



THE MUSEUM OF RUSSIAN ICONS

230 Union Street, Clinton, MA 01510 | www.museumofrussianicons.org

Nina Berger, Public Relations | ninajberger@gmail.com

Mary Delaney, Marketing Director | mdelaney@museumofrussianicons.org |

978.598.5000 x111

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MUSEUM OF RUSSIAN ICONS RECEIVES MAJOR GIFT OF MORE THAN 100 ICONS & RELATED SACRED ARTIFACTS FROM THE EDWARD AND JOAN SIMPSON COLLECTION

CLINTON, MA – The Museum of Russian Icons has announced that Boston area collectors Edward and Joan Simpson have donated their exceptional collection of 18th and 19th century Russian icons and sacred artifacts to the Museum—a donation that will be the largest and most valuable single gift since founder Gordon B. Lankton established the Museum in 2006. The only museum in the US dedicated to Russian icons, the Museum of Russian Icons has the largest collection of icons outside of Russia; and is a center for the study and enjoyment of Russian culture.

“We are extremely grateful to the Simpsons for their support of the mission of the Museum in such a generous way,” said Kent Russell, curator and CEO of the Museum. “The Edward and Joan Simpson Collection, as it will be known, joins the close to 1000 icons the museum presently owns. The gift fills in some of the missing pieces in the chronological history of the Russian icon in our collection, bringing the Museum closer to being an encyclopedic collection tracing the entire arc of the development of the sacred arts in Orthodox Russia.”

“Edward and Joan Simpson are inveterate collectors. Among their many collections, the Russian icons stood out as particularly important,” continues Russell. “Numbering ninety one icons and twenty eight related Russian Orthodox objects, such as bronze crosses and a jeweled and enameled wedding crown, this is the most significant private donation since we opened the Museum 10 years ago.”

Edward Simpson traveled to the Soviet Union, and later to Russia, beginning in the early 1990s, during the same period Gordon Lankton was traveling to Russia for business purposes. Both collectors acquired many of their icons from Moscow’s famous open-air Izmaylovo Market.

Whereas Gordon Lankton was primarily attracted to the traditional Old Believer style in icons produced from the 15th through 18th centuries that are often characterized by the use of metal, the Simpsons’ collection contains 18th and 19th century icons more openly influenced by European religious art.

“These Europeanized icons reflect the prevailing taste of Russians from the late 18th century onward,” added Russell. “And it is precisely in these periods and styles of icon painting that the Museum had significant gaps. This gift adds many unusual icon subjects such as the Pure Soul,

Prayer of the Cup, rare examples of carved icons, a wedding crown, and new regions and styles not previously represented in our collection.”

Joan and Edward Simpson, residents of Bourne, MA, run a national property development business. They travel extensively, and are also avid collectors of works by American painters.

“Joan and I are delighted to donate our collection of Russian icons and religious items to the Museum of Russian Icons,” Edward Simpson said. “We know the Museum will be exceptional custodians of the collection and we couldn’t be happier that our collection has found a home where they can be displayed and shared with the widest audience possible.”

In celebration of this historic milestone, the Museum has created a special exhibition of twenty-four icons in the Auditorium Gallery, on display now through June 17, 2018.

CURRENTLY ON VIEW

MIGRATION +MEMORY: Jewish Artists of the Russian and Soviet Empires

October 12, 2017 – January 28, 2018



The Museum of Russian Icons presents *Migration + Memory: Jewish Artists of the Russian and Soviet Empires*, featuring approximately 100 works drawn from the Vladimir and Vera Torchilin Collection that explore the creative responses and historical trajectories of Jewish artists born, trained, or active in the Russian and/or Soviet Empires in the twentieth century. Organized by Boston’s Ballets Russes Arts Initiative and curated by BRAI's Executive Director, Anna Winestein, the show is structured around the themes of migration and memory that are central to

the Jewish experience in this period.

FROM FIREBIRD TO FISHERMAN: TWELVE FAIRY TALE PLATES

October 28, 2017-March 18, 2018

Twelve decorative plates designed and crafted by accomplished artists from the villages of Palekh, Kholui, and Fedoskino are featured in this small-scale exhibition. Each plate illustrates a different Russian fairy tale, examples of the myths and legends that provide a window into Russia’s fascinating and diverse history and culture.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM: The Museum of Russian Icons inspires the appreciation and study of Russian culture by collecting and exhibiting icons and related objects; igniting the interest of national and international audiences; and offering interactive educational programs. The Museum serves as a leading center for research and scholarship through the Center for Icon Studies and other institutional collaborations. It is the only museum in the US dedicated to Russian icons, and it is the largest collection of icons outside of Russia.

Museum hours: Tue. - Fri., 11AM to 4PM, first Thurs of the month to 8PM, Saturday and Sunday 11AM to 5PM, closed Mondays. Admission: Adults \$10, seniors (59+) \$7, Students \$5, Children (3-7) \$5, Children under 3 Free. For more information please visit museumofrussianicons.org.