



ENCOUNTERING THE SACRED IMAGE

Highlights from the Icon Museum and Study Center

Thursday, October 15 and Friday, October 16, 2026

SPEAKERS



Evan Freeman, Simon Fraser University

Evan Freeman is the Hellenic Canadian Congress of British Columbia Chair in Hellenic Studies at Simon Fraser University, Canada. His research focuses on art and ritual in Byzantium and the wider Eastern Orthodox world. He co-edited the Smarthistory Guide to Byzantine Art with Anne L. McClanan (2021) and Byzantine Materiality with Roland Betancourt (2024). His articles have appeared in journals including *Gesta*, *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, *Journal of Orthodox Christian Studies*, *Analogia*, and *Studies in Iconography*.



Eva Haustein-Bartsch, Ikonen-Museum Recklinghausen

Starting in 1972, Dr. Eva Haustein-Bartsch studied art history—specializing in Byzantine and Eastern European art—and Slavic philology in Tübingen, Vienna, and Bonn. She received her doctorate in 1984 under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Horst Hallensleben in Bonn. From 1983 until the end of 2018, she served as the academic director of the Icon Museum in Recklinghausen, where she organized numerous icon exhibitions and international conferences. From 1996 to 2005, she served on the academic committee of the Icon Museum at Palazzo Leoni Montanari in Vicenza, Italy. She has published many exhibition catalogues, books, and essays, focusing primarily on icons and the Icon Museum in Recklinghausen.



Natalia Komashko, Independent Scholar

Natalia Komashko holds a Master of Arts in Art History from Moscow State University and has been with the Andrey Rublev Museum of Ancient Russian Culture and Art since 1984, serving as Scientific Secretary from 1999 to March 2022. She has curated numerous exhibitions of Russian late medieval and Post-Petrine era church art at the Andrey Rublev Museum, the Tsaritsyno Museum, and the State Exhibition Hall "Manege." Her research includes expeditions aimed at identifying historically significant Russian icons in Greek museum and church collections. She also directed and developed the theoretical framework for the "Russian icons of Sinai" Project. She co-authored the book *Russian Icons of Sinai*, three monographs, numerous museum exhibition catalogues, multiple exhibition catalogue articles on 17th–18th century iconographic art, and regular contributions to the *Orthodox Encyclopedia*. She has authored over 100 academic publications.



Elliot Mackin, Icon Museum and Study Center

Elliot Mackin is the curator and study center manager at the Icon Museum and Study Center in Clinton, MA. He received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania. Before coming to the Icon Museum, Elliot was a Fellow in Medieval and Byzantine Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He has conducted extensive fieldwork in Greece, Mount Athos, Crete, Cyprus, Serbia, Kosovo, and North Macedonia. At the Icon Museum, Elliot shares America's largest collection of icons with public and scholarly audiences through exhibitions, tours, publications, lectures, and conferences. He aims to make the art of the past accessible and meaningful through the compelling stories embedded within the objects themselves.



Aleksandr Preobrazhensky, Moscow State University

Aleksandr Preobrazhensky is an Associate Professor in the Department of the History of Russian Art at Moscow State University and Deputy Director of the State Institute of Art Studies (GIAS). He holds a PhD in Art and graduated from the History Department of Moscow State University in 2001. He is a senior research fellow in the Old Russian Art Sector at the State Institute of Art Studies. He is a laureate of the First Prize in Memory of Metropolitan Macarius (Bulgakov) of Moscow and Kolomna in the category "History of the Orthodox Church" (2013) and a recipient of the Gold Medal of the Russian Academy of Arts (2013) for his monograph "Ktitor Portraits of Medieval Rus. 11th - Early 16th Centuries".



Lutz Rickelt, Ikonen-Museum Recklinghausen

Lutz Rickelt was between 2008 and 2016 a research associate of the Cluster of Excellence "Religion and Politics" at the Institute for Byzantine and Neo-Greek Studies at the University of Münster (Germany), where he received his PhD. Among other publications, he co-edited (with Michael Grünbart and Martin Vučetić) *Zwei Sonnen am Goldenen Horn? Kaiserliche und patriarchale Macht im byzantinischen Mittelalter. Akten der internationalen Tagung vom 3. bis 5. November 2010* (Byzantinistische Studien und Texte 3, 4) 2 Bde. Münster/Berlin 2011/2013. Since December 2018 he is the Academic Director of the Ikonen-Museum Recklinghausen in Germany. Since then he has organized several exhibitions and published accompanying exhibition catalogs, most notably *Schenkung Dr. Reiner Zerlin* (2021), *Neues aus Griechenland* (2022), *IKONA. Heilige Frauen in der orthodoxen Kunst* (2023, ed. with Liesbeth van Es and Konstanze Runge) and *Icons In-Between. Eastern Christian Art from Border Areas - Belarus, Ukraine, Romania, Western Balkans, Greece* (2025).



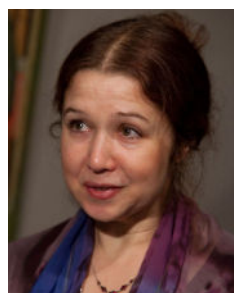
Wendy Salmond, Chapman University

Wendy Salmond received her PhD at the University of Texas at Austin and now teaches art history at Chapman University in Orange, CA. Her publications on Russian art include *Arts and Crafts in Late Imperial Russia*, *Treasures into Tractors: The Selling of Russia's Cultural Heritage, 1918-1938*, and *Tradition in Transition: Russian Icons in the Age of the Romanovs*. She is also editor of the *Journal of Icon Studies* published by the Icon Museum and Study Center in Clinton, MA. Her book *From Icon to Art* will be published by Northern Illinois University Press in Fall/Winter 2027.



Athanasios Semoglou, University of Thessaloniki

Professor of Byzantine Art and Archaeology at the Department of History and Archaeology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, he studied in Thessaloniki, Paris, and Belgrade and received his PhD from the École Pratique des Hautes Études (Paris) as a fellow of the Alexandros S. Onassis Foundation. He has held research fellowships from the British School at Athens, the DAAD, the Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, and Princeton University (Seeger Fellowship, 2026). Since 2013, he has been a member of the Greek National Committee of UNESCO's Memory of the World Programme. He currently serves as Vice-President of the European Centre for Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Monuments and as a member of the Committee for the Preservation of the Athonite Heritage. He has published five books, two catalogues of Byzantine icons, and numerous articles in peer-reviewed journals. His research focuses on Byzantine and post-Byzantine iconography, artistic exchanges in the Mediterranean, and Athonite art.



Irina Shalina State Russian Museum

Irina Shalina is the leading researcher in the Department of Old Russian Art of the State Russian Museum, Deputy Director for Research at the Museum of Russian Icons, expert at Rosokhrankultura, and the member of ICOMOS National Committee in St. Petersburg. She has a PhD in Art History and is the author of numerous studies and publications on Byzantine and Medieval Russian painting, including catalogues of national and international exhibitions, monographs on artistic originality, iconography, and symbolism of Eastern Christian art. Her scholarly interests include the problems of artistic development of Byzantine and Old Russian art, the history of icon painting, the artistic and symbolic language of icons, Byzantine and Medieval Russian iconography and its connection with Eastern Christian liturgy and theological thought.



Maria Vassilaki, University of Thessaly

Maria Vassilaki is Professor Emerita of Byzantine Art History at the University of Thessaly. She serves on the Board of Trustees of the Benaki Museum and on the Study Center Committee of the Clinton Icon Museum and Study Center. Her research focuses on Late Byzantine and Cretan icon painting, with particular emphasis on the social status of painters and artistic techniques. She has curated exhibitions at major institutions, including the Benaki Museum in Athens and the Royal Academy of Arts in London. She is currently co-editing *The Icon* with Charles Barber (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming December 2026) and co-authoring, with Robin Cormack, *Transformations of the Icon: From Constantinople to Venetian Crete and Venice* (Cambridge University Press, 2027).



Justin Willson, Yale University

Justin Willson is an Assistant Professor in the Department of the History of Art at Yale. His first book, *The Moods of Early Russian Art* (University of Chicago Press, 2026), examines attitudes towards images in Muscovy. He is at work on a new book on the labor history of the icon painter in Byzantium and Russia. He is editor of a handbook of primary sources, *The Visual Culture of Late Byzantium and the Early Modern Orthodox World* (c.1330-c.1669), with Cambridge University Press. Prior to Yale, he worked as Curator at the Icon Museum and Study Center, where he organized the show: "Printing Icons: Modern Process, Medieval Image." He received his PhD from Princeton in 2021 and held the Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship in Art History Leadership at the Cleveland Museum of Art and Case Western Reserve University.

