



PRESS RELEASE

Creating the world in eight million stitches...

From 14th June - 26th July, Ely Cathedral will be playing host to 'Threads through Creation', a breath-taking exhibition of twelve enormous, embroidered silk panels that explore the story of Creation.

Inspired by the first pages of the bible, textile artist Jacqui Parkinson re-imagines an amazing story in brilliant silks, dazzling metallic leathers and gold leaf – and more than eight million stitches!

The panels are huge – as much as 4m/13ft wide: Jacqui Parkinson's work is eye-catching, designed to be attractive for viewers of all ages. Whilst the serious message of God's good earth and man's impact on it underlies the entire exhibition, the embroidery itself is bold and exuberant.

Jacqui uses unusual techniques: "I start with antique bedsheets, which hold their own tales of life and death. I gradually build up my stories by quilting the sheets and painting them. Then I add layers of silk, which I stitch into place using a special free motion sewing machine which allows me to stitch my 'drawings'. Then I add gold leaf and metallic leathers as finishing touches, overall creating great richness - a feast for the eye!

Jacqui adds: 'My aim is to capture the wonderful extravagance of the Creation story and to delight people who view it. Despite Adam and Eve's fall from grace, it remains a story of love and promise, something we can all do with these days.'

The Very Reverend Mark Bonney, Dean of Ely Cathedral, said, 'The book of Genesis invites us into the wonder of God's work in creation and helps us better understand our place within it. It's an ancient story, but highly relevant today, with a message of hope – of God with us - and its call for us to care for our amazing world. We warmly invite you to come to Ely Cathedral and see Jacqui Parkinson's extraordinary re-telling of the creation story. With astonishing designs and colours, Jacqui's work provides interest, enjoyment and spiritual insights. I think that everyone who sees this exhibition will find it both beautiful and inspiring.'

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About Ely Cathedral

Highly regarded by historians and architects from all over the world for its beauty and size, Ely Cathedral is widely acknowledged as 'one of the wonders of the Medieval world'. Visible for miles around, the Cathedral is often referred to as 'The Ship of the Fens'.

The present building dates from 1081 and is a remarkable example of both Romanesque and Norman architecture. In addition to its unique Octagon Tower and magnificent Lady Chapel, Ely has the third longest nave of any UK Cathedral. The Cathedral's role today is not so far removed from its days as a Benedictine monastery and offers regular daily worship with a special emphasis on choral music. It still maintains a resident choir of 22 choristers and 6 lay clerks and so continues the tradition of choral evensong every day of the week during term time.

As well as being a major visitor attraction, the Cathedral serves as a cultural focal point for East Anglia by providing a unique venue for the arts & music, for exhibitions, concerts and theatre. Most recently Ely has gained global recognition a prominent film location including *Elizabeth: The Golden Age*, *The Other Boleyn Girl*, *Macbeth*, *The King's Speech* and *The Crown*.