

Artifex Dei

A curated home for contemporary sacred art — created exclusively by human hands

Artifex Dei is an independent, founder-led platform from Croatia that gathers, verifies and presents **contemporary sacred artists in the Catholic tradition**. Its purpose is simple: to connect people who seek true sacred beauty with those who know how to create it. It is not only a platform — it is **a community that protects and promotes authentic sacred heritage** in a time when even the sacred is at risk of trivialization and falsification.

20+
VERIFIED ARTISTS

150+
ORIGINAL WORKS

3
DISCIPLINES

100%
HUMAN-MADE, VERIFIED

I. Why Artifex Dei exists

Depictions of Christ, Mary and the saints generated by algorithms are spreading rapidly across social media and religious shops — while living sacred artists, whose work grows out of prayer, formation and craft, remain largely invisible online. Artifex Dei was founded as the authentic alternative: a protected space where every work bears the signature of a person — their hands, faith and talent. There is no substitute for that.

“My goal is to promote real artists and protect a space where believers can find works born of personal talent, prayer, and effort, not algorithms.”

MARIJA MATOKANOVIĆ · FOUNDER OF ARTIFEX DEI

The position is principled, not anti-technology: the founder openly credits digital tools as support in building the platform itself. The line is drawn where it matters — **technology may serve, but it must never replace the uniquely human capacity to express truth, goodness and the encounter with the divine through art.**

II. How the platform works

Every artist profile is reviewed personally before joining, and every work must be created exclusively by the artist's own hand — no AI-generated content, stock material, or copying. Works span oil, watercolour and tempera painting, sculpture in wood and stone, stained glass and sacred handicraft. Images are watermark-protected, and each piece shows its real status: available, sold, reserved, or not for sale.

Artifex Dei deliberately runs **no anonymous e-commerce**. The buyer and the artist are connected directly, person to person — **the platform is only a bridge** that enables that connection.

III. Where it is going

Alongside the gallery, Artifex Dei is building **Baština (Heritage)** — a growing library of writing on Christian art and the sacred tradition. The next phase deepens this educational mission: forming the eye and heart of the faithful public, documenting Croatia's living sacral-art heritage, and handing the tradition on to a new generation of artists and believers.

AT A GLANCE

- **Curated & verified** — every profile personally reviewed; human authorship confirmed for each work
- **Catholic identity** — artists living the faith; Christological, Marian, hagiographic and liturgical themes
- **Direct connection** — buyer and artist meet person to person; the platform is only a bridge
- **Community-supported** — sustained by the annual support of its Friends, not by commissions on sales
- **Bilingual** — Croatian and English

A community, not a catalogue

Around the gallery stands a community of artists, supporters and readers: a newsletter, heritage essays, and Friends of the platform who lend their names to the mission. The platform also curates *Life with God* — limited-edition spiritual journals for personal prayer life.

What we seek in partners

Artifex Dei is looking to connect with organisations and communities who share the conviction that art and faith belong together — for exchange, visibility for its artists, and collaboration on exhibitions, publications and education in sacred art.