

The Nicholas Lochoff Cloister of the Henry Clay Frick Fine Arts Building, University of Pittsburgh

The cloister, completed in the spring of 1965, is meant to embody the spirit of the Florentine Renaissance. The paintings it contains are scale reproductions by Nicholas Lochoff, commissioned in 1911 by the Moscow Museum of Fine Arts (now the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts). The artist was asked to reproduce the media, processes, and distinguishing characteristics of Renaissance originals for exhibition to the Russian public.

Lochoff worked so meticulously that by the time of the 1917 Revolution, he had only sent a few paintings back to Russia. Stranded in Italy, he was forced to sell the paintings to other buyers, including Harvard University, the Portland Art Museum (Ore.) and the Frick Art Reference Library in New York. Miss Helen Clay Frick acquired these replicas after Lochoff's death with the help of Bernard Berenson, a connoisseur and art critic.

Mr. Berenson felt that these were no ordinary copies, but the closest imaginable to the creations of the original artists. He wrote of Lochoff's paintings:

One glance around the studio was enough to show us that his copies were indeed very different from all other reconstructions of the pictures... Such faithful, such scrupulous recreation by one man of the genius-born achievements of other artists had, to our knowledge, which is not slight, never before happened in Europe at least. Down to the minutest speck of dirt which in the course of centuries had adhered to the picture, everything was there!