

JEAN LAMB: Suffering Man



Born Hampstead London 1957
Trained in Fine Art at Reading University BA
Hons 1979 and Nottingham Trent Polytechnic
1988 MFA
Studied Theology at St Stephen's House
Oxford 1981-4 and began ministry as a
Deaconess in 1984 as a Chaplain to
Leicester Polytechnic. Subsequent ministry
has been in Nottingham and the surrounding
area.

Artist Statement

I work as witness in the Church of England to its beliefs both as a priest and as an artist. I am also its most ardent critic, with a passion for justice, expressed through my art and preaching.

Suffering Man, carved between 2017-20, is a meditation on human suffering, most notably that which is caused by fellow human beings. In Lent we walk the Way of Jesus more keenly and acknowledge his suffering as he lived in our context. In the final moments of his life he stared out at the crowds who have betrayed his love for them - a broken man. He was about to die.

The icon of Jesus' brokenness is reflective of our time in this Pandemic after a year of severe separation from each other. The causes of our grief are multiple and developing, but we see in our faith a God who becomes involved with our tragedies and who answers our heartache with tender love, surprising perspectives and hope for all our futures in his resurrection from death.

Suffering Man will not walk away from us: he stays to the end.

See related work in the Sorrowful Mysteries page on my website:
www.jeanlamb.com



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The log of sycamore was the gift of my former boss, the Reverend John Cave who was Vicar of Bilborough St John's in June 2005. The Vicarage garden needed light and the saplings had been planted when the church had first been built in the late 1950's. So my original idea was to make a sculpture of St John the Baptist. But by the end of that year, John had died and I had to juggle the workload of three churches during an Interregnum that lasted for eighteen months.

I moved the wood into my garden where an idea arose for Suffering Man, an Ecce Homo in 3D, a development of 2D ideas from previous years. Ten years later, when I eventually approached the log, much of its upper section had rotted away and become pulp. I wasn't sure how much, if any, could be saved but the idea persisted for Suffering Man.

Upon reflection, the fractured head of Suffering Man closely resembles not only our brokenness within the world but our half presence in another space; a desire to turn our faces away from our current dilemmas.

God in us makes us stay and presents us with the hope for tomorrow.

Jean Lamb: Suffering Man Oil on Sycamore 2020 H 5'3"x W1'10"x D1'8"