

The Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood (11th – 15th June 2014)



One of the wonders of the city is doubtless the Church of the Resurrection, universally known as The Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood (Spas na Krovi, in Russian). According to an Internet poll by tourists' site TripAdvisor, this church is considered the eighth most symbolic and beautiful monuments in the world.

The building of this wonderful church, fully representative of Russian Orthodox art, began in 1883 on the place where tsar Alexander II was murdered a couple of years earlier, but was completed only in 1907 under tsar Nicholas II.

Filled with wonderful mosaics, the Church of the Savior has a **huge amount of enamels covering the cupolas and the beautiful iconostasis, a noteworthy work of art and jewelry.** Unfortunately, the church passed through a dark age during the Soviet period, when she was used as a warehouse for the Red Army (deserving the unlucky nickname "potato church"). Fortunately or, if you prefer, providentially, all projects by the Soviets to raise the Church down have been suspended and this wonderful landmark of Saint Petersburg survived up to now. While the symbols of the Soviet past have literally disappeared or have been largely forgotten, these religious symbols live once again in a renewed splendor.



Interior of the Church on Spilled Blood.

Because of the misuse during the Soviet period, the original enamels of the **Holy Gates or Royal Gates** (i.e. the door through which Jesus, contained in the Eucharist, passes through to access the presbytery in the processions) are now lost. In 2005, a project of restoration and reconstruction of Holy Gates has begun. Decorated with fired enamels reconstructed after the originals, thanks to contemporary photos and lithographs, the new Holy Gates have been designed by V. Y. Nikolsky and S. G. Kochetova and have been enameled by CKI artist Larisa Solomnikova and her equipe. The Holy Gates have been inaugurated and consecrated on March 14th 2012 by Amvrosy, Orthodox bishop of Gatchina, on the 129th anniversary of the murder of Alexander II.



A moment from the consecration of the Holy Gates in 2012.



Detail of the enamels.



Enameled painting.



Ensemble view on the ICONOSTASIS wall: sculptures, mosaics, paintings and enamel fill the whole wall.



Larisa during the creation of the enamels for the Holy Gates.



Enamels from the Holy Gates as created by Larisa and her atelier.



Entrance to the altar area, separated from the nave by the Iconostasis.

Larisa Solomnikova was born in Saint Petersburg when the city was still called Petrograd. She graduated in 1981 and studied Jewelry at the Institute of Art and Design named after Vera Mukhina, i.e. the later State Academy of Baron von Stieglitz. In 1990 she worked for a private atelier in Berlin. Up to 1993, she taught and worked autonomously in her own artistic atelier and partook in many national and international expositions. She is member of the Union of Artists of Russia since 2004 and today she teaches fired enamel at the Academy of Baron von Stieglitz. Between 2005 and 2012, she worked with her husband on the creation of the Holy Gates enamels for the Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood in Saint Petersburg. She partook in the International Exposition of CKI in **Nova Milanese (2011)** and in March 2014, she held a 5-day **seminary** of icon enameling for the members of CKI Italy.



Group picture in the Church of the Savior on Spilled Blood.

