



UNIwersytet Śląski  
w Katowicach

# Illicit trade of works of art

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1. Introduction

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2. Stages of illicit trafficking

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3. Entities committed to prevent the illicit trafficking

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4. Practical measures and tools to prevent illicit trafficking





# 1. Introduction

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Although illicit trafficking of cultural goods is not a new phenomenon, the levels it has reached in recent years, especially in areas affected by armed conflicts and natural disasters, is concerning.

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Cultural heritage is increasingly targeted during conflicts.

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The illicit trafficking of cultural property contributes significantly to the funding of terrorism, organized crime and money laundering.

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It is problematic to provide an assessment of the global extent of the illicit trade in cultural property.



# The Causes

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There are many causes of today's international illicit traffic of cultural objects:

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I. the opening of frontiers, the rapid expansion of low-cost travel and the blossoming of the international art market;

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II. the multiplication of conflicts;

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III. organized criminal groups are increasingly involved in all aspects of trafficking in cultural objects and related offences.;

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IV. the deficiencies of national regulations.



# Basic forms of this crime

- Illegal export of cultural goods;
- Illegal import of cultural goods;
- Failing to bring back a cultural good exported on the basis of temporary permit;
- Import or export of cultural goods without permits to avoid customs

# Stages of illicit trafficking

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can take different forms, ranging from theft from cultural heritage institutions or private collections, through looting of archaeological sites to the displacement of artefacts due to war

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This trade is also often linked to organized crime, money laundering and terrorism.



## Stage 1.

# Source of cultural property illicitly traded

- Art theft
  - Illicit excavations
  - The production of fakes
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The reasons  
that  
individuals  
get involved  
in illicit  
excavations:

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I. extreme poverty;

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II. artifacts as presents from their  
ancestors;

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III. forced by criminal groups;

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IV. treasure hunters;

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V. way of making a living.



## Stage 1.

# Source of cultural property illicitly traded

- Art theft
  - Illicit excavations
  - The production of fakes
- 

## Stage 2 - Illicit exportation

- Illicit exportation refers to the smuggling of cultural property in breach of the legislation of the exporting country.

## Stage 3 - The sell

- In a number of instances auction houses have been accused of obscuring the true origin of art objects through their confidentiality clauses.



## **Fake provenance documents**

In order to hide the illegal or suspicious history of cultural objects, the production of fake documents is a common practice of traffickers

## **Fake export certificates/Falsified customs declarations**



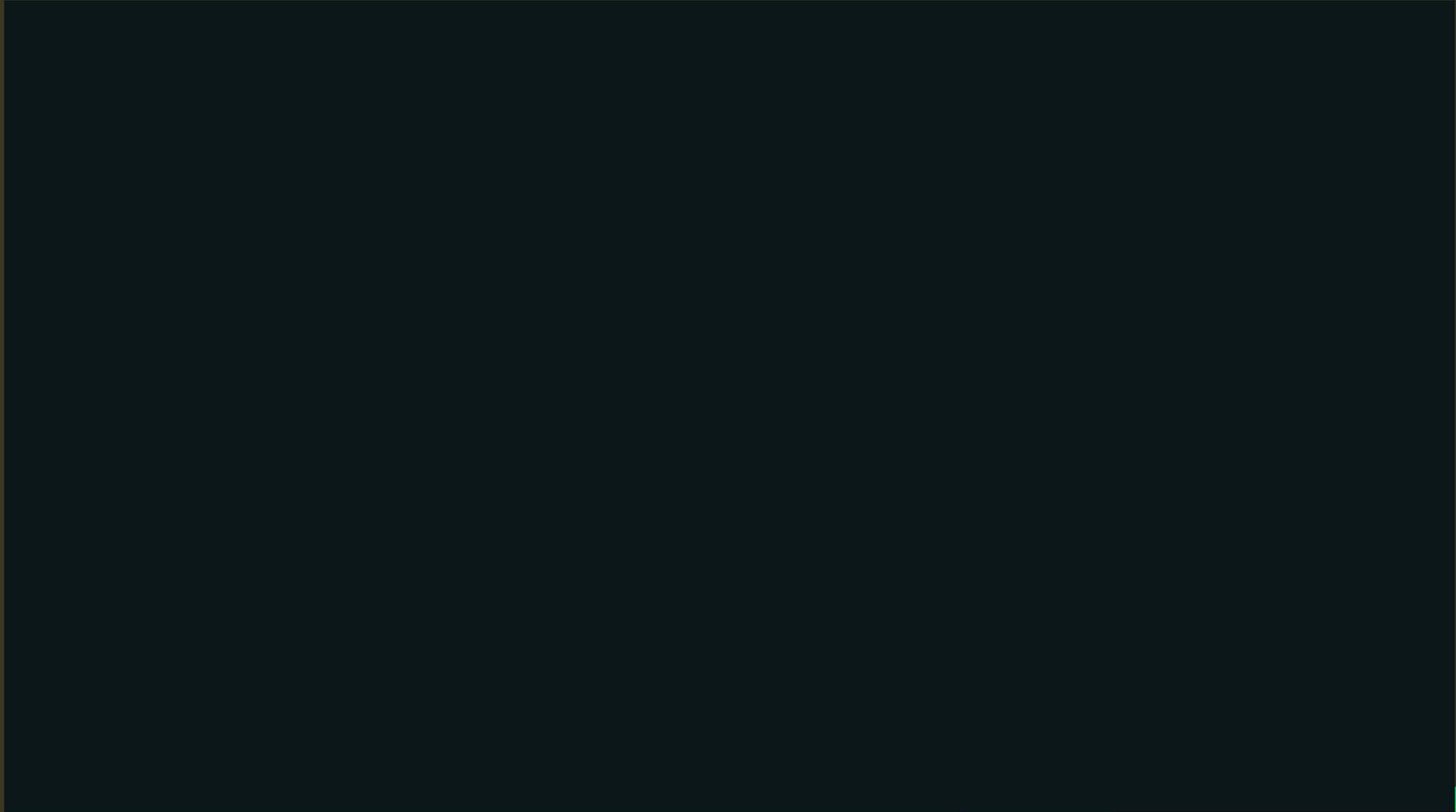
# Dancing Shiva



<https://plone.unige.ch/art-adr/cases-affaires/dancing-shiva-statue-2013-india-and-national-gallery-of-australia>



# Transnational nature of the illicit trafficking in cultural objects



# Illicit trafficking of cultural property as an organized crime

- Organized criminal groups are increasingly involved in trafficking in cultural property, both through legitimate markets, such as auctions and through the Internet, and in underground illicit markets.
- Illicit trafficking routes can change for historical, cultural, economic and social reasons.



# OPERATION ATHENA

## GLOBAL CUSTOMS AND POLICE ACTION

Against the illicit trafficking of cultural goods

**20-30 NOVEMBER 2017**

[WWW.INTERPOL.INT](http://WWW.INTERPOL.INT)

[WWW.WCO.ORG](http://WWW.WCO.ORG)





Kabul @Interpol





Golden Mask from Tumulco  
@Interpol



# Corruption and Money Laundering

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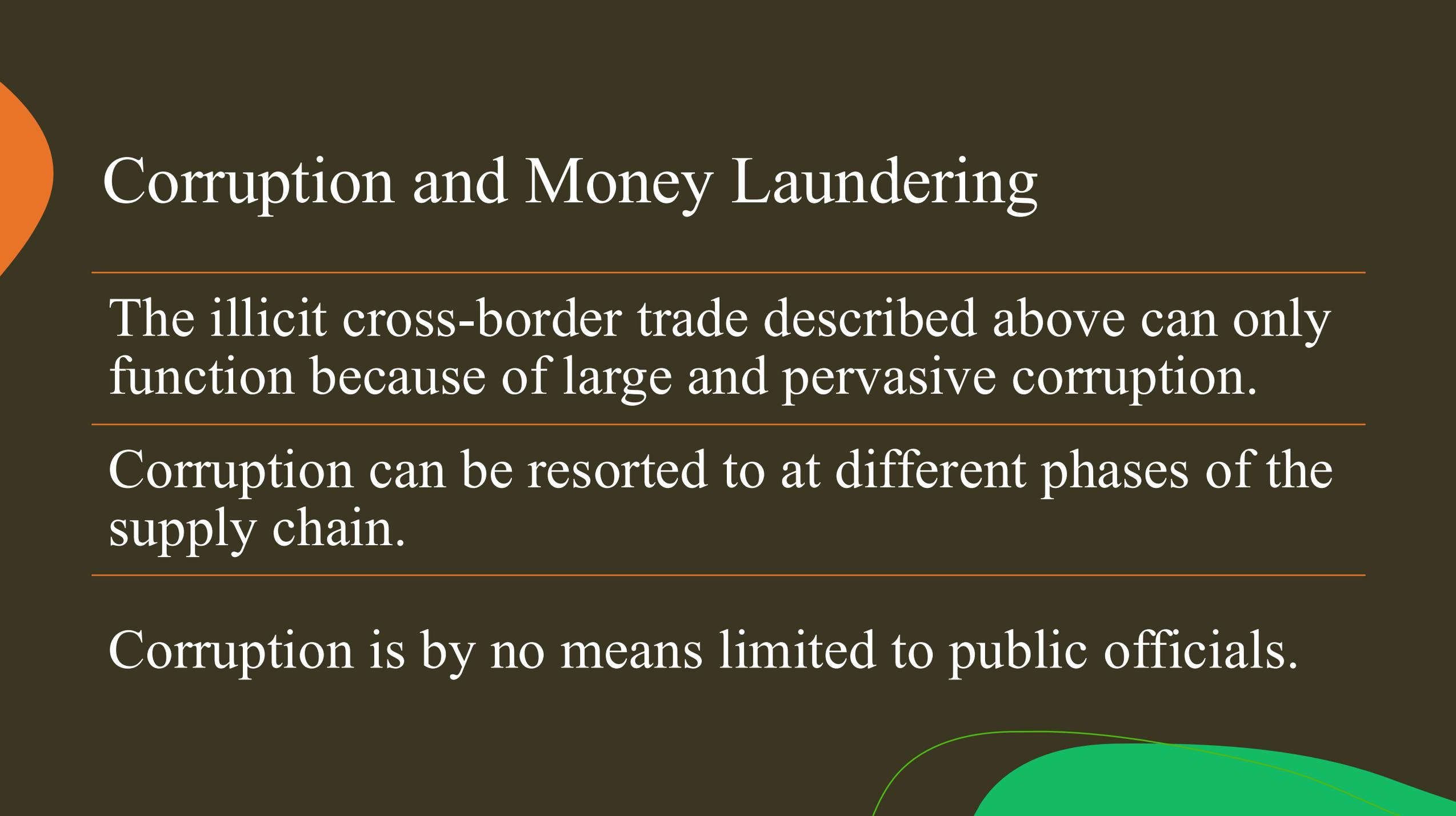
The illicit cross-border trade described above can only function because of large and pervasive corruption.

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Corruption can be resorted to at different phases of the supply chain.

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Corruption is by no means limited to public officials.



# 3. Entities committed to prevent the illicit trafficking

United Nations Security Council (UNSC)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT)

International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

World Customs Organization (WCO)

International Council of Museums (ICOM)

European Union (EU)



## 4. Practical measures and tools to prevent illicit trafficking

1. UNESCO
  2. INTERPOL
  3. ARCHEO – World Customs Organization
  4. ICOM
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# 1. UNESCO tools

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Awareness-raising campaigns: films, video clips and publications

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Mediation and conciliation rules on conflicts related to cultural property

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Actions concerning Cultural Objects being offered for Sale over the Internet

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Model export certificate





# 1. UNESCO tools

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Awareness-raising campaigns: films,  
video clips and publications

---

Mediation and conciliation rules on  
conflicts related to cultural property

---

Actions concerning Cultural Objects  
being offered for Sale over the Internet

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Model export certificate

## 2. INTERPOL tools

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Database for stolen works of art

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Posters - the most wanted works of art, a poster that is distributed to countries.

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Purple Notice – issued to warn and share info on modus operandi, objects, and concealment methods used by criminals.

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ID-ART app



INTERPOL

# LES ŒUVRES D'ART LES PLUS RECHERCHÉES THE MOST WANTED WORKS OF ART

N°52 (a)  
Juin / June 2022

Objets représentés dans la base de données d'INTERPOL.  
En cas de découverte ou de renseignement concernant ces objets,  
prière d'aviser les services de police de votre pays, ou INTERPOL

Objects featured in the INTERPOL database.  
In the event of discovery or information about these objects,  
please inform the police of your country, or INTERPOL

WWW.INTERPOL.INT



CALICE / CHALICE

Dimensions: 22,7 x 14,5 cm  
Vol/Theft: 31 Dec. 1997 – 30 Dec. 2000  
(Eglise/Church)  
Dossier/File: 2022/100.1  
B.C.N./NCB: BUDAPEST



PHOTOGRAPHIE / PHOTOGRAPH

Par/By: Linda McCartney  
Numéro/Number: 21 of 25  
Dimensions: 60,4 x 40,7 cm  
Vol/Theft: 24 Mar. 2022  
(Bus)  
Dossier/File: 2022/115.11  
B.C.N./NCB: VARSOVIE/WARSAW



STATUE / SCULPTURE

Par/By: Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres  
Dimensions: 13,5 x 21,1 x 14,9 cm  
Vol/Theft: 5 Jan. 2022  
(Musée/Museum)  
Dossier/File: 2022/15.1  
B.C.N./NCB: PARIS



TABLEAU / PAINTING

Par/By: Gennaro Greco  
Vol/Theft: 30 Sep. 2015  
(Particulier/Private residence)  
Dossier/File: 2022/48.1  
B.C.N./NCB: ROME/ROMA



PENDULE / CLOCK

Dimensions: 25 x 10 x 11,5 cm  
Vol/Theft: 17 Dec. 2021  
(Antiquaire/Antique Dealer)  
Dossier/File: 2022/21.1  
B.C.N./NCB: MANCHESTER



TABLEAU / PAINTING

Par/By: Alberto Breccia  
Vol/Theft: 28 Feb.-30 Mar. 2005  
(Entrepôt/Warehouse)  
Dossier/File: 2009/31327-1.3  
B.C.N./NCB: BUENOS AIRES



INTERPOL

## LES ŒUVRES D'ART LES PLUS RECHERCHÉES THE MOST WANTED WORKS OF ART

N°53 (b)  
Décembre / December 2023

Objets représentés dans la base de données d'INTERPOL.  
En cas de découverte ou de renseignement concernant ces objets,  
prière d'aviser les services de police de votre pays, ou INTERPOL

Objects featured in the INTERPOL database.  
In the event of discovery or information about these objects,  
please inform the police of your country, or INTERPOL



VASE / VASE

Dimensions: 78 cm  
Vol/Theft: 6 Nov. 2023  
(Château/Castle)  
Dossier/File: 2023/229.5  
B.C.N./N.C.B: PARIS



MOSAÏQUE / MOSAIC

Dimensions: 30 x 45 cm  
Vol/Theft: 29 Jan. 2023  
(Galerie d'art/Art gallery)  
Dossier/File: 2023/24.2  
B.C.N./N.C.B: BUENOS AIRES

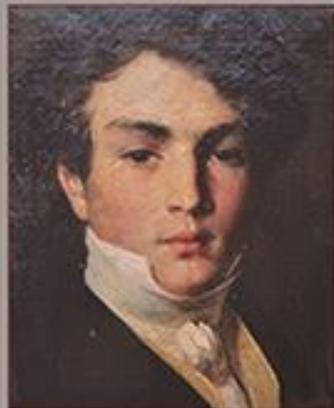


TABLEAU / PAINTING

Par/By: Richard Parkes Bonington  
Dimensions: 27 x 21 cm  
Vol/Theft: 1 Jan. 1981 - 25 Jun. 1982  
(Musée/Museum)  
Dossier/File: 2023/193.1  
B.C.N./N.C.B: ANKARA



TABLEAU / PAINTING

Par/By: Jakob Alt  
Dimensions: 20 x 25 cm  
Vol/Theft: 14 Sep. 2023 - 20 Oct. 2023  
(Particulier/Private residence)  
Dossier/File: 2023/227.1  
B.C.N./N.C.B: VIENNE/VIENNA



SCULPTURE / SCULPTURE

Dimensions: 75 cm  
Vol/Theft: 07 Feb. 2023 - 15 Feb. 2023  
(Église/Church)  
Dossier/File: 2023/98.1  
B.C.N./N.C.B: BRUXELLES/BRUSSELS



TABLEAU / PAINTING

Dimensions: 70 x 31 cm  
Vol/Theft: 15 Apr. 2014  
(Musée/Museum)  
Dossier/File: 2023/210.32  
B.C.N./N.C.B: BEIJING



INTERPOL

22 November 2022

**MAJOR THEFT OF INVALUABLE CELTIC  
GOLD COIN TREASURE FROM  
2ND AND 1ST CENTURY B.C.**

**KELTEN RÖMER MUSEUM  
IN MANCHING, GERMANY**

If you have any information about the theft or current location  
of these objects, please contact :



INTERPOL General Secretariat  
(Lyon, France)  
Email: [woa@interpol.int](mailto:woa@interpol.int)

[WWW.INTERPOL.INT](http://WWW.INTERPOL.INT)



**Celtic Gold Coin Treasure**  
Manching, Germany



**Celtic Gold Coin**  
Ref.: 2022/240.6  
NCB Wiesbaden



**Celtic Gold Coin**  
Ref.: 2022/240.8  
NCB Wiesbaden



**Celtic Gold Coin**  
Ref.: 2022/240.7  
NCB Wiesbaden



**Celtic Gold Coin**  
Ref.: 2022/240.9  
NCB Wiesbaden



INTERPOL

6 March 2024

**MAJOR THEFT FROM THE D'ANNUNZIO  
SEGRETO MUSEUM AT THE VITTORIALE  
DEGLI ITALIANI IN ITALY**

**NEARLY 50 GOLD PIECES CREATED  
BY ITALIAN SCULPTOR UMBERTO  
MASTROIANNI WERE STOLEN**

If you have any information about the theft or current location  
of these objects, please contact :



INTERPOL General Secretariat  
(Lyon, France)

WWW.INTERPOL.INT



**Tribute to Palma Bucarelli**  
Ref.: 2024/119.7  
NCB Roma



**Bracelet n°4**  
Ref.: 2024/119.47  
NCB Roma



**Rectangular Pendant**  
Ref.: 2024/119.51  
NCB Roma



**Sculpture Ring n°1**  
Ref.: 2024/119.39  
NCB Roma



**Belt Buckle**  
Ref.: 2024/119.25  
NCB Roma



**Idole n°1**  
Ref.: 2024/119.42  
NCB Roma



INTERPOL

13 September 2023

**MAJOR THEFT FROM THE MUSEUM OF  
EAST ASIAN ART COLOGNE, GERMANY**

**RARE CHINESE PORCELAINS  
FROM THE MING (1368-1644)  
AND THE QING (1644-1911) DYNASTIES  
WERE STOLEN**

If you have any information about the theft or current location  
of these objects, please contact :



INTERPOL General Secretariat  
(Lyon, France)

WWW.INTERPOL.INT



**Gourd Wall Vase**  
Ref.: 2023/188.1  
NCB Wiesbaden



**Dragon Dish**  
Ref.: 2023/188.5  
NCB Wiesbaden



**Fencai Vase**  
Ref.: 2023/188.8  
NCB Wiesbaden



**Fencai Bowl**  
Ref.: 2023/188.9  
NCB Wiesbaden



**Doucai Charger**  
Ref.: 2023/188.7  
NCB Wiesbaden



**Dragon Jar**  
Ref.: 2023/188.6  
NCB Wiesbaden

Special poster on Green Vault theft



INTERPOL

**MAJOR THEFT ON 25 NOVEMBER 2019  
FROM THE GREEN VAULT MUSEUM IN  
DRESDEN, GERMANY**

**14 INVALUABLE 18TH CENTURY JEWELS  
FROM THE DIAMOND ROSE GARNITURE,  
THE DIAMOND GARNITURE AND THE  
QUEEN'S JEWELLERY WERE STOLEN**

If you have any information about the theft or current location  
of these objects, please contact :

INTERPOL General Secretariat  
(Lyon, France)  
Tel: +33 4 72 44 76 76  
Email: [woo@interpol.int](mailto:woo@interpol.int)

[WWW.INTERPOL.INT](http://WWW.INTERPOL.INT)



**Rapier**

By Christian August Globig and August Gottlieb Globig  
Total length 96 cm



**Polish Order of the White Eagle**

By Jean Jacques Pollard  
15,5 x 15,5 cm



**Hat Brim Ornament**

By Christian August und August Gottlieb Globig  
Length 13,5 cm, width 6,5 cm



**Epaulette**

By Franz Diespach, Christian August Globig and  
Jean-Jacques Pollard  
Length 20,4 cm



**Brooch of Queen Amalie Auguste**

By Christian August Globig  
Width 21,4 cm, height 12,5 cm, depth 5 cm



**Shoe buckles**

By Christian August Globig  
Height 4 cm, width 8,5 cm, depth 6 cm



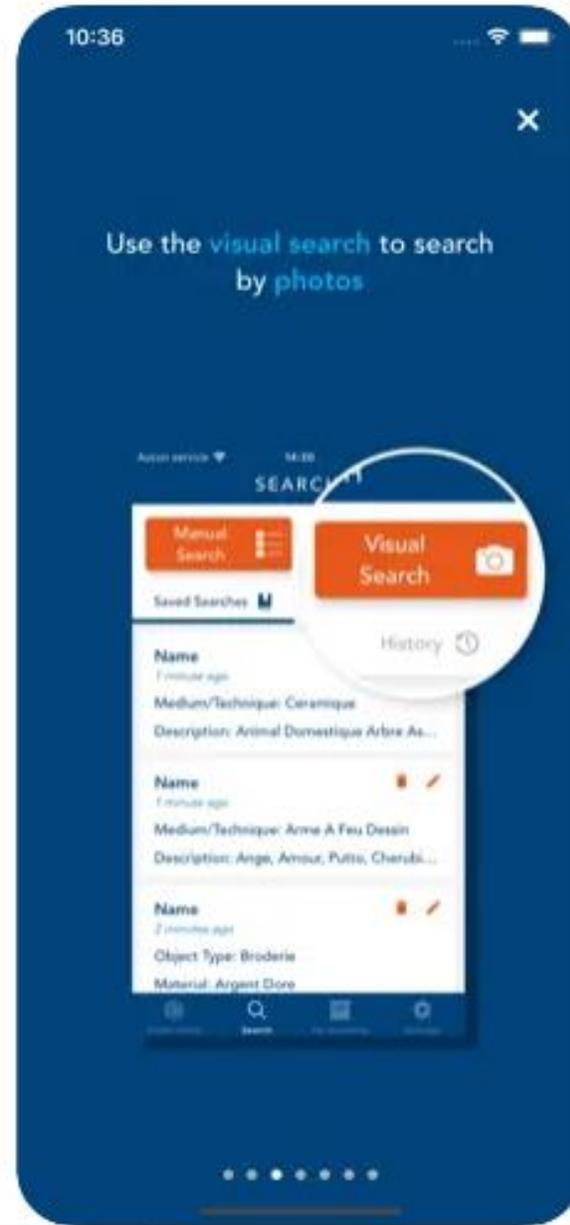
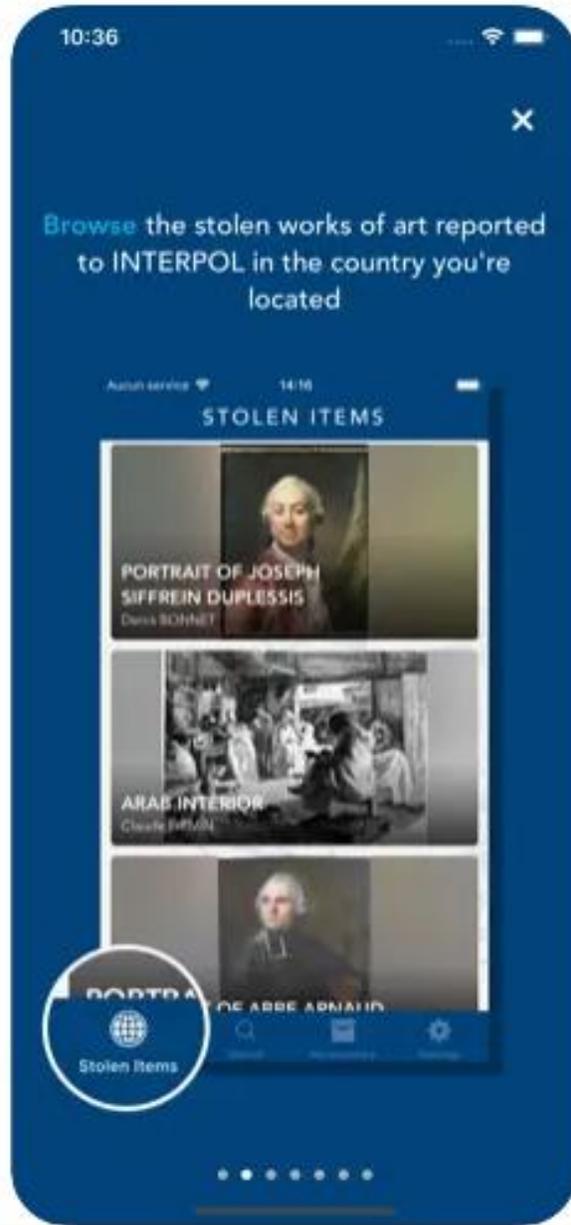


# ID-ART

CAPTURE THE ART  
CAPTURE THE CRIMINALS

The app that  
allows you to check  
if a work of art is stolen







### 3. ARCHEO – World Customs Organization

- real-time communication tool
- the information sent via ARCHEO is encrypted and secured.



## 4. International Council of Museums (ICOM)

### The ICOM *Code of Ethics for Museums 2004*

- It sets minimum standards of conduct and performance, which museum professional staff throughout the world is encouraged to implement.

### International Observatory on Illicit Traffic in Cultural Goods

- It is a worldwide cooperation platform to share information on and promote cooperation in the fight against illicit traffic.

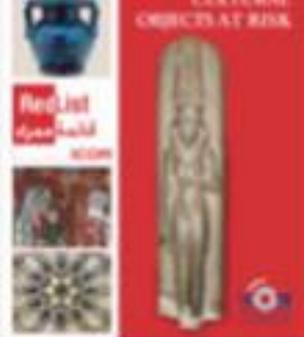
## Red Lists

- endangered archaeological objects or other types of cultural property
- composed of images of the objects that are secured in a museum or in a cultural institution.
- to enable law enforcement and cultural heritage/museums professionals and collectors to be alerted when they encounter similar artefacts to the ones presented in the list.



PDF

## Emergency Red List of Cultural Objects at Risk – Yemen



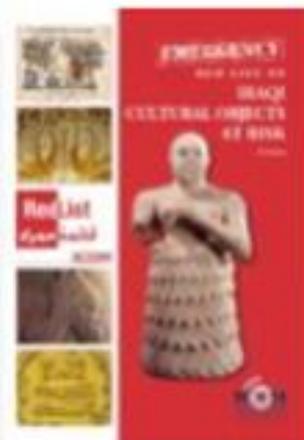
PDF

## Emergency Red List of Egyptian Cultural Objects at Risk



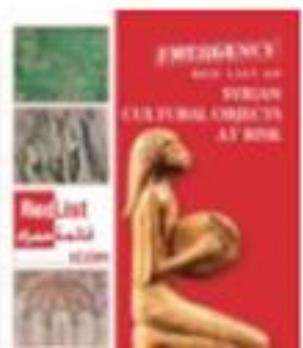
PDF

## Emergency Red List of Iraqi Antiquities at Risk



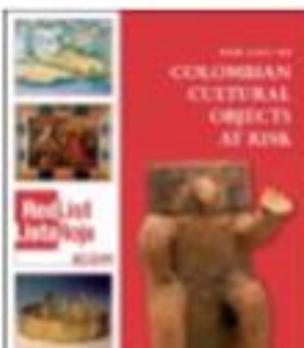
PDF

## Emergency Red List of Iraqi Cultural Objects at Risk – 2015 Update



PDF

## Emergency Red List of Syrian Cultural Objects at Risk



PDF

## Red List of Colombian Cultural Objects at Risk

# CULTURAL OBJECTS AT RISK - YEMEN

## Accessories and tools

**Incense burners, astrolabes and lamps:** Made of metal, stone or clay, of various shapes and forms.



37. Limestone incense burner, South Arabia, late 3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD, 25.5 x 18 x 16 cm.

© RMN - Grand Palais (Musée du Louvre)/Franck Paour

38. Copper alloy incense burner or lamp, Yemen, 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD.

© Trustees of the British Museum

39. Brass astrolabe, Yemen, AD 1291, 19.4 x Ø 15.6 cm.

© The Metropolitan Museum of Art

40. Bronze incense burner, Southwestern Arabia, ca. mid-1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC,

27.7 x 23.7 x 23.2 cm. © The Metropolitan Museum of Art

41. Copper alloy lamp, Yemen (Hadramawt), 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD, 20 x 18.7 x 8.7 cm.

© Trustees of the British Museum

**Ornaments:** Metal hands, Torah sticks (finials) in different shapes and materials.



42. Brass Torah finials, Yemen, 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> c., 25.7 cm.

© Carolina Center for Jewish Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

43. Bronze votive hand, South Arabia, 1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> c. AD?, 10.4 x 7 x 0.5 cm.

© Musée du Louvre, dist. Grand Palais/Raphaël Chopard

**Weapons:** Ancient metal swords and metal daggers (jambiyas) with handles made of ivory.



44

44. Bronze dagger, Yemen (Sirwah),

2<sup>nd</sup> half 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC, 34.7 x 3.7 cm

© I. Wagner/Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI)

# CULTURAL OBJECTS AT RISK - YEMEN

**Statuettes:** Statuettes and figurines representing human beings or animals in metal or stone.



14. Sandstone sculpture, Southwestern Arabia, 3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BC,

27 x 13.9 x 10.9 cm. © The Metropolitan Museum of Art

15. Bronze statuettes, Yemen (Sirwah), 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC-3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD, 10.4 x 2.7 cm; 8.9 x 3.3 cm.

© I. Wagner/Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (DAI)

16. Copper alloy statuette, Yemen (Marib), 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC-2<sup>nd</sup> c. AD,

21 x 28 x 9.7 cm. © Trustees of the British Museum

17. Yellow stone statue, Yemen, 3<sup>rd</sup> c. BC-3<sup>rd</sup> c. AD, 20 x 8.3 cm.

© Trustees of the British Museum

**Statues and busts:** Human beings or animal statues or busts made of metal or stone.



18. Alabaster funerary statue, Yemen, 1<sup>st</sup> c. AD, 45.5 x 13.3 x 10.3 cm.

© RMN - Grand Palais (Musée du Louvre)/Hervé Lewandowski

19. Bronze relief, Yemen, 1<sup>st</sup> c. BC, 67 x 70 x 9.5 cm.

© The National Museum, Sanaa. Photo: Musée du Louvre, dist. Grand Palais/Thierry Ollivier

20. Bronze bust, Yemen (Jabal al-'Awd), 3<sup>rd</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> c. BC, 23 x 14 cm.

© General Organization of Antiquities and Museums (GOAM); CASIS Project, University of Pisa

21. Bronze statue, Yemen (Al Baida), 6<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> c. BC, 140 cm.

© The National Museum, Sanaa. Photo: Musée du Louvre, dist. Grand Palais/Anne Chavet

## Documents, manuscripts, books

13<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> century AD

Manuscripts and miniatures, rare books, incunabula and early printed books; on paper or parchment; woodcut, gilding, engraving; handwritten and printed; in Arabic, Cyrillic, Greek, Hebrew or Latin script. Some books are also the first printed works of the new Ukrainian literature written in the popular language.

### Manuscripts, miniatures and rare books

1. *Druha Gorajel Book*, language: Church Slavonic in Belarusian or Ukrainian variant, 142 folios, parchment, Orsha, 13<sup>th</sup> c. AD, 4", 19.4 x 26.4 cm. © NBUV
2. *Aeneid*, Ivan Kotliarevskiy, language: Ukrainian, 8", 1798, 28 x 13 cm. © NBUV
3. *Pinkas of the Talmud Torah*, Religious School in Kopychinty, language: Hebrew, 8 folios, 1873–1889, 37 x 24 cm. © NBUV



### Early printed books



4. First complete printed edition of the Bible in Church Slavonic language; paper printing, woodcuts, leather binding, Ostroh, 1581, 2", 32 x 20 x 10 cm. © Museum of Book and Printing of Ukraine
5. *Pateryk ili Otchynok Pecherskyi* (Kyiv–Pecherskyi *Pateryk*), language: Church Slavonic, first edition, paper, engraving, printing, woodcuts, leather binding, Pechersk Monastery, Kyiv, 1661, 2", 38.5 x 17.5 x 6 cm. © Museum of Book and Printing of Ukraine
6. Theological text, manuscript on paper, *Bukhchytasay*, Simons, 18<sup>th</sup> c. AD, 22 x 17 cm. © Lviv Museum of the History of Religion
7. *The Altar Gospel*, Pechersk printing house, silver, wood, paper, embossing, gilding, printing, engraving, 1707 (metal cover, 1658), 41 x 26 x 8 cm. © National Reserve "Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra"

## Icons

Icons featuring figures (religious inspired art) painted on canvas or wood; oil and/or tempera; gilding and/or silvering.



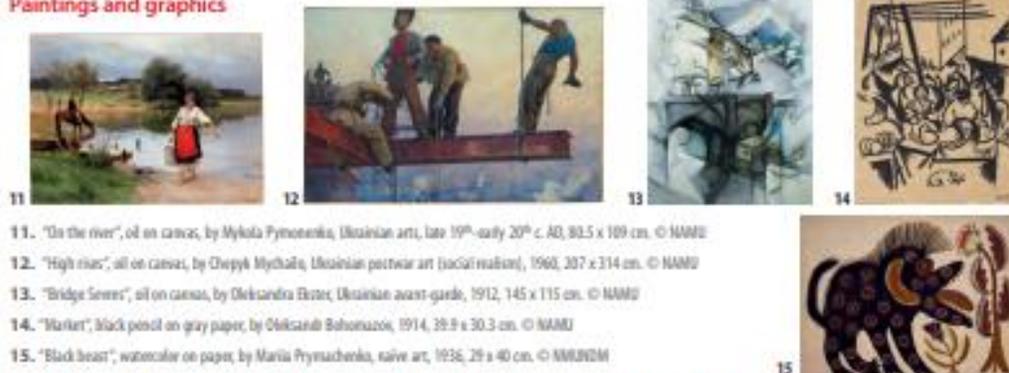
8. "Saint Nicholas with stones from his belt" (oil, tempera, gilding, silvering on gesso-grounded two-piece lime-wood panel, relief, carving), *Soborshchynya*, 1680–1685 AD, 125 x 81 x 1.7 cm (frame: 144 x 119 x 19 cm). © NAMU
9. "Christ the Vigilant Eye, Christ is the Grape vine, John the Baptist", oil on canvas, Kyiv region, 1853, 58 x 120 cm. © NAMU
10. "Exaltation of the Holy Cross of the Lord, the Virgin and Child, St. Nicholas, Yurii the Dragon Fighter, Crossfallen", oil on wood, folk icon, Bukovyna region, late 19<sup>th</sup> c. AD, 57.2 x 97.5 cm. © National Center of Folk Culture – Ivan Honchar Museum

## Fine arts

Late 19<sup>th</sup> – mid 20<sup>th</sup> century AD

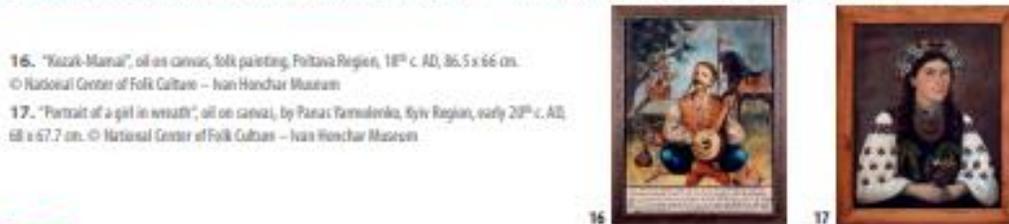
Drawings, engravings, paintings and folk art; in oil, pencil or watercolour; on canvas or paper. Ukrainian national schools of realism, avant-garde, and postwar (social realism) and naive art.

### Paintings and graphics



11. "On the river", oil on canvas, by Mykola Pymonenko, Ukrainian art, late 19<sup>th</sup>–early 20<sup>th</sup> c. AD, 80.5 x 109 cm. © NAMU
12. "High river", oil on canvas, by Shepyk Mykhailo, Ukrainian postwar art (social realism), 1960, 307 x 314 cm. © NAMU
13. "Bridge Sewer", oil on canvas, by Olesandra Berez, Ukrainian avant-garde, 1912, 145 x 115 cm. © NAMU
14. "Market", black pencil on gray paper, by Oksana Bohomazov, 1914, 39.9 x 30.3 cm. © NAMU
15. "Black bear", watercolor on paper, by Mariia Prymachenko, naive art, 1936, 28 x 40 cm. © NAMU/M

### Widespread artworks by folk painters of the 19<sup>th</sup> – first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. in central Ukraine



16. "Kazki-Mama", oil on canvas, folk painting, Poltava Region, 18<sup>th</sup> c. AD, 86.5 x 66 cm. © National Center of Folk Culture – Ivan Honchar Museum
17. "Portrait of a girl in wreath", oil on canvas, by Panas Parnalenko, Kyiv Region, early 20<sup>th</sup> c. AD, 68 x 67.7 cm. © National Center of Folk Culture – Ivan Honchar Museum

## Religious artefacts

Service artefacts and sculptures; silver and wood; engraving, embossing, gilding and/or silvering.



18. Discs (silver, engraving, printing, gilding), Kyiv region, early 18<sup>th</sup> c. AD, 8.8 x 28.8 x 20.7 cm. © National Reserve "Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra"
19. Altar Cross (silver, embossing, engraving), Chernyavka region, end of 17<sup>th</sup> c. AD, 37.1 x 18.3 x 6.9 cm. © National Reserve "Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra"
20. Rhatzay (decorations for the Torah), (silver, repoussé and chasing), Simons, 19<sup>th</sup> c. AD. © National Reserve "Ancient Holyct"
21. Bellhurst (cascioletta), silver, Simons, 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> c. AD, 28 x 8 25.3 cm. © MIST
22. Angel (wood, oil, gilding), Ternopil region, 18<sup>th</sup> c. AD, 131 x 60 x 44 cm. © NAMU
23. Mark the Evangelist (wood, carving, gilding), Kyiv region, 18<sup>th</sup> c. AD, 47 x 34 x 20 cm. © NAMU