

Teodora Axente, Saint George

Curated by Riccardo Freddo

St George's Church, Hanover Square, London
The Vestry, 2A Mill St, London W1S 1FX



Teodora Axente, *Stabbing the Sin A White Lily is Blooming*, 2023, oil on canvas, 200 x 151 cm

At St George's Hanover Square Church, in the heart of Mayfair, Romanian artist Teodora Axente presents a new body of work inspired by Saint George, curated by Riccardo Freddo. Opening on April 23rd, Saint George's Day, the exhibition unfolds within the church's historic interiors, creating a dialogue between contemporary painting and sacred space.

At the centre of the presentation is *Stabbing the Sin A White Lily is Blooming*, a large-scale painting that stages a theatrical and confrontational scene. Axente's figures meet the viewer's gaze directly, embodying her distinctive language of metamorphosis, where bodies and symbols shift between states of tension and transcendence. In the background, Saint George slays the dragon as a white lily blossoms. Within the artist's visual vocabulary and religious tradition, the lily becomes a symbol of purity and the presence of good, emerging precisely at the moment evil is overcome.

Extending beyond painting, Axente intervenes in the architecture of the church with a sculptural installation that reimagines the religious cross. At its centre lies a Pietà, depicting Christ, protected and inspired by the three theological virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity, represented as winged figures above.

At the base of the cross, a painted element introduces the embodiment of Peace, grounding the composition in a quiet but essential counterpoint to the surrounding drama. This vertical structure draws the eye upward, echoing both spiritual ascent and the enduring power of belief, while anchoring it in a vision of reconciliation and stillness.

In another section of the church, Axente introduces a powerful allegory of courage. A figure clad in red stands beside discarded armour, evoking the inner strength required to confront darkness. This motif resonates with the legend of Saint George, reframed here as a psychological and moral struggle rather than a purely heroic act.

Built in the early 18th century, St George's Hanover Square Church provides a historically rich and symbolic setting for Axente's work. Long a site of community and cultural exchange, the church amplifies the exhibition's exploration of faith, transformation, and resilience.

The exhibition opens on April 23rd and will be followed by a special service and reception on Sunday, April 26th, from 11:00.

Special thanks are extended to Roderick Neil Stephen Leece, BA, MA, and the entire church team for their generous support and collaboration.