



From 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. on Friday, July 13<sup>th</sup> Holy Trinity Cathedral is hosting a fundraiser and wine & cheese reception featuring the amazing artwork of orphaned children from Russia's Saratov region.

The exhibition is presented by the Radonezh project, made up of teachers, psychologists, pediatricians and others who volunteer to help orphaned and abandoned children in Russia. The Radonezh Art Program sponsors art-therapy lessons and one-on-one psychotherapy sessions in orphanages in the Volgograd and Saratov region.

The reception on Friday will raise money specifically for a project to open a family-style children's home for 25 abandoned children. The children's artwork will be on view at the Cathedral through July 29, and all donations and proceeds from the sale are tax-deductible.

A similar event, held at the Cathedral of the Holy Virgin Protection in New York, received a very warm response and generous support from the local community. A review by one of the guests and a letter from the director of the Radonezh Board will tell you more about the Radonezh Art Program and the coming event.

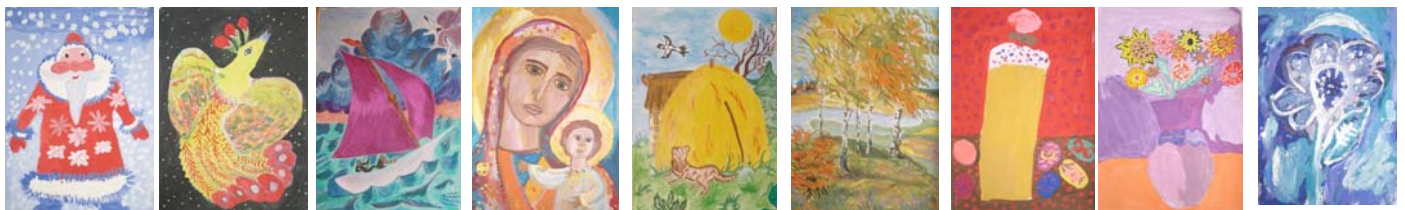
# RADONEZH ART WORK EXHIBITION

Artwork created by orphaned children from the  
Saratov/ Volga region of Russia  
with  
a presentation on the Art Program  
and  
a Wine & Cheese reception  
on  
Friday, July 13, 2007, 7-9.30 PM

at the Cathedral of Holy Trinity  
1520 Green Street, San Francisco

*Parking at St. Brigid School  
Broadway between Franklin & Van Ness*

For any additional information please contact  
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When I arrived at the Radonezh Art Exhibition on opening night, vespers was being held in the Orthodox cathedral upstairs. The smell of incense and burning candles filled the air. It was dark, light smoke hovered around the altar, the choir was chanting in the background. Golden icons of saints covered the walls, increasing the mysticism of the place. I was filled with a sense of peace as I slowly made my way down the stairs towards the basement. The white light of the gallery blinded me at first when I walked into the room. I soon realized that this light was not only emanating from the white-painted walls and the setting sun outside. Indeed, the brightness I felt also came from the paintings on the walls. These watercolors had been painted by young Russian orphans between 7 and 14 years old as part of an art therapy program and their spirit clearly radiated from the art work. With pleasure I will admit that I was impressed by the children's talent and that I was not expecting to see such skillfully painted pieces. The exhibit contains some very beautiful pieces and all the artwork passionately translates the culture and atmosphere where the children are growing up. The piece that first caught my eye on opening night was a red goldfish. It was placed between two windows overlooking the graveyard on the other side of the street. Enclosed, dreaming, distant, the fish seemed in harmony with its element. I noted that it was swimming in a sea, far from bowls and aquariums, far from the captured reality of life. The title confirmed my impressions: "The Golden Fish" was quite literally golden. Then I noticed "Daisies" by 14 year-old Volodya Rovenkov. The piece's skillfully painted simplicity brought me back to my childhood and the world of playful imagination. I miss the days when the limits between reality and fiction were allowed to remain blurred and this painting somehow reassured me that these young people are being offered the opportunity to translate their thoughts into art. A "Happy Frog", "Paradise Birdie", "Firebird", "Magic Tree", "Cat"...these paintings testify of children playing with their ideas of beauty, joy and dreams. Overall, I highly recommend that you visit the gallery. The only thing that I missed was the presence of the young artists in the room, but when I got home that evening, I realized that it was up to me to use my imagination too. Through their art, these children's stories are being told and brought to us here in New York City. Such occasions remain rare, even in this city, so don't miss this opportunity.

Elin Lindquist, New York University

*"Who are you talking to?" I asked a nine year old Anya, who was leaning over the table covered with paper, paints and brushes.*

*"Winnie-the-Pooh."*

*"Oh, and where is he?" I asked, looking at the picture of the trees and not seeing anything resembling the bear.*

*"Oh, you can't really see him. His house is behind that tree," said Anya, pointing at a tree that looked like a cabbage leaf, "and anyway he's gone by now."*

*"He's gone?"*

*"Yes, he went to see Piglet, who has his birthday today."*

*"Oh, I see". I stepped back and turned to Larisa, the Art teacher of the "Home of Mercy" orphanage in Volzhshsky.*

*"She is quite an artist!"*

*"Yes, she enjoys painting a lot. I remember when she first came to us and joined the art lessons. Black, dark green and brown were the colors she used most.*

*"She's definitely changed her favorites since then!"*

*"Well, you see," Larisa continued to explain, "life for these children has really been a struggle and in many ways it still is. Anya, for example, was basically living on the street before she came here. She has never met her father, and her mother was denied parental rights due to neglect. So it was not surprising to see the gloomy pictures that she used to draw. They were merely a depiction of her social reality.*

*As an art teacher, I see the amazing impact and importance of Art Therapy. It helps us give the children access to an alternative reality where they can express their emotions and be creative. It enables children to model the world in the way they want, even if it is only imaginary. Basically it allows them just to be children. I wish so strongly that we could provide these children with a new social reality, a new home and a loving family."*

For the last two years our organization has been involved in programs which provide state & private orphanages with arts & crafts materials for use in Art Therapy.

Through *Radonezh*, psychologists and art teachers volunteer their time and efforts to conduct one-on-one psychotherapy sessions that involve Art Therapy.

Radonezh serves underprivileged families of the Saratov region and the following orphanages:

- ◆ “Home of Mercy” Orthodox Orphanage, Volzhskiy, Volgograd region;
- ◆ Privolzhskiy State Orphanage for Mentally Challenged Children, Saratov region;
- ◆ Saratov State Orphanage №3 for preschool children;

Our current major project is to offer *a new social reality* to 25 abandoned children of the Saratov region by opening a family style children’s home in a beautiful country setting, on land we have acquired on the banks of the Volga river. We hope that this home will serve as a prototype for other homes of this kind and will promote family upbringing of orphans in the region.

**Your purchase of art works and your donations help us to continue and expand our Art programs. Your generous support also helps bring our project of a family style children’s home closer to completion. We are deeply grateful.**

With sincere gratitude in appreciation of your support,

Elena Slessareva  
Radonezh Board Director