

GERALDINE WOJNO KIEFER
Cave, Spring and Shrine
The Edge Art Gallery, June 28-July 31, 2002

The intent of this “prepared room” is to interpolate a cool, invigorating, refreshing, and time-expanding space of contemplation into the heated structures of contemporary life. The cave metaphor incorporates the idea of going under and going within, as in a subterranean passage beneath a crowded street. By means of this passage, one arrives at one’s destination; by means of this passage, one is yet transformed. “Spring” incorporates the idea of moving water. Just as underground streams gush forth from rock-cut caves, the stream traveler emerges from her contemplative journey with renewed energy and direction.

Before you enter the space, please take one or more of the cards from the offering basket before you. These describe specific altars and stations of the installation. Consider your entrance a step over a threshold into a sacred place—a small wayside chapel. Please take a few moments to view the stations and altars: first, the main altar, with Mammoth Cave-inspired, mixed-media altarpieces, cave-shrine chalices, and a turquoise fabric stream; secondly, the iconostasis or icon screen with nature shrines and a missal entitled *A Reading from the Book of Nature*; thirdly, the “Mary garden” inspired by the grotto of the Virgin at the University of Notre Dame (itself inspired by the grotto of Lourdes); fourthly, the “Byzantine” icons on a side altar; and finally, the landscape panels along both sides of the chapel space. Lighting is subdued and subtly subterranean, suggesting both a cave and the ocean-cut caves along Kauai’s Na Pali coast that inspired the blue, palm-tree panel on the east wall. Although the overall concept is that of nature, geology, and the mythological and spiritual interpretive trails that have been traced thereon, these additional references will hopefully lead to a memorable, participant experience.

Please take a moment to inscribe your own thoughts and comments by means of words or images in the sketchbooks and notebooks provided. It is requested that you do not touch the works of art. Please replace and reposition all writing and other materials before you depart; your comment pages may be placed in the offering basket.

Finally, please take this quote from one of my favorite authors, Thomas Moore, into your heart as you return to the “real world”:

We may need a threshold experience just to find the needed threshold. My personal favorites are a piano, a Gothic cathedral, a megalith, desert, a forest path, an Irish pub, a dark bedroom, Guillaume Dufay, a candlelit bathtub. . . the moors, and honeysuckle. Each of these stands to the side of life’s central concerns, and yet each makes life worth living.—Thomas Moore