

*Holy Trinity and Crown of Thorns*, by Ludmila Pawlowska

reviewed by [Lil Copan](#) in the [February 20, 2013](#) issue



While wanting to be faithful to the Russian tradition of icon painting, Ludmila Pawlowska seeks a new way of expressing what Matisse (when he discovered icons) termed “luminosity and devotion.” Her own Orthodox faith and cultural heritage (she was born in Kazakhstan and has been influenced by art movements in Sweden, where she lives) shape her exploration. “God is not an idea, and praying is not an exercise to improve our idea of God,” she says. She calls an icon a kind of prayer—“the cultivation of the awareness of God’s actual presence.”