

The Church of Resurrection (Savior on Spilled Blood) was built as a historical and memorial center of the Russian nation. The Cathedral was built in the memory of Emperor Alexander II and his reforms, and served as a symbol of repentance of the Russian nation for the murder of the Emperor.

The Savior on Spilled Blood is also a historical monument of the tragic murder of the Emperor on March 1, 1881.

The Cathedral should not be perceived as simply a cult building; its idea is broader and deeper. The image of the Savior in this Cathedral reflects not so much the cult aspect, but the political, historical, artistic, stylistic importance of the monument, and underscores its importance for the city.

The territory adjacent to the cathedral is one of the oldest areas of St. Petersburg, its historic downtown, which was formed in the first third of the 18th century. It was during this period that the city communications system was formed with Bolshaya Konyushennaya Ulitsa and Malaya Konyushennaya Ulitsa serving as thoroughfares between the Royal Stable and Nevsky Prospekt. Because the church is located in the very heart of the city, its surroundings are of highest value. The historical and cultural environment here is extremely rich, represented by such treasures of world spiritual culture as the Russian Museum, the Maly Opera Theater, the Grand Philharmonic Hall, and churches of various confessions. The Cathedral is probably the only building in the city that stands out so much in its architectural and spatial environment with its silhouette, composition, and rich decor.

The cathedral boasts a luxurious decor, ornamental architraves, frames, corbels, ceramic tiles, and colored glazed tiles. Five cupolas of the church, some 1000 square meters in area are covered with precious enamel. The belfry is decorated with mosaic coats-of-arms of cities and regions of the Russian Empire.

It would seem that the peculiar architecture and decor of the Church of Resurrection would become a dissonant element in the environment. It did, however, fit into the city landscape, mostly due to reconstruction in this part of St. Petersburg according to the projects of engineers G.G. Krivoshein, N.N. Mitinsky, and N.A. Zhitnevich, and architects A.A. Parland and R.F. Melzer.

The Church of Resurrection had never been conceived as purely a center of religious life. Even church leaders thought of this church as a memorial and symbol.

Here is what highly educated Orthodox thinker Rev. Fr.N. Antonov wrote about this: "This Church of Resurrection and the district around it should be made into a conglomerate of what is artistically related to Emperor Alexander II; first and foremost in the area of painting and art overall".

Antonov viewed the vestry of the Church on Spilled Blood as a museum as well, and even suggested to expand this museum through a possible addition of another smaller building in Mikhailovsky Gardens. He also offered a sensible idea of organizing a museum of sorts in the garden, where he suggested installing statues of Russian artists of the second half of the 19th century, and, most importantly, a statue of Emperor Alexander II himself among them.

Antonov and his associates wanted to see the Church of Savior on Spilled Blood as a hermitage of Russian national music culture, the center of religious choir performance and spiritual vocals. Back at the time the church was not seen as an active church as everyone understood its exclusive artistic value. Every of these suggestions could still be implemented today. In fact it is a ready program for revitalizing the cathedral.

On October 30, 1930 the Central Executive Committee by Order No. 67 ordered to close the Church of Resurrection. Over a long period of time this cathedral and monument, which first had been a court church and then a congregational church was not needed as the center of spiritual education, as it had once been.

In November 1930 the Secretariat of the Central Soviet of Political Convicts transferred the dilapidated church to the museum section. However, the former political prisoners found themselves incapable of managing the grandiose building and keeping it in good order. Over a certain period of time the cathedral stood vacant. It was thought to benefit the new masters of the land who believed that the Savior on Spilled Blood was of no historical or artistic value. A campaign started that called for its demolition.

In November 1931 the Regional Committee for Cult Affairs decided that the Savior on Spilled Blood Cathedral should be disassembled. After remaining on the agenda for some time the resolution was later cancelled.

The issue rose again in 1938. The action was planned for 1941. It seemed at the time that the fate of the church, just like the fate of many other churches in Russia, was sealed. But as Germany attacked the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, demolition experts were sent off to the front right before they were set to demolish the church. During the Siege of Leningrad the Savior on Spilled Blood served as a morgue where bodies of deceased citizens of the city were stored.

After the war the cathedral was leased by Maly Opera Theater who made it into a stage set storage. Destruction of the building continued. The building, which did not serve its direct purpose stood with broken windows, gaping holes in the roofing and the cupolas caused by splinters, through which moisture accumulated inside the building.

1956 was another critical year in the fate of the church, when the city authorities once again decided to demolish the church in order to build a new street. The new campaign of tearing down religious buildings continued for over ten years.

It was only in 1968 that the Cathedral was granted protection of the State Inspection of Landmarks of the Department of Architecture and Urban Planning. In 1970 director of St. Isaac's Cathedral and Museum G.P. Butikov persuaded the city officials and then the officials of the Ministry of Culture that the church had considerable historical and artistic value. He also petitioned to make the church a branch of his museum, carry out restoration and, in the future, open a museum there.

The executive committee of the Leningrad City Soviet adopted decision No. 535 on July 20, 1970, in accordance with which a branch of St. Isaac's Museum and Cathedral was opened in the building of the former Church of Savior on Spilled Blood. The memorial church was transferred onto the balance of the museum on April 12, 1971.

By that time the Church of Resurrection was in a critically dilapidated condition and required immediate restoration.

Restoration could not begin without an initial large volume of construction and engineering operations. Simultaneously the research staff of the museum studied archival materials on the Savior on Spilled Blood not only in Leningrad, but also in Moscow, Sverdlovsk, and Barnaul. To determine the state of the decor of the church and offer recommendations on restoration, contracts were settled with institutes and research laboratories.

Restoration itself started only in 1980.

The first stage of restoration was completed by August 19, 1997, when Savior on Spilled Blood Cathedral and Museum opened its doors to visitors. The exposition of the cathedral centers on architecture and the decor of the building.

Specificity of the museum collection led to expositions of religious art, which smoothly combine artistic, informational, and memorial value.

The exposition of the Savior on Spilled Blood serves as the media for learning Russian history and culture. The objective of the museum is to present the historic and artistic value of the Cathedral, and make our contemporaries feel a part of Russian historical and cultural tradition.

The Cathedral of Resurrection is the only surviving monument to Alexander II in the city.

The tragic events of March 1, 1881 found their reflection not only in the ciborium of the church, but also in the building of the vestry, which has for several years housed the exhibition dedicated to Emperor Alexander II (1818 - 1881), the assassinated monarch.

The next objective of the Savior on Spilled Blood Cathedral and Museum is to restore the former status of a historical memorial.

Architecture

The Church of Resurrection (Savior on Spilled Blood) is one of the leading elements in the skyline of the left bank part of St. Petersburg. Its silhouette dominates the panorama. The cathedral is especially impressive when viewed from Nevsky Prospekt in perspective of the Griboedov Canal. It attracts attention with its dynamic shape, multicolored decor and the unexpected yet recognizable intrusion of ancient Russian architectural forms in the classicistic environment of the downtown area.

In the history of Russian architecture this church has become one of the key elements of the later period in evolution of the Russian style. This style was first seen in the end of the first third of the 19th century and then developed in various modifications through the 1910s. The Russian style was not a direction of its own, being included as a part of an eclectic (historical) style. During this period the architectural image was based on "smart selection" of corresponding prototypes, associated with ideas and functions of any particular building. Among all the style varieties, the Russian style was of particular socio-political and cultural value. Contemporaries had seen it as a separate style, representing the Russian national idea.

Usually researchers distinguish two stages in the development of the Russian style.

The first, early stage of the 1830 – 1850s used Russian churches of the 15th through 17th centuries. Along with use of architectural details of ancient Russian and Byzantium architecture, the style experienced considerable influence of academism. The leading architect of the time was K.A. Ton, who created the official academic variant of the style, which was official in terms of the general idea, and academic in the treatment of images). Along with the use of traditional Russian church style features Ton shows exaggerated monumentality, heaviness, emphasize centrality and geometric simplicity of forms and décor. Such are his St. Catherine Church and Annunciation Church in St. Petersburg, Cathedral of Christ the Savior in Moscow, churches in Voronezh, Elets, Krasnoyarsk, Tomsk, and numerous civilian buildings. The school of K.A. Ton was supported by official authorities. Simultaneously, there came around the decorative (folklore) style based on the shape of the Russian folk architecture, a log cabin. A characteristic example would be the Nikolsky House, a pavilion built for recreation of the Imperial family, made according to the project of A.I. Stackenschneider.

The second stage (1860 – 1890) is characterized by a more democratic look, a mixture of the official and folklore style, which took the leading position in the 1860s – 1870s. During that time the main source for inspiration were the buildings of the 17th century and the Cathedral of Basil the Blessed in Moscow, which had been built in the 16th century and then considerably renovated in the next century. The architects wanted to continue working in this traditional direction because they believed that it was in the 17th century that the Russian architecture achieved the peak of its unique style only to be interrupted by the reforms of Peter the Great. The leading position was taken by the folklore (decorative) style headed by V.A. Gartman and I.P. Ropet (Petrov). Their buildings were very colorful, used folk embroidering and carving patterns. In the 1880s – 1890s the

official Russian style took prevalence following the assassination of the Czar on March 1, 1881. This variety of the style is close to the decorative style with multiple volumes, richness of the silhouette and color palette, and various materials, all of which could be seen in the work of N.V. Sultanov, V.A. Kosyakov, and N.N. Nikonov.

The architecture of the Savior on the Blood also belongs to the later period of the Russian style. The cathedral was built according to the design of A.A. Parland, and Archimandrite Ignatius (Malyshev), Father Superior of St. Sergius and Trinity Monastery in Strelna. The final project of 1887 was authored by Parland. The architect carefully studied the Russian church architecture style of the 17th century and applied the technical achievements of his time to his project, creating a collective image of a Russian Orthodox Cathedral.

The composition of the church is based on a compact four-up, with the northern and the southern facades completed with curvilinear pediments. There are five cupolas, and the central one is placed on a 81 m tall tabernacle. The composition of the church reminds one of the characteristic features of Moscow decorative style, seen in the Trinity Church in Ostankino and Trinity Church in Nikitniki, especially since the facades of the Church on Spilled Blood are covered with complex small details, analogous to the work of Moscow and Yaroslavl masters of the 17th century. The combination of the tabernacle and the multi-colored cupolas of complex shapes that surround it undoubtedly call to mind the church of St. Basil the Blessed, although the latter has an entirely different layout with its nine pillar-shaped churches on the common basement.

The belfry located in the western section of the cathedral stands out over the canal. The placement of the belfry along the roll-axis makes the composition of the church similar to three-part buildings of the 17th century in the form of a ship. Unlike the latter, however, the Savior on Spilled Blood has no middle part – the feast room – and the belfry is not separate from the church itself.

The belfry of the church is topped not with a tabernacle but a cupola, which makes it look similar to the belfry of St. John the Great in Moscow Kremlin. The level of the bells, the adjacent tabernacle perrons and a faceted foundation decorated with coats-of-arms of Russian cities, are shape-wise similar to churches of Moscow and Yaroslavl, made considerably later than the church of St. John the Great.

In the eastern section of the church three semi-circular apses are topped with smaller gilded cupolas. There are a total of 9 asymmetrically positioned cupolas on the church.

The eastern and the western sides of the cathedral are strictly symmetrical with the gradual build-up of the mass. While the central and the southern facades are asymmetrical, the midline axis is emphasized in both.

The four-pillar and three-nave interior is clearly defined on the outside with corbels, certain elements of which (for instance, the supposititious arcade) are not tied to the inner structure.

Most elements of the décor of the Savior on Spilled Blood Cathedral were taken from the arsenal of stone church architecture of the 17th century. A.A. Parland selected decoratively rich elements, which corresponded to the artistic style of late 19th century. The church stands out with its numerous small elements, a wide variety of finishing materials and a rich palette of colors. The decor of the building includes various finishing materials: brick, marble, granite, enamel, gilded copper and mosaic.

The stereobate was riveted with six rows of gray granite, and 20 dark-red Norwegian granite boards with descriptions of the main achievements of Alexander II were installed in niches along the perimeter of the Cathedral. The facade was decorated with reddish-brown brick, bringing out the delicate white marble elements of the decor: arcades, arches, kokoshniks and rectangular niches.

The decor of the Savior on Spilled Blood includes a number of features that are close to the eclectic style: numerous small decorative elements, which may not be directly related to the constructive foundations of the composition.

The combination of architectural details and numerous colors, bright and multi-layered decor creates the impression of the building being overloaded, with a heavy emotional impression. Simultaneously the architecture of the Savior on Spilled Blood Cathedral does not appear chaotic; its parts correspond to the unified compositional rhythm.

The church appears up-rushing due to two cupolas on high drums and especially the central tabernacle with the main dome, which is smaller than the cupolas of the belfry and the lateral cupolas. This creates an illusion of a high central tabernacle which appears to be reaching up high into the height of heaven.

The up-rushing impression is especially strong when the church is viewed from the Mikhailovsky Gardens. The narrow eastern facade of the building is decorated with a strict sequence of apse cupolas, lateral domes, and finally the main dome with its unifying motif. Of considerable importance for the look of the building are the tall, daintily patterned crosses, emphasizing the vertical plane of the building.

Unfortunately, the Church of Resurrection is clearly visible only from the southern side, as seen from Nevsky Prospekt. The northern facade faces Konyushennaya Ploschad. On the eastern side there are an asphalt road going around along the walls of the cathedral, and the Mikhailovsky Gardens overflowing with trees. The main western facade faces the Griboedov Canal, which is thus closed from open view.

Although the Cathedral of Resurrection is located in dense architectural environment, it remains an architecturally dominant element of this part of St. Petersburg.

Mosaic

The first thing that jumps into the eye as one enters the Church of Resurrection (Savior on Spilled Blood) in St. Petersburg is the amazing mosaic of its icons and ornaments covering the entire internal space, from the stereobate to the main dome. This is the only Orthodox cathedral with 7065 square meters of mosaic, one of the largest mosaic collections in Europe.

Creating the decor of the Savior on Spilled Blood became a new stage in the development of Russian monumental mosaic art.

The mosaic ornaments of the cathedral gradually turn into the mosaic icons. The decorative stone of the walls, the iconostasis, the kyots and the marble mosaic of the floor are of rare beauty and truly unforgettable.

In 1895 the Commission for Construction announced a tender to participate in creating the mosaics for the cathedral. Faculty of the Mosaics Department of the Academy of Arts, craftsmen of Puhl and Wagner Company from Germany, Italian companies Salviati and Societa Musiva and the first private mosaic workshop of A. Frolov participated in the contest, which was won by the latter candidate. The mosaics presented by the workmen of the studio satisfied the members of the Commission both in terms of their technical and artistic merit and in terms of the schedule of deadlines.

Frolov and his men used the so-called reverse, or Venetian methods of assembling mosaics. The method was best fit for large-scale compositions to be viewed from a distance. The mirror image of the artistic original was copied onto the thick paper. The drawing was then cut into parts, and pieces of *smalt* (glass melted with different oxides of metals) were glued face down onto the surface. The mosaic was then framed and covered with cement solution. Mosaic blocks were then

fixed onto the walls. The seams between them were filled with mastic sealing, and the rest of the composition was then completed using the usual direct method of application.

The artistic method was distinguished by simplified sketching, a laconic color palette solution, and precise marking of light and shadow. The decorative value of such a mosaic depended on the original, presented by the artist, to a much greater extent than the mosaic done by the usual direct method. The prototype of this manner of decoration were the mural paintings of Novgorod and Yaroslavl churches of the 17th century.

The artistic sketches for the mosaics of the Savior on Spilled Blood were created by 32 artists who differed by the measure of their talent, and their style. Among those who succeeded in perceiving the specifics of monumental art were N.N. Kharlamov, V.V. Belyaev, and, to a certain extent, A.P. Ryabushkin and V.M. Vasnetsov. Their creative manner of painting presented considerable variety, from Byzantium traditions to academic canons to modern stylistic solutions.

The exterior mosaic decoration fit well with the architectural forms. Most of these mosaics were made according to a simplified method; at times the *smalt* pieces repeated the pattern of the brickwork.

The southern facade shows a remarkable mosaic of the larger kokoshnik, entitled "Christ in Glory", made according to the design of N.A. Koshelev. The central part of the composition is the image of Christ fitting into the academic triangular shape. The entire area of the mosaic is permeated by the golden flow of rays from the vesica. Usually the image of Christ is surrounded by images of other saints; in this case, however, there are only two figures to be seen. On the right is St. Nicholas of Myra, after whom Nicholas II, the reigning Emperor during the time of consecration, was named. On the left is St. Alexander Nevsky, the patron saint of the city and of Emperor Alexander II. The model of the Church of Savior in his hand shows why the church was built.

The composition of the mosaic is rather sketchy, and the colors are dappled, but the entire image is well fit into the tympan of the kokoshnik. A. Frolov referred to Christ in Glory as one of the best works of his workshop.

The dominating theme of the mosaic by M.V. Nesterov on the northern facade, entitled "Resurrection of Christ", is hope and salvation.

Against the golden background of the tomb the airy figure of the Savior in his white burial cloak is seen with a thin red cross in the left hand. While the Lord looks pious and humble in the mosaic, He is depicted testifying the victory of life over death.

On the right we see the incorporeal figure of the angel with outstretched wings. The subdued color of the image and a somewhat listless expression nevertheless allow to perceive the image of Christ as bright and monumental.

The mosaic decor is the richest in the belfry above the spot where the Czar was assassinated. Its peculiar feature is a collection of 134 mosaic coats-of-arms of Regions, Areas, Districts and Cities of the Russian Empire, who contributed financially to the construction of the Church of Resurrection.

On the facade of the belfry on three sides of the large window there is a three-part composition made according to the design of M.V. Nesterov. In the center is the cloth with the image of the Savior carried by angels. Next to it are the figures of repentant faithful, praying to forgive the sin of assassination. On the right is St. John the Evangelist, who is filled with awe. To the left is the Theotokos with her hands lifted up in prayer. Behind her is the hilly Umbrian landscape. The color palette of the image, consisting of intense color spots is well fitting for the monumental character of the artwork. However, the pacific piety of the images distorts this impression.

On the western side the base of the belfry includes an open chapel. On the wall under a golden overhang there is a carved marble cross with crucified Christ, made according to the design of A.A. Parland. On both sides of the crucifix are the icons of St. Zosima of Solovki, the saint whose day is celebrated on the birthday of Alexander II, April 17, 1818, and St. Martyr Eudokia, whose day is celebrated on the day of the Emperor's death, March 1, 1881.

Unlike the exterior decoration, where mosaics decorate only separate architectural planes, the entire interior of the church, including pylons and the dome are made of mosaics. The numerous iconographic plots are separated from each other with mosaic ornaments serving as artwork-type bagnette. There are different patterns but the leading place is taken up by the plant ornament with a light Byzantium plait pattern. The decor is made according to the designs of A.A. Parland and A.P. Ryabushkin.

The placement of mosaics corresponds to the theological concept of the church and represents several cycles. On the western side there are scenes of the Old Testament and Twelve Great Feasts. The central part of the cathedral shows the plots from the earthly life of Jesus Christ. On the eastern side there are plots concerning appearances of the Lord following the Resurrection. The traditional Pantokrator is shown on the plafond of the central dome. The pylons and pilasters of the walls show the mainstays of the Church - the apostles, martyrs, saints, prophets and blessed elders.

The specifics of a memorial church necessitated some corrections in the interior decorations. The canons have not been followed in the western section of the church, which includes a museum section on the spot where Czar Alexander II was mortally wounded. The place dictated placement of the mosaics around the ciborium, showing the plots of laying into the coffin, crucifixion, descending into hell, and others, made according to the original design of V.V. Belyaev. The topic of the martyr death of the Czar is presented through associations with the fate of the Savior after His passing.

The mourning place, the ciborium is lit through the window on the western wall. It is topped with a composition entitled "Thy Kingdom Come", or "The Trinity of the New Testament", showing God the Father on the throne, Jesus Christ and the pigeon, the symbol of the Holy Spirit soaring above them.

Next to the window on both sides are the images of the Guardian Angel of the Emperor and St. Prince Alexander Nevsky. Two warriors, earthly and heavenly, stand guard at the spot where the Czar lay mortally wounded. The images are bold and full of dignity, made in the academic tradition. The professionalism of the artist can be felt not only in the positioning of the figures on the limited plane of the wall, but also in the color palette. The cold shine of the Prince's armor and the golden embroidering on his red cloak are shown remarkably well.

The academic approach was also used by V.V. Belyaev in his mosaic, entitled "The Trinity of the Old Testament", which can be seen in the archway on the southwestern side. The mosaic shows the hospitality of Abraham the primogenitor of the Jews, and his wife Sarah. Under the shadow of a Mambrian oak they are welcoming three travelers, angels who predict the birth of their son. The artist shows the angels of the same height, with golden halos signifying the unity of the inner essence of the messengers. The mosaic shows the talent of Belyaev the painter. The decorative features of the piece fit nicely with the character of the drawing. The drawing was brilliantly copied by masters of mosaic art from the studio of Frolov.

The calm and balanced rhythm of the pieces by Belyaev is different from the uniquely free manner of A.P. Ryabushkin. His pieces show the special Russian character and style, yet there is also the feeling of the academic school. This is especially visible in the mosaic entitled "Feeding of Five Thousand People with Five Breads". During one of His sermons Jesus Christ revealed a miracle, when he blessed and shared five breads and two fishes to feed about five thousand people, with twelve baskets of food still left over. In the foreground of the mosaic we see the Savior surrounded

by people. Standing next to him is the silver bearded man who helps a boy hold a tray with bread. Groups to the right and to the left of Christ balance out the composition, making it somewhat symmetrical. In an interesting style, characteristic of his work, Ryabushkin made the face of the Lord look very kind. The major colors of the image do not deviate from the traditional three academic colors. A fairly cliched work by Ryabushkin fits well with the architecture of the dome. The spherical semi-dome is perceived as the vault of heaven, with its light blue and indigo colors dominating the color palette of the mosaics.

An important role in the composition of the interior belongs to the mosaics of the smaller cupolas, made according to the designs of N.N. Kharlamov, who revived the traditions of Byzantium painting, with the generalness of composition and color, and laconic shapes. This manner is revived in the Pantokrator plafond. The composition of the image is schematic, the manner is rich and decorative. The silhouette of the Savior stands out on the dark blue background stressing the flatness of the image. The face of the Lord with large dark eyes gazing at the viewer, is wonderfully attractive. There are no more than two shades of color. This allowed the artist to create a bright monumental image.

The mosaics of the smaller plafonds, entitled Savior the Good Reticence, Savior Emmanuel, John the Baptist and the Theotokos, follow the canons of the Byzantium icon-painting. These relatively small pieces show the clear and precise pattern of the mosaics.

The work by N.N. Kharlamov in the altar, entitled "The Eucharist", is as expressive and laconic. The artist skillfully combined the Byzantium tradition with the peculiar features of the academic style. In the center of the image the angels lower their sacerdotal fans over the Savior, while the Seraphims hold the symbols of the Passions. Two groups of apostles are seen headed toward Christ. We see the holy rite of the Eucharist, symbolizing the victim of the Savior, and representing the major liturgical rite of communion, when bread and wine are miraculously turned into the flesh and blood of Christ. The mosaic is based on the precise rhythm of the figures following each other, and the repeating pattern of color. The linear rhythm and the rhythm of movement of the personages become more intense at the center, focusing on the praying figures of Apostles Peter and Paul in the center of the composition. The tense rhythm has its apotheosis in the central explosion of color in the figure of the Savior with His pale-blue chiton and yellow cloak. The psychological state of the participants in the scene is reflected in the gestures of the apostles and the expressive color palette. The major impression of the scene is peace and quiet, interrupted only by rustle of the wings of the Seraphims, completing the mosaic composition in the bright frieze.

Four mosaics for the iconostasis and the kiots were made by the mosaic masters of the Academy of Arts by the direct reproduction method. Sketches were turned into mosaics by carefully selected and shaped small pieces of *smalt*, showing careful study of color transitions.

"The Theotokos with the Child", and "Christ on His Throne" mosaics were done according to the sketches of Viktor Mikhailovich Vasnetsov. In his treatment of the images the artist used the Byzantium approach, but unlike N.N. Kharlamov, succeeded in showing the inner state of the personages.

Special spirituality can be seen in Vasnetsov's figure of the Theotokos. Her eyes reveal motherly feeling of unease, apprehending the upcoming loss and mourning. The small composition is balanced. The contours and soft local tones and careful patterns give the mosaic the impression of monumentality.

The artist repeated the same motifs in creation of the image of Jesus Christ. The dominance of the image is shown through the frontal orientation and the strict symmetry. The Lord is seen sitting solemnly on His throne. In his left hand he holds the open Gospel with the calling to love one's neighbor, and with His right hand He blesses the viewer. The gaze of Christ shows the deep inner

concentration and tension. The color palette is muted, and the blue background strengthens the decorative effect by creating an illusion of depth.

The warmth, the lyrical tone and wonderful harmony distinguish the mosaics of the kiots, "St. Prince Alexander Nevsky", and "Resurrection of Christ", made according to the originals by M.V. Nesterov. The topic of Resurrection is associated with the fate of Alexander II, and is repeated twice in the decor of the church. In both instances it was done by Nesterov.

The composition of mosaics is based on juxtaposition of vertical lines. On the background of the gold passageway of the tomb we can see the frontal image of the resurrected Lord, who is holding up the cross as the symbol of victory of life over death. It's a transitional work in its style. Certain theatricality of Christ's posture is the heritage of the academic school. The color of the image is too light, however, the excellent pattern helps soften the problem with color, which reflects the modernist style.

"St. Prince Alexander Nevsky" mosaic is more successful in terms of color solution. The blessed Prince is shown praying in the home church, engulfed in thought and cloistered. On the left in the window one can see the northern landscape with a golden sunset and a cupola of a church. The lyrical Russian note in the piece is remarkable and makes it stand out from other works of art in the Cathedral.

The mosaic is faultless in color, the shine of the armor and the ammunition of the Prince is represented perfectly, as is the warmth of a candle burning in his hands.

Nesterov's talent is remarkable, but the creative manner of the painter did not always take into consideration the specifics of the original in the mosaic form and that deprives some of the works of the master of expressiveness.

The fact that there were over 30 artists working on decoration of the Church of Resurrection, determined the various styles of the artistic solution in the decor. Not all the artists managed to understand and consider the specifics of their sketches being turned into mosaics. However, the expressiveness of the material and high mastery of the mosaic masters of Frolov Company allowed to combine the pieces of variable character into a uniform ensemble.