



Monastic treasures from Ukraine to go on display in the UK for the first time at the V&A

Ukrainian UNESCO Heritage site National Preserve 'Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra' monastic complex loans precious treasures to V&A South Kensington for display

Sacred Treasures from Kyiv

Galleries 84 and 89, V&A South Kensington

14 September 2026-17 September 2027

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Today, the V&A announces Sacred Treasures from Kyiv, a display of exceptional 18th-century sacred objects on loan from Ukraine's National Preserve 'Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra'. Opening in the Silver Gallery and Sacred Silver and Stained Glass Galleries at V&A South Kensington on 14 September 2026, this free display will bring together remarkable works that reveal the artistry, craftsmanship and spiritual traditions of one of the world's greatest cultural sites and highlighting the richness of Ukraine's cultural heritage. These objects will be on display in the UK for the first time.

Founded in the 11th century, the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra is a UNESCO World Heritage Site that continues today as both a place of worship and a museum complex. The display offers a rare opportunity to experience eighteenth-century masterpieces of baroque sacred art from this exceptional collection, reflecting the Lavra's status as a major hub of artistic production and patronage, and one of the foremost centres of Ukrainian goldsmithing. On display in the UK for the first time, the seven objects represent key items of worship important to the Ukrainian Orthodox church including: an Icon and a silver-bound altar Gospel - a liturgical book used in Christian worship – as well as a diskos used to carry the Eucharist in Orthodox liturgy, and a silver gilded chalice depicting the crucifixion.

Sacred Treasures from Kyiv builds on a multi-year partnership between the V&A and the National Preserve 'Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra', centred on provenance research into two pairs of rare silver-gilt Holy gates in the Gilbert Collection (on long term loan to the V&A from the Gilbert Trust for the Arts) that originated from the monastery. Now on display in newly transformed Gilbert Galleries at V&A South Kensington, the Holy gates are the only known examples of their kind outside the Orthodox world. The collaboration has generated new insights into the history of the Lavra and its collections, while deepening understanding of Ukrainian cultural heritage and the complex histories of ownership, displacement and exchange embodied by museum objects.

Marking the 975th anniversary of the founding of the Lavra monastery, the display will be accompanied by a programme of events spotlighting Ukrainian cultural heritage, including a one-day symposium, Ukrainian Cultural Heritage and UK Institutions: Shifting Perspectives and Practice, bringing together international voices to explore changing approaches to representation, preservation and collaboration in the UK and the Ukraine.

Tristram Hunt, Director of the V&A, said: 'These national treasures showcase the exceptional skill of Ukrainian silversmiths and illuminate the rich artistic heritage preserved by the Lavra. We hope that the display and conference this September will inspire greater appreciation of Ukraine's unique heritage and foster collaboration across the cultural sector to uncover and share the country's remarkable story.'

Maksym Ostapenko, *General Director of the National Preserve 'Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra'* said: "This display offers an opportunity to tell a story far greater than that of a remarkable group of objects. The silver Holy Gates and other treasures from the collection of the National Preserve 'Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra' reveal an entire chapter of Ukrainian cultural heritage that remains little known beyond Ukraine. Through these works, international audiences are introduced to the Ukrainian school of eighteenth-century sacred goldsmithing — one of the highest achievements of Ukrainian Baroque art. For us, it is especially significant that, through our partnership with the Victoria and Albert Museum, this story will be shared with the world and presented in an international context as an integral part of Europe's shared cultural heritage."

– ENDS –

**For further PRESS information please contact the V&A press office on +44
(0) 20 7942 2502 or email press.office@vam.ac.uk (not for publication).**

Press images available to download [here](#)

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- **Instagram:** [@vamuseum](#)
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Notes to Editors

- *Sacred Treasures from Kyiv* opens at V&A South Kensington on 14 September 2026 - 17 September 2027.
- More information on the *Ukrainian Cultural Heritage and UK Institutions: Shifting Perspectives and Practice* symposium can be found [here](#).
- The display has been made possible with support from the British Council and the Gilbert Trust for the Arts, and with the involvement of the Ukrainian Institute, the Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine and the Embassy of Ukraine in the UK. The project strengthens long-term collaboration between cultural institutions and professionals in Ukraine and the UK and contributes to the cultural ambitions of the UK–Ukraine 100 Year Partnership. All objects are generously lent by the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra National Preserve.

Social Media

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About V&A South Kensington

The V&A is a family of museums dedicated to the power of creativity.

V&A South Kensington is a world of extraordinary global creativity, with unmissable exhibitions, experiences and educational programmes for all. One of London's most iconic buildings, it is home to national collections of art, design, fashion, photography and furniture to theatre, performance, architecture, and ceramics, as well as the UK's National Art Library. It is a place where everyone can experience a story of creativity that spans 5,000 years and every creative discipline, which brings that story to life through programmes and activities for all ages and specialisms, and world-leading research and conservation.

The National Preserve 'Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra'

The National Preserve 'Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra' is Ukraine's largest historic museum complex, established 100 years ago, and an active monastery with a 975-year history inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. For nearly a millennium, the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra has stood at the intersection of spirituality, scholarship, artistic excellence, and statehood — four enduring dimensions symbolised by the Lavra Cross. Together, they have shaped the Lavra as one of the principal centres of Ukrainian civilisation and continue to guide the Preserve's mission to safeguard and share this living heritage with the world.

Today, the National Preserve cares for one of Ukraine's richest museum collections, encompassing approximately 73,000 objects and 140 cultural heritage monuments dating from the 11th to the 20th centuries. As a secular public institution, it preserves and interprets this exceptional legacy while ensuring it remains accessible to all. At a time when Ukraine continues to defend its history, identity, and cultural memory, the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra stands not only as a monument to the past, but as a living institution shaping the country's cultural future.

About the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection

The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection celebrates some of the most beautiful objects ever made, many in precious materials, and often on a small scale. It is famous for European and British masterpieces including stone and glass mosaics, silver, gold boxes and enamel miniatures.

Their passion for craftsmanship and beauty prompted Sir Arthur Gilbert (1913 – 2001) and his first wife Rosalinde (1913 – 1995) to acquire the very best objects in their collecting areas. Always intended for the public, the V&A has been the home of this collection since 2008.