



SPLENDOUR AND GLORY: Art of the Russian Orthodox Church

V BOELE

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From 19 March to 16 September Splendour and Glory will provide the first overview in the Netherlands of the time-honoured spiritual and artistic traditions of the Russian Orthodox Church. More than 300 religious artefacts - icons, fresco fragments, robes, paintings, historical books and gold and silver objects associated with Christian worship - form the tangible evidence of this rich and enduring sacred institution.

Religion has played an essential role in Russian society, from the Church's earliest beginnings in 988, when Grand Prince Vladimir officially adopted Orthodox Christianity as his state religion, until the present. After this 'baptism', the Orthodox faith spread rapidly throughout the realm, adding an extra dimension to church history and art history.

The exhibition walls will be richly filled with icons, large and small, centuries old and world famous. Icons are sometimes called windows on eternity, for they are believed to reveal a piece of heaven. Their beauty is without parallel. Attention will focus on the origins and development of Russian icon painting, with Kiev as its birthplace.

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