silk-on-silk embroideries and original prints hang above two wood sculptures. A concert grand piano on a brick platform supports a Christmas tree and crèche.

At the piano, the master of the house, who studied with the late Paul Hindemith, composes notable organ and choral music

catalogued by prominent publishers and performed at Saint Mary the Virgin, New York, and other Episcopal churches.

Alongside the piano platform lean more mosaics, embroideries, and many collages — pictures made of glossy colored papers cut and pasted. Art books, plants, and candles adorn the room.

All these originals and more — in a half-dozen different media — were designed and executed here by the remarkable artistic partnership of Katharina and Frederick Breydert.

Clearly contemporary in appearance (in no other century could such works have been conceived), their award-winning art is readily recognizable in subject. All is truly religious, both in outward content and inner inspiration. Deep spirituality is

the root from which these works flower.

The German-born couple reached the United States separately — she in 1940 and he the following year. While awaiting Mr. Breydert, Mrs. Breydert began work on what was to become a group of mosaic panels. Earlier, Mr. Breydert had painted for her a series of water colors. When the Museum of Modern Art afterward attempted to buy them, Mrs. Breydert explained they were gifts from her husband, and not for sale.

By now, their sacred art is being produced to special order. All designs originate with Mrs. Breydert, who renders each in collage. Embroidery is the only medium in which she is unassisted by Mr. Breydert. He alone interprets the designs in enamel, linoleum block, and stained glass.

Mosaic making for them is a continual collaboration. It is he who obtains the tesserae (small glass pieces) and bits of marble from which the mosaic is to be made. As these materials never quite match the hues of her collage papers, the translation of colors into mosaics poses many problems.

From her small collage, he draws by hand and in reverse a full-sized "cartoon" of the design on linen. Mrs. Breydert then applies the stones, chipped to size by Mr. Breydert, face down on the cartoon, using a paste of honey, flour, and water.

This is the most time-consuming stage; days may be required on a mosaic for every hour needed to paint a comparable picture.

The last major step is the casting. The

finished mosaic is secured within a frame, and concrete is poured by Mr. Breydert onto the reverse side. When dry, the face is freed of the cartoon, and the mosaic surface is waxed to render the concrete nonabusive.

Sacred art by the Breyderts has been shown by museums and universities throughout the nation. Exhibitions containing their work have been sponsored by the American Federation of Arts, National Council of Churches, and Church Architectural Guild.

By invitation, they participated in the International Exposition of Sacred Art, Rome, during the Holy Year 1950. Fourteen of their works constitute the core of a religious art show now at the Fitzgerald Gallery, New York, through January 23.

Doris Bartels, of Manhattan's new Contemporary Christian Art gallery, where the Breyderts have exhibited, considers their work "delightful as it is good."

Barry Ulanov writes in *Liturgical Arts*, "Mystery and intimacy are joined with particular fervor and exemplary precision by Katharina Breydert . . . what she creates is the tender icon. . . . There is a kind of dancing movement in her art. It is dignified enough to fit the subject. It is joyous enough to express the fullness of feeling the event arouses. Caught up in the movement, the viewer must inevitably join in. His meditations have been instructed. The purpose of sacred art has been accomplished by a tender icon."

Feature continues on next page.

Mosaic making: Mr. Breydert chips mosaics to proper size while Mrs. Breydert applies a special paste to stones and positions them face down on the full-sized outline cartoon of the design. Her guide in selection of mosaic colors is the small collage propped at rear corner of her table. A mark of Mrs. Breydert's skill is that once in place, it is extremely rare for a stone to need moving for enhancement of the picture.

Ted Batchelor

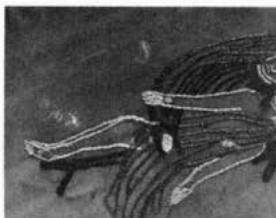


January 19, 1964



Soichi Sunami

The Last Supper (enamel): Under Mount Calvary, our Lord occupies His cross within a cross. St. John rests on His heart; Judas hangs outside.



Oliver Baker

Pieta (silk embroidery): The Blessed Virgin embraces her Son's lifeless body after Crucifixion.

Pax — the Kiss of Peace (mosaic): Black-and-white cannot suggest the unfalling splendor of the Breyderts' colors. The white Lamb of God reigns in a gold field from a lavender cross encircled by rose and yellow haloes. Beneath, the white man embraces the black man, the white man embraces the brown man, the white man embraces the yellow man: all brothers in Christ. Inspired by the Eucharistic prayer for peace.

Soichi Sunami





Solchi Susami

far memorial (mosaic): When no priest was there to comfort those who died, the Lord had mercy. Jesus, at right, beckons to a hero standing before the altar of honor above the widows.

mbroidery: Mrs. Breydert inserts silk threads into a silk square on which the design is outlined. The mosaic depicts the Last Judgment.

Ted Batchelor



Stained glass: The last step for Mr. Breydert is to trim by sawing the edge of the epoxy panel in which the thick faceted glass is mounted.

Ted Batchelor



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Pentecost (above): In the midst of red-robed Apostles, hands upflung in excitement and heads surmounted by tongues of yellow flame, appears our Mother the Church. The Holy Spirit, as a dove, overshadows all. Background is many shades of blue. **Madonna and Child (below)** shows new technique: thick glass, faceted for sparkle, in epoxy.

Ted Batchelor



Good Shepherd (embroidery): Christ with lamb, lower center, heads for heavenly Jerusalem and the Lamb of God on the altar, top. In their misery and torture, Jews (lower left), not perceiving Him, become baptized by blood, and, passing Adam's skull at foot of the Cross, rise in saintly white. Peasant women kneel in adoration. Martyrs (lower right) become saints.

Solchi Susami

