

Kateryna Shadrina's
***We Are Together and
Tree of Life***

by [John Kohan](#) in the [September 2024](#) issue
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In the early days of the Russian invasion, Ukrainian Greek Catholic icon writers in the city of Lviv took part in a group exhibition on the Lenten theme *Waiting for Salvation*, a title especially resonant at a time when the fate of their homeland hung in the balance. Two iconic figure groupings from Kateryna Shadrina underscored the importance of community in times of trouble, offering contrasting portraits of a gathering of the faithful and the hopeful.

Shadrina's wood panel painting *We Are Together* brings to mind real-life scenes of Ukrainians taking shelter in the Kviy metro during the failed Russian advance on the capital. She depicts the anguished followers of Jesus in a Holy Saturday huddle, supporting each other in prayer as they try to make sense of the crucifixion. One head protrudes above the confining black rectangle of present woe into the white

field of eternity.

Faith in God's goodness expands into hope for future salvation in the second icon, *Tree of Life*, in which bunched figures become joyous dancers, encircling this evergreen biblical symbol that offers its leaves to all "for the healing of the nations" (Rev. 22:2). Shadrina creates icons, immediately recognized by their iridescent rainbow hues, that remind us that pure light is composed of all the colors of the spectrum.