

## Joyce Kozloff: JEEZ

JEEZ is a twelve by twelve-foot painting in thirty-six panels based on the Ebstorf map, a 13<sup>th</sup>-century mappa mundi of the same size. One of the most famous medieval world maps, destroyed during WWII bombing, the Ebstorf map combined geopolitics, science and theology. It depicted Biblical stories alongside pagan myths within a vision of the world, as it was then known. Christ's body served as both a symbolic and literal frame for the circular map, with his head at the top, his hands at the left and right sides, and his feet at the bottom. In her response to this historic work, Kozloff has drawn upon a wide range of her artistic practices, incorporating her interest in cartography, decoration, history, material culture, and politics. As a secular person, she is particularly motivated by the ongoing evangelical rhetoric of some candidates in the current U.S. presidential race.

JEEZ is her subsequent attempt to grapple with the religious images that pervade Western Culture. In JEEZ, Kozloff navigates through the history of art, incorporating everything from Byzantine mosaics to contemporary street art. In one vignette, Jesus holds hands with Krishna; in another, he replaces Che Guevara in the famous poster. She culls from sources high and low, from Old Master paintings to everyday kitsch, and encounters scores of representations of Jesus; black, Asian, Latino, and female; adult and infant; Jesuses from the movies and New Age hippie Jesuses. Over thirteen months, Kozloff painted 125 images of Christ into her contemporary mappa mundi. Each represents a stereotype from its culture, faithful to its own artistic ideal, but the proliferation of depictions wryly erodes their power. In JEEZ, she collects and displays archetypal images of Christ; as they accumulate, they transform the holy portraits into rogue's gallery of mismatched characters.