

Rublev Museum to Remove Icons from Kiev Ahead of Schedule

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The icon "Our Lady of Smolensk"

A collection of valuable, unique icons displayed in Kiev by the Andrei Rublev Museum will be brought back to Russia ahead of schedule, the museum announced Wednesday.

The exhibit "Masterpieces of Ancient Russian Art. Icons of the 15th to 16th centuries from the collection of the the Andrei Rublev Museum" opened on the grounds of Kiev's Sofia Cathedral on Dec. 23 and was intended to remain on display until March.

However, museum director Gennady Popov told RIA Novosti that the museum had already sent workers to Kiev to close the exhibit and pack up the artifacts. "Our main preservationist and other coworkers are already there," Popov said.

Popov added that there might be some delay in removing the icons from Ukraine due to a required exchange of documents between the culture ministries of Russia and Ukraine. With

changes in the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers believed to be imminent, it is unclear what effect the turmoil in the Ukrainian government will have on removing the icons from the country.

The exhibit includes a selection of 30 icons, including the valuable hodegetria icon "Our Lady of Smolensk" and the saint's icon "The Holy Martyr George with Scenes from his Life," both from the early 16th century.

While no reason was officially given for removing the icons, the premature closure of the exhibit is likely connected with the unrest in Kiev — the Kiev History Museum was looted by unknown intruders on Feb. 19, and the National Art Museum of Ukraine also expressed concerns about the safety of their collection.

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