



Thank you to all the artists for their hard work and dedication to this project

Thanks also to

Paul Fawcus at JazzMouse Studios Slough,

Shahid Nazir at AA Productions,

Tony at P Dogra, Slough

The Richardson family

Manfed Klinner of the Stadtarchiv Pforzheim,

Wolfgang Stoll and the members of the

Auferstehungskirche Pforzheim,

Renate Beck-Ehninger

Emel Soylu,

Ashik Shah,

Andreas Loewe,

Jas Sian

Sally Staples, Liz King, Penny Ashcroft, Rachel Cornell,

the staff and patients at Upton and Wexham Park Hospitals

Slough, Milton Keynes General Hospital, Mount Vernon

Hospital and the dept of Clinical Radiology King Edward VII

Hospital Windsor,

Damien Bent, Katinka, Tom, Seema, the Sherlock Family, Sinade

and Diva, Jo and Del, Justin, Korina, Sherry,

Arts at St Mary's Slough,

Richard Thomas of The Churches Media Trust,

Pat O'Neill at E Sargeant and Son, Slough,

The Arts Development Team at Slough Borough Council.

Supported by Arts Council England

© Art Beyond Belief 2005

www.art-beyond-belief.com

www.via-dolorosa.org.uk

About the Via Dolorosa Project

The idea of 'giving away' a piece of Christian devotion was something that took a lot of discussion and soul searching. Here was something very specifically Christian; normally, there are small plaques around a church to commemorate each station, with prayers said at each one.

We asked ourselves some questions. What if we replace these plaques with video monitors, and at each one show a multimedia presentation representing that station? What if we invite artists of other faiths to work on the content of each? In short, what if we give it away?

The Via Dolorosa project is the answer to these questions. Planning began in Summer 2003, with a pilot project of two stations completed in January 2004. In October 2004 we were awarded Arts Council England funding to complete the project, which was shown for the first time in Spring 2005 at its home church of St Mary's in Slough.

What is the Via Dolorosa?

Early Christians would sometimes visit Jerusalem as pilgrims, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and reflect upon his passion and death. They would stop along the path to contemplate what happened there, marking the stages of the journey for others to follow. The path that Jesus walked became known as Via Dolorosa - the way of pain.

By the fourteenth century, series of 'stations' were to be found at monasteries and major churches to assist these devotions without the need to travel to Jerusalem. The traditional fourteen stations first appeared in the sixteenth century, and were standardised by the eighteenth. The fifteenth station is a more recent addition which is not always included.

*We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you,
because by your holy cross
you have redeemed the world.*

Station I - Jesus is condemned to die

*“There was an outcry...
'Away with him... Crucify
him, crucify him!' Their
shouts prevailed, and
Pilate decided that
they should have their
way...and gave Jesus up
to their will.”*

Luke 23.18-25

Condemned to die
For what possible reason?
A faith in one God and service to others
A love for all humans as sisters and brothers
What was their crime
Those who gathered to pray
At their holiest shrine on a holy day?

Butchered by bullets like lambs at the
slaughter - mother, father, son, daughter
And washing their hands of this innocent blood
A world remained silent or blinded by lies
Churned out by censured media eyes

The massacre of Sikhs in 84
Was nothing new, it happened before.
Throughout India's past and her ongoing fight
Against religious intolerance
and the political might

artist:Amrit Kaur Singh of the Sikh tradition
poem: written and read by Amrit Kaur Singh
painting:Amrit & Rabindra Kaur Singh

Of foreign invaders and tyrannous rule,
When religion was used as a political tool
Sikhs were targeted for fighting back
Hunted, tortured, shrines attacked
Without fear or submission
they accepted their fate
Offered their heads to defend freedom's gate

The flame of Amritsar honours their story
Testifying to the loyalty and glory
Conveniently ignored in a political game
Which sought to slander their respected name
Dividing Hindus and Sikhs
and their traditional affection
In a desperate bid for re-election.

Condemned without reason, except to feed
The selfish ambition and political greed
Of those in power, with something to gain
From the terror, misery and suffering they reign
On those who are blameless of any crime
Victims of circumstance, place and time.

Hard to forget, harder still to forgive
Yet survivors find strength in their faith to live
As a people condemned in a Nation they serve
Suffering a fate they don't deserve?

Station II- Jesus carries His cross

*“Then they led him
away to be crucified.”
Matthew 27.32*

artist: Flor Kent of the Jewish tradition
sound: air-raid sirens, and the sound of the
Shofar (ram's horn) the ritual instrument for
both ancient and modern Hebrews.

Station III - Jesus falls for the first time

*“He committed no sin,
he was convicted of no
falsehood.” I Peter 2.22*

artist:Tejal Sanghvi of the Jain tradition
music performed by Ajay Sanghvi; song of
worship to the compassionate one who
removes obstacles from our path.

Station XIII - Jesus is taken from the cross

*“A man called Joseph...a
good man from the town of
Arimathaea... approached Pilate
and asked for the body of Jesus.
Taking it down from the cross, he
wrapped it in a linen sheet...”*

Mark 23.50-53

artist:Vikaas Mistry
of the Hindu tradition
this station is silent

Station XIV - Jesus is laid in the tomb

*“Then Joseph laid him in a
tomb cut out of the rock,
and rolled a stone against
the entrance. Mary of
Magdala and Mary the
mother of Joseph were
watching and saw where
he was laid.”*

Mark 15.46,47

artist: David Sparrow
of the Christian tradition
music: Steal Away (traditional)
sung by Mrs Evelyn Richardson,
Mrs Richardson originally sang this
traditional African-American Spiritual at
the funeral service for her son Vernon.

Steal away, steal away
Steal away to Jesus!
Steal away, steal away home,
I ain't got long to stay here.

My Lord calls me;
He calls me by the thunder;
The Trumpet sounds
within my soul,
I ain't got long to stay here.

My Lord calls me;
He calls me by the lightning;
The Trumpet sounds
within my soul,
I ain't got long to stay here.

Steal away, steal away
Steal away to Jesus!
Steal away, steal away home,
I ain't got long to stay here.

Station XV - Easter: Jesus is risen

*“The angel addressed
the women 'You have
nothing to fear' he said 'I
know you are looking for
Jesus who was crucified.
He is not here; he has
been raised again.’*

Matthew 28.5,6

artist: Gotthilf Ehninger
of the Christian tradition
music/singer: Frank Foerschler,
improvisation on the organ of St Francis
Church in Pforzheim, Germany.

...et resurrexit...

...and he rose again....

Then, when the smoke had cleared
and the army departed
What the Sikhs discovered
left them more broken hearted

Stripped of their proud history,
the museum set alight
And its treasures plundered
under cover of the fight
Thus a noble people were 'put in their place'
By attacking the very heart of their faith
And attempting to erase without a trace
All memory of the glorious past of their race

Why the victims of their Government's animosity
Chosen to suffer such an atrocity?
Subjected to public humiliation
As if stripped naked before the whole Nation.

Decades on, the hurt is still strong
And the Sikhs will never forget the wrong
But, as the scars of the memories continue to live

Can they ever find the moral courage to forgive
Those corrupt leaders of their beloved Nation
Who instigated such pain and humiliation?

Station XI - Jesus is nailed to the cross

*"They brought him
to the place called
Golgotha...then they
fastened him to the
cross."*

Mark 15.22,23

artist: David Sparrow
of the Christian tradition
music: *Dies Irae* from Requiem 23-02-1945
by Rolf Schweizer, composed in Pforzheim
1995. © Rolf Schweizer. 1945 Raid
photographs © Stadtarchiv Pforzheim

The narrative refers to the day
when a devastating allied bombing
raid destroyed most of the town of
Pforzheim; in just 20 minutes, more
than 18,000 people died.

*Dies irae, dies illa
solvat saeculum in favilla...
The day of wrath, that day
when the world will be
reduced to ashes...*

Station XII - Jesus dies on the cross

*"It was about midday and a
darkness fell over the whole land,
which lasted until three in the
afternoon; the sun's light failed.
And the curtain of the temple
was torn in two. Then Jesus gave
a loud cry and said 'Father, into
thy hands I commit my spirit'; and
with these words he died."*

Luke 23.44-46

artist: Shehnoor Ahmed
of the Muslim tradition.
with background conversations

Station IV - Jesus meets His mother

*"Jesus saw his mother,
with the disciple whom
he loved standing beside
her. He said to her
'Mother, there is your
son' and to the disciple
'There is your mother'.*

John 19.26,27

By the waters of Babylon we
sat down and wept: when we
remembered thee O Sion.

As for our harps, we hanged them
up: upon the trees that are therein

For they that led us away captive
required of us then a song, and
melody in our heaviness: Sing us
one of the songs of Sion.

How shall we sing the Lord's song:
in a strange land?

If I forget thee. O Jerusalem: let my
right hand forget her cunning.

From Psalm 137

artist: Ilona Langdorf Jaffe of the Jewish tradition
music: from Dvorak: Ten Biblical Songs Op99.
Performed by Brian Rayner-Cook, Baritone,
Scottish National Orchestra conducted by
Neeme Järvi (Chandos records CHAN 8608)

O sing unto the Lord a new song:
for He hath done marvellous
things.

...sing...rejoice...with a psalm of
thanksgiving.

Let the sea make a noise, and all
that therein is: the round world,
and they that dwell therein.

Let the floods clap their hands:
and let the hills be joyful before
the Lord

Let the field be joyful and all that
is in it...let the earth be glad: let
the sea make a noise, and all that
therein is.

From Psalms 96 and 98

Station V - Simon carries Jesus' cross

*"They seized upon a
man called Simon, from
Cyrene, on his way in
from the country, put
the cross on his back,
and made him walk
behind Jesus carrying it"*

Luke 23.26

artist: Zeljana Schönauer
of the Buddhist tradition
Simon, Jesus and the Ten Worlds
chant: Zeljana Schönauer
'Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo'
In Nichiren Daishonin Buddhism,
'Nam-Myoho-Renge-Kyo' represents
the universal Law of Life - the essence
of life itself.

Station VI - Veronica wipes Jesus' face

*"He is the image of
the invisible God"
Colossians 1.15*

artist: David Sparrow
of the Christian tradition
music: Bob Dylan: Shooting Star

Seen a shooting star tonight
And I thought of you
You were trying to break into
another world
A world I never knew
I always kind of wondered
If you ever made it through.
Seen a shooting star tonight
And I thought of you.

Seen a shooting star tonight
And I thought of me.
If I was still the same
If I ever became what you
wanted me to be
Did I miss the mark or
Over step the line
That only you could see?
Seen a shooting star tonight
And I thought of me.

Listen to the engine,
listen to the bell
As the last fire-truck from hell
Goes rolling by,
all good people are praying,
It's the last temptation
The last account
The last time you might hear
the sermon on the mount,
The last radio is playing.

Seen a shooting star tonight
Slip away
Tomorrow will be another day.
Guess it's too late to say
the things to you
That you needed to hear me say.
Seen a shooting star tonight
Slip away

© 1989 Special Rider Music

Station VII - Jesus falls for the second time

*"When he was abused he
did not retort with abuse."
1 Peter 2.23*

artist: Minaz Ali
of the Muslim tradition

Station VIII - Jesus meets the women

*"Great numbers of people
followed, many women
among them, who mourned
and lamented over him.
Jesus turned to them and
said 'Daughters of Jerusalem,
do not weep for me...'"
Luke 23.26-28*

artist: Zabi Liwal-Saam
of the Muslim tradition
music: Arvo Pärt; Tabula Rasa-Silentium
Performed by Gidon Kremer
Kremerata Baltica: Nonesuch Records

Station IX - Jesus falls for the third time

*"When he suffered he
offered no threats."
1 Peter 2.23*

artist: Imkan Hayati of the Baha'i tradition
music: from 'Songs of the Ancient Beauty'
sung by The Baha'i Chorale.

Physical Suffering - The material body
is feeble and weak; it feels pain and on
this earth it is put through many forms
of suffering.

Supplication - Turning one's face
towards God in times of suffering and
pain will help ease the anguish; through
prayer and supplication, pain will be
turned to joy.

A Higher Level - Through sacrifice and
suffering, man is taken to a higher level.

He becomes more spiritual as he over-
comes his tribulations.

Happiness and Joy - Suffering is part of life,
and once it has been overcome, man will
find great joy. Christ made the ultimate
sacrifice so that the world would live in hap-
piness and joy.

"...If sorrow and adversity visit us, let us
turn our faces to the kingdom and heav-
enly consolation will be outpoured..."
(from the Baha'i writings)

Station X - Jesus is stripped

*"The soldiers dressed him in
purple, and plaiting a crown of
thorns, placed it on his head.
They beat him... spat upon
him and paid mock homage to
him... they stripped him of the
purple and dressed him in his
own clothes" Mark 15.17-20*

artist: Rabindra Kaur Singh
of the Sikh tradition
poem: written and read by
Rabindra Kaur Singh
painting: Amrit & Rabindra Kaur Singh

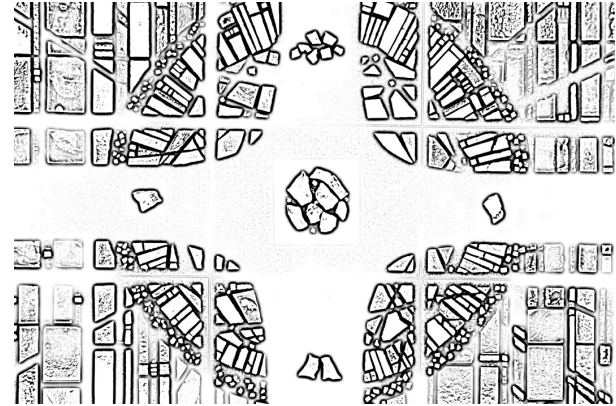
Stripped of their honour by a hideous crime
Sikh pilgrims attacked in their most sacred shrine
Men, women and children scrambled to hide
From the tanks and guns on every side
And were forced to drink from the bloody water
Whilst for three days the army continued
the slaughter.

Why the victims of their government's animosity
Chosen to suffer such an atrocity?
Subjected to public humiliation
As if stripped naked before the whole Nation.
When the gun fire was over,
then what was their lot?
To be further insulted before they were shot:

Stripped of their symbols
of their dignity and pride
Bound with their turbans
and scalped before they died.
And children, executed too, did not escape
The unfettered display of mindless hate.
For centuries a people honoured and respected
Now indiscriminately despised and rejected.

Why the victims of their government's animosity
Chosen to suffer such an atrocity?
Subjected to public humiliation
As if stripped naked before the whole Nation.

continued >>



the Via Dolorosa project



Arts at Saint Mary's



a multimedia presentation of Stations of the Cross
interpreted by artists of different faiths

