



Icon of Mary



"The peacock green curtains in this image are lined with roses...the origin of the word "rosary".

- Irvine, Denise, Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary Hamilton, New Zealand, 2009, p. 17

This magnificent icon of Mary stands in the inner foyer of the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Hamilton. It was designed by religious artist Michael Pervan for the new Cathedral which opened in 2008.

Drawing inspiration from Victorian post-Renaissance images of Mary, this scene of the Annunciation depicts Mary as the Virgin of Nazareth in prayer, but also as the newly assumed Queen of Heaven.

The Holy Spirit, who comes as wind and fire, is symbolised by the parted curtains and Mary's fiery red cloak. The three stars around Mary's head represent her perpetual virginity, before, during and after the birth of Christ. Her blue garment represents Mary's sinlessness and purity, and the glittering gold Holy Spirit is styled after Bernini's Holy Spirit window in St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican.

Pervan has used time-honoured techniques of gold-leaf gilding and egg tempera as the paint medium. The icon is mounted in a hand-crafted European templar-style matai frame made by Gavin Mecchia of Waikato Turnery, Hamilton, and his father Jim did the ornate turning.

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Source: Irvine, Denise, Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary Hamilton, New Zealand, 2009