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[ July 7, 2020 ] AU

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## Oksana Shachko: Left Activism to Paint the Icons

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In the heart of the Marais, Mansard Gallery is white as snow. Also the small wooden frame hung vertically with its naive colors, gold, red, blue, it can't be unnoticed. But what makes this piece of religious art in the midst of abstract works together in tribute to Anna Guenrikhovna, Russian filmmaker 1950s, censored by the Soviet regime? The devil is in the details. The three angels with long haired girls from the East, flower garlands in their hair, smoke cigarettes over a few beers. These are disguised as FEMEN Holy Trinity.

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In fact, the author of this painting is Oksana Shachko, co-founder of the FEMEN movement. Refugee in Paris since 2012, the Ukrainian stopped activism in 2015 to concentrate on the Orthodox religious icon. More than a new fad, it is a return to a first vocation. "Before being known as FEMEN, Oksana was a child prodigy of the religious icon," says Azad Asifovich, curator of the exhibition.

A kind of Rimbaud paint on wood. Accepted to 5 years in a reputable school, the child sets to decorate churches. These are her philosophy studies that have made her an atheist activist, one of the first three FEMENS – alongside with Anna Hutsol and Sasha Shevchenko (Inna Shevchenko, known for founding FEMEN France, joined it later). Gone is the small icons designer, that's the sextremist whos topless images spread around the world. Jesus, long curly hair, brandishing a gun in gangster mode. The Virgin Mary giving the breast to the child, veiled in a burka. She is preparing with the team of 8 +/- 2 a personal exhibition which will reveal its most explosive works in spring.

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