



**Raycap**



**Routes of Icons  
17th- 19th century  
Art and Technology**

**Drama, Greece, Santirvan**

**Opening: December 13th 2024, 20:00**

**Duration of exhibition: December 14th 2024 – April 27th 2025**

Press Kit:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/qhevt3nhn474nrm9k6rap/ADyALk2MAXpaqVWijh3BnJI?rlkey=nc7sr0lp0rv6fxvu0akpiqkh5&dl=0>

**Press Release**

The exhibition **Routes of Icons 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century. Art and Technology** is presented at Santirvan, in Drama, Greece and will run through to 27 April 2025. The exhibition includes works from the Benaki Museum collections.

From the 17th to the 19th century an impressive variety of icons adorned the churches and homes of the Orthodox Greeks. Icons and artists travelled from place to place, in ships and caravans from land and sea, crossing territories belonging to different states and empires. Works from Venetian Crete, the diverse centres of Russia, the Venetian Ionian Islands, the Ottoman Constantinople, the pan-Orthodox Mount Athos, or the Aegean islands could coexist

side by side in monasteries, churches and pilgrimage sites, as well as in the private icon niches that adorned and protected the homes and workshops of Orthodox Christians.

Using emblematic icons from the Benaki Museum collection, the exhibition attempts to reconstruct such a diverse set and to shed light on the stylistic and technical diversity of the icons that circulated in the Greek Orthodox world from the 17th to the 19th century. The concept of space is treated not so much as a geographical entity but, above all, as a social construct that is consistent with the notion of community created by an Orthodox identity and shared by populations with different traditions, ethnic backgrounds, political allegiances and language. The common Byzantine background created a shared legacy of iconographic themes and technical solutions that were constantly being enriched in various ways in each centre of production, without, however, disrupting the constants that allowed the movement of icons from place to place and their common use in the same place of worship from Russia and Ukraine to the Ionian Islands, Crete and Asia Minor.

Nowadays, the technical analysis and material study of icons in conservation laboratories plays a decisive role in the identification and understanding of their production. In the second part of the exhibition, the Conservation Department of the Benaki Museum shares with the public new data on the technology and conservation of Russian icons and metalworks of private devotion. Drawing on the findings of [the European research project ERC RICONTRANS](#), this section highlights the working methods followed by a contemporary museum through the collaboration between art historians and conservators and the wealth of information that technical examination reveals when combined with historical questions. The icons, devotional objects and, at the same time works of art, are thus transformed into valuable historical testimonies of the place and people who commissioned and created them.

Curators:

Anastasia Drandaki, Assoc. Prof. of Byzantine art and archaeology, Director of the Graduate Program "The Byzantine World: History and Archaeology", Faculty of History and Archaeology NKUA, Academic Advisor – Benaki Museum, and Vassilis Paschalis, Raycap Head of the Conservation Department of the Benaki Museum.

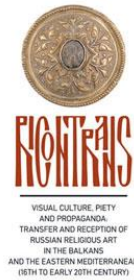
Architectural Design: Vassilis Paschalis, Spyros Nasainas

**ORGANIZED BY**



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THE EXHIBITION PRESENTS THE SCIENTIFIC RESULTS OF THE RICONTRANS PROJECT WHO HAS RECEIVED FUNDING FROM THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH COUNCIL (ERC) UNDER THE EUROPEAN UNION'S HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME (GRANT AGREEMENT NO 828791)



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SANTIRVAN | Armen 46 and Agamemnonos, Drama | opening hours: Thursday, Friday, Saturday: 10:00 - 14:00 and 17:30 - 20:30, Sunday: 11:00-14:00 and 17:30-20:30.