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Artist Pays Queen a Pearl Tribute

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Pastyrev, right, with his painting with 1,360 pearls for Britain's queen. **Ilya Naymushin**

KRASNOYARSK — A Siberian artist has spent a small personal fortune on more than 1,000 pearls for a religious painting he has made for Britain's Queen Elizabeth.

Clad in embroidered robes, Adam and Eve sit in thrones on a suspended Garden of Eden in Anatoly Pastyrev's painting, which is crowned by a Russian Orthodox icon and pearl-encrusted throughout.

"The British monarchy in particular has been the bastion of modern civilization, which has centuries-old traditions coming from Christianity," Pastyrev said Sunday at his home in the taiga forest encircling Krasnoyarsk.

Pastyrev now wants to give the painting, called "Glorification of the Lord," to the British monarch as a tribute to her title as Supreme Governor of the Church of England.

The bulldozer operator-turned-artist spent months working on the painting, which has 1,360 natural pearls he bought in Moscow for the handsome sum of 500,000 rubles ($17,700).

"The British royal court is the oldest, most powerful and most influential," said Pastyrev, 57, who was a fervent communist in Soviet days.

He is now looking for a way to give the painting — which measures one meter by 1.4 meters long and is pearl-encrusted along its outline, throughout the garden and on the bubble-like clouds — to Buckingham Palace as a gift.

But Pastyrev wants to wait while the "heat" surrounding Prince William's marriage to Kate Middleton on April 29 dies down before attempting to get his artwork to the British monarch.

"I am thrilled by this event. ... I have nothing but respect for the young Prince William," he said.

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