

It is surprising how religious symbolism in modern art continues to speak to a broad public. Art and religion are intrinsically connected because both deal with the fundamental issues of life.

Examining art in churches and museums with this in mind, Wessel Stoker looks at how modern and contemporary Western visual artists present these fundamental issues. In this work, he explores the new visual language that artists like Vincent van Gogh, Alexej von Jawlensky, Graham Sutherland, Marlene Dumas, and others use to image God or Christ anew. In contrast to what has long been the dominant view of art in the West – art for art’s sake – their art fulfills functions in social life. Their art engages in dialogue, becomes a form of protest, or provides spiritual deepening. How is that to be evaluated theologically?

Wessel Stoker is Professor Emeritus of Aesthetics at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. He has written various books on topics in philosophy of religion, including *Is the Quest for Meaning the Quest for God?* (1996) and *Is Faith Rational?* (2006), and on aesthetics, *Where Heaven and Earth Meets: The Spiritual in the Art of Kandinsky, Rothko, Warhol, and Kiefer* (2012).