CLINTON, MA – Zhostovo: A Russian-American Odyssey, a new mini-exhibition of trays and boxes painted in the traditional Zhostovo-style will be on view in the lobby at the Museum of Russian Icons from April 6 – October 20, 2019. These treasures are created by American decorative painter and teacher Tricia Joiner, and Zhostovo Master Painter Vyacheslav (Slava) Letkov. The artists combine traditional Zhostovo tray painting techniques and American educational methods and materials.

Every journey begins with a step. The first step of this odyssey was taken when Tricia Joiner went to Russia as the Soviet Union was collapsing. She was driven to make the trip by her intense interest in European
decorative arts and their traditional techniques. A chance connection led her to the Zhostovo Tray Factory just outside of Moscow, where she met Master Artist, Vyacheslav (Slava) Letkov. What happened there changed her life and the lives of thousands of painters around the globe that they introduced to the Zhostovo style of art. For almost 20 years, Tricia and Slava traveled around the U.S. and the world, teaching painters the beautiful techniques and style that grew out of their collaboration.

Tricia was a well-established American decorative painter, teacher, and author when she went to Russia to learn more about that country’s extraordinary decorative arts. Slava is one of the world’s most outstanding and prolific artists, but is not a teacher and had never used acrylic paints. Using Slava’s artistic skills and Tricia’s knowledge of teaching, they developed a program, teaching the traditional Zhostovo techniques across the U.S. and four continents.

Many of the works in this exhibit of Tricia’s collection were painted by Slava Letkov, Merited Artist of Russia and recipient of the Repin Award, who celebrates his 80th birthday this year. He was the youngest of seven masters recognized during the factory’s 50th Anniversary Celebration in 1977 and is the only one still painting. Slava no longer travels but does continue to paint. Tricia continues to paint and teach, including online classes.

The history of the Zhostovo craft dates back to the early 19th century when craftsmen’s workshops for decorative painting of lacquered items made of papier-mache and metal were founded in the villages of Zhostovo, Ostashkovo, Khlebnikovo, and Troitskoe outside of Moscow. The rich and tactile floral compositions are traditionally painted in vivid colors against black, red, blue or green backgrounds. The folk artists who work in this style carefully preserve the historic signature patterns and painting techniques; passing along the secrets of the craft to the next generations of Zhostovo masters.

The MoRI exhibition features examples of factory and exhibition trays demonstrating the breadth of the Zhostovo art form. The traditional trays were painted in oils with mostly floral designs and dried in ovens to save time. There are furniture pieces and household items painted in acrylics, which are examples of the increasingly challenging class projects. Visitors will learn how thousands of students from dozens of countries have been taught to paint a Zhostovo rose.

**RELATED PROGRAMMING**

**Workshop: Introduction to Traditional Zhostovo Painting**  
Friday, June 7 – Sunday, June 9, 10:00am – 4:30pm  
Members $125, Nonmembers $150, plus $80 supply fee  
Limited to 18 participants, registration required by Friday, May 31

Learn to paint the Zhostovo style from Tricia Joiner, one of the world’s leading authorities and teachers. This three project course is designed for painters who have never painted this style before or who want a refresher class to hone their skills. Daisies, cornflowers and a classic rose with an ornamental border will be painted. DecoArt will provide the Americana acrylic paints to be used in the classroom.

The students will learn some Zhostovo history, how to set up your painting space, about painting supplies needed, the use and care of brushes, how to properly prepare a surface, how to transfer a design to the painting surface, when to use opaque and transparent paints, and some basic stroke work. Students will also
receive an introduction to the stages of the traditional painting – base painting, shading, and highlighting. There will also be a lesson on the beautiful ornamentation that adorns Zhostovo works. Added to this experience will be the opportunity to walk through the exhibition of many unique and beautiful examples of Zhostovo painting never before seen in one location. Students will leave full of excitement and ready to create many more paintings.

The class fee includes complete written instructions, line drawings, colored worksheets of each stage, and three days of classroom instruction. Students will also be given access to a recorded version of the class in Tricia’s online classroom, where lessons can be reviewed or repeated. There is an additional surface fee, plus the brushes and all of the supplies needed may be purchased in class (except for a short list of household items). Students must have the required sable brushes, or buy them in class. The class is designed for adult painters, and some previous painting experience or teacher permission is needed. Please contact me with any questions.

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: Tuesday–Friday, 11AM to 4PM; Saturday and Sunday, 11AM to 5PM. First Sunday of the month: free admission! 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. Follow the Museum of Russian Icons on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.