

Russian Orthodox Four-Panel Traveling Icon (Складень), circa XIX C.

In bronze; measures 41 x 17 cm (16" x 6.5") when fully unfolded, 9.5 cm x 6.5 cm (4" x 6.5") when closed (size of the single panel); weighs well over 2 lb.

Four beautifully detailed panels present the major feasts of Christ. Above the panels are four "domes" in which special icons are depicted. From left to right the domes represent The Crucifixion or 'Passion' of Christ; The Holy Trinity of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit shown as a dove. It is not often that God the Father is represented in icons. The Trinity is surrounded by a flaming circle of Seraphim, guarding this Throne of the Almighty. The third dome records the Feast of the Elevation of the Cross which was instituted after the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great discovered the True Cross of Christ in Jerusalem. Patriarch Macarius of Jerusalem is holding the Cross high overhead. The fourth dome shows Christ blessing his mother, the Theotokos as she sits enthroned in paradise surrounded by angels and saints.

Below, the top row of icons begins on the far left with the Annunciation by Archangel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, to the right is the Nativity of Christ with Wise Men bringing gifts, shepherds and the midwife. Next Christ is Presented in the Temple, with an offering of turtle doves, on the 8th day for Circumcision to fulfill the Law. Next, Christ is Baptized in the Jordan and the Holy Spirit descends while the voice of the Father proclaims his Son. The narrative breaks now and returns to the bottom row of panels on the far right with the birth of John the Baptist, the Forerunner of Christ. To the right is Christ teaching the priests in the Temple in Jerusalem while his parents search for Him. The next panel jumps ahead to the Transfiguration of Christ on Mt. Tabor with Moses and Elijah appearing with Him from heaven proving that there is bodily life after death. The next panel is the Entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

We then go to the top row of the third icon which shows the Resurrection of Christ and the breaking of the gates of Hades. To the right is the Ascension after 40 days with the Virgin Mary and Apostles witnessing Christ borne up on a cloud by angels. Looking down to the bottom left of this panel the icon of Pentecost with the Holy Spirit descending on the Apostles grouped around Christ in a closed room. Finally the Icon of the Dormition of the Theotokos with Christ holding the soul of His mother as her body is carried by the Apostles to her grave. An angel cuts off the hands of a Jew attempting to disrupt the funeral.

The last icon panel on the right is dedicated to the Virgin Mary showing four different icons greatly revered at the time, they include the Pochaevskaya Mother of God, the Vladimir Mother of God, and Our Lady of the Sign. The various icons take their names from the posture of the Virgin and Christ child which differs in each.

The icon is in very good condition. Fine details of the figures are very well preserved and crisp, show only minor wear to the highlights. The hinges are sound; although the first one on the left is missing a part of the internal wire (probably easy to replace if desired) and therefore slightly loose, it is nevertheless still fully functional, while the other two are completely intact and tight. There are some very minor blemishes to the artwork that do not detract and actually add character; irregular patina on the reverse. A very attractive and impressive piece.

Please note, pen in our photo is for size reference.

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\$370.00

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