



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 1, 2014

Hi res images available upon request

Media Contact Only:

Lynn Rossotti

(202) 243-3975

lrossotti@HillwoodMuseum.org

Hillwood opens new Russian Sacred Arts Gallery

Chalices, vestments, regalia, and other religious objects highlight the depth of Russian religious holdings at Hillwood



WASHINGTON—A new gallery dedicated to the sacred arts of Russia is opening today at Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens. Hillwood is home to some 200 magnificent examples of Russian sacred arts and this new gallery offers visitors a more detailed exploration into the distinctive visual culture and spiritual traditions of Russian Orthodoxy.

Ranging from the 15th to the 20th centuries, a selection of the most beautifully crafted chalices, icons, liturgical vestments, and other religious items are presented to explore how Russian Orthodoxy is practiced in church and at home. One of the most magnificent pieces—a gold chalice that Catherine the Great commissioned in 1791 as part of a communion set—stands in the center of the room. The dazzling nuptial crown that Empress Alexandra wore in 1894 during her wedding to Nicholas II, the only piece of Russian imperial regalia outside that country today, sits alongside two late 19th-century wedding crowns to illustrate the splendor of the marriage rite. An icon corner replicates the center of devotional practice in Orthodox homes. Vestments worn by Russian Orthodox clergy, magnificently embellished to emphasize the glory of the kingdom of God, are also on view in this new gallery space.

Background

Already a seasoned collector of French decorative arts, Hillwood's founder [Marjorie Merriweather Post](#) became a pioneer collector of Russian art while living in the Soviet Union with her third husband, ambassador to the Soviet Union Joseph E. Davies, in the late 1930s. As she encountered religious objects for sale in commission shops, she saw an important part of Russian life disappearing and decided to make them a part of her collecting interests. Post continued collecting Russian religious items for the rest of her life and today Hillwood, her former home in Washington, D.C., houses one of the finest collections of icons and Russian liturgical objects in the United States.

Vestments, chalices, and other liturgical items were previously on display in a gallery adjacent to Post's [kitchen](#) in the mansion. This summer, that space was returned to its original appearance as the [dining room for Post's staff](#) in the 1950s, 60s, and 70s, and a new home has been created on the second floor of the mansion for these sacred objects.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Location:

4155 Linnean Avenue, NW, Washington, DC
Metro: VanNess/UDC, Red Line (20 minute walk)

Information:

(202) 686-5807 for information or www.HillwoodMuseum.org
[Facebook.com/HillwoodMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/HillwoodMuseum)

Hours:

Tuesday through Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm; Select Sundays, 1 to 5 pm. Closed Mondays, most holidays, and for several weeks in January.

Café:

The HILLWOOD Café serves lunch Tuesday through Saturday from 11:00 am to 3:30 pm. Afternoon Tea is served on Sundays only from 1 to 3:30 pm. Express Dining, featuring a quick selection of sandwiches, salads, snacks, and beverages, is available Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm and Sunday from 1 to 4 pm. Call (202) 686-5807 for café reservations.

Suggested Donation:

\$15, \$12 seniors, \$10 college students, \$5 for visitors age 6 to 18.
No donation is suggested for children under 6.

###

One of the premier art collector's museums in the United States, Hillwood Estate, Museum and Gardens is dedicated to enlightening and engaging visitors with an experience inspired by founder Marjorie Merriweather Post's passion for excellence, gracious hospitality, and intent to preserve and share the beauty and history of her collections, garden, and estate. Home to the foremost collection of Russian imperial art in the United States and impeccable French furnishings and objects, Hillwood is set upon 25 acres of gardens and surrounding woodlands in northwest Washington, D.C. Twelve acres of enchanting formal gardens include a Japanese-style garden, a Rose Garden, and a French parterre.