

# FOREWORD

dr. sc. Barbara Gaj Ristić ~ Arts Academy in Split

In the sacred sanctuary of the church of St. Mikula, hidden in the stone streets of Varoš, the exhibition “Milost” by artist Žana Bajić has taken place. This pre-Romanesque chapel from the 11th century, one of the oldest in the region, in its centuries-old silence, opens its doors to art. But this is not just a space; it is a sanctuary, a temple of spirituality in which her paintings have found their rightful place. The transcendental atmosphere, infused with the patina of the past, comes alive through Žana's works, which ennoble the space, and the paintings, in touch with that sacred silence and ambiance, gain an additional aura of sacredness and inner radiance. **The church of St. Mikula**, located next to Žana's home and passed by her daily, has become more than just a place – it has become a mystical companion of her creative journey, a space of contemplation, inner dialogue and silent prayer.

The opening of the exhibition on **May 22 falls on the feast of St. Rita**, the Italian nun, mystic, and patroness of those in hopeless and desperate situations. This date is not a coincidence. It carries a quiet symbolism that permeates the entire exhibition, because it is precisely in moments of darkness, spiritual struggle, and suffering that Love and Milost are born, becoming sources of creation and healing.

The entire exhibition, as well as each individual piece, is dedicated to the **Woman and the Mother** as Divine Beings. Her works reflect the sacred strength of Woman, her love, her presence, her timelessness. Most of the paintings depict a mother and child in an embrace, connected by an unbreakable thread not only of the body, but also of spirit, vibration, and light. Above all, the **Mother of God** always watches – a protector, a silent guardian, the center of an invisible presence that connects everything. At the crossroads of stone, light, and silence, “Milost” emerges like a silent prayer dedicated to the Woman – a source of strength, love, and the divine.

The inspiration for these works sprang from a deeply personal experience. During the pandemic, four years ago, Žana spent five days on a respirator, on the threshold between worlds. That encounter with vulnerability, with her own breath disappearing, profoundly changed her. From that meeting with death emerged a desire: to paint the Woman as a Divine Being. A strength that, even when falling, rises with

love, faith, and Milost. Interestingly, the very church of St. Mikula was built in **1068** by a woman – **Nemira, a woman from Split and daughter of Mesagalin**. Thus, the exhibition space is not only dedicated to Women, but also founded by a woman's hand, leaving a mark through the centuries. Feminine energy – omnipresent, mysterious, and sacred – floats through the space, vibrates through the paintings, and enters beneath the skin. In every corner of the painting there is the image of the Mother of God – small, almost invisible, but always present. Not as a symbol, but as a **presence and Blessing**.

**The colors** Žana uses are not accidental, for they point to divine energy, heavenly heights, and the deep mystery of maternal love. **Gold** symbolizes light, holiness, and divine presence, **blue** brings the peace of the sky and soul, **orange** evokes strength and the fire of life, a spark in the dark, while black symbolizes mystery, mysticism, and the sublime power of women, even through the darkest moments of life. **Gilded halos** contribute to the sense of sacred connection between motherly love and the Mother of God.

On the faces of the mother and child, **fractal analytical drawing** lines are visible, which, according to the artist herself, change the perception of shape and form. These are not just faces, but also emotions, vibrations, and inner light. The lines reveal the unspoken, which cannot be seen with the eyes, but felt with the heart – infinitely connected and always in motion. Their delicate yet powerful interweaving leaves an impression of peace and safety in the mother's embrace and care.

The exhibition “Milost” invites visitors to **reflect on the strength of women** and mothers, on the divine love that unites us, and on the secrets we carry within ourselves. Through these works, the artist wishes to transmit the grace and strength she personally experienced, and to offer visitors the opportunity to feel a deep connection with the divine, with unseen, yet ever-present energies, in this sacred space.

In a place where stone remembers prayers and silence carries the breath of eternity, a space of encounter opens – a quiet, inner one, where art becomes prayer, and the image becomes a mirror of the soul.

**The exhibition “Milost” was not created to simply be seen – but so that what is deepest in us may be recognized through it.**



MILOST IV 2025. mixed media 69 x 99 cm

# ABOUT THE ARTIST

## A WORD FROM THE ARTIST

The exhibition Milost was born out of a moment when I stood at the edge of life – connected to a respirator, feeling the breath of departure, yet also sensing the quiet presence of Grace that kept me here. That moment of catharsis changed me forever. It brought me back to creation with a new vision and artistic expression: a yearning to paint the Woman as a Divine Being – Mother, Sacredness, Quiet Strength.

In each painting, I searched for the face of the Mother – not only the earthly one, but also the Mother of God, a spiritual axis through which I rose. As I painted, I felt her beside me – invisible yet present, like a blessing in every brushstroke. The motif of Woman and Child flows through every work as a symbol of unbreakable connection, of light, of healing love.

I covered the faces with lines of fractal drawing to reach for the invisible within the visible – the unspeakable felt by the heart, like a silent thread linking souls and worlds. The exhibition opens on May 22nd, the feast day of Saint Rita – a woman of steadfast faith and quiet perseverance, an intercessor in moments when everything seems fragile and impossible.

I believe that the date, the space, and the theme were gently guided by an unseen hand that sees deeper than we do. I believe that Grace comes quietly – but when it comes, it transforms everything.

*The exhibition Milost, dedicated to Woman as a divine being and mother, is lovingly devoted to my daughters, Bruna and Doris.*

*Žana Bajić*

## BIOGRAPHY

**Žana Bajić** was born in 1961 in Kotor. She graduated from the Assenza Art Academy. She is a member of ULUH Split and the founder and president of the Croatian Artists' Association “Nanael.”

She has participated in numerous group and solo exhibitions in Croatia and abroad; **Milost** is her **19th solo exhibition**.

In 2010 and 2011, she organized the Native American festival **RED ROCK & CRAFTS FESTIVAL** in Split, bringing notable guests such as musician Melanie Stormm, director Chris Eyre, and Niles Diamond, as well as lecturers from American universities and museums – Tom Jones and Patsy Phillips.

She initiated the multimedia project “**We Speak the Universal Language**” (2008), within which she published the children's book *My Song, Your Color* in 2014, illustrated with artworks by preschool children from Split and Kotor.

She completed training in fractal drawing and earned a certificate as a **practitioner of the Fractal Drawing Method** and as a **VidiYa trainer**.

As a producer, she is credited on two documentary films:

- Croatian Rhapsody – Maksim Mrvica (2011), which inspired her painting cycle **Rhapsody**, based on the pianist's music.
- The Blue Cage (Modri kavez, 2015), a documentary about the lives of seafarers – the most-watched Croatian documentary that year – accompanied by the painting cycle **The Depth of Parting**.

# LIST OF WORKS

Author: **Žana Bajić**

- 1 **Milost I**, 2024.  
*mixed media, 74 × 59 cm*
- 2 **Milost II**, 2024.  
*mixed media, 49 × 59 cm*
- 3 **Milost III**, 2024.  
*mixed media, 49 × 59 cm*
- 4 **Milost IV**, 2024.  
*mixed media, 69 × 99 cm*
- 5 **Milost V**, 2024.  
*mixed media, 71 × 70 cm*
- 6 **Milost VI**, 2024.  
*mixed media, 48 × 68 cm*
- 7 **Milost VII**, 2024.  
*mixed media, 44 × 82 cm*
- 8 **Milost VIII**, 2025.  
*mixed media, 68 × 88 cm*
- 9 **Milost IX**, 2025.  
*mixed media, 70 × 74 cm*
- 10 **Milost X**, 2025.  
*mixed media, 70 × 63 cm*
- 11 **Milost XI**, 2025.  
*mixed media, 50 × 86 cm*
- 12 **Milost XII**, 2025.  
*mixed media, 65 × 86 cm*



**MILOST V** 2024. *mixed media* 71 x 70 cm

# IMPRESUM



**MILOST VII** 2024. *mixed media* 44 x 82 cm

Exhibition title:  
**MILOST**

Organizers:  
**Nikola Franić**  
**Žana Bajić**

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**Nikola Franić**

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**MILOST XI** 2025. *mixed media* 50 x 86 cm



**Žana Bajić**

# MILOST

E X H I B I T I O N

Church of St. Nicholas / Veli Varoš / Split / SUMMER 2025.