

Dear readers!

This is the eighth time we have celebrated the New Year together. This is a special time when people expect their best dreams to come true, good changes, joyful events and meetings. We wish this to all of our authors and readers. And we will try to make our journal bring a bit of this joy into your life — introduces you to the world of wonderful works, to creative people and treasures of art. This issue is fully international — it presents articles from Russia, India, China, and Mongolia.

The journal opens with the traditional section “Eurasian Heritage”, where many learn with interest about the unique work of ancient art — the Pantikopean Torso, which is kept in the State Hermitage Museum.

In the section “Art of the 20th-21st centuries» we can mention an article about Zurab Konstantinovich Tsereteli, President of the Russian Academy of Arts. On 4 January he turns 90, but he is still full of energy, often gives master classes for children and works continuously. His works can be found in both large prestigious galleries and small regional museums — on almost all continents. The essay about him is a presentation of his art (and the artist himself) using the example of the exhibition “Painting of a Monumentalist”, which was successfully held in Siberian museums.

For the first time, this issue presents three articles about the wonderful Mongolian artist D. Amgalan. The contribution of this master to the development of Mongolia’s fine arts can hardly be overestimated. He is known as a graphic artist and painter whose works are recognised as classics. In fact, he stood at the origins of the art education system in his homeland. It is important to note that he received his professional education in Russia and claimed that this opened the way to the world of art.

The central section of the journal, “Forum”, is devoted to icon painting. We can claim a large-scale revival of this art form in our country. Almost all major exhibitions now have sections of contemporary church art. Along with traditional tempera painting, other techniques are used here, allowing artists to achieve high artistic expressiveness and spiritual fulfilment. For example, enamel technique is actively developing. Large altar images in enamel are difficult to execute, but how their colours shine, which are not allowed to fade and for which bad weather and temperature fluctuations are not terrible. The number of such enamel icons is growing, and today they decorate not only churches, but also the urban environment, introducing bright notes and special moods into it. But the increase in the number of icon painters and new decorated churches also reveals the problem of the quality of new icons. In icon painting, not only the artist’s skill and knowledge of the canon are important, but also a deep immersion in tradition and an understanding that the icon and the prayer experience are interconnected. In general, we believe that it is necessary to maintain a living connection with the tradition of icon painting, and therefore the section contains articles that reveal the features of iconography, the regional specifics of icon painting associations in Siberia and Tobolsk Province, and present the rich collections of icons in the museums of Ryazan and Yugra.

A new section has also been opened in this issue — “Art critics, researchers, teachers.” There is only one article in it so far — about one of the authors of our journal, Anna Vadimovna Ryndina, whose life was interrupted this year. She was an outstanding researcher of ancient Russian art, the author of many books that have become reference ones for everyone who cares about the history of Christian art in our country.

I think many will agree that on the eve of the New Year we most often think about time. We remember the past, think about how fast the days are passing by, and make plans for the future. And against the background of this flow of time, great works of art stand like undying lights, concentrating eternal values and meanings and gradually, century after century, revealing them to us. “Life is short, art is eternal,” as Hippocrates said, and through art we also become familiar with eternity — both the artists themselves and we, the audience.

**Mikhail Shishin,
Chief Editor**