

NoB Lecture

March 24, 2022 | Dumbarton Oaks

The Gold of Banjska

Dr. Ivan Drpić, Associate Professor, University of Pennsylvania



Midway through the quick succession of brief biographical notes about Serbian monarchs and potentates that comprise the so-called *Genealogy of Karlovci*, a fifteenth-century text, the reader comes across a passage of considerable art-historical import. Writing about the great works of royal and clerical patronage, the anonymous author declares that “the pavement of the church at Prizren, the church of Dečani, the narthex of Peć, the gold of Banjska, and the paintings of Resava are to be found nowhere else.” This lecture takes the peculiar reference to “the gold of Banjska” as the point of entry into an exploration of a little-studied phenomenon—the extensive use of gilding in medieval Serbian wall painting. The results of recently conducted technical analyses will be used to illuminate this phenomenon and clarify its significance for finding the place of Serbia on the artistic map of the later Middle Ages.

Image: Unidentified holy bishop, painted between 1317 and 1321, Church of St. Stephen, Monastery of Banjska, Kosovo.
