

Icon with the “Dormition of the Virgin” (Koimesis) and Tryptic with “Deesis”



**FIRST RESTORATION MEETING REPORT
FEBRUARY 2024**

Description

Artist: **Sacred Russian Art**

Date: **15th–16th century**

Dimensions: **33,5 cm x 27 cm**

Materials: **Tempera on panel with riza and metal elements**

Inventory Number: **40538**

The ancient Vatican icon depicts the Dormition of the Virgin (in Greek Koimesis) in the center, with the Mother of God on her deathbed, surrounded by the array of emotionally moved apostles and other figures (yet to be identified).

Peter and Paul are easy to recognize and are in the front row. In the background, Jesus appears in a *mandorla* with the crossed nimbus on his head, thoughtfully holding a small figure, representing the Virgin's soul.

The work, created by an anonymous Russian painter between the 15th and 16th century, needs restoration. The study will make it possible to unravel the enigmas of the iconography, specify the dating and provenance, and, with careful analysis, decipher for the first time the inscriptions in Church-Slavic on the metal cover, which celebrates the painted sacred narrative.



State of Preservation

On the back, there is sparse coverage along the perimeter of the painted surface because of the metal elements and haloes on the internal figures. The varnish appears very dulled or is perhaps absent. Also, there were observations of cracks, micro-slumping, gaps, and previous retouching.

Additionally, there are holes for anchoring the missing haloes. Laterally, on the long sides, there are observations of a red finish with probable decorations in white. The support, also partially visible, has two original sliding crosspieces, and they are in need of functional revision.



Restoration Procedures

- Disassembly/remounting riza and metal elements
- Insertion of expanded polypropylene protections where necessary
- Anoxic treatment
- Possible protective glazing before restoration of the substrate and functional review of crossbeams
- Cleaning for removal of oxidized paint and altered touch-ups.
- Consolidation micro lifting, plastering, and reintegration of gaps in the paint film
- A protective varnishing will be the final step



Description

Artist: **Sacred Russian Art**

Date: **16th–17th century**

Dimensions: **34 x 12,5 cm**

Materials: **Tempera on wood with riza and metal elements**

Inventory Number: **40998**

The precious travel triptych dates between the 16th and 17th centuries. It depicts the famous iconographic theme of Byzantine origin called “Deesis,” which translates as “supplication,” “prayer,” and “intercession.” In the center is the enthroned Christ blessing with his right hand and holding a scroll with his left. On the sides are Our Lady and St. John the Baptist, encountering Christ Pantocrator who is praying on behalf of humanity.

Painted on the right side is the icon of the so-called “Smolensk” Madonna; St. John the Evangelist and the Angel are on the left. This ancient Russian goldsmith’s artifact has critical conservation issues on the delicate painted surface and the fine metal cover. The study, accompanied by the restoration, will allow the in-depth investigation of the art-historical aspect that makes this type of triptych so important.





State of Preservation

It is possible to only view the work partially because of its placement in the display case. On the back, there is sparse coverage along the perimeter of the painted surface because of the metal elements and haloes on the internal figures.

The varnish appears highly opaque, in some areas very yellow with cracks, probably due to a drying agent. Cracks, microlifts, gaps, altered retouches, and small holes are present. The mount, which is also partially visible, has a small fixed crossbar on the back of each individual compartment that is in need of functional revision.



Restoration Procedures

- Disassembly/remounting of the riza and metal elements
- Insertion of expanded polypropylene protections where necessary
- Anoxic treatment
- Possible protective glazing before restoration of the substrate and functional review of crossbeams.
- Cleaning for removal of oxidized paint and altered touch-ups
- Consolidation of the micro-lifting, plastering, and reintegration of gaps in the paint film
- A protective varnishing will be the final step Total







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