

# Word as Image



Featuring artwork  
by Sandra Bowden



ALL SAINTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Gallery • Ordinary Time 2025

## **Artist Statement**

*In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God...And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Sandra Bowden's work is a complex meditation on time, incorporating Biblical archaeological references and ancient text in her art. The mystery of the word as a vehicle of communication across generations has been an important component of her personal iconography, using segments of language and text as design within the image. Her visual imagery is a provocative example of art centered both figuratively and literally in word.

The work in this show traces her interest and intrigue with the Word As Image, using elements from Biblical texts and ancient Hebrew. She finds a source of mystery in the evolution of the word, visibly recorded and presented historically in a variety of ways. Images from her Text and Collage Series are included in this exhibition along with several from Bowden's Crucifixion Series. The natural progression of her work has led her to a new form with the introduction of artist's books with text has now presented in a three-dimensional format using an actual book as the painting surface.



*Shepherd's Psalm*  
Collagraph mixed media  
1990  
27 x 20 in  
\$550/675

This third century Shepherd has been a cherished image for Christians throughout the centuries. This piece incorporates the Hebrew text from Psalm 23, the title page of Leonard Bernstein's Psalm XXIII, written for the Chichester Cathedral in England, with Vatican's sculpture of the Good Shepherd with the lost sheep.



*Folio Pages*  
Collage mixed media  
1995  
20 x 26  
\$800/925

Beneath the strata of papers are pages from the music of Pratorius. The center panels are portions from the Genesis story in Hebrew gilded text.



*In the Beginning Was The Word*  
Collagraph and embossing  
1982  
30 x 18 in.  
\$400/525

A Hebrew commentary traditionally has the main text written in the center of the page, surrounded by other scripture that sheds light on the passage and commentaries by other great thinkers. This Jewish concept perceives the various writers in conversation with each other. This piece portrays an exchange between the Old and New Testaments, where John uses the opening text of Moses to begin his Prologue. The Hebrew text, "In the beginning God created," starts the first chapter of Genesis and is included in the central panel of this print. A Greek embossing surrounds the Hebrew passage with "In the beginning was the Word...the Word became flesh and dwelt among us," (John 1:1 & 14) creating a kind of conversation between John and Moses.



*Law and Gospel*  
Collagraph mixed media  
1994  
Two 18 x 14 in. panels  
\$700/850

The rich surface is a Hebrew text from the Ten Commandments, created by layering gold leafing on the collagraph print, then adding colored iridescent craypas repeatedly to the raised areas.

The Word of God consists of both Law—which reveals our mortal failures—and Gospel, which proclaims the forgiveness of sin through the unfathomable grace of God. Christians believe God assumed human flesh in Jesus Christ, who died as a sacrifice and the atonement for the sins of the world. The broken tablets of the broken Law give way to the Cross.

With one additional horizontal cut, the tablets of the Law become four quadrants, suggesting a cross. Jesus said he came to fulfill the Law. When we have finished an item on our list of items to be done, we put a line through it, marking it done. *This is what I was thinking as I took the Law, marked it done, with a horizontal line, only to see a cross appear.*



*Journey*  
Collage mixed media  
24 x 18 in.



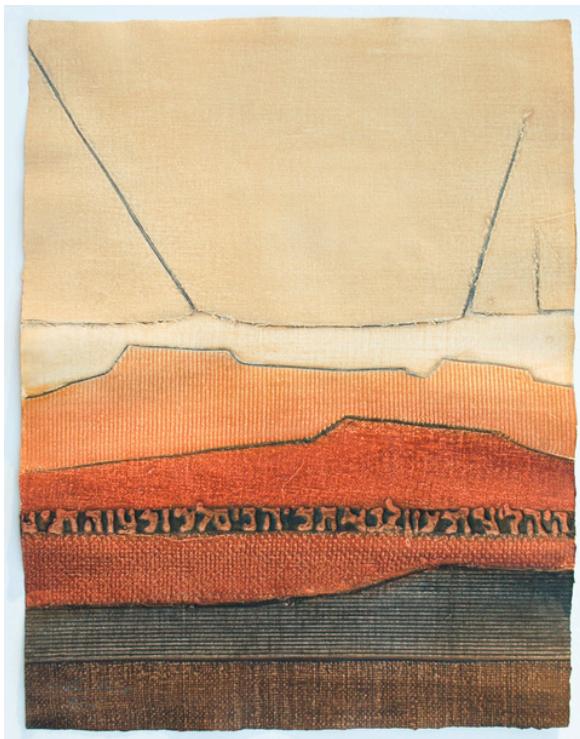
*Rock of Ages*  
Collage mixed media  
2018  
7 x 8 in.  
\$250/375

A page from an old hymn book with the song, *Rock of Ages*, is buried beneath the layers of Japanese rice papers. Panels of Hebrew text from the Ten Commandments fill the center section of the collage, and a small rock is added to the surface.



*In the Beginning God Created*  
Collagraph  
1978  
21 x 8 in.  
\$400/525

The first chapter of Genesis, written in a Dead Sea scroll script, becomes both the text and image of this collagraph. Two Hebrew words from the first verse of Genesis, God created, rise from the center of the first line of text to form a celestial body.



*My Fortress, My God*

Collagraph

1982

24 x 18 in.

\$300/375

This Israeli desert landscape suggests forms along the Dead Sea coast with its rich sienna colors and natural geological formations. The Hebrew text embedded in the landscape is from Psalms 71:3, "thou art my rock and my fortress."

A collagraph is an intaglio printing process, which uses a built-up collaged plate made from a great variety of materials (strips of fabric, thread, alumionum foils, plants, marbel dust, acrylic modeling paste) that are glued onto the surace of masonite or cardboard. The surface is then painted or inked and run through an etching press at several thousand pounds of pressure, thereby transfering the paint and the texture to the surface of the paper. The process is completely repeated to create another print in the edition.



*To Take the Book*  
Collage mixed media  
24 x 18 in.



*Logos*  
Collage mixed media  
1995  
6 x 8 1/2 in.  
\$250/375

A page from an old Greek Bible with the first chapter of the Book of John is layered into this collage, and a gilded Hebrew panel from the 1st chapter of the Book of Genesis is centered on the piece. This sets what a midrash would consider a conversation between John and Moses.



Two Pages  
Collagraph mixed media  
1988  
20 x 20 in.  
\$300/425

Two pages from a Bach facsimile of Prelude float side by side against a purple background with various colored hand applied strokes of color.



*Hallelujah, Praise to God*  
Collage mixed media  
2018  
7 x 8 in.  
\$250/375

A page from an old hymn book with the song, *Hallelujah, Praise to God*, is buried beneath the layers of Japanese rice papers. Panels of Hebrew text from the Ten Commandments fill the center section of the collage.



*Footnotes*

Mixed media collage  
1995  
18 x 24  
\$800/925

Four columns of gilded Hebrew text are spread across a heavy rice paper, which is superimposed over pages from a Hebrew Bible. Footnotes, or small strips of text, rest beneath each column.



*Decalogue Black*  
Collagraph mixed media  
2003  
30 X 22 in.  
\$500/625

The Ten Commandments radiate from the 10 gilded sheaves of paper floating above the surface of the black background. The entire Exodus text was created on a masonite plate, printed on an etching press in a brown color on a heavy paper, then gilded and surfaced with iridescent craypas to give a luminous quality to the image.

## Artist Bio



Returning artist and friend, Sandra Bowden, served for fourteen years as President of CIVA—Christians in the Visual Arts, an international non-profit organization committed to the perpetuation and cultural impact of contemporary Christian artists and their vital work. She has been a proactive ambassador reaching out on a myriad of fronts, seeking ways to serve the Christian community and other artists.

Sandra and her husband, Robert, live in Chatham, MA and are active art collectors with selective and important holdings in the great Christian visual art of the present and past centuries. In 2005 Square Halo Books published *The Art of Sandra Bowden*. For more information on her work go to [www.SandraBowden.com](http://www.SandraBowden.com)

Contact Sandra for purchase.  
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