

Lilli Muller's "The Global Supper" at the Aachen Cathedral, Germany



In the courtyard of a historic church in Venice, the Los Angeles-based artist Lilli Muller created an immersive installation as a metaphor of Christ's Last Supper. Photo: Lilli Muller

The European Dom Stiftung Aachen (EDSA) invited the Los Angeles based artist Lilli Muller with "The Global Supper" Installation, as a timeless symbol for peace, for this year's International Karlspreis Award, honoring the Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and the people of Ukraine.

For this year's Charlemagne Prize 2023 Award, the installation by artist Lilli Muller can be seen from May 8th to 18th, 2023 in the cloister of the Aachen Cathedral Aachen. Last year the "The Global Supper" art installation attracted a great deal of attention during the Venice Biennale. In the courtyard of a historic church, the Los Angeles-based artist Lilli Muller created an immersive installation as a metaphor of Christ's Last Supper. Using symbolically set massive tables, she brought to light the vast economic inequality in the world in a simple but emphathetic way to spark dialog and evoke change. To this end, Muller, of German descent, set up long dining tables draped in purple velvet around the entire cloister courtyard. All the countries of the world were represented in the form of unique hand-made place settings. On top of customized placemats for each country were set 199 precisely filled glasses representing the level of their respective gross domestic product, with place cards hinting at further economic data of each country. Every tiny detail of the installation was researched and meticulously presented. Hand-sewn facemasks made of denim sat on each plate like food were a reminder of the worldwide pandemic, simultaneously serving as a metaphor for hunger in the world, not being able to eat nor speak, signifying lack of freedom of speech and identity.

Dr Jürgen Linden, Chairman of the Foundation Board ESAD, finds a lot of potential in this approach. "The common meal at the large, all-inclusive table is a symbol of unity, understanding, trust, and friendly family-like cooperation between the people and countries, of a harmonious relationship between Europe and the rest of the world. This is the common goal that the International Charlemagne Prize and the European Foundation Aachen Cathedral pursue with their work."

The installation, which is to be understood as a timeless symbol for peace, is part of this year's supporting program of the Charlemagne Prize ceremony. It will be flanked by other activities, including a concert and an evening of discussion, organized by Misereor, the Catholic organization for development cooperation. "The Global Supper in the cloister and the Aachen Cathedral connecting twofold: On the one hand, Holy Mass is celebrated daily in the cathedral as a continuation of the Last Supper. On the other hand, the installation makes it clear that the cathedral and the activities taking place in it serves to nurture our responsibility to the major global issues of poverty, war, and injustice," explains Provost Rolf-Peter Cremer.

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