

LORE BERT

TOWARDS THE LIGHT



Over the years spent preparing Lore Bert's exhibition in San Fantin, as the exhibition design and the themes and ideas it conveyed took shape, I was deeply struck by Lore Bert's desire to use her works to offer a glimpse of that beauty which triumphs over the man-made horrors of life, rekindling the desire for goodness that can unite human beings, foster empathy and restore hope to the world.

At the same time, the Catholic Church was preparing to celebrate the Jubilee of 2025, the ›Holy Year‹, and the Italian dioceses had organised exhibitions and artistic projects which, through their artistic and cultural heritage, provided an opportunity for reflection on the Christian hope offered to the world, with a focus on baptism.

From this convergence towards a single goal of *Beauty* and *Hope*, the ›Speranza 2025‹ project was born, which culminated in the exhibition ›Towards the Light‹, proposed to the Italian Episcopal Conference as an artistic event for the Jubilee organised by the dioceses of the North-East (Veneto, Trentino-Alto Adige and Friuli-Venezia Giulia).

During the Jubilee Year 2025, the dioceses organised exhibitions and historical-artistic tours aimed at showcasing the ecclesiastical cultural heritage held in their museums, archives and libraries.

By highlighting the call to hope as one of the gifts of baptism and as a universal gift intended for everyone, I proposed establishing a close link between the various diocesan centres and the work of Lore Bert. The various exhibitions, held in over ten cities across north-eastern Italy, concluded with an invitation to visitors to write their names – a sign of their identity and uniqueness – on sheets of paper destined to become essential elements of Lore Bert's work itself. The joyful participation of so many young and old people, families and couples, tourists and pilgrims in the various locations has provided us with thousands of names: an expression of the joy of taking part in the creation of a work of art, marked by the beauty and symbolic power of hope and communion, even in diversity.

Among the millions of pilgrims who travelled to Rome during the Jubilee, many passed through our dioceses, visiting the various exhibitions where works of art and artefacts invited reflection on baptism and show, that beyond their historical and artistic value, these assets also serve as a reminder of the relevance of a message of *Beauty* and *Hope* that visitors have been able to rediscover.

At the end of the exhibition, every visitor was invited to contribute to Lore Bert's work by leaving their name, thereby taking part in the creation of a contemporary artwork enriched by contributions from all the exhibition venues in the churches of the North-East: the mark left behind – one's name written on the sheets – 'builds' the work in a communal and shared way. Writing one's name is an expression of the offering of a gift: that of one's own identity and that of the gift of the Spirit received at baptism.

We have collected a great many signed sheets of paper, which now form the fabric of hope that is woven into the fabric of Lore Bert's work; they are visible yet hidden within the piece, just like the signs of hope and beauty that are woven into the fabric of life in our contemporary world.

I would like to thank *Lore Bert* and *Dorothea van der Koelen* for accepting the proposal and responding generously to this invitation to be involved in the dioceses' exhibition, offering an additional experience to visitors and pilgrims. I also thank all the dioceses which, through their Offices for Cultural Heritage and Archives, libraries and ecclesiastical museums, believed in the proposal and collaborated on the initiative. I am also grateful to all those who, by signing their names, have shown their appreciation for the various exhibitions visited at the different venues, as well as their desire to be part of a work/sign of beauty that gives hope to the world, because it leaves a tangible trace of their lives, expressed through their names.

Arch. Don Gianmatteo Caputo,
Curator of the MAB and Contemporary Art Project
for the Holy Jubilee Year 2025