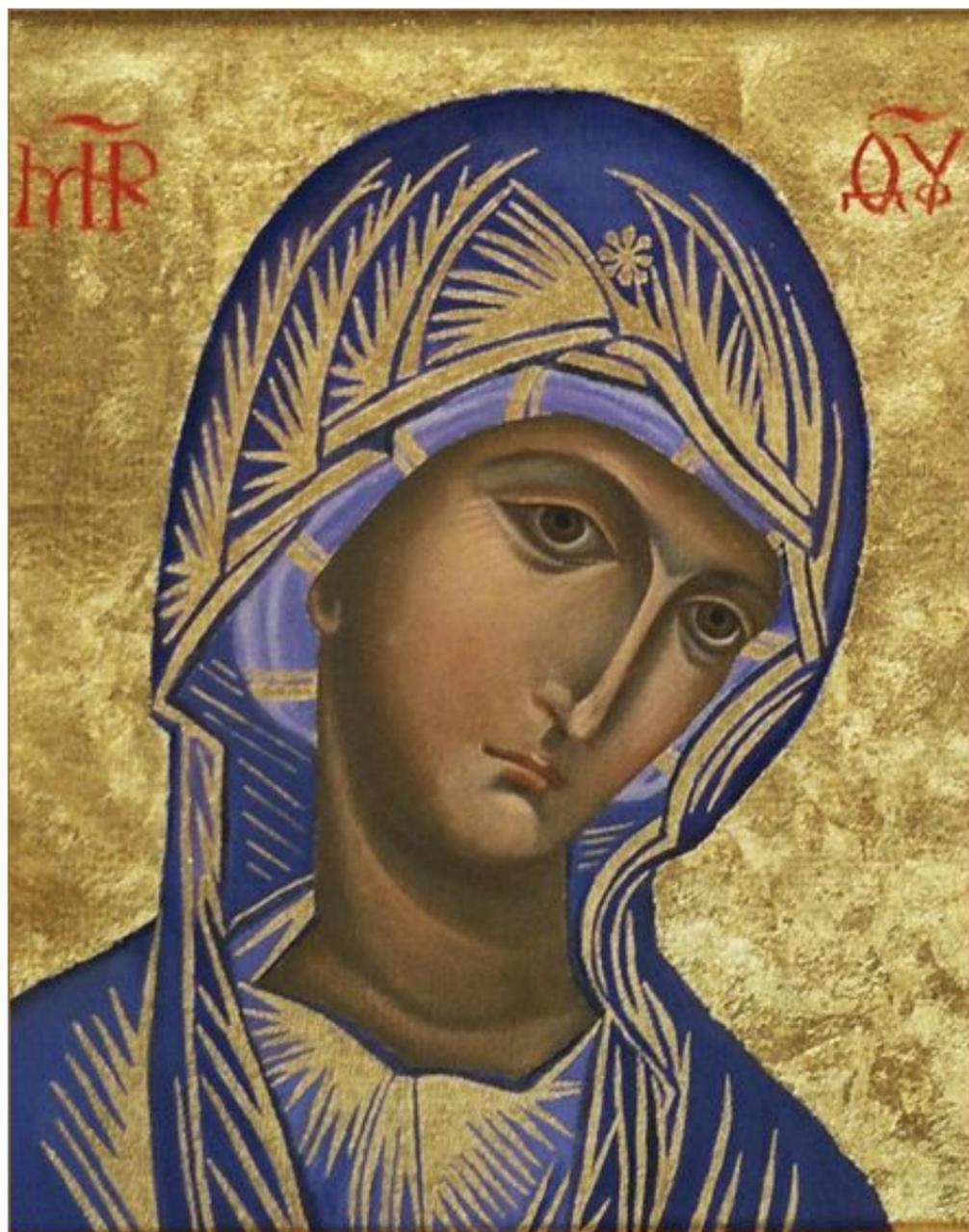
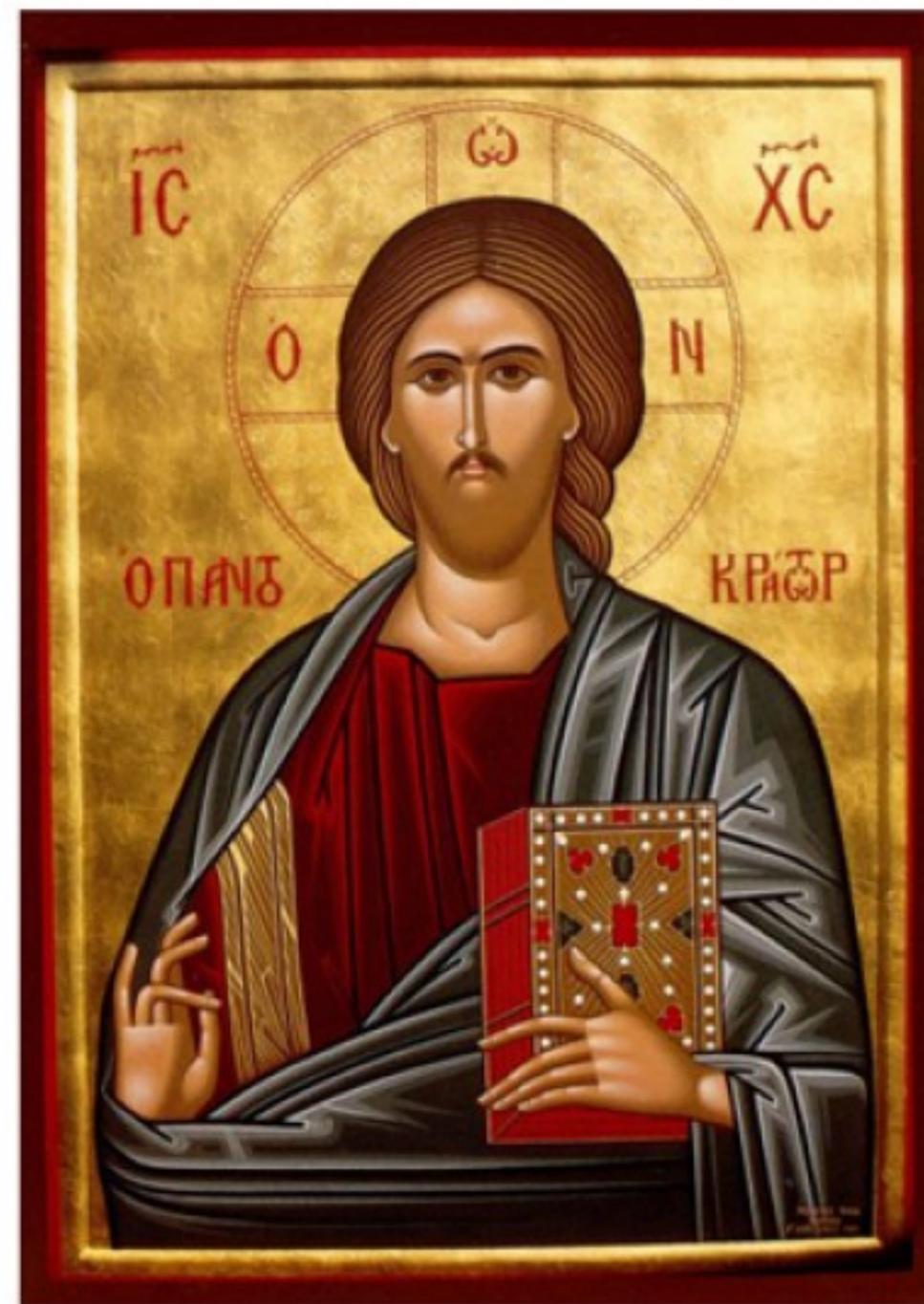


Hand Written Not Painted



Icons



The History & Symbolism of Iconography



"windows into heaven,"

The History of Icons



Church tradition teaches that the first iconographer was **Saint Luke the Evangelist**. He painted the holy image of the Virgin Mary on a panel, a face which he himself had seen. He brought his first icons to the Mother of God herself, who approved them and proclaimed: "May the grace of Him Who was born of me, through me, be imparted to these icons."



The Iconoclasts ("icon-smashers") were suspicious of any sacred art which represented human beings or God, and demanded the destruction of icons.

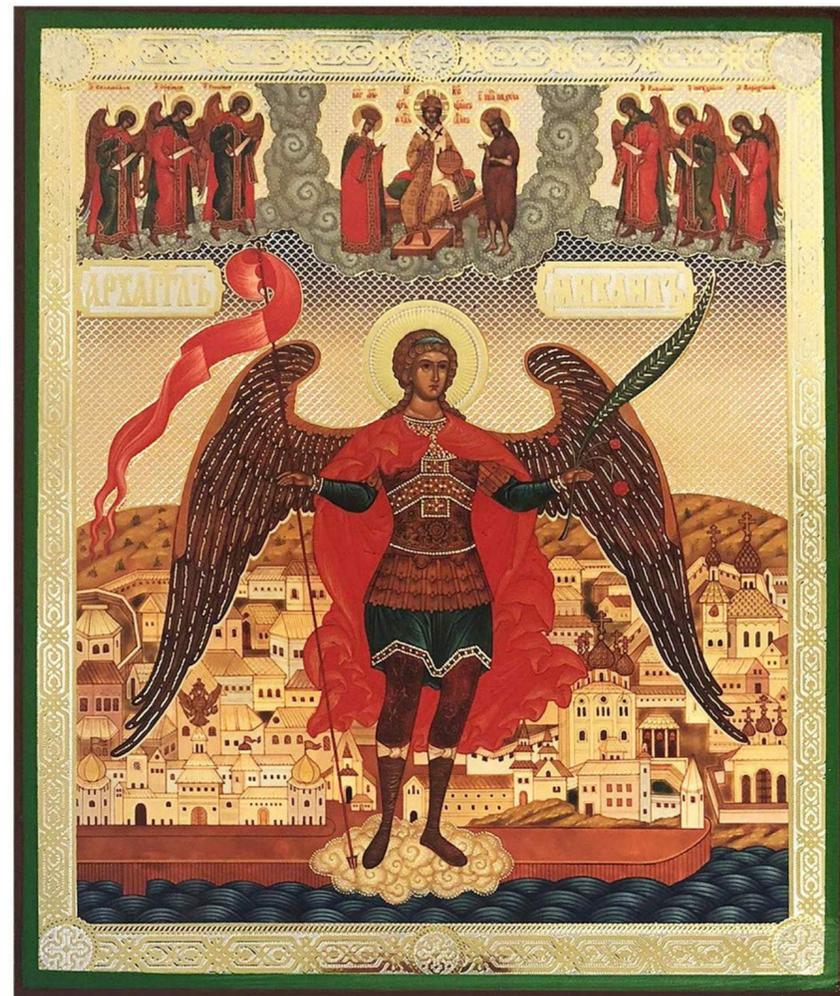


One of the champions of icons during this period was Saint John of Damascus, who wrote in his famous "Defense of Icons": "Through the icons of Christ we contemplate His bodily form, His miracles, and His sufferings, and we are sanctified...The icons of the Saints are filled with the Holy Spirit."

The Purpose of Icons

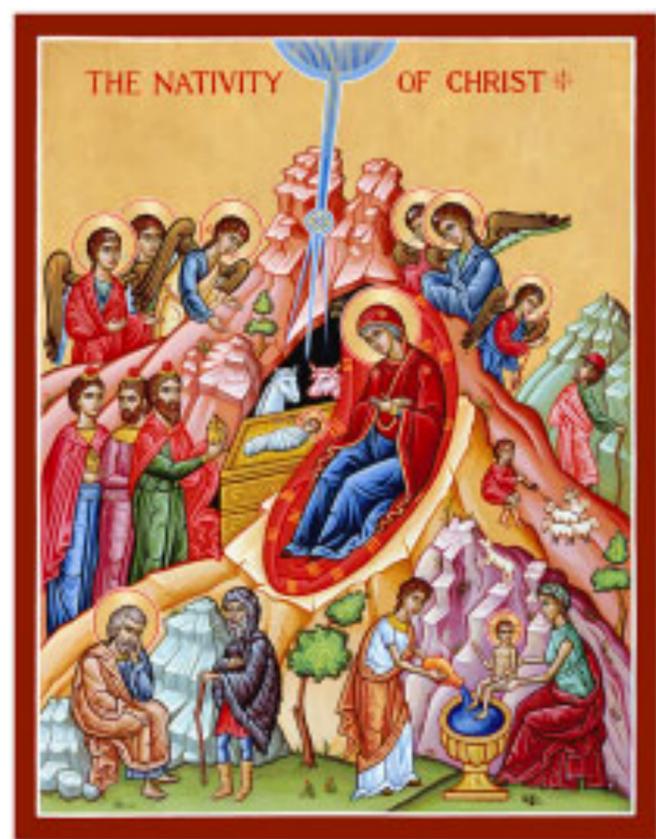


In describing the purpose of icons, the early Fathers used the Greek work anagogic, literally meaning "leading one upward."



Again, the selection of colors is also often fixed

This stylization also appears in all the elements of the faces and body members of the persons in the icon.



The hands are often thin and expressive, commonly in various gestures of blessing. The halos around the heads of **Christ**, the **Virgin Mary**, and the **Saints** are painted as a clearly delineated circle, signifying their sanctity and drawing our attention to their faces.

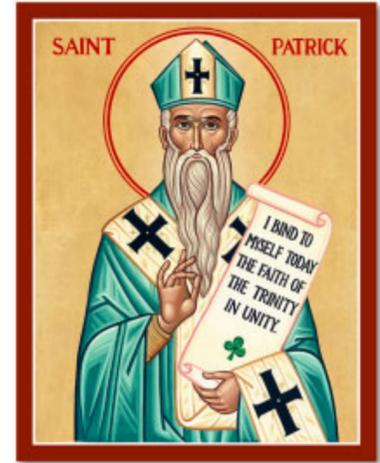
Even nature itself is transformed by the hand of the iconographer.

Icons of the Saints & Iconographic Symbolism

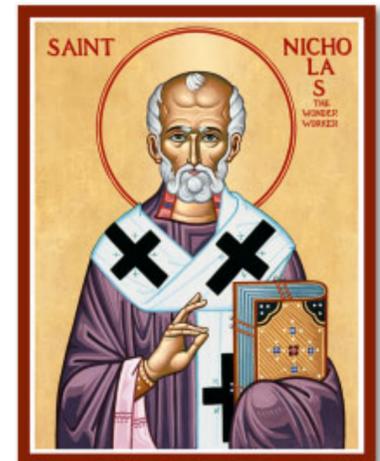




"Even if he has seen a certain saint in life, the iconographer does not paint him materialistically or naturally, but in a spiritual manner, illumined by divine grace,"



In many icons the saints hold a scroll that quotes their own words



The images of sacred icons



Eight facts about icons to help
you grow in understanding
about them.

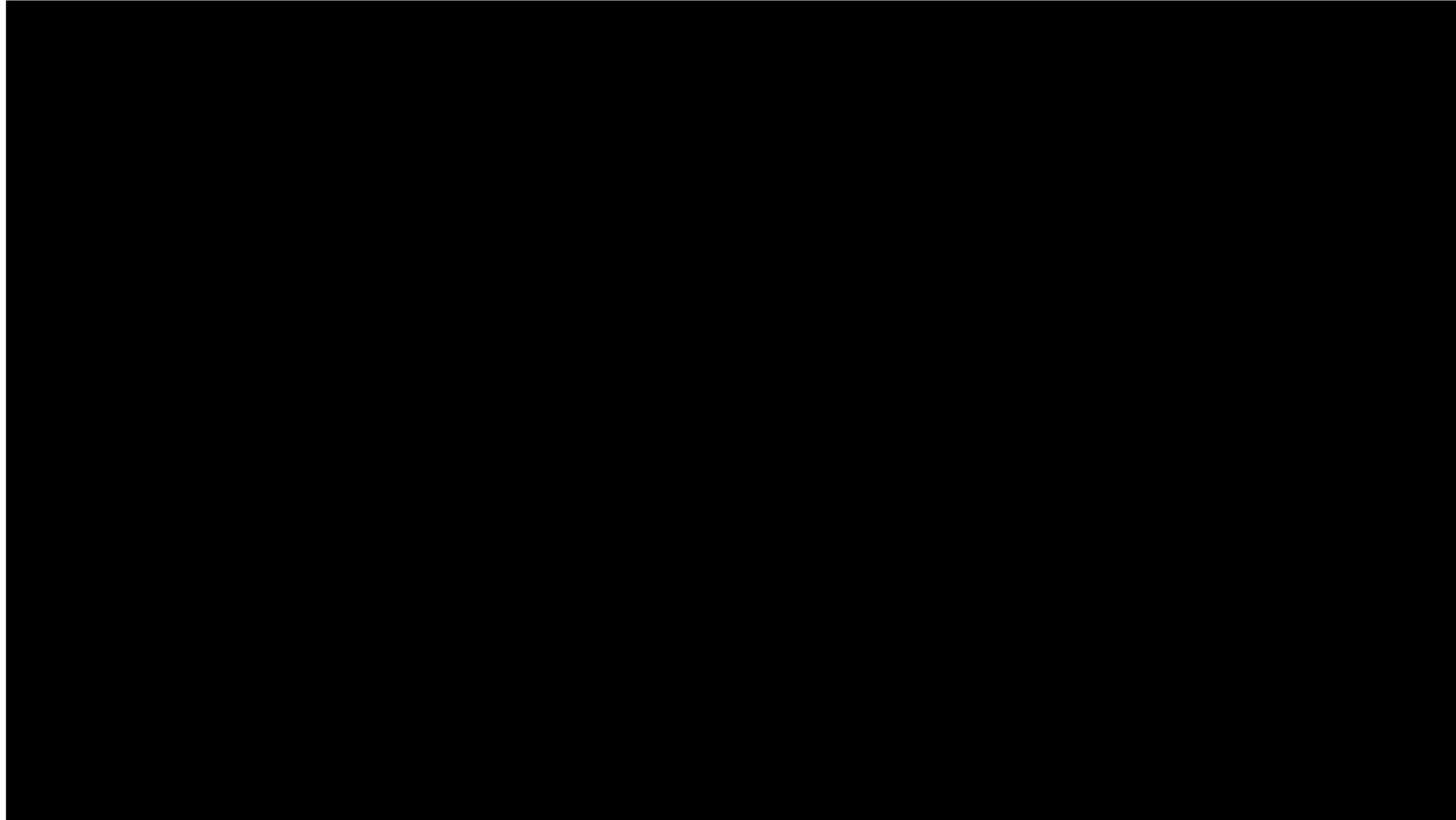
1. Icons aren't drawn, they're written



2. Icons have high foreheads and long noses for a reason



3. The preparation to paint an icon is important



4. Iconstasis

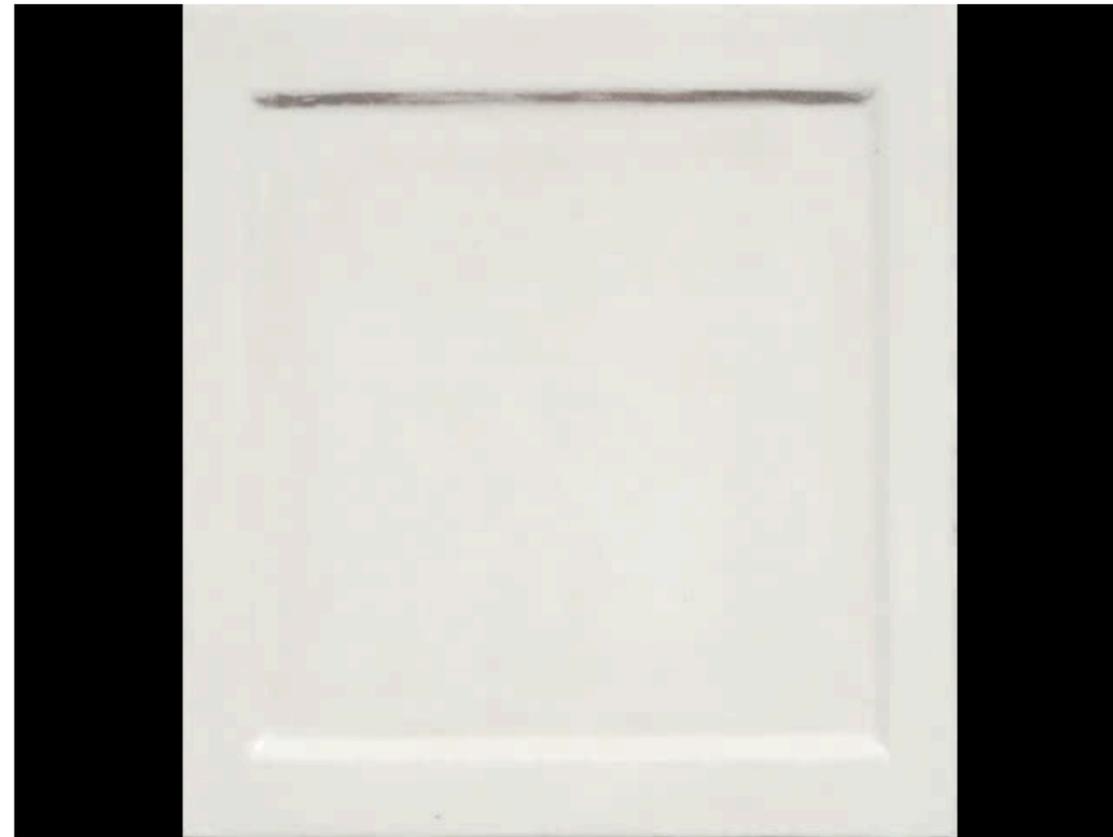






*magneticlife.eu
because life is magnetic*

5. All icons are written anonymously



6. Colors are richly symbolic



7. When Christ is depicted as a child, icons show him as a miniature adult. He is wrapped not in swaddling clothes, but in the robes of a teacher and philosopher.



8. Hands gestures in icons are important

