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**The exhibition “Zhostovo tray” at the Crimean Craft Chamber as a phenomenon of actualization and transmission of traditional applied art in contemporary cultural space**

One of the significant events of autumn 2025 in the cultural life of the Republic of Crimea was the opening on November 11 at the Craft Chamber in Simferopol of a large-scale exhibition “Zhostovo tray”, timed to coincide with the 200th anniversary of the famous art craft (Fig. 1<sup>8</sup>).



Fig. 1. Official opening of the exhibition “Zhostovo tray”,

The exposition was composed of graduation qualification works by students of the Fedoskino institute of lacquer miniature painting – a branch of the Russian university of traditional art crafts. This event transcends local exhibition practice, representing a comprehensive cultural act aimed at preserving, updating and promoting a unique layer of Russian artistic culture in the Russian region.

Products with Zhostovo painting, recognized as a brand of Russian traditional applied art, showcase the virtuoso technique of multilayer oil painting on metal, the ability to convey volume, depth and play of light. More than thirty unique trays, ranging from rare historical samples to innovative modern works by graduates of the Fedoskino institute of lacquer miniature painting, demonstrated the evolution of the Zhostovo painting style while strictly adhering to the canons of mastery.

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<sup>8</sup> Figs. 1-4. Photo by the author of the article.

Also exhibited were works by students of Fedoskino lacquer miniature painting and enamel painting. This curatorial approach allowed visitors to familiarize themselves with three areas in which professional education is provided at the Fedoskino Institute of Lacquer Miniature Painting. Zhostovo painted trays appeared not as isolated phenomena, but as an integral part of Russian art crafts industries united by common principles of handcraft, deep connection to tradition and the highest level of performance skill.

Of particular significance from a scientific and pedagogical point of view is the presentation of graduate qualification works, which serve as compelling evidence of the effectiveness of the continuous professional education system developed at branches of the Russian University of Traditional Art Crafts. This system enables future artists to evolve along individual trajectories, gradually mastering the intricacies of traditional applied art from basic skills to a high level of professionalism.

Thus, the exhibition served as a public report of the educational institution, presenting not only finished products but also the success of the very pedagogical model aimed at reproducing personnel in the field of traditional art crafts industries.

Visitors, according to updated data, consisting of 425 schoolchildren and 89 adults, had the opportunity not just to passively observe works of art but to peek into the creative laboratory, understanding the process of succession through which tradition acquires new life in the hands of young artists.

A series of workshops was organized for guests, during which they not only heard an engaging story about the history of the Zhostovo craft but also got to touch upon the secrets of metal painting (Fig. 2). The culmination of this acquaintance was the opportunity for each participant to feel like a master and create their own unique Zhostovo flower.



Fig. 2. Master class “Zhostovo flower”. Instructor: M.A. Saltanov

Alla Alikovna Ponomarenko, deputy chairman of the State Council of the Republic of Crimea and chairwoman of the parliamentary committee on culture, protection of cultural heritage and sports, pointed out in her speech that such events serve as an effective tool for preserving Russian culture and demonstrating its

viability. Her words stating that “Zhostovo painting is recognizable worldwide and it is especially pleasing that residents of the Russian Crimea can now familiarize themselves with this unique craft” precisely reflect the mission of the Russian university of traditional art crafts and its branches, aimed at strengthening cultural identity through access to authentic national artistic values.

An important complement to the exhibition project was a media presentation of its concept and goals on radio “Tochka” (Fig. 3). On air, Mikhail Saltanov, director of the Fedoskino institute of lacquer miniature painting and Vladimir Naumov, director of the Bogorodskoye institute of artistic wood carving, elaborated not only on the exhibition itself but also on the philosophy of education in their unique institutions. They stressed that education is built on a tripartite foundation: careful preservation of deep-rooted traditions, transfer of unique professional skills from teacher to student and integration of modern pedagogical approaches. This public discussion enabled the broader audience to grasp the idea that traditional art crafts are a dynamically evolving domain offering young people sought-after and deeply creative careers. The institutes emerge as cultural hubs where the past and future of national art engage in constant dialogue.



Fig. 3. Live broadcast on “Radio Tochka”, Simferopol, 2025

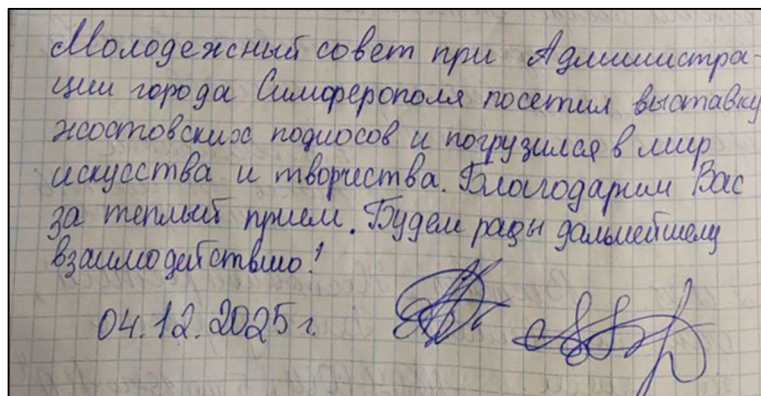


Fig. 4. Feedback from the Youth council of Simferopol city administration after visiting the exhibition

The exhibition “Zhostovo tray” in Simferopol fulfilled several significant functions: representative, presenting exemplary samples of the art craft; pedagogical, clearly demonstrating the operation of the system for training new masters; career-oriented, attracting the younger generation of Crimeans to unique forms of art. This event served as a vivid example of how traditional art, presented skillfully and contemporarily, can function as a powerful unifying and meaning-forming factor in today's sociocultural space, confirming its enduring value and relevance.