

ST GEORGE VS DRAGON EXHIBITION NEWSLETTER

By Michael Galovic

Dear All

Ethiopia is one of the most intriguing and exciting countries and everyone who has visited it, never forgets this once-in-a-lifetime experience. I was fortunate to be one of those and even had an exhibition in Addis Ababa, years ago.

This unique place deserves to be talked about much more than I can do at this moment; my fervent hope is that a friend Gustav who was with me at the time and made a huge amount of video recording, will one day come up with a film about our exploits there. I am mentioning it now for Saint George as my icon exhibition on the subject is approaching.

One of the most spectacular religious sites in the world, if not THE most outstanding one is a complex of stone churches in Lalibela. King Gebre Mesquel Lalibela of the Zagwe dynasty is the person during whose time those churches were carved, in the 13th century. The churches were carved from the top down with a precision and outcome that defies belief. One of the churches is dedicated to St George and it is said that the hoof prints of the white stallion that St George rode on the day the church was completed can still be found imprinted in the rocks surrounding the church...

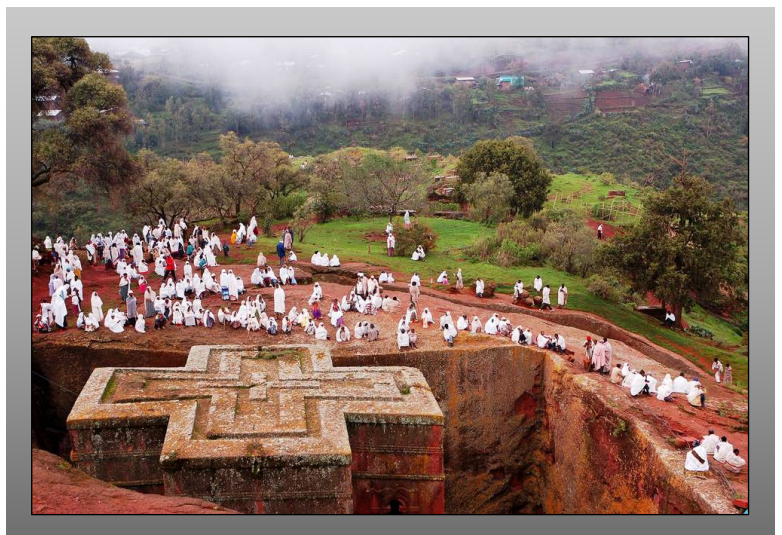
And that is the story for some other time. Going back to the upcoming show in Hunters Hill, it is worth mentioning that the “heavenly knight” is depicted in traditional iconography in various ways:

As a warrior, standing, in the military accoutrement with sword, shield, lance, arrows and many details. As such he can also be painted sitting or enthroned; the fully-figured version sometimes include hagiographic scenes around him, a staff of legends about the saint’s miracles and tortures before his final execution.

And then, there is this most famed rendition of St George mounted, in duel with the beast, interchangeable dragon or serpent, or a hybrid of both.

The visitors to this show will be able to see these versions save the one with scenes from his life.

Apart from the apostolic number of 12 icons dedicated to St George, visitors will see the icon of the Annunciation and two artworks from my Uluru series. That body of work was built over some 20 years and these two pieces are the last remaining ones.



Dr Guy Freeland from St Andrew Greek Theological College, Sydney (now retired) has written in the booklet of Uluru in 2010:

“Michael Galovic is not a painter of the physical, geological Uluru any more than Orthodox iconographers down the centuries have been painters of the actual sacred mountains – Mount Sinai, the Mount of Olives, Mount Thabor etc – that appear in numerous icons. What Michael is seeking to portray is the conceptual, not the physical, Rock. His objective is to convey the spiritual dimension and the symbolic meaning of this unique natural feature which, in its different ways, has “iconic” status for both Aboriginal and non-indigenous Australians..Where is Michael Galovic going to take us from here in his iconographic studies of Australia’s sacred mount? We will have to wait to see”.



As I said before, the exhibition will also be informative/educational as two large texts are prepared for the public, one by Kerrie Magee, the other by myself. Speaking about this for months leading to the event and the completion of the information, Kerrie and I could not but absolutely agree that irrespective of how much information will be presented to the visitors, it is only scratching the surface! We had no idea how multilayered and deep is every single aspect and element of the myth, legend or the story of the saint in his “cosmic” battle against the dragon and each one of those would require such a research that could easily finish by being an essay or even a thesis, and Kerrie is now seriously thinking about the latter.

I am looking forward to seeing you in the beautiful stone church of All Saints Hunters Hill!

May you all be well

Michael Galovic

April 2024



ST GEORGE VS DRAGON icons show, ALL SAINTS Anglican, Ambrose St, Hunters Hill, Sydney.

Opening: Sunday, 28th April, 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Daily: Monday, 29th April – Thursday, 2nd May & Saturday, 4th May, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Note: Friday, 3rd May, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm ONLY