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THE ICON MUSEUM
AND STUDY CENTER
2024 ANNUAL REPORT



ILLUMINATING THE ART OF THE SACRED ICON

EXPLORE THE ETERNAL BEAUTY, FASCINATING
HISTORY, AND DEEP SPIRITUALITY OF ICONS.



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

As we look back on 2024, we can confidently say that it has been a year of remarkable growth, and we are proud to share the progress we've made towards "illuminating the art of the sacred icon" as the first sentence of our mission so beautifully articulates.

Early in the year Curator Justin Willson, Manager of Marketing Danielle Shabo, and Manager of Visitor Services and Membership Taylor Barros joined our stellar team, bringing their expertise, energy, and enthusiasm to the roster of 2024 exhibits, programs, and activities. Four new members, two of whom are international, joined the Board of Trustees, thus strengthening ties with the icon world in the US and abroad.

This year we acquired a few exceptional new pieces for our collection: Lynette Hull generously donated a magnificent St. Nicholas Vita icon, finely painted in the 19th century in an Old Believer workshop. Ruah Donnelly established a fund enabling us to acquire two exquisite panels by the renowned Cretan artist Georgios Klontzas, a pivotal figure in 16th-century Cretan Renaissance art. We are immensely grateful for their support.

On the development front, two generous donors—and others are now part of a new group of key supporters, the "Friends of the Icon Museum," established this year for key supporters who donate \$1,000 or more to the Annual Appeal each year.

Printing Icons: Modern Process, Medieval Image, a ground breaking exhibition curated by Justin Willson, brought together works from seven prestigious institutions to explore techniques of print and iconography. Scholars, fine art students, artists, and families joined us during Print Week to encounter the printed icon head-on in the galleries and hands-on in our art workshops.

The Museum's Study Center is now an energetic hive of activity, cultivating rigorous and engaging scholarly collaboration and exchange. Notably, we established a partnership with the library at College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, which has significantly enhanced our library's visibility and accessibility through inclusion on WorldCat. Additionally, our internship program this summer attracted top candidates from the US and Greece.

Most rewarding of all, visitors often tell us how transformative their experiences have been. A characteristic entry in our guest book reads, "I will never look at icons the same way again." This feedback affirms our belief that the Museum is not only a place to view art, but a space that fosters deep, meaningful connections to the sacred and the spiritual.

We are grateful for your ongoing support and look forward to welcoming you to the Museum in 2025!

Simon Morsink,
Executive Director



EXHIBITIONS & INSTALLATIONS



SPIRITUALITY IN EASTERN CHRISTIANITY: IMAGES OF A LIVING TRADITION

September 22, 2023 – March 3, 2024

**Curated by Alain de Lotbinière and
Simon Morsink**

Spirituality in Eastern Christianity: Images of a Living Tradition was an exhibition of twenty-six black and white photographs by Alain de Lotbinière. These images captured the Eastern approach to faith and spirituality, taken during several trips to Northern Macedonia, Serbia, Russia, Turkey, and Egypt.

SACRED PRESENCE: VIRGIN OF KAZAN

March 22, 2024–August 25, 2024

Curated by Dennis Sardella

Believed to be a Byzantine icon, the Virgin of Kazan was mysteriously rediscovered in 1579 in the hinterlands of the emergent Muscovite empire. Over the centuries, it came to be among the most beloved images in the Russian religious imagination. Guest curated by Dennis Sardella, the exhibit interwove reflections on the image's iconography, form, spiritual journey, allure, and beauty, as well as its co-option by political and religious actors up to our modern times.

SKIN, SCRIPT, SPIRIT: ETHIOPIA

May 16, 2024–December 1, 2024

Curated by Justin Willson

The lands of Ethiopia have an ancient and storied history that can be traced back as far as 3000 BCE. Christianity found an early home in Ethiopia, officially adopted under King Ezana in the second half of the 4th century, making it one of the world's oldest Christian cultures. This rich heritage is reflected in the fascinating and unique icons and liturgical objects produced in the region. *Skin, Script, Spirit: Ethiopia* was the first research installation at the Icon Museum and Study Center, highlighting three intriguing objects that were recent gifts and acquisitions.

The Icon Museum and Study Center is grateful to Meseret Oldjira, who shared her knowledge of these objects.



EXHIBITIONS & INSTALLATIONS

PRINTING ICONS: MODERN PROCESS, MEDIEVAL IMAGE

October 18, 2024–March 30, 2025

Curated by Justin Willson

Printing Icons: Modern Process, Medieval Image explored the way print and icon painting interacted over the seventeenth to early twentieth centuries. It showcased works from across the Balkans, Eastern Europe, and Russia to illuminate how traditional techniques, such as printing icons after traced panels, shaped perceptions of woodblocks and engravings, and how Western techniques transformed icon painting itself. *Printing Icons* brought together over sixty works from seven institutions and private collections to explore the methods used to create iconic prints.



UNVEILING MIRACLES: A JOURNEY THROUGH SAINT NICHOLAS'S LIFE

December 6, 2024–September 14, 2025

Curated by Justin Willson

Unveiling Miracles: A Journey through Saint Nicholas's Life is a one-icon installation featuring a delicately painted Saint Nicholas depicting thirty-two episodes from his life and posthumous miracles. The icon, received as a gift from Lynette and Brandon Hull, was crafted in exquisite detail, a crowning achievement of a Russian nineteenth-century Old Believer workshop. The finely rendered lines on the saint's face, the shadows below his brow, and the frost-tipped whiskers in his beard convey the warmth and presence of one of the most beloved and revered leaders of the Byzantine Church.

ORIENTATION GALLERY

At the end of 2024, the lower level gallery was redesigned as an Orientation Gallery, offering an introduction to icons and exploring their history, significance within the Orthodox world, and the techniques and materials used in their creation. This installation showcases works from founder Gordon B. Lankton's collection, highlighting his passion for icons and providing context for the Museum's mission to illuminate Eastern Christian art.



2024 HIGHLIGHTS

Programs & Activities

Annual Kent dur Russell Lecture: *To Honor and Adorn: Icons and their Covers in Late Imperial Russia*

Speaker: Dr. Wendy Salmond

Lecture: *Sacred Histories: Why Russian Leaders Tell Icon Tales*

Speaker: Dr. Amy Adams

Lecture: *The Secret World of Medieval Iconographers*

Speaker: Dr. Mihaela Leonida

Lecture: *Paper Icons of the St. Catherine's Monastery in Sinai*

Speaker: Dr. Waldemar Deluga

Gallery Talks: *Sacred Presence: Virgin of Kazan*

Speaker: Dennis Sardella



Virtual Talk: *Printed Icons in the Early Slavic World*

Speaker: Dr. Justin Willson

Talk: *Eighteenth-Century Vernacular Images and the Making of an Armenian Icon*

Speaker: Erin Piñon

Talk: *Images within Images: Exploring Composite Icons*

Speaker: Dorota Zaprzalska

Farewell Gallery Talk for *Spirituality in Eastern Christianity: Images of a Living Tradition*

Speaker: Alain de Lotbinière

ASEEES Reception *Printing Icons: Modern Process, Medieval Image*

Film: *Exploring Mount Athos in Two Films*

Q&A with Julia Gearhart

Printmaking for Clark University students with Carolyn Letvin

Study Day with Dr. Waldemar Deluga



Pysanky Egg Decorating Workshop

Instructor: Hanka Robertson

Spring Concert

Performers: Greek Chorale Boston

Piano Concert: Suite by Modest Mussorgsky "Pictures at an Exhibition"

Performer: pianist Ekaterina Willewald

Hybrid Contemporary Russian Literature Book Group

First Free Sunday

Free admission on the first Sunday of each month, courtesy of the Nypro Foundation.

Free Family Thursday: *Written in Color*

Written in Color

Free Family Thursday: *The Story of Nesting Dolls*

The Story of Nesting Dolls

Free Family Thursday: *Iconic Animals*

Iconic Animals

Free Family Thursday: *Iconic Bingo*

Iconic Bingo



Free Family Thursday: *Glam Up! Gold in the Conservation Lab*

Free Family Thursday: *Rainbow Flower* by Valentin Kataev

Free Family Thursday: *Miraculous Story Time*

Free Family Thursday: *Fairy Tales*

Saint Nicholas Scavenger Hunt

Partnerships

Clinton Public Schools

Lancaster Boy Scouts

Worcester and Clinton Area Chambers of Commerce

Grants

In 2024, the International Center of Medieval Art (ICMA) and the Kress Foundation awarded us an exhibition development grant for *Printing Icons: Modern Process, Medieval Image*, and the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation announced their support for the travel costs of 3 scholars of Veneto-Cretan icons and the IM+SC conservation team for an exciting 2026 symposium (stay tuned for details!)

Several grants this year

supported programs for our youngest visitors and their families. A stipend from the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area: Hidden Treasures program allowed us to purchase supplies for Artist Adventures: Exploring Nature Inside, and a Festivals & Projects grant from Mass Cultural Council supported Free Family Thursdays in July and August.

Museum visitors can now appreciate the collection's details in sharper focus, thanks to the Schwartz Foundation's grant toward improved lighting in the Gordon B. Lankton Gallery. Last but far from least, the Nypro Foundation once again sponsored the beloved Free First Sundays program, which continues to draw in new and repeat visitors for close encounters with iconic art.

The Museum gratefully acknowledges this integral support which enables us to strive for excellence in exhibits and programs, polish the visitor experience, and forge community connections.



MESSAGE FROM THE CURATOR

This year saw the Icon Museum and Study Center hosting exciting new exhibitions and launching partnerships and research initiatives that will place us at the helm of new approaches to the icon. Our show *Printing Icons: Modern Process, Medieval Image* explored the impact of the technology of printing and tracing in the Baltics, the Balkans, and Russia over the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. With support from the International Center of Medieval Art and the Kress Foundation, we hosted three visiting lecturers and led a series of events under the heading of "Print Week." During the summer, we hosted two interns with the generosity of our supporters, and we installed a focused exhibition, *Skin, Script, Spirit: Ethiopia* to explore media in the Orthodox art of Ethiopia.

At the Study Center we announced a symposium, planned for fall 2026, to research and publish some of the best icons from the Museum's permanent collection. We received a grant from the Gladys Kriebel Delmas Foundation to carry out work on the Greek icons within this project. Work is underway for the publication of the 2024 issue of the *Journal of Icon Studies*, which draws on the lectures of five speakers from the 2021 international conference *Collecting Orthodox Art in the West: A History and Look Towards the Future*.

New acquisitions include examples of Veneto-Cretan painting from the hand of George Klontzas, wood carving from 16th century Novgorod, and icons from the Greek islands. We also received gifts of Old Believer woodcarving and painting, including the captivating vita icon of St. Nicholas pictured on the cover. We launched a partnership with the library at the College of the Holy Cross, which will make our titles on Eastern Christian art searchable by the public. We received donations to our library and archives with many new titles in Russian, Ukrainian, Greek, and English. We continue to build ties with area universities and colleges and to foster historical inquiry and hands-on material study of icons. We hosted a lively series of online and in-person lectures and works-in-progress talks with visiting scholars.



NEW ACQUISITIONS 2024

Mother of God of the Life-Giving Spring

Late 20th century (print), 1807 (matrix)
Greece
Engraving, ink on paper
74.2 x 52.1 cm
Gift of John Barns, 2024

Mother of God of Tenderness

Late 20th century (print), 1810 (matrix)
Greece
Engraving, ink on paper
52.7 x 37.2 cm
Gift of John Barns, 2024

Saint Nicholas

Late 20th century (print), early 18th century (matrix)
Russia
Woodblock, ink on paper
48 x 40.5 cm
Gift of John Barns, 2024

Saint Haralambos with Scenes

18th century
Greece
Egg tempera on wood
53.4 x 38.8 x 4.5 cm
Museum purchase, the Gordon B. Lankton Collections Fund

Archangel Gabriel

16th century
Russia
Wood
12.7 cm x 2.6 cm
Museum purchase, the Gordon B. Lankton Collections Fund

Triptych with the Anastasis and Selected Feasts

16th century
Crete
Egg tempera on wood
32.8 x 43.5 cm
Museum purchase, the Gordon B. Lankton Collections Fund

Christ Enthroned

18th or 19th century
Greece
Egg tempera on wood
102 x 76 cm
Museum purchase, the Gordon B. Lankton Collections Fund

Pendant with Saint Panteleimon

Late 19th century
Russia
Egg tempera paint on tin with silver cover
6 x 4 x 0.7 cm
Bequest of Joseph Cesario

Communion Travel Kit

Late 19th century
Russia
Metal
9.5 x 7 x 3.5 cm
Bequest of Joseph Cesario

Mother of God Kazanskaya

Late 19th century
Russia
Oil on wood with silver enameled oklad, velvet backing
31.2 x 26.8 x 4.5 cm
Bequest of Joseph Cesario

Saint Nicholas with Scenes from his Life

Circa 1800
Russia
Egg tempera on wood
89 x 67 x 2 cm
Gift of Lynette and Brandon Hull

Etching of a Deesis Icon

20th century
Brass, metal
10.2 x 8.3 cm
Museum purchase, the Gordon B. Lankton Collections Fund

Saint Tikhon of Kaluga

Late 19th century
Russia
Egg tempera on wood, silver ground
21.7 x 19.3 x 3.2 cm
Gift of John Barns, 2024

The Transfiguration

Late 19th century
Russia
Egg tempera on wood, silver ground
21.7 x 19.3 x 3.2 cm
Gift of John Barns, 2024

The Beheading of John the Forerunner

Late 19th century
Russia
Egg tempera on wood, silver ground
21.6 x 18.3 x 3 cm
Gift of John Barns, 2024

Saint Panteleimon

Late 19th century
Russia
Print on wood
17.6 x 14.5 x 1.5 cm
Gift of John Barns, 2024

Mother of God Kazanskaya

Late 19th century
Russia
Oil on wood
28.5 x 25 x 2.9 cm
Gift of John Barns, 2024

Mother of God, Joy to All Who Sorrow

Late 19th century
Russia
Egg tempera on wood
25.9 x 21.2 x 2 cm
Gift of John Barns, 2024

Archangel Gabriel, Russia, 16th century, wood, R2024.03



Saint Nicholas with Scenes of his Life, Russia, circa 1800, egg tempera on wood, R2024.09
At the unveiling event with Lynette Hull and Simon Morsink

ANNUAL GIVING

\$50,000 and Above

Ruah Donnelly & Steve Dinkelaker
Lynette & Brandon Hull

\$20,000 and Above

Margaret Patel

\$10,000 and Above

Catherine Mannick
Ted Lapres & Connie Keeran

\$5,000 and Above

Amy Adams & William Adams,
The Amy S. & William G. Adams
Charitable Fund

Eric Brose, Brose Hie Hill
Foundation

Jack & Leslie McCabe

Ann Molloy, J. Irving & Jane L.
England Charitable Trust

Karen Lankton Schmidt &
Michael Schmidt

\$1,000 and Above

Sarah Cupp

Margery Dearborn

Ellen Dunlap

The Rt. Rev. Mary Glasspool

Kent & Aisling Russell

David Stadtherr

Raoul & Mary Smith

George Tonna, Tonna
Charitable Trust

Irene Weigel, Plato Malozemoff
Foundation

\$500 and Above

Edward Russel

Gerard Flynn

Mark & Elise Forbes Seeley

Nina & Tim Rose

Wayne & Carmen Huntoon

Daniel & Margaret McCarthy

\$250 and Above

Elaine Davies

Pattie Kaczynski

Paul & Wilhelmina Van Der
Wansem

Svetlana Nikitina & Andrew
Levin

Joel Greene & Ann Lisi

Marian Pruslin

Peter & Bliss Rand

Made in Honor of

Hugo Morsink *in honor of Simon
Morsink*

Edward Russell *in honor of the
Annual Kent Russell Lecture*

Made in Memory of

Lila Packer *in memory of Nikola
Tolmachev*

Patricia Pasternak *in memory of
Rev. Robert Kaszynski*

W. Pierre Baker *in memory of
Rev. Michael Ciullo*

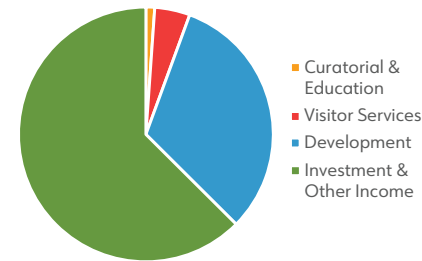
Ann Molloy *in memory of Janet
Lankton*

Barbara Sloat, *in memory of
Mary Geletka*

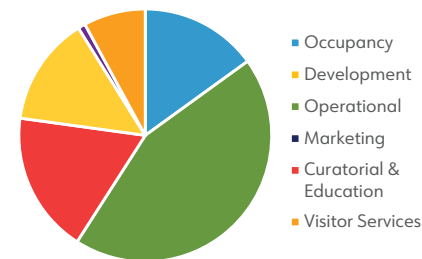
Donald Bisset, *in memory of
Jennie Corchemny*

Wendy Salmond, *in memory of
Roy Robson*

2024 Earned Income



2024 Expenses before Depreciation and Taxes



FRIENDS OF THE ICON MUSEUM

The Friends of the Icon Museum is a new initiative to honor our donors who give \$1,000 or more to the Annual Appeal each year. By joining as a Friend, you can support research on previously unexplored topics related to icons, strengthen ties to area universities and institutions abroad, and study Eastern Christian art in the company of like-minded icon lovers and experts.

The group's inaugural excursion--a behind-the-scenes tour to see the icon collection of the Harvard Art Museums--took place in October. Watch this space for the next Friends excursion and find out how you can take part: www.iconmuseum.org/friends/

Thank you to our Friends

Amy & William Adams

Eric Brose

Sarah Cupp

Margery Dearborn

Ruah Donnelly & Steve
Dinkelaker

Ellen Dunlap

The Rt. Rev. Mary Glasspool

Lynette & Brandon Hull

Ted Lapres & Connie Keeran

Jack & Leslie McCabe

Catherine Mannick

Ann Molloy

Margie Patel

Kent & Aisling Russell

Karen Lankton Schmidt &
Michael Schmidt

David Stadtherr

Raoul & Mary Smith

George Tonna

Irene Weigel



MEMBERSHIP AND STAFF

Museum Members: 478

Corporate Members: 2

Institutional Members: 21

Individual, Senior, Senior Dual,
Family Plus: 396

Lifetime Members: 7

Complimentary Members: 33

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Auburn Public Library

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Bigelow Public Library (Clinton)

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(Boxborough)

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Tewksbury Public Library

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(Lancaster)

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UMass Medical School Lamar
Soutter Library

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Registrar

Lise Graham
**Visitor Services and
Membership Coordinator**

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Visitor Services Assistant

Jillian Holmberg
Visitor Services Assistant

Susan McKie
Visitor Services Assistant

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Executive Director

Danielle Shabo
Marketing Manager

Eben Taylor
Visitor Services Assistant

Melanie Trottier
Manager of Administration

Olivia Trottier
Visitor Services Assistant

Justin Willson
Curator

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Caleb Barrett, **Practicum
Internship in Public
Humanities**

David Farina, **Visitor Services
Intern**

Kyriaki Giannouli, **John Barns
Research Intern**

Michael O'Connell, **Raoul &
Mary Smith Research Intern**

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Karen Reilly

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Joyce Carpenter-Henderson

Larissa Dyan

Serena Howlett

Sandra Larson

Art Norman

Michael Popik

Dennis Sardella

Joan Wash

Beth Woodruff

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Simon Morsink



OUR MISSION

The Icon Museum and Study Center illuminates the art of the sacred icon for a global audience. We serve as a leading center for dialogue on icons as a diverse and living tradition. We inspire learning and understanding through innovative exhibitions, programs, and scholarship.

OUR CORE VALUES

Inspiration – Exciting curiosity and discovery

Diversity – Embracing all individuals, cultures, and expressions

Accessibility – Ensuring a welcoming and inclusive environment

Integrity – Maintaining the highest ethical standards in all we do



Please consider becoming a member or donating to the Icon Museum and Study Center. Information is available on our website:
www.iconmuseum.org/support/
Photography: Norm Eggert, Andy Ryan, Danielle Shabo, and Anna Farwell



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