

David Edwards (aka Sister Mary Dazie Chain), .

David Edwards' 1992 work: *Untitled (AIDS Pietà)* replicates Michelangelo's *Pietà*, but with two societal outcasts – the AIDS victim and the gay male nun – to create a sense of homosexual family and spirituality and a very different symbolic meaning. For Edwards, who was also Sister Mary Dazie Chain of the Sydney Chapter of the Order of Perpetual Indulgence, the use of the chapter's spiritual leader, Mother Superior in the Marian role was an essential element in the image's construction, and paid tribute to the OPI's role in HIV prevention and support.

The pietà is a cultural symbol embedded in Christian iconography that epitomises shared suffering and sacrifice. While Ted Gott called *Untitled (AIDS Pietà)* “a perfect symbol of the moral, spiritual and pathological morass surrounding the AIDS debacle” above all else, this pietà returns the victim to humanity and allows the community to offer compassion.

References: Ted Gott, *Don't Leave Me This Way: Art in the age of AIDS*, National Gallery of Australia: Melbourne, 1994, p. 25.

