

ACUAVITAE

ALBERTA'S UKRAINIAN ARTS AND CULTURE MAGAZINE

125TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EDITION
WINTER 2016/2017 | VOLUME 12, NUMBER 2

Destiny's Children

DEDICATED, DEVOTED, DETERMINED



A PUBLICATION OF THE ALBERTA COUNCIL FOR THE UKRAINIAN ARTS

ALBERTA'S UKRAINIAN
ARTS AND CULTURE MAGAZINE

125TH ANNIVERSARY
SPECIAL EDITION
WINTER 2016/2017

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ACUAVITAE



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ON THE COVER



ORIGINAL PAINTING BY PETER SHOSTAK

O, dear Lord, how difficult it was to make a living! This is
what drove use to emigrate to Canada.

*"The two of us arrived in Hamburg, where an agent put us aboard a
large ship for the ocean crossing. We sailed for twenty-two days. The
trip was both good and bad. After crossing the ocean, the ship sailed
down a river to a big town. It was Montreal."*

*WA Crzumer, Recollections About the Life of the First Ukrainian
Settlers in Canada (Saskatoon, 1978), 13.*

Peter Shostak painted the history of Ukrainian settlers
in Canada in the series For Our Children. The original
painting was selected, for this cover of ACUA Vitae, because
it illustrates the beginning of the journey.

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UCPBA

Ukrainian Canadian
Professional & Business
Association of Calgary

As we celebrate 125 years of Ukrainian settlement in Canada and the many great accomplishments of our pioneers and their descendants, so too do we salute organizations such as ACUA for their vital contribution to promoting and showcasing Ukrainian culture and the arts in Alberta.

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THE JOURNEY



On behalf of the Alberta Council for the Ukrainian Arts I would like to invite you on a journey of 125 years of Ukrainian Art and Culture in Alberta.

The paths and roads you will travel on, in this magazine, were built by the Ukrainian pioneers who dedicated themselves to making sure that the Ukrainian journey didn't end at Pier 21, but continued through the many generations to follow. The journey is filled with stories of hardships and happiness, you will laugh, you will cry, you will remember and most of all you will be so proud and grateful that the rich Ukrainian culture has stayed vibrant and relevant for 125 years.

We hope that you enjoy the stories and the pictures in the magazine and enjoy the journey as much as we have while developing this special issue. Every story on every page is in honour of all of those who came before us and those who continue to keep our culture alive.

The number of individuals and organizations involved and the number of projects which Ukrainian Canadians have undertaken over the past 125 years is overwhelming and very impressive. We have focused on telling the first stories, and the stories of those dedicated volunteers who devote themselves to sharing the culture. A call for nominations was sent out across the province for over 3 months. A large team of writers, contributors, and volunteers was assembled to bring this project to completion.

We have captured only a snapshot of the past 125 years, there are so many more stories. If there are stories of individuals and organizations which you would be interested in reading about in ACUA Vitae, please let us know and we will endeavour to feature these in future issues. Our magazine is published twice a year and we are always looking for article ideas.

Sit back, relax and enjoy the Journey of 125 years of Ukrainian Art and Culture in Canada!

Deborah Stasiuk

President | Alberta Council for the Ukrainian Arts



TOP TO BOTTOM:
BEGINNING THEIR JOURNEY, KATERYNA STASIUK & PANTELEMON STASIUK; PHOTO PROVIDED
DNIPRO CHOIR AT LEGISLATURE BUILDING, EDMONTON, 1966 (1-438 DOC 08)
60TH ANNIVERSARY OF IMMIGRATION, RADWAY, AB 1951 (1-227 DOC 08)
PROVINCIAL TECHNICAL ORCHESTRA, 1936-37, CALGARY (65-009)
PHOTOS PROVIDED BY UCAMA

A black and white photograph of a man, Ivan Pylpyv, sitting and looking directly at the camera. He is wearing a thick, dark fur coat over a dark shirt. His hands are clasped in his lap. The background is slightly out of focus, showing what appears to be a window or a doorway. The word "DESTINY'S" is overlaid in large, bold, yellow capital letters across the middle of the image.

DESTINY'S

IVAN PYLPYV PORTRAIT (P78-1-315 DOC 08)
PHOTO PROVIDED BY UCAMA

CHILDREN



By Lyrissa Sheptak

Ukrainian Canadians have a reputation for tenacity, ingenuity, and vitality. On Canada's multicultural palette, our colors burn brightly. But getting here was a heart wrenching journey. We suffered. But we rebuilt ourselves, and our cultural and national identity, one dream at a time.

Our story begins 125 years ago, thousands of miles away on a continent, on the cusp of war, that was one spark away from chaos. But thanks to two men who, in the midst of cruel circumstances, rejected their status quo and refused to bridle their vision for a better life, Ukrainian Canadians have not only been allowed the freedom to reach their potential, but flourish as well.

The world that Ivan Pylypow and Vasyl Eleniak came from was tumultuous at best. Ukrainians didn't have a nation to call their own. Instead, their regions were usurped by either the Austro-Hungarian Empire, or Russia. Pylypow and Eleniak hailed from Galicia in the west. Their world was plagued with increased taxes, starvation, lack of work, scarcity of land, unstable politics, and oppression of their national and cultural identity. Refusing to accept what was handed to

them, in 1891, answering Canada's call for immigrants, Pylypow and Eleniak took their dreams by the helm and followed their destiny.

They were not the first Ukrainians to travel to North America. However, they were the first to recognize its potential and set down roots. Getting to that point, though, wasn't easy. They had to endure hardships on the journey over, only to be met by a sterilized reception. Although they were welcome, they were not warmly received. Just like in their old country, they navigated discrimination, prejudice, misunderstanding, and ridicule. Thousands of other Ukrainians who followed in that first wave, were forced to deal with the same negativity along with seclusion, loneliness, toil, and malnutrition.

Further hardship came in the form of language barriers, governmental demands, and shock of moving to a new country. During World War I, many Ukrainians who came to Canada were either interned or were forced to adhere to strict and outrageous expectations by government and policing authorities. This maltreatment disrupted the life they worked so hard to achieve causing many to re-evaluate the pros and cons of continuing to practice their culture. As historian Radomir Bilash mentions, "Many who suffered the government's injustices at this time felt it wasn't worth it."



SMOKY LAKE HOUSE, 1910 (P78-1-228 DOC 08) | PHOTO PROVIDED BY UCAMA

Adding fuel to the fire was the collision of disdain that Galicians and Bukovynians held for each other. Just as in Ukraine, they weren't united in Canada. Differences in politics, religion, and region interfered with their true objective. But these hardships forced them to cooperate in order to survive. The answer came in the form of the preservation of culture.

When the emigrants uprooted their families and sold all they had to travel across the world for an opportunity that they were merely taking a chance on, theirs was a fight for survival. Spending all their waking hours clearing land and ensuring their day-to-day survival generally didn't allow the settlers the luxury of extra time and energy to devote to tradition. They were too busy, too tired, and oftentimes the men worked away from home. Yet they found a way to do at least something.

Perhaps it was a desperate attempt to pay homage to their recent past, or a vow to never forget. Maybe the mere physical act of partaking in their rituals and ethnic art

connected them to those they left behind. That's the wonderful thing about art: it connects, gives meaning, and explains the world. Art is an outlet for thoughts and emotions, and carries us through the banalities of life. It was no different for our forefathers. Their weariness and despondency didn't push them away from celebrating their culture and practicing their traditions. Rather, they gravitated to it all the more. Art is also what built the bridge between the Galicians and Bukovynians

When the emigrants uprooted their families and sold all they had to travel across the world for an opportunity that they were merely taking a chance on, theirs was a fight for survival.

sparking a wave of cultural enhancement in a country that allowed it.

Many of the first and second waves of immigrants were peasants. It was these peasants, from both regions, who contributed to the perpetuation of the culture and folk art: singing, carving, writing, dancing, embroidery, theatre, storytelling,

and writing pysanky. They became inspired and innovative using whatever they could find locally to create supplies. But despite their busyness, settlers who specialized in particular traditions selflessly stepped forward and took it upon themselves to teach their children and the next generation.

As people learned, interest grew, and as interest grew, things became organized. Churches were built first – they became not only religious hubs, but social and cultural ones as well. It's where knowledge was spread, and they could celebrate themselves as a people. As well, magazines and almanacs from Ukraine kept women up-to-date with current patterns, techniques, and supplies. Over time, and with the increase of Ukrainian immigrants, clubs and associations, which encouraged the promotion of the culture, became more widespread.

The Second Wave of immigrants who arrived to Canada during the interwar period were a mixture of farming and non-farming people. These were survivors of WWI, people who had witnessed atrocities, and perhaps

even spent time in European labour camps. Identifying themselves as Ukrainians, instead of by their region as did their predecessors, many of the non-farming immigrants who came at this time had the intention of only staying temporarily. They wanted to return to Europe to free Ukraine. These urban immigrants fused politics with art and culture with the intention of stirring up cultural pride and political fervor. Their programs had political agendas, but they also played a significant role in the spread of the Ukrainian arts in Canada through theatre, dance troupes, choirs, and orchestras.

But as the first two waves of immigrants became comfortable in their new country, their children and grandchildren began seeing those ways as old-fashioned, lacking in practicality. They were more interested in assimilating into mainstream Canada, instead of looking back at their past – especially one they couldn't identify with. As Roman Fodchuk states in his book, *Zhorna*, this generation “measured success in terms of economic and social progress made within the mainstream Anglophone society”.

They made leaps and bounds in their financial status and material wealth; they modernized, and were proud of their acceptance by and contribution to greater Canada. However, despite the lack of interest in living their culture on a daily basis, these Ukrainian Canadians didn't walk away from it completely. They looked to modern magazines and fashion for the latest trends, colours, and inspirations, melding the old with the new. The essence of folk art remained the same, but its style and intention was evolving.


After World War II, a third wave of immigrants came to Canada. Many of them were refugees displaced from the war who were highly educated, bringing different ideas and perspectives on life. They too were survivors of horrifying experiences like the Holodomor, Nazi labour camps, WWII,

or Communism. These circumstances affected their cultural intensity and how they perpetuated it in Canada.

Bilash explains that “life got turned on its head as soon as Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau declared multiculturalism” thus legitimizing peoples' cultural identities. Ethnic groups could now express themselves freely instead of relegating their cultural experiences to “weekends and holidays.” Bilash further states that Ukrainian Canadians, and all other cultures in Canada, were free to “maintain their culture in a Canadian context.” The younger generations embraced this diversity, and as a result, there was a rediscovery of self. They were proud to share their traditions with others.

Art, for Ukrainian Canadians, has become more than the preservation and explanation of the past. It has also become a living dialogue that comments on the present and what life could and should be. There are some distinguished Ukrainian Canadian artists who have done outstanding things, not only as individuals, but for individuals. Doris Yanda, master weaver; Peter Lipinski, church iconographer; Olga Monastersky, artist of traditional Ukrainian pottery. They, and countless others, have inspired pride, vision, and creativity in their own realm, allowing people to dream bigger, question deeper, solve problems, and inspire ordinary people to do extraordinary things. Globalization and technology have managed to connect the world, as well, broadening our scope of ideas, and sophisticating the arts. We've gone from being a people who lacked a strong national identity, to one that is developed and constantly growing.

It takes a persistent heart to fight for freedom, and a strong mind to never stray from who you are. Each wave of

immigration was the necessary backbeat for the next. Each generation built upon the other, contributing to the maintenance and prosperity of our Ukrainian culture. As we celebrate how far we've come, we must pay homage to the nation who believed in our value, and to those who had the grit to answer its call. Both laid the foundation for our success. May we be leaders in our own right and continue to fearlessly promote the greatness of our culture and country through creativity, cleverness, and class. 



TOP TO BOTTOM: SMOKY LAKE HOUSE, 1924 (P78-1-232 DOC 08); PHOTO PROVIDED BY UCAMA | WASYL ELENIAK AND HIS WIFE ANNA ROSZKO AT THEIR HOME, 1934; PHOTO PROVIDED

IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME

By Lyrrisa Sheptak

Maya Angelou states, “...[I]n diversity, there is beauty and there is strength”. This is true, and especially evident in Canada, a multicultural country. With the Multicultural Act came initiatives to encourage the celebration of immigration, diversity, and marginalized cultures.



CENTENNIAL SALUTE SHOW RECEPTION (1991), AUDREY UZWYSHYN WITH PRIME MINISTER BRIAN MULRONEY; PHOTO PROVIDED BY ACUA | EXCELLENCE IN ARTISTRY AWARDS BANQUET, 1992, LEFT TO RIGHT: AUDREY UZWYSHYN, RUTA MARTYNKIW, RENA HANCHUK, AND TERRY MUCHA; PHOTO PROVIDED BY ACUA

It has taught people tolerance and respect. Sometimes there are struggles, but overall, and compared to many other countries, we certainly have something to be proud of. But the introduction of the Multicultural Act and initiatives had another effect. It allowed the marginalized cultures to stand taller, and to be a more obvious and accepted presence in mainstream society. This was no different for Ukrainian Canadians. Instead of people maintaining their culture amongst themselves, it could be more easily and freely celebrated and shared amongst Canadian society. The Multiculturalism Act was an exciting opportunity for Ukrainian Canadians to grow and develop their culture within a Canadian context.

Although Ukrainians had been celebrating their traditions in Canada for decades, with the onset of multiculturalism, the government now encouraged minorities to organize public programming to share their cultures. Dr. Roman Petryshyn, an involved member of the Ukrainian

community, states that “[b]y sharing aspects of Ukrainian culture, the Ukrainian arts also had a right to funding from a public purse”. As a result of the new government initiatives, a non-profit organization called Alberta Council for the Ukrainian Arts (ACUA) was founded. Dr. Petryshyn dreamed of promoting the development and awareness of the Ukrainian arts, not only amongst members of the cultural community, but to the broader Albertan public as well. Rena Hanchuk became involved because she wanted to “[g]ive a voice and a platform to our artists who, in many instances, worked individually and independently.”

Hanchuk, founding president and who continues to be involved with ACUA since its inception thirty years ago, claims that Ukrainian arts and cultural organizations like ACUA are important, “[b]ecause [they] showcase a plethora of genres of our rich heritage”. This rings especially true because our nation is celebrating 125 years



VESNA KRANSA ART EXHIBIT AT THE
MUTTART CONSERVATORY FOR ACUA'S 20TH
ANNIVERSARY, PHOTO PROVIDED BY ACUA

ARTS ORGANIZATIONS



LEFT TO RIGHT: FIRST ACUA VITAE COVER, 1990 | ACUA VITAE COVER, 1993 | ACUA VITAE COVER, 2001 | OUR ART OUR SOUL ACUA VITAE COVER, 2015 | TIMELESS TREASURES ACUA VITAE COVER, 2016; ALL PROVIDED BY ACUA

of Ukrainians in Canada and as Hanchuk further claims, “[m]any contributions are tied to the arts”. The special thing about ACUA then (other than the fact that it is one-of-a-kind in not only Alberta, but nationally as well) is that, as an arts organization, it celebrates all genres instead of just one medium.

Although created and organized by a dedicated group of volunteers back in 1986, ACUA has come a long way. Surviving the ebbs and flows like any typical organization, ACUA has stayed close to the hearts of Ukrainian Albertans. We have always found a way to rally behind our artists, and as Dr. Petryshyn states, “If the community learns to help the artist, it helps itself because it gets better known and better appreciated.” So why is art so important to Ukrainians? It has been said that art and creativity are great examples of rebellion. Certainly, when recalling Ukrainian history and our fair share of suffering, Ukrainians have not only survived, but ensured that their culture and traditions – the things often under direct attack – didn’t vanish despite everything.

Deborah Stasiuk, ACUA’s current President weighs in. When it comes to Ukrainian art and culture, “Ukrainian hearts bleed color, and art feeds our souls. You simply can’t separate us from art because it permeates every aspect of our lives. Consider ceremonies and rights of passage, whether it’s music, or embroidery,

or words, art is always a part of it. As well, Ukrainian culture and art give us something we Ukrainians (Canadians) can’t get anywhere else”.

Stasiuk goes on to say that the beautiful thing about ACUA is that although a lot of art “[i]s inspired by religion or current events, there is never an agenda. It transcends those lines”. In other words, ACUA celebrates all forms of art for art’s sake. So what has ACUA done all these years? Why are people so loyal? ACUA

“If the community learns to help the artist, it helps itself because it gets better known and better appreciated.”

not only creates pride within the culture and community, but it reaches out to non-Ukrainians as well. Through workshops, artist promotions, folk retreats, and seasonal events, as well as the magazine and boutique, ACUA has been busy sharing and teaching Ukrainian art and culture to all who are eager to learn. But as Stasiuk attests, none of it could be done if it wasn’t for a dedicated core group and all the volunteers -- she is, “Grateful to the community for all the support”.

Stasiuk has always had the belief that if you build it, they will come. And that belief hasn’t failed her yet. She has built upon the work of past members – learned from them, been inspired by them – and as a result, has been able to dream big. Not only does Stasiuk want to maintain programs that are already in place, but she intends to reach out to rural communities, encouraging them to become more involved. Stasiuk would love to create relationships within rural communities so ACUA could discover artists, offer exposure, and become part of their community as well. She also says that there are big plans for 2017: a project coupled with the Art Gallery of Alberta and UCAMA (Ukrainian Canadian Archives and Museum of Alberta), the 30th anniversary of ACUA, another Bridal Fair and Vintage show, and always...the magazine.

ACUA, despite continually expanding and redefining itself, always maintains its artistic and cultural integrity. It is a constant in an evolving society. A gem in a bustling world. And it’s always there, ready to teach and nurture, and then set you free to shine for others. ^{AV}

RIGHT PAGE TOP TO BOTTOM:
VESNA KRANSA ART EXHIBIT AT
THE MUTTART CONSERVATORY FOR
ACUA’S 20TH ANNIVERSARY;
PHOTO PROVIDED BY ACUA



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Workshop registration is by email to workshops@focusonfibrearts.org

FFAA aim is to encourage, foster and develop among the citizens of the community, excellence and appreciation of fibre as an art form.

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Edmonton & District Quilt Guild is hosting Anne's free public Lecture at 6:30 pm, Wednesday, March 16, 2017 at Royal Alberta Museum, 12845-102 Ave.

My Heritage Fibre Arts Exhibit At the Dow Centennial Gallery in Fort Saskatchewan for Nov. 2-27. On Sunday, Nov. 6, FFAA will host a Artist Reception at the Gallery.

Visit focusonfibrearts.org for future events and activities, including workshops and lecture in July with Jennifer Manuel; extraordinary rughooking and jewelry making artist; and information on the 2018 FFAA competition theme, Climate Change.



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Canada



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: UCAMA'S FIRST BOARD OF DIRECTORS; PHOTO PROVIDED | FR. JOSAPHAT JEAN BLESSING THE BASILIAN FATHERS MUSEUM AT ITS OPENING IN 1957; PHOTO PROVIDED BY BASILIAN FATHERS MUSEUM | UKRAINIAN BLOUSE DISPLAY; PHOTO PROVIDED UCWLC MUSEUM - EDMONTON EPARCHY | COSTUMED ROLE-PLAYER TENDING TO HER GARDEN IN THE LATER IMMIGRANT FARMSTEAD AHEAD OF THE SUMMER STORM.; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN CULTURAL HERITAGE VILLAGE



RECORDS OF THE PAST

By Lindsay Shapka

MUSEUMS, CULTURAL & EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRES



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DISPLAY COMMITTEE 1969 UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA EXHIBIT AT RAM (EMMA VERCHOMIN, OLGA FIGOL, MARY SULYMA, NELLIE SENIW, AND YOUTH); PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH | ANDRIY NAHACHEWSKY TEACHING A FOLKLORE CLASS WITH HIS STUDENTS; PHOTO PROVIDED BY KULE FOLKLORE CENTRE | SIGNING THE GUEST BOOK AT THE BASILIAN FATHERS MUSEUM, 1950S; PHOTO PROVIDED BY BASILIAN FATHERS MUSEUM | UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH FABERGE EGG DISPLAY (NELLIE SENIW); PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH | UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH "CHILDREN'S WORLD" EXHIBIT, 2010; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH

These seven institutions have spent years taking on the important, monumental task of sourcing, gathering, documenting, preserving, and sharing the art and artifacts that have helped shape, and continue to shape, the cultural and national identity of Ukrainians in Canada. "Art and esthetics are one of the main ways that we express our Ukrainian-ness," says founder of the Kule Folklore Centre Andriy Nahachewsky, "our visual culture is instantly recognizable." Here is a look at where

these important depositories of our past came from, and how they are contributing to the Ukrainian arts and culture in Canada.

Basilian Fathers' Museum

The Ukrainian Museum and Archives of the Basilian Fathers (the museum's original name) was founded in July of 1957 by Father Orest Kupranec to display the collection of artifacts that had been amassed by Father Josaphat Joseph Jean. According to Karen Lemiski, "Father Jean had collected many of the pieces during his religious studies

in the monasteries of Lavriv and Krekhiv in the 1910s; while he served as chaplain for the Ukrainian Galician Army and later as a secretary-translator for the Western Ukrainian National Republic during World War I; and then as a special delegate of the Ukrainian Catholic Committee to Aid Ukrainian Refugees at the end of World War II." To round out the collection, individuals from the Beaver Lake-Mundare area donated folk objects, and personal items that they had inherited, to the archives.

MUSEUMS, CULTURAL & EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRES

The museum collection now acts as an important resource that chronicles the history of the Beaver Lake-Mundare area, the Basilian Order in Canada, and the life of Ukrainian settlers. The contribution the museum has made to the Ukrainian arts includes preserving documents, personal artifacts, and a wealth of liturgical items from the Ukrainian churches of east-central Alberta like embroidery, furnishings, and religious icons.



TOP TO BOTTOM: UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH "UNITY IN DIVERSITY: THE UKRAINIAN MOSAIC" (BOIKO ETHNOGRAPHIC REGION), 2014; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH OPENING (EMMA VERCHOMIN, KAY MISKEW), 1953; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH

To commemorate the 125th anniversary, the museum will be holding a special exhibit displaying historic posters from community events, and artifacts from local Mundare businesses. They are also restoring a log house that sits on the property — one of the last remaining log structures in Lamont County — with the hope of having it open to the public by the end of June 2017.

Ukrainian Museum of Canada Alberta Branch (UMC Alberta Branch)

Though the Alberta Branch of the Ukrainian Museum of Canada was founded in 1944 by Emma Verchomin, Ukrainian women's associations across Canada started collecting artifacts that would make their way into the various branches of the museum in the 1920s.

The motivation for opening the museum was to preserve not only the works of art and artifacts that were brought to Canada by the five waves of immigration, but also the skills that had been developed over generations to create these works.

The more than 3,000 artifacts in the Alberta Branch include maps, paintings, traditional costumes, textiles, pottery, wedding headdresses, documents, and photos that were sourced from rural areas in both Alberta and B.C. (the items from B.C. were collected before the province had its own branch).

Now, the UMC Alberta Branch is so much more than just an archive, it is also contains an exhibition space that educates both Ukrainian Canadians and the general public on the ethnographic regions in Ukraine. According to Elaine Harasymiw (Emma Verchomin's daughter), "we have been collecting items from all regions so that we can show the unity and diversity in the Ukrainian mosaic. We want to show that while all regions have their differences, they are united as Ukrainians." She is also happy that one of the ways the museum is contributing to the Ukrainian arts

is by teaching traditional skills to artists that are interpreting them in a modern way. "The artifacts we have can be used to stimulate future development of these art forms in a contemporary way. Third and fourth generation Canadians are translating the skills and practices into contemporary pieces. It's wonderful!"

To commemorate the 125th anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada, the UMC Alberta Branch partnered with the UCWLC and the Edmonton Society-Ukrainian Women's Organization of Canada to produce the travelling exhibit *Treasure Chest*.

Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada Museum—Edmonton Eparchy (UCWLC Museum)

Established at an Eparchial Convention in 1952, the UCWLC Museum was created with the goal of preserving and developing the Ukrainian culture, heritage, language, tradition, and arts in Canada. Since the Edmonton branch was opened to the public in the early 1970s, it has evolved from collecting and preserving artifacts in the Bishop's home to having its own dedicated space and a vast collection that includes folk costumes, dolls in miniature regional folk costumes, handmade textiles, woven klyms, beautiful embroidery, pysanky, religious articles, photographs, wood carvings, pottery, wedding headdresses, leather footwear, and more.

The UCWLC Museum also holds regular exhibits, gives guided tours to schools, and offers workshops and courses in Ukrainian crafts like pysanka writing, motanky making, weaving, embroidery, and beadwork to help pass on the traditional skills of Ukrainian artisans.

To mark the 125th anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada, the UCWLC partnered with the UMC Alberta Branch and the Edmonton Society-Ukrainian Women's Organization of Canada to produce a travelling

exhibit called *Treasure Chest*. The exhibit features a beautifully painted chest filled with objects considered to be important for life in the new country like historic bibles, jewellery, embroidered costumes, and family photographs. According to Evelyn Cook, “the exhibit shows the significant contribution that these pioneers made to the culture and communities of Canada over the last 125 years.”

Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village & their Friends Society (UCHV)

Founded in 1971 by community leaders, the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village Society had the goal of building a village to commemorate the settlement of central Alberta by the first two waves of Ukrainian immigrants from 1891 to the 1930s. Buildings from farms and towns within east-central Alberta began being relocated to the site almost immediately, and in 1975, it was acquired by The Province of Alberta.

According to David Makowsky, head of communications at the UCHV, there was a “black book” created at the inception of the village that laid out a plan for the buildings that were to be sourced, relocated, and restored. In 2003, the Friends of the Ukrainian Village Society initiated the Enrichment Program with the intention of bringing in the 20 buildings that were still missing from the original plan. Since then, 18 of the buildings have been brought to the UCHV and the first five were opened in May 2015.

David believes that the UCHV has been a major contributor to the Ukrainian arts in the way that it has preserved the places that these arts were taught and evolved. “The [village] shows traditional architecture, and the churches, halls and schools where cultural practices were taught. These communities, and buildings, provided a scaffolding for the arts at a time when farmers could move from just ‘existing’ to being able to thrive.” The UCHV



LEFT TO RIGHT: BASILIAN FATHERS MUSEUM DISPLAY, 1950S
PHOTO PROVIDED BY BASILIAN FATHERS MUSEUM | МОЯ РОДИНА ДУЖЕ МАЛЕНЬКА:
МАМА, ТАТО, БРАТ І Я. МОЯ БАБУСЯ, ТІТКА І ДЯДЬКО ЖИВУТЬ В УКРАЇНІ. БАГАТО
МОЇХ РОДИЧІВ ПОСТРАЖДАЛИ ВІД ВІЙНИ, ГОЛОДОМОРУ ТА ПОЛІТИЧНИХ РЕПРЕСІЙ.
МАК - СИМВОЛ ВІРАТІ. Я НАМАЛЮВАВ ЦІ МАКИ В ПАМ'ЯТЬ ПРО СВОЮ РОДИНУ.
ХАЙ ЇХНЯ КРАСА БУДЕ ВІЧНА. ARTIST ЛЮБОМИР С, AGE 12

also holds regular art exhibits including *Where We Came From*, which was displayed in 2016 and was the first of two exhibits commemorating the 125th anniversary. The second, in summer of 2017, will contain art by children that will celebrate both the anniversary of Ukrainian settlement and Canada's 150th anniversary.

Kule Folklore Centre & their Friends Society

In 2001, Andriy Nahachewsky and Dr. Medwidsky submitted an application that was recognized by the provost of the University of Alberta, and the Kule Folklore Centre was born. Since 1977, there had been a small archive and some programs and classes covering Ukrainian arts and culture in Canada at the University, but the goal of the Centre was to connect them together under one organization, with one goal, and a higher profile. The role of the Centre in the beginning was to promote and support students that were researching Ukrainian folklore, and now, it is to continue to build on the rapidly growing archive and



the important research being done that has resulted in a library containing a wealth of published books, manuscripts, programs from performances, and interviews. There is also a substantial audio, video, and photography archive that has been accessed and added to by more than 50 graduate students.

According to Andriy, there are a few projects lined up to mark the 125th anniversary, “We created an exhibit called *Making a New Home* that contains materials from our archives and showcases some of the research that has been done at the Centre and across the country. It started in January of this year [2016] and will travel to 20 or 30 different places across Canada over 24 months... We are also creating a catalogue [for the exhibit] that will be published and distributed widely.”

Ukrainian Canadian Archives & Museum of Alberta

Though the museum and archives were officially opened to the public in October of 1974, founders Hryhory and Stefania Yopyk

MUSEUMS, CULTURAL & EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE CENTRES



UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH HERITAGE DAY 1994 (CHESTER KUC, NADIA BODNAR, MARIA PROKOPIW); PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH

spent many years' prior gathering documents and artifacts to build the collection. According to their daughter, Khrystia Kohut, her parents were friends with many Ukrainian priests in the areas around Holden and Redwater. When they would drive out to visit them, the priests would tell them about how third, and fourth generation Ukrainian Canadians were throwing out traditional articles that they were inheriting from parents or grandparents, and that they were often burning documents that were written in languages that they didn't understand. Distressed at the loss of these important parts of history, the Yopyks began spreading the word that they were looking for these materials and driving around Alberta to collect them. Eventually, the couple ran out of storage space in their home, and the Ukrainian Canadian Archives & Museum of Alberta was born. Since the 70s, the museum has amassed a huge collection, nearly tripling in size — the library has more than 40,000 volumes, an impressive collection on one-of-a-kind musical instruments, and there are more than 300 maps, 50,000 photos, and 800 works of art!

"The museum has an active program, exhibiting four to six times a year," says Khrystia, "We have carefully preserved textiles, pottery, and paintings dating from the 1900s to the present day. This collection paints a portrait of the incredible contribution the Ukrainian immigrants made to the arts culture, community, and churches of Canada. Our artifacts are also great teaching tools that can be used to educate the younger generations."

To celebrate the 125 years of Ukrainian settlement in Canada, the museum will be partnering with *ACUA* to provide artwork and museum materials for a month long exhibit at the Art Gallery of Alberta in May 2017.


Ukrainian Museum of Canada Calgary Collection

Established in the 1970s, the Calgary Collection is a member of the Ukrainian Museum of Canada, which has its main collection in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The goal of the collection is to "acquire, preserve, study and interpret representative artifacts which depict the Ukrainian heritage and their contribution to Canada."

Since the 70s, the collection has grown to include treasured artifacts from the first, second, and third waves of immigration. A large part of the collection is made up of textiles, including shirts, weaving, and embroidery. There are also irreplaceable examples of pottery, traditional tools, photographs, pysanky, and religious items in the archives. The museum has an impressive display of traditional breads,

with detailed explanations on their various ceremonial uses, as well.

As a way to educate the public on the role that the Ukrainian immigrants played in the art and culture of Canada, group and school tours are offered throughout the year that include videos, skits, dance, or specific information on Ukrainian Christmas and Easter traditions.

The Ukrainian Museum of Canada Calgary Collection has also displayed artifacts in special exhibits like *Treasures and Tragedies: Domed Churches of the Prairies* and *Celebrating The Art of Pysanky*. It has also participated in community events including the Calgary Ukrainian Festival that has a goal of raising the profile of Calgary's Ukrainian Community through an annual showcase of Ukrainian arts, cuisine, entertainment, and culture. 

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH "CHRISTMAS SEASON TRADITIONS" EXHIBIT (NATIVITY), 2012; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH | UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH "CHILDREN'S WORLD" EXHIBIT, 2010; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH | UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA - CALGARY COLLECTION DISPLAY; PHOTO WWW.STVLADS.COM





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MUSIC * THEATRE * ART SHOW & SALE * STREET HOCKEY * GALLERIES * CURLING

PROMOTING, PRESERVING
AND DEVELOPING

Ukrainian Canadian Dance in Alberta

By Lindsay Shapka



CHEREMOSH DANCE - SUITE OF UKRAINIAN DANCES, 1984
PHOTO BY ROMAN PETRIW AND PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY

From the moment the curtain rises, a Ukrainian dance performance is a breathtaking spectacle of dizzying spins, gravity-defying leaps, blurs of colour, and intense energy — it is an unforgettable, uplifting experience. The beginnings of Ukrainian dance in Alberta can be traced back to Vasyl Avramenko's (known as the father of Ukrainian dance in North America) visit in 1939. A Ukrainian actor, dancer, choreographer, and ballet master, when Vasyl returned to Ukraine after WWI, he discovered a renewed sense of nationalism and started teaching dance to anyone who wanted to learn. He soon began travelling to different cities and towns all over the world, always assigning a leader to continue his teaching when he left. Here in Alberta, that leader was Chester Kuc.

Chester Kuc

The founder of Ukrainian dance in Alberta and a beloved, but rigid, taskmaster to his students, Chester Kuc was the founder of Shumka (1959), Cheremosh (1969), and ran a School of Dancing at the Ukrainian National Federation (UNF) that grew to over 350 students annually. Born on April 15, 1931, Chester's parents were determined to

have him learn about his heritage, sending him to Winnipeg's Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre in the summer months. He also developed a passion for music, earning Royal Conservatory of Music certificates in both piano and violin. Then, in 1939, he had the opportunity to learn from Ukrainian Dance Master Vasyl Avramenko — known for spreading Ukrainian dance around the world. Fifteen years later, Chester combined everything he had learned about Ukrainian culture, music, and dance together and embarked on his teaching career.

Together, he and his wife Luba made an immeasurable impact on Alberta's Ukrainian dance culture. Not only did he found two major companies and teach at countless other schools, he also produced major productions, wrote original scores, and, along with Luba, helped preserve and create costumes that continue to be used and cherished by countless generations of dancers.

LEFT TO RIGHT - TOP TO BOTTOM:
PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN SHUMKA DANCERS | CHEREMOSH DANCE - THE
EMBROIDERERS, 1972; PHOTO BY JERRY PRYMA AND PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH
UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY | PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN SHUMKA
DANCERS | CHEREMOSH DANCE - RAFTS ALONG THE CHEREMOSH, 1982; PHOTO
BY ROMAN PETRIW AND PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY |
PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN SHUMKA DANCERS | CHEREMOSH EN ROUTE TO
SASKATCHEWAN (BANNER CREATED BY CHEREMOSH DANCERS OF THE ERA), 1974;
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COMPANY | PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN SHUMKA DANCERS | CHEREMOSH
REHEARSAL AT UNF HALL IN EDMONTON, 1984; PHOTO BY ROMAN PETRIW AND
PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY



DANCE & PERFORMING ARTS



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CHESTER KUC IN SHUMKA STUDIO PHOTO; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN SHUMKA DANCERS | CHESTER KUC WITH HIS WIFE LUBA; PHOTO PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY | CHESTER KUC AND CHEREMOSH IN ENGLAND, 1977; PHOTO PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY



Also passionate about creating and collecting Ukrainian art (Chester was known for being a prolific pysanky and embroidery artist), Chester worked to present Ukrainian dance as an art form and an important way to preserve and transmit Ukrainian culture. He wanted to showcase Ukrainian culture on a high level and show that dance is not just for Ukrainian Canadians to appreciate, but is for all Canadians.

Chester passed away on February 16, 2013 at the age of 81.

Alberta Ukrainian Dance Association (AUDA)

Founded in 1983 as a non-profit organization, the original goal of AUDA was to offer support to Alberta Ukrainian dance groups and individuals that were interested in Ukrainian dance.

The association now acts as a liaison in the dance community and supports artists, groups, and instructors in achieving their goals. According to their mandate, the organization strives to “use the arts to help shape the image of who we are as Albertans both in rural and urban settings,” while promoting and developing dance throughout the province. Since its

inception, AUDA has played a role in engaging youth from all heritage backgrounds, offering scholarship programs to upcoming dancers, and has held multiple workshops, programs, and conferences to support the changing expressions of dance that have emerged. More recently, AUDA has been helping dance groups and individuals find effective ways to harness digital technology and social media (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) to engage new audiences and share their outstanding art form with audiences all over the world.

The support AUDA has offered to the Ukrainian dance community is invaluable — they promote upcoming events on their website, share experiences and past events through social media, and engage the community as much as possible. Ultimately, AUDA works to “ensure that students of dance, artists, and citizens who believe Canada’s rich heritage of Ukrainian dance and music are enabled to have a distinctive voice in shaping Alberta’s cultural legacy.”

Shumka

Canada’s only professional Ukrainian dance company, Shumka was founded in 1959 by Chester Kuc when he decided that it was time to take dancers out of the basement of St. John’s Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral and to the big stage and bright lights of the Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium. The founding of this group was a family affair, as Luba, Chester’s wife, was also heavily involved, even helping to sew some of the first costumes and teaching other dance moms how to sew them as well.

In 1968, the company decided to move in a different direction, modernizing the dances they performed by mixing tradition with more contemporary dance trends, and so Chester stepped aside. Though the troupe sought to modernize the dances, they did so while still maintaining a deep respect for heritage. The goal was to challenge more conventional boundaries in order to present a form of Ukrainian dance that helped define the experiences of Ukrainian Canadians in today’s society.



DANCE & PERFORMING ARTS

Shumka has played a major role in promoting, preserving, and developing original Ukrainian Canadian-inspired dance throughout Alberta, Canada, and the world. They have performed nationally and internationally in places like China and the United Kingdom, while also collaborating with other troupes to find new ways to share the rich heritage of Ukrainian folk culture. Their unique way of merging the new and old while still preserving tradition has left a rich and exciting legacy for future generations of dancers.

Cheremosh Ukrainian Dance Company

After leaving Shumka, Chester Kuc was approached by 19 young dancers from the Ukrainian National Federation (then known as *Veselka*), who wanted to be taught more advanced dances. A year later, in 1969, Cheremosh — named after a Carpathian River in Western Ukraine known for its raging waters — was formed.

Instead of modernizing dance, the group sought to combine regional dances with dramatic costumes, choreography, and music that would make them more entertaining while at the same time still remind audiences of their dynamic cultural heritage. The goal was to enrich the Canadian cultural mosaic by highlighting traditional folklore and folk tales of the Ukrainian people through dance. Much of the choreography and music was composed by Chester — he would even accompany the dancers on the piano during rehearsals and performances!

Known for having one of the most authentic and varied wardrobes of any Ukrainian dance group in Canada (especially the unique Hopak



LEFT TO RIGHT - TOP TO BOTTOM: CHEREMOSH DANCE - WOMEN'S LYRICAL DANCE, 2005; PHOTO BY CINDY GANNON AND PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY | CHEREMOSH DANCE - IKHALY KOZAKY - THE RIDING COSSACKS AT GLENSIDE, PENNSYLVANIA, 2015; PHOTO BY ANDREW ZVARYCH AND PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY | CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY 30TH ANNIVERSARY - NEW BEGINNINGS, 1999; PHOTO BY ROMAN PETRIW AND PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY | PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN SHUMKA DANCERS | CHEREMOSH DANCE - BUKOVYNIAN CELEBRATION DANCE, 2012; PHOTO BY NINA KARPOFF AND PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY | PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN SHUMKA DANCERS | PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN SHUMKA DANCERS | PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN SHUMKA DANCERS

costumes and embroidered blue skirts that were handmade and have been passed down through generations of dancers), most of the costumes were handmade and designed by Chester and Luba Kuc, or sourced and purchased by them straight from the Ukraine.

From 1982 to 1988, Rick Wacko led Cheremosh dance troupe as Artistic Director after being an active member of the dance group. For Cheremosh's 15th anniversary, Rick introduced Freelands, which portrayed the hardships and rewards of the first Ukrainian immigrants starting new life in Canada.

In 1991, Mykola Kanevets became Cheremosh's Artistic Director and Ballet Master. A native of Kyiv, Ukraine, Mykola attended the National University of Culture and Performing Arts in Kyiv. In 1999, Mykola produced his first full program, New Beginnings, in Canada. For over 25 years, Mykola's understanding and unique perspective of Ukrainian folk and classical dance has brought Cheremosh to new heights and will continue to under his direction.

The company has travelled provincially, nationally, and internationally, and was also the first entire Canadian troupe to attend a dance workshop in Kiev, Ukraine in 1981. Over the years, this semi-professional dance company has grown to include four performing arts groups, a dance school, and more than 100 dancers, all currently under the tutelage of Artistic Director and Ballet Master Mykola Kanevets. ^{AV}



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DNIPRO CHOIR, PHOTO PROVIDED

IMMERSED IN MUSIC

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CHOIRS CULTIVATE TRADITION

By Shawna Dirksen

Enriching and uplifting, choral music speaks to the soul. This powerful art form is steeped in history, yet has evolved to keep audiences engaged and entertained. With themes ranging from classical to traditional, folk to contemporary and spiritual to secular, it's no wonder this musical genre is centre stage in today's Ukrainian Canadian communities.

Choral singing was one of the earliest artistic expressions practiced by Ukrainian pioneers arriving in Alberta and remains an important cultural experience for Ukrainian Canadians today. Choir members of Ukrainian descent tell the stories of their ancestors, and share their own experiences, beliefs and traditions through song.

From church and community ensembles to professional choral groups, Ukrainian choirs

bring unique voices together – expertly synchronized – to create one joyous sound, a collective energy that fills our hearts and minds. With talented singers, dedicated conductors and enthusiastic audiences abound, there’s no question Ukrainian choral music will continue to stand the test of time.

The Ukrainian Dnipro Choir of Edmonton

The Ukrainian Dnipro Choir of Edmonton has been delighting audiences for decades. Since Dnipro made its debut more than 60 years ago, it has grown into one of the most celebrated choirs in Canada. “The purpose of [Dnipro] was, and is, to provide a way to present the many aspects of Ukrainian culture and tradition to Canadian audiences, and to inspire Canadians of Ukrainian ancestry to maintain and be enriched by this culture,” says Irena Tarnawsky, a long-time member of Dnipro who has held many roles with the choir, including conductor, vocal coach, accompanist and committee member.

Founded in 1953 by the late Roman Soltykewych, Dnipro was originally an all-male ensemble; however, it became a mixed ensemble in 1975. Throughout its history, the choir has had more than 400 members, and has performed at hundreds of concerts and events. “[Our choir] maintains a level of choral excellence generally not heard from a community choir,” says Tarnawsky. “Annual concerts, countless appearances at community functions, goodwill Christmas performances, fundraising activities, vocal workshops, weekly rehearsals, incredible musicality, dedication and perseverance, and the many routine activities of an active performing collective tell the rest of our story.”

There’s no doubt the award-winning choir’s continued success results from the passion of its members and its ability to present the highest standard in choral music time and time again. “Dnipro’s programming has always been rich and

varied, drawing on a vast repertoire of Ukrainian folk songs, composed art songs, sacred and liturgical music, opera choruses, large choral-symphonic works ... we have [also] been fortunate to procure new, contemporary music [from Ukraine].” says Tarnawsky. “We are the only choir in Western Canada performing this calibre of repertoire, and introducing both Ukrainian and mainstream audiences to these choral gems.”

The Verkhovyna Ukrainian Choir

Known for blending traditional and folkloric choral music with contemporary works, the Verkhovyna Ukrainian Choir has been a fixture in Edmonton’s Ukrainian Canadian community since the early 1960s. The choir began as a women-only ensemble in 1959 and made its public debut on April 24, 1960. In 1976, the choir dropped its women-only status to become a mixed ensemble.

Now in its 56th year, the Verkhovyna Ukrainian Choir has built an impressive repertoire and has performed in many parts of the world, including Canada, the United States, Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, and Eastern Europe. In addition to its annual concert performances, the choir makes regular appearances at community events, festivals, workshops and religious celebrations. “Members demonstrate the value of volunteerism [as part of this] performing group,” says long-time member (and former composer) of the choir Ksenia Fedyna. “[Choir members participate in] rehearsals, performances and fundraising.”

Part of the cultural branch of the Ukrainian Youth Association of Canada, the choir embodies every facet of Edmonton’s Ukrainian Canadian community – from Ukrainians who are brand new to Canada to fourth-generation Ukrainian Canadians. “Celebrating the talents and skills of composers of Ukrainian heritage while



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DNIPRO BUD'MOI; PHOTO PROVIDED | FIRST DNIPRO CONCERT, 1955; PHOTO PROVIDED | DNIPRO CHOIR EVENT; PHOTO PROVIDED | VERKHOVYNA CHOIR; PHOTO PROVIDED



MUSIC: CHOIRS

showcasing pride in our heritage with each performance displays the rich, multicultural tapestry of Canada,” says Fedyna. “It’s a reminder of the vibrant Ukrainian culture that has thrived in our province [and] country since the arrival of the first Ukrainian immigrants 125 years ago.”

The very existence of the Verkhovyna Ukrainian Choir is a contribution to Ukrainian Canadian culture in itself. As Fedyna so eloquently puts it, “Music – be it song or dance – is a major aspect of Ukrainian culture; it’s a means of retaining our national consciousness and identity within the Canadian multicultural fabric.”

Serge Eremenko

A renowned Ukrainian Canadian composer, violinist and teacher, Serge Eremenko made a major impact on choral music in Alberta during his life.

Born in 1912, Eremenko began his musical career in Ukraine, where he studied at the State Music Conservatory in Chernivtsi. In 1944, the young musician moved to Holland to escape the war; during his time there he played in the symphony orchestra in Amsterdam. In 1952, Eremenko immigrated to Canada, first arriving in Vancouver, and finally settling in Edmonton in 1955.

In Edmonton, Eremenko immersed himself in music – he was a conductor at St. Elias Orthodox Church for 40 years, conducted the Verkhovya Choir for 20 years, taught violin in his own studio, and even worked with authors and poets to put music to their words. “Sergei made a major imprint in the development of Ukrainian folk and classical music in Canada,” says Gene Zwozdesky, who was a student of Eremenko’s in the early 1960s. “He was a great arranger, a very good composer ... he put orchestrated Ukrainian music on the national map.”

According to Zwozdesky, Eremenko had a genuine love of all Ukrainian culture –



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: UKRAINIAN MUSIC SOCIETY OF ALBERTA EXECUTIVE; PHOTO PROVIDED | ROMAN SOLTKEYWYCH; PHOTO PROVIDED | SERGEI EREMenko AND HIS WIFE IN 1983; PHOTO BY J. FEDORIW (COURTESY OF THE PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA, J.312/2)

music, art, embroidery, pysanka. “He was a real pioneer of Ukrainian arts and he really shined when it came to the musical side. What fueled his passion for Ukrainian culture was his love of freedom, his love of artistic expression.”

Eremenko’s music has certainly stood the test of time, with church choirs still singing his compositions today, but perhaps his work as a teacher is his greatest legacy. Zwozdesky recalls that Eremenko encouraged the kids attending his studio to pursue their musical talents. “He had a mild manner that created a warm, encouraging atmosphere, like you were visiting your favourite uncle. Many of his students went on to have careers in music. We were fortunate to have him here.”

Roman Soltkyewych

Even in the face of war and persecution, it seems music was never far from Roman Soltkyewych’s heart and mind.

Born in Ukraine in 1909, Roman studied music and conducted choirs in his home country. In the late 1940s, Roman – like so many Ukrainians – was displaced from his home during World War II. “He felt persecution from different sides – Poles, Germans, Kurds,” says Orest Soltkyewych of his late father.

While in Ukrainian refugee settlements in France and Austria, Roman organized choirs and continued his work as a conductor. “He felt oppressed,” continues Orest. “I think this makes you want to defend what you have. It makes you stronger, motivates you to work harder to promote your culture and be proud of where you came from.”

Eventually Roman immigrated to Canada and settled in Edmonton in 1951; he continued his career in choral music, conducting a number of church and secular choirs. In 1953, Roman founded Dnipro

Men's Choir. "He saw potential for more choirs in Edmonton and took hold of the opportunity," says Orest.

According to Orest, Roman simply "loved music and loved conducting music." Roman quickly earned the respect of his peers in Edmonton's cultural community. In 1973 he was recognized with the Alberta Achievement Award for "his outstanding service to culture and arts."

Roman continued with Dnipro Men's Choir (which is now called the Ukrainian Dnipro Choir of Edmonton) until he passed away in 1976. "His contribution to Ukrainian culture in Alberta was through the choirs he conducted and the people he met and influenced as a conductor over the years. Hundreds of people," says Orest. "He impacted people and inspired people – even those who didn't know a lot about Ukrainian culture."

Roman organized choirs and continued his work as a conductor. "He felt oppressed," continues Orest. "I think this makes you want to defend what you have. It makes you stronger, motivates you to work harder to promote your culture and be proud of where you came from."


Ukrainian Music Society of Alberta

When a group of dedicated people shares one passion, it's amazing what can happen – just look at the Ukrainian Music Society of Alberta. More than 45 years ago, four highly respected Ukrainian music teachers came together with an idea: to form an association for professional Ukrainian musicians and music enthusiasts. The rest is history.

Based in Edmonton, the Ukrainian Music Society of Alberta (UMSA) has

been operating since 1972. The organization is entirely volunteer-run, and members include professional musicians, amateur musicians and non-musicians alike.

Over the last four-and-a-half decades, UMSA has made many strides in bringing together Ukrainian musical talents and in developing Ukrainian music in Canada. The group regularly organizes concerts, events, seminars and workshops.

Since its inception all those years ago, UMSA has remained true to its mission: promoting love and respect for Ukrainian music and musicians in both Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian communities throughout Alberta. 


UKRAINIAN CANADIAN MUSICIANS

PLAY FOR THEIR HERITAGE

By Shawna Dirksen

Music is a way of life. A few notes can transport us to another time or place; a familiar song can provide comfort when times are tough; an energetic stage performance can sweep us up in celebration. Music is art, culture and community, and musicians are the ones who make it possible.

Ukrainian Canadians have a rich musical history that began as soon as the first pioneers settled in Canada. Ukrainian settlers brought the musical customs of Ukraine to their new home, often getting together with friends and neighbours to sing Ukrainian songs and play traditional instruments.

Today there are still many musicians of Ukrainian descent who uphold these musical traditions, either sharing the original songs and music of their ancestors or including cultural references in their contemporary compositions. These artists have helped carry Ukrainian culture across Alberta — to Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian communities alike. 

MUSIC: MUSICIAN SPOTLIGHTS



ANNE AND PETER CHRUNIK

By Shawna Dirksen

Sharing their heritage through music was a family affair for spouses Anne and Peter Chrunik.

Both Anne and Peter developed musical talents at an early age. Growing up, Anne sang in her church's choir in New Kiew,

Alberta. Peter studied the violin as a child and, as a teenager, played in a band that performed in the Thorsby area.

When Anne and Peter married in 1947, they formed their own band — the Meadowlarks. Anne sang and Peter played the violin. According to Anne and Peter's daughter Joyce Chrunik-Rudiak, Anne composed several songs herself; songs about Two Hills, pioneers, and their Pontiac and Ford.

Eventually, Anne and Peter's children joined the band. They played at weddings, anniversaries, parties and dances. "Audiences loved dad's music because he played a variety of excellent dance music. They loved mom because she was always happy ... she loved to joke around and sing humorous songs."

Anne and Peter instilled a love of Ukrainian culture in their children and grandchildren. "Ukrainian music, be it church music, dance music or folk songs, is closely connected to other aspects of Ukrainian culture," says Chrunik-Rudiak. "We are continuing down the same path of preserving and promoting our love for Ukrainian culture, including Ukrainian music." AV



JOHN STETCH

By Shawna Dirksen

John Stetch's career as a musician began when he was in his late teens, performing with a Ukrainian wedding band in Edmonton. "My first experiences onstage were within the Ukrainian community," recalls Stetch. "As a musician, your first dozen or so times performing live ... it has a powerful impact on you. You never forget it."

That was 30 years ago. Today Stetch (formerly Stechishin) is an award-winning jazz pianist based in New York; he's performed in jazz venues worldwide, has worked with some of the biggest names in the genre and has released 13 albums. "I play a variety of music. Jazz, but also classical and world, like Eastern European and Ukrainian music."

In all he's accomplished, Stetch remains true to his Ukrainian roots. "I make a conscious effort to bring an Eastern European element [into my music] because it comes naturally to me. Being exposed to a different language and culture makes you see the world differently. It has coloured my artistic outlook."

Stetch's strong cultural perspective has most certainly added to his success as a jazz artist. "I released a Ukrainian album 20 years ago and a lot of people still say it's their favourite because it's the most unique. I try to include it in every concert." AV

TUNING INTO UKRAINIAN HOUR

By Brian Cherwick

Ukrainian dance bands provide one of the most visible examples of Ukrainian culture in Alberta. Until the 1950s the instrumentation and repertoire of Ukrainian bands in Alberta remained relatively unchanged from those in the villages of Ukraine. Most focused on three main instruments: the violin, the tymbaly (sometimes referred to as the dulcimer), and some type of drum. With the influence of North American music, bands eventually began to add banjos, guitars, trumpets, saxophones and accordions to the mix.

At one time, every community had its own group of musicians. While literally hundreds of bands have existed in the 125 years that Ukrainians have been in Alberta, most of those musicians have faded from memory, except for their appearance in old photographs. The advent of recording technology helped preserve some of those sounds, and, for a while, an Alberta Ukrainian recording industry thrived. As a result, we have a great archive of recorded sounds to help us examine the evolution of Ukrainian culture in Alberta. Here are some of the artists that helped shape Alberta's Ukrainian music in the last 60 years.

The Radomsky Orchestra

There are few Ukrainian musicians in Alberta that garner the same love and respect of fans and fellow musicians as Metro Radomsky.

Metro was born in 1910, and began his musical career with violin lessons from Walter Holowach. He played his first

wedding at age 12, and by 1928 was leading his own band, The Radomsky Orchestra. As a young man, he provided music for Vasile Avramenko's dance school, and was invited to tour with Avramenko, but his father's death instead forced Metro to remain on the family farm.

Over 45 musicians were part of Radomsky's Orchestra from 1928 to 1989. Accordionist Bob Mason, who played with Radomsky in both the 1950s and the 1970s, recalls, "Metro was very particular as a leader. If he came with a new song on Saturday, you made sure you played it perfectly by the next Saturday."

Ukrainian weddings were often two or three-day affairs, with each day requiring musicians for various rituals. At his busiest, Metro played 14 weddings in a two-week span in addition to farming or working as an elevator agent. Radomsky's son Ken, who played saxophone for the band, recalls that in 1952, they once performed 22 days straight. At Ukrainian weddings of that era it wasn't unusual to play from 8 a.m. to 4 a.m.

Radomsky's music was based on the old-country model of violin, tymbaly and drums. While tymbalist Bill Malayko played with the band for over 40 years, Metro Lastiwka, Bill Semeniuk, and Radomsky's brother Bill were also featured on tymbaly. Radomsky later expanded his group to imitate the sound of mainstream North American music, adding saxophone, trumpet, and accordion to the line-up.

The Radomsky Orchestra made some of the earliest recordings of Ukrainian dance music in Canada, beginning with a series of 78 RPM discs for Stinson in the early 1950s. He went on to produce numerous albums on the Ukadian, DSLP, Heritage, and Maple Haze labels.

Because of Radomsky's importance in Alberta's Ukrainian music scene he was featured in articles in Equinox Magazine, Forum: A Ukrainian Review, and the Edmonton Journal. He received ACUA's Excellence in Artistry Award in 1992.

MUSIC: BANDS



LEFT TO RIGHT - TOP TO BOTTOM: THE STARLITES | THE RADOMSKY ORCHESTRA
| THE KUBASONICS | RADOMSKYS ORCHESTRA LIVE ALBUM COVER | THE
STARLITES | BILL BOYCHUK AND HIS EASY ACES | KUBASONICS KRAINA MRYI
PARADE | MILLENIA | THE EASY ACES
ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED BY KULE FOLKLORE CENTRE



THE EASY ACES; PHOTO PROVIDED BY KULE FOLKLORE CENTRE

Bill Boychuk and the Easy Aces

Fiddler Bill Boychuk was raised in the Boyan/Willingdon area of Alberta, where there was a large Bukovynian and Rumanian population. He played his first wedding in the Shandro district in the late 1930s, and continued until the late 1960s, when he relocated to British Columbia. During that time his band, The Easy Aces, played thousands of weddings, dances, anniversaries and house parties.

Weddings were a staple for the band. Bob Mason, who played accordion with the Easy Aces for about 3 years, recalls that they would begin playing around 5 pm and continue until 2 a.m. As guests would arrive at the wedding, musicians would meet them at the entrance and lead them in playing a march. Guests would throw coins into Boychuk's violin and he would have to perform with the additional weight until there was a suitable break to retrieve them. The money from the fiddle was divided among the musicians, augmenting their pay, which was usually between \$7-10.00 for the night.

Boychuk was known as an easy-going band-leader. Mason recalls that Boychuk would simply "motion to a musician when it was time to take a lead. You would stand up and move to the mic. It was a trying time." Even if the performance was not perfect, Boychuk was forgiving. The spirit of the performance was what counted.

The Easy Aces recorded over 102 original Ukrainian selections: 15 78s, 2 45s, and 5 LPs on the Stinson, Arrex, DSLP, Heritage and V-Records labels. While some selections featured a full band, others reverted to the traditional instrumentation for a village wedding band: violin, tsymbaly and drum. Many of these recordings, such as "Huculka," for example, faithfully recreated dance melodies just as they had been performed in the old country. The band's 1955 recording of "The Early Bird of Spring" was used for many years as the theme song for CFCW's Ukrainian Hour.

Joe Hrycyk And The Starlites

While Minnesota has its tales about Paul Bunyan, Alberta has stories of "Eight

Foot Joe." That would be Joe Hrycyk, a giant of a man and one of Alberta's most celebrated fiddlers.

Hrycyk was born in 1932 and grew up at St Michael, Alberta. By age six he began to teach himself the violin, later augmenting his studies with correspondence violin lessons. Anyone familiar with Joe and the size of his hands would marvel at way he could make fingers so huge move so nimbly. Even after losing part of a finger in an accident, Hrycyk could not be held back and returned to playing dances within weeks.

Hrycyk won the first CFCW Fiddle contest in 1955. He was also a three-time prize winner at the Alberta Old Time Fiddling Competition, placing second one year, first the next, and also winning in the novelty category. After playing with a number of local groups, he started his own band, The Starlites, in 1955.

Hrycyk and his Starlites band released a number of recordings, primarily featuring Joe's fiddle playing and singing. His rendition of "Oi Kume, Kume" is

MUSIC: BANDS



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JIMMY WATSKO; PHOTO PROVIDED BY KULE FOLKLORE CENTRE | VERNA WATSKO; PHOTO PROVIDED BY KULE FOLKLORE CENTRE | MARRIN KROPIENISKI; PHOTO PROVIDED BY KULE FOLKLORE CENTRE

still heard frequently on Ukrainian radio programs across Canada. One recording of note featured The Starlites providing accompaniment for eight-year-old singer Gloria Kolmatyski, who went on to international fame as Gloria Kaye.

Through the 50 plus years that the Starlites were active, over 100 musicians shared the stage with Joe. Many of those musicians returned to take part in a special evening celebrating the band's 50th anniversary. For a time the band included his son Michael on accordion and daughter Bernie on piano and vocals. The latest incarnation of the group featured three generations of the Hrycyk family with Joe, Michael, and Micheal's son, Shawn, on drums, along with Larry Bucholz on guitar.

In 2010, Joe received the Legendary Achievement Award from the Ukrainian Musicians Association and in 2015 received a Lifetime Achievement Award for over 50 years of performing Ukrainian music. Throughout all of those 50 years, Joe Hrycyk and his fiddle carried on the musical style and traditions reminiscent of Alberta's early pioneers.

Jimmy Watsko And The Lumberjacks

While a name like The Lumberjacks may not elicit thoughts of Ukrainian music, this was one of the finest Ukrainian bands in Alberta. The cover of one of their LPs indicates that they "weave Ukrainian melodies into the mosaic of Canadian music." In doing so, band-leader Jimmy Watsko and his group created something that is both distinctly Ukrainian and distinctly Canadian.

Like many Canadian fiddlers, Jimmy's love of the violin began watching Don Messer on television. He started at old time fiddling lessons at age 17 and began playing with a local band, the Star Melody Aces around the same time. By the late 1950s he started his own band, The Lumberjacks, the name a tribute to one of Don Messer's early bands. The band, featuring Jim on fiddle and his wife Verna on vocals, continued playing in various incarnations until 2002. While many musicians were part of the band over the years, some of the longest serving were accordionist Marvin Kropieniski and guitarist Terry Kotyk.

The Lumberjacks enjoyed a career that spanned over 50 years. In addition to weddings, anniversaries and community dances, they also performed at various reunions and festivals, and took part in concert tours with recording artists such as Mickey and Bunny and The Interlake Polka Kings. Jim also helped organize and produce festivals, radio programs and recordings and in the early 60's the Lumberjacks had their own weekly radio program. In 1967, along with radio personality Dan Chomlak, Jim was one of the producers of the "Ukrainian Centennial Album," a compilation featuring 13 Alberta bands that helped launch Ken Huculak's Heritage Records label.

In 1963, and again in 1970, Jimmy won the Alberta Golden Fiddle Championship sponsored by radio station CFCW. In 2010, in Dauphin, Manitoba, Jimmy received the Legendary Achievement Award and was inducted into the Ukrainian Musicians Association Hall of Fame. In 2015, he received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the same organization for 50 years of musical contribution and preservation of Ukrainian culture and heritage.

Dumka

In the 1970s, as the nature of the Ukrainian community in Alberta was becoming more urban and cosmopolitan, there was an appetite for music that reflected those tastes. Dumka was one of the first bands to address that need.

The band had simple beginnings back in 1972, when friends Orest Warchola and Mike Duchniy got together to jam in their parents' basements. They soon expanded to a full band with drummer Ihor Karpa and guitarist Rob Snatynchuk. One of their early influences was the popular Montreal group Rushnychok, but they also took inspiration from non-Ukrainian groups such as the pop band Chicago. "We really liked the sound of the horns," says Warchola. From a modest start in church basement concerts and community hall dances, the band grew in popularity. Warchola feels they garnered attention because "our music was a little bit different from the traditional skrypka and tsymbaly that people were used to."

The band enjoyed a career that spanned over 20 years. A number of prominent musicians cycled through the group, including pianist John Stetch, trumpeter John Demianiw, keyboardist Bohdan Zajcew and singer Christine Chernesky. The band also released a number of recordings. Warchola recalls that early recordings were relatively simple: "We recorded them in Ken Huculak's studio, which was, basically, a garage converted to a studio. In those days the band played all together, live off the floor." Later offerings were more ambitious, with the band's 1983 album "Zvukovydy/Soundscapes" of particular note, combining the band's contemporary, horn-based sound with the tsymbaly playing of Ted Harasymchuk.

In addition to local weddings and dances, Dumka was in demand for zabavas and festivals across Canada. Of note for Warchola was an event the band played in Los Angeles: "The hall was packed, mostly

with young people. We were picked up in a limo and were treated like rock stars."

Dumka continued performing into the early 1990s. In 1998 the band staged a reunion concert where over 15 of the musicians who had been part of the group took part.

Trembita

"Keep Calm and Polka On!" is the motto of Edmonton band Trembita, and they've been doing just that for 40 years.

The band got its start in 1977 when accordionist Taras Nohas gathered some friends, including Andy and Peter Tarnawsky, Ihor Dytyniak and Taras Dwornycki, to form a band. Eventually, the Tarnawsky's moved on to form their own band, Estrada, and Nohas brought other friends into the fold. Younger brother Slavko Nohas occasionally appeared as a featured singer and, in time, became a regular member of the group.

In the mid-1980s, Taras Nohas left the band and Slavko took the reins as band-leader, a role he continues to the present. With Slavko at the helm, the band moved in a new direction. The younger Nohas had studied at Grant McEwan College's Music Department and when the need for new musicians arose he tapped his colleagues from the Music School rather than relying on acquaintances from the Ukrainian community. Nohas could develop tight written arrangements, confident that any professionally trained musicians could step in to play the part. To date, over 40 musicians have been members of Trembita.

Trembita's most active period coincided with a golden age of zabavas in Alberta. During the 1980s-90s the band performed up to 45 weeks per year, with shows ranging from small country dances in Smoky Lake and Willingdon to the arena-sized mega-zabavas



DUMKA; PHOTOS PROVIDED BY KULE FOLKLORE CENTRE

MUSIC: BANDS

of Festival 88 and Shumkafest. While Nohas has many memories, his first big road trip leaves a lasting impression: “I was 15 and we flew out to Vancouver to do a Malanka . . . There was a limo driver waiting for us with Trembita written on a card.”

When the number of zabavas in the Ukrainian community declined, Trembita found new opportunities performing for corporate events. In recent years, they have enjoyed a renewed popularity that has led to Festival appearances and even a performance with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra. After a long period since their first two recordings (1987’s “Blue Album” and 1991’s “Faces”), the band released a new recording in 2012.

As Trembita continues to polka on, they light-heartedly invite their fans to “...come by...say hi...wear an accordion...”

Trubka

Unlike most dance bands that eventually find their way to the concert stage, Trubka followed the exact opposite route. Beginning in 1987, the trio, consisting of Jodie Wacko, Ralph Sorochan and Tim Zaharychuk, travelled extensively as instrumentalists for the song and dance troupe The Flying Cossacks. Performances ranged from festivals in Vegreville and Dauphin to “any small town with a fair,” as Wacko describes. Eventually they moved on to larger venues in New York, New Jersey and San Diego, California.

A Flying Cossacks performance in Regina

Our music was a little bit different from the traditional skrypka and tsymbaly that people were used to.

saw Trubka emerge as an independent unit. The band played the Malanka dance following that show, then their schedule rapidly increased “from 10 to 12 to 15, 30, 40, 50 shows per year,” Wacko noted. After numerous dance and wedding appearances, they returned to festivals in Dauphin, Minneapolis and San Diego.

Trubka’s development as a band reflects the quintessential prairie experience. With members living in Lamont, Vegreville, and Edmonton, at least 2 of the 3 had to travel in excess of an hour across prairie roads, braving prairie weather conditions to get to practice. When performing in Eastern Canada and the USA, Wacko realized “how unique music on the prairies is.” He also noted, “travelling from Edmonton to Dauphin, it is amazing that there is 1000 miles of communities with similar experiences.”

In 1994, the group expanded with the addition of guitarist John Moroz. In 1996, Zaharychuk left the group and was replaced with multi-instrumentalist Clint Moroziuk. The added instrumentation allowed greater possibilities for repertoire.

The band released CDs in 1991 and 1997. The music was both a reflection of material performed in their shows and some more creative pieces that couldn’t be replicated in live performances. Their goal, according to Wacko, was to “try to do something a little different.”

While Trubka had a wide range of travels and experiences, it is the community performances that hold a special place for them. Wacko recalls weddings “where we played until 3 am and there were still 250 people on the dance floor. There were some real good parties.”

Millenia

Like many Ukrainian bands, Millenia got its start when schoolmates Bobby Yakoweshen, Paul Begory and Chad Hines got together for some informal jamming. After Yakoweshen saw his cousin, Johnny Wacko,



TOP TO BOTTOM: TRUBKA; PHOTO PROVIDED BY KULE FOLKLORE CENTRE | TREMBITA; PHOTO PROVIDED BY KULE FOLKLORE CENTRE

at a family event the band was ready to take shape. Yakoweshen was impressed with Wacko’s singing on a recent Jimmy Watsko album, and invited him to attend their jam sessions. After Hines departed, Wacko brought in guitarist Andrew Kowalchuk, and the initial line-up of Millenia was in place.

It was inevitable that Bobby and Johnny would stake out a space in the music world. Yakoweshen says he “grew up sleeping on a stage.” His parents, Bruce and Bernie, were long time musicians, as were his grandfathers Joe Hrycyk and Bob Mason. Wacko’s influences included his father’s band, The Lumberjacks, and his brother’s band, Trubka.

Millenia began playing in earnest in 2000, and released their first CD in 2001. Their

initial album paid homage to groups that had inspired them and replicated many well-known arrangements. Their subsequent CDs, in 2006 and 2012, were more adventurous. They followed with a live CD in 2013 and a 2015 collaboration with singing ensemble Rozhanytsia of Ukraine.

Along with many weddings and dances across the prairies, Millenia has been featured at Festivals in Dauphin (3X), San Diego (2X), Toronto, and has even played a wedding in Beverly Hills. Yakoweshen notes that he especially enjoys performing in places he hasn't been before: "When you have a new audience and you get a good response, when you meet new people who haven't heard you before but who like you, that's a great feeling."

In 2016, Millenia were winners of the People's Choice Award at the Edmonton Music Awards. While no surprise to the band and their legion of fans, their win was

an eye-opener for organizers of the event. It showed that Ukrainian music is alive and well and, word has it, that a new category for World and Ethnic music will be added to the awards in the future.

The Kubasonics

(Disclaimer: When I agreed to write this article, the editors provided a list of bands. My own band was on the list. While it seems strange writing about myself, I am proud of my band's achievements. BC)

The Kubasonics began in 1996 when multi-instrumentalist Brian Cherwick was invited to perform at AUDA's Hopak in the Park. Rather than perform alone, he devised unique arrangements for an ensemble that combined traditional melodies, a variety of Ukrainian folk instruments, and various other musical genres. The crowd response was so positive that what was supposed to be a one-time performance became a 20-year project.


The Kubasonics were never a wedding and zabava band. Instead, their show was designed for clubs, concerts and festivals and brought them recognition from beyond the Ukrainian community. They appeared at numerous mainstream music festivals

and performed in 9 of Canada's provinces and territories.

The group produced four CDs featuring their unique adaptations of traditional melodies alongside Cherwick's original compositions based on Ukrainian Canadian life. Their music was broadcast on four continents, highlighted on national TV, and in films. Miaso (1999) made the list of Top Ten CDs on Canadian college radio stations, and in 2005 they were chosen to play live on CBC-Radio's "Disc Drive." A CBC-TV documentary was based on the song "Giants of the Prairies," while their song "Billy Mosienko" was played on Hockey Night in Canada. "Polka from L'viv" was chosen for the prestigious compilation "Alberta Wild Roses and Northern Lights" on the Smithsonian Folkways label.

A high point in the Kubasonics' career was their 2008 tour to Ukraine. They were the first Canadian group to perform at the Kraina Mrii Festival in Kyiv, and they visited other centres performing in clubs and intimate house concerts. The band continues to generate attention in Ukraine and was recently featured as one of only two Canadian artists on a 2016 Ukraine-based website devoted to Ukrainian musicians around the world.

The Kubasonics performed for numerous Ukrainian events throughout Alberta and collaborated with various ensembles, providing live-music for the Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, the Verkhovyna Ensemble and others. In 2000 the group received ACUA's "Innovation in Artistry Award."

After a brief hiatus, the band re-grouped and is currently very active in the music scene in St John's, Newfoundland, where they continue to promote Ukrainian and Prairie music. 



LEFT TO RIGHT - TOP TO BOTTOM: TAISTRA CHUHAISTRA FESTIVAL LIVIV; PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE KUBASONICS | THE KUBASONICS; PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE KUBASONICS | BREAKFAST IN BURDIKIVTSI; PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE KUBASONICS





TOP ROW LEFT TO RIGHT:

VEREGA WEDDING, TWO HILLS, AB, 1917 (P78-1-336 DOC 08) | V. AVRAMENKO
SCHOOL OF DANCE, NATIONAL HALL, EDMONTON, 1950 (P78-1-274 DOC 08) |
60TH ANNIVERSARY OF IMMIGRATION, RADWAY, AB 1951 (P78-1-195 DOC 08) |
PHOTOS PROVIDED BY UCAMA

MIDDLE ROW LEFT TO RIGHT:

THREE WOMEN, SHANDRO, AB, 1925 (P78-1-331 DOC 08); PHOTO PROVIDED BY
UCAMA | UKRAINIAN NATIONAL HALL DANCE GROUP, EDMONTON, 1929 (P78-1-
470 DOC 08); PHOTO BY JOSEPH PRYMA (EDMONTON) | CONCERT IN HONOUR
OF TARAS SHEVCHENKO, MYRNAM, AB, 1931 (P78-1-109 DOC 08); PHOTO BY K.
KANTOR | LEAGUE OF UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC WOMEN, GLENDON, AB, 1962 (P78-1-
220 DOC 08); PHOTO BY PETER VAITKUNAS PHOTO STUDIO, ST. PAUL

BOTTOM ROW LEFT TO RIGHT:

UKRAINIAN NATIONAL FEDERATION CHOIR, CONDUCTOR O. CUKORNYK,
EDMONTON, 1944 (P78-1-111 DOC 08); PHOTO PROVIDED BY UCAMA | UKRAINIAN
EMBROIDERY WORKSHOP AT UKRAINIAN NATIONAL HALL, INSTRUCTOR ANTONIA
KUCHER, EDMONTON, 1975 (P78-1-268 DOC 08); PHOTO PROVIDED BY UCAMA |
UKRAINIAN NATIONAL YOUTH ORCHESTRA, ORGANIZER S. EREMENKO, EDMONTON,
1962 (P78-1-118 DOC 08); PHOTO BY ALPHA STUDIO (EDMONTON) | OLENA,
STEFAN, VASYLYNA PORAYKO FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH, 1910 (P78-1-204 DOC 08);
PHOTO PROVIDED BY UCAMA | RUTHENIAN SETTLERS, 1905 (P78-1-313 DOC 08);
PHOTO PROVIDED BY UCAMA





THEATRE



VEGREVILLE THEATRE GROUP, VEGREVILLE, AB, 1919 (P78-1-355 DOC 08)
PHOTO BY SPENCER PHOTO AND PROVIDED BY UCAMA



PERFORMANCE OF A LIFETIME

By Cameron Slavik

It's 1901 and you're in modern day Star, Alberta – the largest and oldest Ukrainian block settlement in Canada, east of Edmonton.

The stage is set for what would be regarded as the first Ukrainian theatrical performance in Canada. Waiting for the play to begin, what you don't realize is that you are witnessing the establishment of a unifying form of cultural expression for Ukrainian Canadians.

Early plays were performed about a decade after Ukrainians started to arrive in Alberta. These pioneers were primarily concerned with surviving and settling themselves, according to Dr. Andriy Nahachewsky, professor, Modern Languages and Culture Studies and Huculak Chair of Ukrainian Culture and Ethnography, University of Alberta.

"The early plays were simply brought over from the old country, often the most familiar and popular ones. Very soon, people started writing new Ukrainian plays in Canada and there are likely 100 or more of these," he explains.

The birth of Ukrainian Canadian theatre led to the growth of a new industry. In "Showtime on the North Saskatchewan", Jars

Balan, coordinator, Kule Ukrainian Canadian Studies Centre, writes about the emergence of many theatre groups, including the Boian Society in 1911 and the Ivan Franko Drama Circle, who made their theatrical debut in the fall of 1913. Various other theatre groups performed in venues such as the Separate School Hall, the Ukrainian National Hall in Edmonton and many other community-owned spaces throughout Alberta.

The first play to feature the New World as a setting was staged in 1910 in Vegreville, with Act I taking place in Western Ukraine and the rest set in a Canadian boarding house.

This performance showed how Ukrainian culture began to evolve and adapt to its unfamiliar surroundings. Writers and actors started to create original plays that incorporated new settings, experiences and ideas. Theatre was a way for the masses to laugh, cry and enjoy themes that were common to all early Ukrainian Canadian settlers.

The 1910 Vegreville play featured a plot with a twist. The performance, described by

THEATRE

The early plays were simply brought over from the old country, often the most familiar and popular ones.

Mr. Balan, centers around two young men departing their homes in the Ukraine for the New World, one of whom is married. Once in Canada, the married man falls in love and proposes to his wife's cousin.

After this early historic production, Ukrainian theatre in Alberta and throughout Canada continued to grow.

Ukrainian theatrical activity in Alberta increased in the inter-war period. "More people were comfortably settled and wanted to and could afford to participate in community cultural activities," says Dr. Nahachewsky.

"The knowledge of Ukrainian language was still very normal, with hundreds of thousands of Ukrainian Canadians, including those born in Canada, being fluent in Ukrainian because that's what they spoke at home."

After World War II, and especially from the 1950s to 1970s, Ukrainian theatre was very active. People saw an opportunity to strengthen their Ukrainian Canadian



UKRAINSKYI STUDENTSKYI KRUKHOK IM. ADAMA KOTSKA, 1924, EDMONTON (51-0048); PHOTO PROVIDED BY UCAMA


identity in light of the turmoil and uncertainty in Europe at the time.

Since then, Ukrainian theatre in Alberta has been on the decline. This can be attributed to communities getting older and decreasing fluency in Ukrainian language, Dr. Nahachewsky suggests.

Despite this, Ukrainian theatre continues to adapt. This is being done through the translation of Ukrainian plays and themes into English, and as many Ukrainians achieve

success in the industry as actors, directors, production people and in other roles.

As the curtain closes on one act, we look forward to the next one. From the first play and performers in Star, Alberta, to the adaptations made to the art form itself, Ukrainian theatre continues to inspire and surprise us.

Through the years, it's purpose has always been clear – to preserve and celebrate a culture that, akin to its theatre, is dynamic, alive and ever-changing. 



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– Уляна Кравченко

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Lamont County Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Year Proclamation

WHEREAS September 9, 2016, marks the 125th year since the arrival of the first Ukrainians to Canada; and

WHEREAS the Ukrainian Bloc Settlement in East Central Alberta encompasses all of Lamont County; and

WHEREAS in 1898, the first Ukrainian Greek Catholic church was built at Star, Alberta; and

WHEREAS the first permanent Ukrainian settlement in Canada was in the Star/Edna area; and

WHEREAS every fifth Albertan can claim Ukrainian ancestry; and

WHEREAS Ukrainians have been a significant piece of the Alberta mosaic since the late 1800s, their immigration to Alberta serving as a catalyst for the formation of the province and its rapid development,

NOW THEREFORE, I, Wayne Woldanski, Reeve of Lamont County, Alberta, do hereby proclaim September 2016 to September 2017 to be designated as “Lamont County Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Year” and do invite all the residents of our county to celebrate this milestone with us throughout the year.

Wayne Woldanski, Lamont County Reeve

Dated this 9th day of August, 2016, in Lamont, Alberta.

SHARING THE UKRAINIAN CANADIAN EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE

literary arts

By Shawna Dirksen

Novels, news stories, poems, song lyrics or scripted plays, the literary arts have been captivating imaginations for decades. The written word – in all its forms – not only provides enjoyment, but also inspires, educates and ignites ideas. Whether it's fictional or factual, literature has the power to preserve history and sustain culture.

When Ukrainian pioneers immigrated to Canada so many years ago, many found comfort in books, news, poems or songs written in the language of their homeland. Generations later, Canadians of Ukrainian descent continue to learn about their origins through literary works.

Numerous Ukrainian Canadian writers have created and published written records of the people, time periods and places important to their heritage. Many draw inspiration imagining what life was like for their ancestors who settled in Alberta, and many write from their own experience. One thing they all have in common; however, is the incredible impact they've

had on Ukrainian Canadian literary arts provincially and nationally.

Ukrainian Book Store

The Ukrainian Book Store is a permanent fixture in Alberta's history. Brother's John and Michael Ferbey opened the bookstore in downtown Edmonton in 1914, and it went on to connect Ukrainian Canadians with their culture for 98 years.

Elena Scharabun and her family owned and ran the book store for three generations, until it closed down in 2012. According to Scharabun, the bookstore was very important to early Ukrainian settlers coming to Alberta. "It was located close to the train station. When new immigrants from Ukraine saw the name on the building, they knew there would be someone there who spoke their language. They knew they could get information there."

In its early days, the Ukrainian Book Store was a bookstore and general store rolled into one; it carried reading material and general supplies for Ukrainian immigrants.

Over the years, the book store evolved.

It was no longer a general store, and specialized in Ukrainian books and sold specific items that fit the needs of Edmonton's modern Ukrainian community. "We sold things like Ukrainian cookbooks, supplies for Easter eggs, musical instruments, dance costumes and newspapers from Ukraine," explains Scharabun.

Scharabun says the book store also supplied Ukrainian literature to libraries all over the world. "We had books about Ukraine, books imported from Ukraine and, later on, books by English writers translated to Ukrainian."

For Scharabun and her family the bookstore was always about keeping up Ukrainian culture and traditions. "You have to know where you come from. [Our society] can become a melting pot, but everyone has a history behind them."

Myrna Kostash

When we think of writers who have inspired Ukrainian Canadian culture in Alberta, Myrna Kostash is among the first that come to mind.

Kostash, whose career has spanned more than four decades, is a highly acclaimed



creative nonfiction writer. Deeply rooted in Canada's writing community, Kostash has won numerous awards for her work, including the Alberta Council of Ukrainian Arts "Excellence in Artistry" Award in 2001.

Over the years, Kostash has written about many topics, including, of course, her Ukrainian Canadian origins. "When I go back to Ukrainian Canadian themes it is either to challenge our own stereotypes about ourselves or to deepen our understanding of everything that has gone into who we are, from Byzantium to relations with Indigenous neighbours," explains Kostash.

As the granddaughter of "first wave" Ukrainian immigrants, Kostash feels it's important to keep "rethinking, reforming and re-presenting" Ukrainian art and culture in Canada today. "What is most interesting about [Ukrainian Canadian culture] after 125 years of being settled in this country is the hybrid forms that the culture has taken, with all the influences that have come to bear upon it, not only from the majority culture but also from other ethnic cultures as well."



TOP TO BOTTOM: UKRAINIAN BOOK STORE; PHOTO PROVIDED | UKRAINIAN BOOK STORE, EDMONTON, 29 MAY 1939; PHOTO BY SMITH STUDIOS (EDMONTON) AND PROVIDED BY UCAMA | MYRNA KOSTASH; PHOTO PROVIDED

Looking back on her work, Kostash is proud of her commitment to cultural and civic life in Canada – and remains committed today. “I am working on a new book, which I’m calling *The Ghost Notebooks*, about all my grandparents.” Unfortunately for Kostash, there is no one in her family left alive that can tell her what she would like to know about her grandparents. But, the seasoned writer is optimistic, “this is why the genre creative nonfiction was invented.”

Tetiana Fedoriw

For Tetiana Fedoriw, writing was purely a labour of love. The talented writer started with poetry while in high school in Ukraine, and her body of work eventually grew to include plays and song lyrics.

In 1948 Tetiana and her husband came to Canada to escape the war in their homeland. The couple settled in Alberta, working on Tetiana’s aunt’s farm before eventually moving to Edmonton. “An important part of her life [in Edmonton] was the church and community halls,” says Tetiana’s son Roman Fedoriw. “In the community halls she could freely express and pass down her culture. There she worked on her plays, poetry and recitals.”

Tetiana’s work was published in local and international newspapers, journals and magazines; she even collaborated with composers who put music to her lyrics. “For her, [her work] was an endeavour of her heart and soul,” says Roman. “[At the time] people [in Ukrainian Canadian communities] were instilled with a sense of pride in their culture and struggle for freedom. She wrote of the great historical heroes, figures and artists.”

Tetiana never earned an income for her writing, but Roman says she felt it was important to preserve and pass on her culture. “If you lose something, then you really realize how important it was. Because [Ukrainian literature and culture] was not allowed and was being systematically wiped out in her homeland, and cultural and religious leaders were systematically eliminated, she felt it was important to nurture.”

After Tetiana passed away, her husband compiled and published a book of her poems, helping carry on his wife’s legacy of sharing Ukrainian culture through the written word. “Here in this great country Canada, [Ukrainian literature and culture] was given a chance to flourish,” says Roman. “[It’s] shared with other cultures and passed on as part of Canada’s multi-ethnic fabric.”

Mykola Woron Library and Archives at St.Vladimir’s Church

What started as one man and his suitcase filled with books has grown into one of the largest Ukrainian libraries in Canada. The Mykola Woron Library and Archives at St.Vladimir’s Church has been serving Ukrainian Canadians (and those interested in Ukrainian history) for 58 years.

The library, which opened in Calgary’s St.Vladimir’s Church in 1958, was the lifelong passion of its founder Mykola Woron. “Mr.Woron was a displaced person during the war,” explains Arkadij Chumak, who has been the librarian at St.Vladimir’s for about two years. “He started the library within a displaced person’s camp in Germany. He brought a few books with him [to Canada] and started the library at the church.”

Today the library holds more than 15,000 volumes. “Mr.Woron came from a very humble background. He didn’t finish high school. He had no training in history or literature. It was just his love of books,” says Chumak. “He funded a lot of [the library] himself. He worked for CPR [the Canadian Pacific Railway] and made an arrangement to collect pop bottles ... he used every cent he collected to fund the library.”

TOP TO BOTTOM: TETIANA FEDORIW, 1954; PHOTO BY JAROSLAW FEDORIW. | UKRAINIAN NEWS EDITOR MARCO LEVITSKY WITH KYIV BUREAU CHIEF VITALIY SHEVCHENKO IN FRONT OF UKRAINE’S PARLIAMENT 1993. IN 1991 LEVITSKY HAD BEEN SENT TO KYIV TO TEACH JOURNALISTS AT “ЗА КИЇВСЬКИМ ЧАСОМ” (BY KYIV TIME), THE NEWSPAPER OF KYIV REGIONAL RUKH, HOW TO USE THE COMPUTERS PROVIDED THEM BY THE ALBERTA FRIENDS OF RUKH. LEVITSKY BROUGHT SHEVCHENKO TO EDMONTON TO TRAIN HIM ON THE COMPUTERS AT UKRAINIAN NEWS FOR SIX WEEKS. SHEVCHENKO SUBSEQUENTLY SERVED AS THE PAPER’S BUREAU CHIEF DURING THE NINETIES. HIS SON, ANDRIY, IS CURRENTLY UKRAINE’S AMBASSADOR TO CANADA. PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN NEWS

According to Chumak, Mr.Woron (now in his nineties) had a talent for finding Ukrainian literature. “He had a reputation. People who wanted a certain book could turn to Woron, and he’d provide. For example, I was looking for a book that was published in the 1930s and asked him about it. He had it for me in about a month. Just remarkable.”

The Mykola Woron Library and Archives remains a valuable resource in maintaining information about Ukrainian history and culture. “[Preserving Ukrainian culture in Canada] is tremendously important,” says Chumak. “You don’t know who you are until you know your background and culture. We are a multicultural country ... we are better Canadians when we know who we are.” AV



UKRAINIAN NEWS – ADAPTING TO AN EVOLVING COMMUNITY

By Marco Levytsky

Ukrainian News (Українські вісті) has been an Edmonton institution for almost 90 years and has evolved with the times from a newspaper aimed at an immigrant population to one which both serves and reflects a community that has been around for 125 years.

It first appeared in 1928 as a Ukrainian-language weekly called “Українські вісті” (Western News), published by S. Fodchuk.

In 1929 it was acquired by the Ukrainian Catholic church, and in January 1932 it assumed its present name, eventually becoming the organ of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Edmonton. For many years after the Second World War the paper was edited by Fathers Petro Kachur, and Mykhailo Sopuliak. I took over as editor in 1982, and then as publisher and owner in 1988.

As the community itself evolved, so the newspaper adapted, changing from an all-Ukrainian newspaper to one in which English became the principal language. The focus changed as well. Whereas a paper aimed at immigrants is a general-interest publication providing news in the language its readers best understand, one aimed at a Canadian-born readership fills a specific niche – both serving its community, and reflecting it.

That is the reason Ukrainian News has a strong focus on cultural events – as that is an element which has been lovingly maintained from generation to generation and remains a constant factor, while language retention often wanes.

At the same time, being a primarily English-language publication, Ukrainian News serves as a voice for the community – reflecting its issues and articulating them for others.

Though newspapers themselves are evolving with the technical changes brought on by the digital age, editorial focus, as such, is a constant regardless of format.



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THE Visual Arts

KEEPING UKRAINIAN TRADITIONS ALIVE



By Shawna Dirksen

The visual arts connect us to the past, preserve history and provide a snapshot of the present. Countless artists of Ukrainian descent have coloured Alberta's cultural landscape over the last 125 years. Through iconography, illustration, oil painting, graphic art and many other mediums, these artists express what it means to be Ukrainian.

Today's Ukrainian Canadian communities celebrate artists and their work, encouraging Ukrainian cultural themes and recognizing artists for their achievements. However, only decades ago, many Ukrainian artists were forced from their homeland, their lives in danger just for practicing their craft. Some of these courageous and dedicated artists immigrated to Canada and settled in Alberta, where they formed new artist communities and created works inspired by their experience.

This important legacy continues today. Ukrainian Canadian artists share traditions from Ukraine, tell stories of Ukrainian prairie pioneers and, most importantly, foster a sense of pride in Ukrainian Canadian culture.

Peter Lipinski

Peter Lipinski was a well-known Ukrainian iconographer who immigrated to Canada shortly before the First World War. Born in 1888 in Galicia (a historical region that was located where the Polish-Ukrainian border is today), Lipinski was among the first wave of Ukrainian pioneers to settle in Western Canada, specifically Edmonton. "Lipinski filled a gap that would not have been thought of pre-immigration," says Radomir Biliash, senior historian with Alberta Culture & Tourism. "At that time, pioneers were replicating church architecture from the old country, but the walls of the church were bare."



PETER LIPINSKI; PHOTO PROVIDED
BY RADOMIR BILASH, COURTESY
OF MRS. MARY LIPINSKY



Even though Lipinski was a skilled painter, according to Biliash, his work wasn't considered art. "Lipinski was able to come in and complete churches; [his work] was considered a part of the construction of the church."

From the time Lipinski arrived in Edmonton to his death in 1975, he had completed 45 churches in Alberta. "[Lipinski's] contributions are prolific," says Biliash. "His contributions are everywhere. He didn't just take commissions from individual parishes, but also provided items to a church goods store in Winnipeg that sent items to churches all over Canada. People are still using his items, like ceremonial banners or Easter shrouds, to this day. Many parishes may not even know they have Lipinski's work."

Even though Lipinski contributed greatly to promoting Ukrainian culture in Canada, Biliash doesn't think the sought-after church painter would have viewed it that way at the time. "He was here to perpetuate a culture in a new land. There was no going back. [The pioneers] had chosen a new land, but were still strongly connected to the church. Lipinski worked tirelessly onsite at churches and at home to make sure the lifestyle [they loved] was maintained."

Ivan Keywan

Ivan Keywan was not only a gifted graphic artist and painter, but also an arts advocate. Born in Karliv, Ukraine in 1907, Keywan began studying his craft in his home country at the Novakivsky Art School in Lviv. From there, he continued his studies in Poland at art academies in Krakow and then Warsaw.

After completing art school, Keywan moved back to Ukraine to teach art; however, World War II brought conflict to his home country, bringing him west. Once the war was over, Keywan taught art in Ukrainian displacement camps in Germany.

In 1949, Keywan immigrated to Canada, making Edmonton his home. Keywan became an active member of Edmonton's Ukrainian artist community, founding the Edmonton branch of the Association of Ukrainian Visual Artists, or Spilka Ukraïnskykh Obrazotvorchykh Myststiv (USOM), in 1957. USOM's purpose was to bring together professional Ukrainian Canadian artists and promote Ukrainian Canadian art. The organization still exists in Canada today as the Ukrainian Association of Visual Arts of Canada.

USOM isn't Keywan's only legacy – his oil paintings and graphic art pieces are displayed in countries throughout Europe and North America, including Ukraine, Poland, Germany, France, the Netherlands, the United States and Canada. Andriy Hernjatkevyc, who was an acquaintance of Keywan's, has seen at least one painting displayed in Edmonton, "It's a painting of St. George the Ukrainian dragon slayer and it now hangs in Plast."

There's no doubt Keywan had a major impact on the Ukrainian arts community in Alberta before he passed away in 1992. As for his motivation in sharing his talent and promoting his heritage, Hernjatkevyc speculates, "He was part of the third wave of Ukrainian immigration to Canada. Many people who came here at that time felt a mission to preserve Ukrainian culture. Artists were especially oppressed [in Ukraine], so they felt it was very important to express their culture once here."



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: PETER LIPINSKI ORIGINAL ARTWORK;
PHOTO PROVIDED BY RADOMIR BILASH



LEFT TO RIGHT: JULIAN BUCMANUK, DIRECTOR OF THE ALBERTA PROVINCIAL MUSEUM, VASYL ZALUCKY, IVAN KEYWAN, WADYM DOBROLIGE, AND STEFA RUDAKEVYCH-BAZIUK (P79-1-20 DOC 08); PHOTO PROVIDED BY UCAMA

Peter Shostak

Esteemed Canadian artist Peter Shostak has spent much of his career expressing his admiration and respect for early Ukrainian settlers in Alberta.

Shostak began his artistic career in 1979,

when he left his teaching position at the University of Victoria. “I had a dream of being a full-time artist,” he explains.

“Teaching was

fine, but I didn’t want to wonder ‘what if?’”

Almost four decades later, the talented painter and silk screen artist isn’t looking back. Shostak has created an impressive body of work and has received much recognition – including receiving an Alberta Council of Ukrainian Arts “Artistic Excellence” Award in 1990.

Today, Shostak is well-known for his vivid interpretations of how Ukrainian pioneers in Alberta once lived; he started exploring this subject shortly after moving from Alberta to Victoria, British Columbia. “It was a big change,” says Shostak. “The geography was different and people’s lifestyles were different. I was looking for subject matter I could relate to.

It’s what I’m familiar with.”

Shostak has always felt a strong connection to – and inspiration from – his

Ukrainian heritage. “I grew up on a farm in northeastern Alberta. Both my parents were from Ukraine. English wasn’t spoken at home,” he says. “I’m inspired to tell the stories of Ukrainian pioneers in my art because life was very difficult for them. Very few people recorded their story.”

“I HAD A DREAM OF BEING A FULL-TIME ARTIST,” HE EXPLAINS. “TEACHING WAS FINE, BUT I DIDN’T WANT TO WONDER ‘WHAT IF?’”



PETER SHOSTAK; PHOTO PROVIDED

❄

My work allows me to share my passion and culture

❄



LARISA SEMBALIUK CHELADYN; PHOTO PROVIDED

Through his work, Shostak has made considerable contributions to preserving Ukrainian Canadian culture. “Most of the symbols of our heritage that were visible 100 years ago have disappeared,” says Shostak. “Traditional clothing has disappeared, so many parts of the landscape have disappeared and the place names that originated in Ukraine have disappeared. The only visible symbols left today are the churches. So, through my artwork, I’m trying to preserve the fact that Ukrainian pioneers came here and played a major role developing Western Canada.”

Larisa Sembaliuk-Cheladyn

From realism to abstract art, Larisa Sembaliuk-Cheladyn’s talent has no bounds. A painter and illustrator, Sembaliuk-Cheladyn has been a professional artist since graduating with her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree 36 years ago; she began her career as an illustrator (illustrating text books), but transitioned to painting. “My first show was in 1993. It was all watercolour paintings, all poppies. I sold 45 paintings in one day.”

That successful first show proved Sembaliuk-Cheladyn could thrive as a painter. Since then, she has sold her work internationally, and been recognized with many awards and scholarships, including the Kuryliw Family Research Assistantship and a recent Shevchenko Foundation Visual Arts grant.

Over the years, Sembaliuk-Cheladyn has explored many themes in her artwork, including her Ukrainian heritage. The accomplished artist unveiled *Baba’s Garden* in 2002, a collection of 20 paintings that feature the food and flowers early Ukrainian pioneers worked so hard to grow. “My [Ukrainian] roots inspire me. I tell stories that are quite positive. Bright, bold and happy colours keep coming through.”

One of Sembaliuk-Cheladyn’s most recent projects was *Poppies & Podushky* – a collection of paintings featuring poppies, and pen-and-ink drawings

of *podushky* (embroidered pillows). In this project, Sembaliuk-Cheladyn used a poured-paint technique she’s been perfecting over the last three years. “Because I’ve done *pysanka*, the process was really intuitive.”

As Sembaliuk-Cheladyn’s work continues to evolve, so do her contributions to the Ukrainian Canadian community. Not only an artist, Sembaliuk-Cheladyn is also the Community Liaison with the Kule Ukrainian Folklore Centre and an illustration instructor at The King’s University. “My work allows me to share my passion and culture; it’s how I connect back to the community.” ^{AV}



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HERITAGE 125 CAMPAIGN

Commemorating the 125th anniversary of Ukrainian immigration to Canada
1891-2016

The Ukrainian Canadian Archives and Museum of Alberta (UCAMA) is building a new museum, archives and library facility on Edmonton's Jasper Avenue. This structure will be a preeminent museum in Western Canada!

This year also marks the 125th anniversary of Ukrainian immigration to Canada. UCAMA's current fund raising initiative, the *HERITAGE125 CAMPAIGN*, is tied to this significant event.

UCAMA needs your help to preserve our heritage!

There are approximately 345,000 people of Ukrainian origin in Alberta. If each were to donate just one dollar for each year of the 125 years since Ukrainians first immigrated to Canada, \$43,125,000 would be raised! That would more than allow for completion of both phases of the museum construction and establish an endowment to operate the facility!

We are a strong community and have made a significant contribution to this country. Our collective heritage and pride is worth \$125 per person.

Make a donation of \$125 and you will have a brick, with **your** name on it, built into a commemorative wall of the new museum!

This project has come such a long way and completion is in sight.

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ELIZABETH HOLINATY RUSHNYKY

Deepening Cultural Spirit Through Folk Art:



THEY REMEMBER THE TRADITIONS



By Pam Clark

When the first wave of Ukrainian settlers arrived in Alberta and settled the land, day to day survival and the wellbeing of the farm took precedent. Little by little, however, there came to be a tangible vacuum in their lives.

As Eva Tomiuk said, “There was hardly any art, and no one was teaching.”

The church often became the center of the Ukrainian rural settlements and it was here that folk art flourished. Many artists have kept Ukrainian folk arts alive and evolving through their sheer determination to bring beauty and their beloved culture to their communities.

Through teaching and inspiring others, these artisans have shared their artistic gifts in their communities, across the province and Canada, and some internationally. This sharing of Ukrainian culture has had two major impacts: one is to unite Ukrainian people and encourage them to embrace the arts of their homeland and the other is to educate other cultures about Ukrainian excellence in the arts.

These artists’ expertise in writing pysanka, wheat weaving, kolachy braiding, hand embroidery, and baking have engaged thousands of people in our communities over their lifetimes. Although these artisans have received multiple awards for excellence in their artistic fields and their community contributions are extensive, the connecting thread is their belief that for the traditional arts to continue, the next generation must also embrace them.

Eva Tomiuk

Eva Tomiuk radiates pride in her art and Ukrainian culture when she says, “Why don’t you come over and see the embroidery?”

Her generous spirit shines through in her gift of sharing her award-winning talent at hand embroidery and teaching others this traditional folk art. Building on her early experience in Ukraine practicing embroidery with her baba and then in school, it was in Edmonton at the hand of a wonderful teacher that she fine-tuned this exacting art that has inspired her life.



Active in her community, Eva has just shared her seventy samples of rushnyky, fine tablecloths with detailed embroidery at the 50th anniversary of St. Nicholas Parish in Edmonton. As a practicing artisan, Eva also became a teacher herself, passing on her love and skill in embroidery to others in Edmonton in the 1960’s first at St. Nicholas, then at St. Basil’s.

She learned and practiced a variety of Ukrainian Folk Arts throughout her life and is renowned for her psyanky, traditionally marked with an E. When asked which Folk Art is her favourite, she laughs and says, “I love them all, especially baking kolachy.”

She sees Ukrainian folk art evolving with time and sees new embroidery designs in the clothing of today’s dancers. She wonders at the survival of the art of hand embroidery with the movement to machine embroidery and shared, “I wonder if any of my students have passed the skill on to their grandchildren.” Humbly, Eva credits her baba for her designs and enduring love of Ukrainian Folk Art and its vital importance in her life.



TOP TO BOTTOM: EVA RECEIVING AN AWARD FROM THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF ALBERTA; PHOTO PROVIDED | EVA TOMIUK; PHOTO PROVIDED | ELIZABETH HOLINATY; PHOTO BY NICK HOWE



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: AUDREY UZWYSHYN; PHOTO BY NICK HOWE |
ELSIE KAWULYCH; PHOTO PROVIDED BY KULE FOLKLORE CENTRE |
JOYCE SIRSKI-HOWELL; PHOTO PROVIDED

Elsie Kawulich

As a University Student in Home Economics, Elsie Kawulich found her voice and deepened her cultural spirit which has endured to present day. She has won high honours including the Lieutenant Governor's Award, as well as, the Order of Canada for her generous community spirit and commitment to others, espousing the importance of everyone belonging and being respected for who they are and their cultural beliefs.

As a young girl in Vegreville, she faced discrimination for being Ukrainian and this awakened a power within her to sustain and be strong in her culture, to "fight for everything, every minute." She practiced Ukrainian dance and sang in the choir, learned the arts of writing pysanky, kolachy braiding, dove

making, and embroidery. She is a firm believer that once you make up your mind to do something, you do it. This leadership vision has guided her throughout her life of giving and sharing her immense talents.

When her children were young, she decided to learn embroidery and had to take the Greyhound Bus 100 km to Edmonton to university. Others questioned her decision, but she held firm to her belief in her cultural values and passion for learning.

Her dedication to preserving and promoting the arts extends to present day where she is active in the Vegreville Pysanky Festival each July. Teaching the art of writing pysanky and dove making, she shared that people often tell her they never understood the symbolism until they learned the art from her. She is proud of the Bilingual School in Vegreville

which is reaching children of many cultures who have moved into the area. Hearing all students sing O Canada in Ukrainian at the school moves her. She sees organizations like the Ukrainian Canadian Foundation of Taras Shevchenko as instrumental in assisting the next generation of artisans who will continue to promote and preserve Ukrainian culture. Elsie's wish for the future is that Ukrainian culture will continue to prosper through language and its art.

Audrey Uzwyshyn

As a founding member of the Edmonton Potter's Guild, Audrey's name is synonymous with Ukrainian Folk Art. It was during her Interior Design degree program in Winnipeg that Audrey had to decide between a course in block painting or pottery. She chose pottery and that has made all the difference to her life.

Audrey found her passion in clay work and after graduation, moved to Edmonton where she practiced high fire reduction which produces unique pieces where she "never got the same result." "The charm of this, its beauty," fueled her passion that she could take a piece of the earth, its very foundation, and create art for others.

She began making symbols of the Ukrainian culture and when she made the ram, it held special meaning for her. Traditionally a symbol of health and prosperity, the ram became integral to her work and without using a mold, she designed and created a series of 100 rams in 2014.

She radiates pride in the art of pottery noting the twenty steps in the process and eloquently sharing that her work has been a "labor of love." She has many favorite pieces that she is saving for her children and grandchildren.

With many honours including international acclaim, Audrey shares, "My dream is to create a dinner set for each my grandchildren." She sees the art of pottery

evolving and feels that more and more people are becoming interested in this traditional art form. Her work is on display at the ACUA Gallery and Artisan Boutique.

Joyce Sirski-Howell

“My journey in Ukrainian arts has been a long one.” Joyce shares that while her introduction to Ukrainian art came through family traditions as a child, it was in university that she really “established her cultural roots.”

Her family immigrated in the 1928/29 wave, and their life centered on the farm and on the church. It was through the Ukrainian organization on campus that she began to explore traditional Folk Art of Ukraine.

After graduation, she moved to Peace River and was instrumental in establishing a network of women interested in making pysanky. At first, they used crepe paper; then “I would buy dyes when I was back in Edmonton.”

Her passion for embroidery blossomed when she moved back to Edmonton. She recounts the 1970’s and 1980’s as “glorious years of embroidery” in the city. There was momentum within the Ukrainian community and a keen desire to reestablish the traditional folk arts of their homeland. As a member of the Edmonton Needlecraft Guild, Joyce has been very active in hand embroidery as a teacher and as the Wardrobe Mistress for Ukrainian Shumka Dancers for over 15 years. She continues her involvement now as a volunteer.

Joyce has also shared her immense talent and passion through involvement as part of the Ukrainian Bilingual Schools’ Program of Studies teaching students in Grades 1-6 embroidery. She has also worked in Vegreville where she is hugged on the street and lovingly called, “the embroidery lady.”

She is actively involved with Easter Celebrations at St. Basil’s where she sees

people bring new modern items in their Easter Baskets to be blessed and recounts that there remains in people “somewhere in their heart, an important element of their culture” to be remembered and upheld. “They remember the traditions,” and with this, Ukrainian art and culture will remain vigorous.

Luba Kuc

Luba Kuc’s love for the art of embroidery shines through in her enthusiastic recounting of the many decades she hand embroidered costumes for both the Shumka and Cheremosh Ukrainian Dance Companies, which her husband, Chester, and she began. She shares that she researched the authentic designs of the many regions of Ukraine in hopes of instilling in the dancers, immense pride in their culture.

“Many dancers no longer spoke the language,” but Luba felt that by wearing a hand embroidered costume with traditional designs, the dancers would be filled with pride for their Ukrainian heritage and this would radiate through their dance. “We absolutely loved it, that’s why we did it,” she states. As Chester was teaching dance, Luba was teaching the mothers of the dancers how to put together and embroider the costumes. She taught a variety of stitches and brought out photographs she herself

LEFT TO RIGHT: LUBA KUC WITH HER HUSBAND CHESTER, 1979; PHOTO PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY | LUBA KUC WITH HER HUSBAND CHESTER, 2010; PHOTO PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY



had taken to authenticate the designs. “The costumes were beautiful and unique to every region in Ukraine. The costumes of the Hutzul Mountain region were the most colourful, with such intricate patterns, but they are all my favorite.”

Luba reiterates the importance of pride in Ukrainian folk art and shares her wish that “with the wealth of information, books and designs, I wish I was still doing embroidery. I wish I could do it now. I still love it.”

Doris Yanda Kanasevich

As a past student of Doris Yanda who passed away in the year, 2000, at age 100, Gloria Ferbey’s admiration for her teacher and friend is palpable.

Doris Yanda is renowned as a master weaver who travelled across Canada and taught at Banff Center for Fine Arts, now Banff Center. Gloria attended Mrs. Yanda’s workshops for four summers and learned the traditional art of wheat weaving from her master teacher and friend.

Gloria shares that Doris held many exhibits and wrote a book on the Art of Weaving





NELLIE SENIW M. MELNYCHUK, DORIS YANDA; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN MUSEUM OF CANADA ALBERTA BRANCH

in the 1970's. "She was passionate about weaving and wanted her students to succeed so much. She loved it with her heart and soul."

This passion for Ukrainian culture extended to Doris' involvement locally and nationally with the Ukrainian Women's Federation. She was a leader and "extremely talented with an abundance of organizational skills; she was ahead of her time," Gloria shares.

Of all her many achievements including work with the Red Cross during WWII, leadership of the Weaver's Guild of Alberta and her scholarship endowments, Gloria Ferbey believes Doris Yanda's greatest legacy will be her revival of Ukrainian art and her unwavering love of weaving.

Eugenia Richardson

Eugenia (Jean) fondly recalls a little boy in a school she had visited approaching her with a smile. "I remember you. You're the egg lady."

Sharing her culture and love of pysanky with thousands of children in the school systems across Calgary and Medicine Hat over 40 years has inspired her. Eugenia possesses an undeniable passion and love of writing pysanky and preserving the Ukrainian culture she loves so much.

"I am proud of my Ukrainian heritage," she says.

Formally trained as a nurse in Saskatchewan, Eugenia grew up surrounded by Ukrainian traditions. However, it was in Medicine Hat that she and good friends brought Ukrainian traditions to their community including Ukrainian dance and the art of writing pysanky.

Combining her extensive knowledge and expertise in writing pysanky, Eugenia's outreach programs have extended to many schools. Her workshops are student focused, introducing Ukrainian culture through the pysanka, its symbolism and colours. She draws a symbol on one side of the egg and then guides students to create their own image for the other side, making it personally meaningful. Blending cultures and traditions, students have written their names in Sanskrit, used Chinese symbols and drawn the logo of their favorite sports team.

As an inspiring volunteer, Eugenia continues to give back to the community. Her latest gift of pysanky will support the Calgary Drop In Center through the Youth For Justice Artisan Fair at Bishop Carroll High School in Calgary.

Eugenia has established herself as a gifted artisan and teacher of pysanka and she is proud of stirring up memories for children and adult volunteers of their own cultural heritage and traditions. Sharing her love of pysanky is symbolically giving life to an art form that has stood the test of time and continues to evolve with new generations.

Elizabeth Holinaty

Elizabeth always had an interest in textiles. This keen interest led her to study how textiles were made locally, nationally, and internationally. Elizabeth studied weaving at the Banff School of Fine Arts and has attended many workshops and conferences to further her knowledge of this area.

Elizabeth crafts beautiful Ukrainian textiles – folk costumes, home furnishings, wearing apparel, kylymy, rushnyky, poyasy. Elizabeth

has studied and researched these textiles and draws inspiration from the richness of the colours, motifs, shapes, and designs of the distinctive ethnographic regions of Ukraine. Her handwoven pieces may be a reproduction, an adaptation of a traditional piece, or a contemporary work with the incorporation of a traditional motif or design. For her, weaving is the interplay of tradition and innovation.

Elizabeth has had the opportunity and joy to weave many kinds of items – for historic sites, museums, groups and individuals.

Elizabeth believes it's important to pass on her knowledge of Ukrainian culture and the knowledge of her Ukrainian craft. She teaches workshops in the community and works within the Ukrainian bilingual program in schools. She also provides demonstrations as much as she can at festivals and art shows and has presented at seminars and conferences. Her work has been shared in displays, exhibits and juried shows.

As an Artist-in-Residence for the Ukrainian Bilingual School, she passes on her love of Ukrainian weaving to a new generation by working with children at summer camps and with youth organizations. As a part of this program, Elizabeth designs children's weaving projects that are contemporary but based on traditional textiles. 



EUGENIA RICHARDSON AT HOME; PHOTO BY PAM CLARK

Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village

Congratulations

*to the artists, musicians, writers,
community leaders and organizations
who have significantly influenced art and
culture in Alberta over the last 125 years.*

*They have planted the seeds for present
and future generations to celebrate
Ukrainian art and culture in this province.*



780.662.3640 | 25 minutes east of Edmonton on Hwy. 16
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Alberta



*On the occasion of the 125th Anniversary of
Ukrainian Immigration to Canada,
UCC-APC congratulates those organizations
and individuals who significantly influenced
Ukrainian arts and culture in Alberta.*

Вітаємо!

Ukrainian Canadian Congress
Alberta Provincial Council





VEGREVILLE PYSANKA CONSTRUCTION, VEGREVILLE, ALBERTA, 1976; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UCAMA

THE ARTIST & THE LEGACY LANDMARK

By Robin McHugh

If you have lived in Alberta in the past 40 years, you have probably heard of or have seen the great Vegreville pysanka! Constructed in 1975, it was the largest Ukrainian pysanka in the world until a larger one was constructed in Ukraine in 2000.

While being a marvel of engineering and architectural design, what is bigger than the famous landmark itself, is the powerful message of the pride and the significant contributions of all Ukrainian Canadians to Canada. It is impossible for any person of Ukrainian heritage to look at the Vegreville pysanka without being flooded with pride, memories, and a realization of the mark that Ukrainian Canadians have made on the Canadian landscape.

The artist behind this intricate work of art, is Paul Sembaliuk. He is probably most well-known for designing the largest Ukrainian pysanka in the world, however, he worked on many other projects in the Ukrainian community.


Paul grew up in North Eastern Alberta, in the Vegreville area. From a young age, he

was inspired by his Ukrainian heritage and the folk art that is woven into the culture. He was inspired by his mother's love for Ukrainian art - pysanka writing, embroidery, and fabric weaving. He learned from a young age that creativity and the arts "can be an integral part of one's life".

Paul attended Alberta College of Art in Design, graduating in 1953. His career brought him to different parts of the prairie provinces to work, but he settled in Edmonton and worked for the Alberta government as a graphic artist. This experience allowed him to work on many provincial and national projects such as Expo 67 in Montreal and the Calgary Stampede.

In addition to this, he actively worked as a graphic artist in the Ukrainian community. He designed logos, record covers, trade fair displays, and publications that all celebrated his Ukrainian heritage.

Paul believes it's important to preserve Ukrainian art and culture. "Ukrainian culture is in my soul. Living with art enhances one's appreciation for the creativity of people. Art works are reflections of the past and societal trends. As well, they are a basis on which to build future creative

projects. The pysanka is an example of how a primitive piece of art, a decorated egg, has been the basis for the development of modern technology in the field of science and mathematics." 



PAUL SEMBALIUK; PHOTO BY LARISA SEMBALIUK CHELADYN

FROM THE OLD CUSTOMS, TO THE YOUNG FACES

*Culture Is What Keeps Communities & Families
Together In Harmony And Trust*

By Andrea Kopylech

A festival is a wonderful event that brings a community together to share in culture and traditions, new and old. But how does one start a festival? Over coffee of course! Or at least that's how the Vegreville Ukrainian Pysanka Festival got started 44 years ago.

A group of four individuals, passionate about their community, gathered together to discuss ways they could help build their community profile. Jerry Wilde, John Huzil, Joe Blonsky and Vicki Kiefiuk got together over coffee to discuss ways in which they could bring something great to Vegreville. They brought their ideas to an open Town Meeting, and everyone voted on starting a festival. That is where Elsie Kawulich began her volunteer time with the Festival. She continues to be a director of the Festival today.

The Festival started as a multicultural showcase of different cultural groups, but with such a strong Ukrainian community in Vegreville, it eventually turned into a Ukrainian festival, with special showcases featuring other cultural backgrounds. Elsie

remembers how important the festival was to the community as it celebrated and preserved traditions, but it also created a platform for both the young and old to perform and learn about their rich heritage.


"The festival was where people could come out and share their talents. We had folk art displays, competitions in bread making, pysanka writing, dance, and embroidery. We had fashion shows, and ways for a more senior community to come and share their country traditions, like the flailing competitions. The dance competitions were very popular, some years we had over 1000 entries. The festival was a great opportunity for youth to perform and showcase their talents."

The competitions have run their course over time and have now evolved into workshops and cultural displays. "A new audience has helped us to evolve. Not all traditions have been passed down through the generations. Our workshops provide an educational opportunity for people to learn how to keep up the old traditions and connect with the meaning behind them. We teach traditional folk crafts, and do our best to share the symbolism and the stories of how these traditions started. People can come try their

hand at doll making, or learn all about the korovai and get to work with the dough."

The Festival continues to showcase music and dance, and Sundays are dedicated to multicultural performances. The stage has celebrated groups from the German, Polish, Scottish, and even Peruvian communities. The Saturday night Zabava is legendary, and continues to bring out the youth who come and camp out all weekend and take in all the festivities.

Elsie's vision of the future of the festival is "for people to truly understand the depth and beauty of the Ukrainian culture and actively be a part of it."

2017 marks the 44th Anniversary of the Vegreville Ukrainian Pysanka Festival. 

UKRAINIAN PYSAKA FESTIVAL;
PHOTOS PROVIDED BY UKRAINIAN
PYSAKA FESTIVAL COMMITTEE



LIVING LEGACIES:

Connection, Education & Celebration

By Pam Clark

For the past 125 years, Ukrainian cultural organizations have been dynamic, reflecting the cultural life and vibrancy of their respective communities, moving in an ebb and flow.

These organizations have been integral sources of pride for their communities and continue to educate and inspire others through their programs. From the first noted Ukrainian operetta in Edmonton in 1907, Jars Balan, Coordinator of Kule Ukrainian Canadian Studies Centre and Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies at the University of Alberta, shares that cultural organizations sought to unite the community from the inside, and also to connect with the outer community through promotion of culture in order to help combat discrimination and to dispel stereotypes.

Cultural organizations often grew out of a love of “traditional handicrafts” and held exhibitions where displays would celebrate the “cultural identity” of the Ukrainian people. Through denominational and non-denominational organizations, the primary goal of these groups was the enhancement and preservation of Ukrainian culture in the new land. As cultural incubators, these organizations flourished with dance, choir and the traditional Folk Arts as their foundation.





UKRAINIAN NATIONAL HALL "RIDNA SHKOLA" DANCERS,
EDMONTON, 1929 (P78-1-352 DOC 08); PHOTO BY
JOSEPH PRYMA (EDMONTON) AND PROVIDED BY UCAMA

CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS



UKRAINIAN NATIONAL HALL ORCHESTRA, CONDUCTOR K. KANTOR, MYRNAM, AB, 1935 (P78-1-354 DOC 08); PHOTO PROVIDED BY UCAMA

Jars recounts Selo, a Ukrainian camp experience in the 1970's and 80's, that immersed youth, aged 15 - 19, in the arts and language as an integral organization for inspiring many young people who are now leaders in their communities across Canada. Many cultural organizations have stood the test of time such as St. John's Cathedral and St. Joseph's Cathedral in Edmonton and Carvel Ukrainian Cultural Society. Others, like Selo have disbanded although their legacy lives on.

As with any organization, it is the people, the founding members and the volunteers who continue to fulfill the mandate and uphold the vision that play leading roles in our collective cultural history, present and future. It is the legacy, longevity and vitality of these organizations and their people we celebrate.

Carvel Ukrainian Cultural Society

Carvel Ukrainian Cultural Society was established in 1928 as the *The Ukrainian Educational Association, of M Shashkivich, of Carvel*. Community meetings took place in member's homes until the hall was built in 1935.

In the years that followed, various fundraising events filled the hall such as live concerts, amateur-hour plays, talent shows, bingos, and dances. With its primary vision "to preserve the Ukrainian language, culture and traditions," Carvel Hall was a place where "residents and members came together to

discuss issues, future plans and activities."

For more than 85 years, this Society has been an integral gathering place, *a hub of community life*, promoting a sense of belonging through events celebrating Ukrainian culture. Long-time community members fondly recall events such as Ukrainian dance lessons, plays and Christmas Caroling at the annual St. Nicholas event. Celebrations such as the Fall and Spring Perogy Suppers are part of the legacy, bringing together hundreds of people and continuing to forge cultural connections across generations.

This organization's outreach extends beyond the Carvel community to greater Alberta and Canada as they encourage citizens to return to their family's roots and celebrate their collective history through seasonal traditional events. Members recognize that the Society has had to evolve over the years to remain viable, thus programming has reflected this. Although there remain few Carvel residents who are direct descendants of Ukrainian immigrants, there seems to be a growing revival of interest in Ukrainian traditions and culture.



TOP TO BOTTOM: COMMUNITY MEMBERS IN FRONT OF THE CARVEL HALL, AFTER A COMMUNITY GATHERING IN 1945; PHOTO PROVIDED BY CARVEL UKRAINIAN CULTURAL SOCIETY | MEMBERS IN THE CARVEL HALL WHO GATHERED FOR FELLOWSHIP AND TO CELEBRATE A 1ST COMMUNION IN 1963. THROUGHOUT THE HISTORY, THE HALL, THE CHURCH, AND THE SOCIETY HAS HAD STRONG LINKAGE AND PARTNERSHIPS; PHOTO PROVIDED BY CARVEL UKRAINIAN CULTURAL SOCIETY

In 2015, in partnership with Alberta Council for the Ukrainian Arts, Carvel Ukrainian Cultural Society brought a Folk Art Retreat to the community. This engaged participants in Ukrainian folk arts of: kolach braiding, motanka dolls, and petrykivka painting. Members note that if the Society continues to partner with Ukrainian organizations such as ACUA, and continues to contribute to the revival of interest in the culture, then the original vision of the society will result in a lasting Ukrainian legacy.

Ukrainian Canadian Foundation of Taras Shevchenko

In 1959 the Ukrainian community in Canada embarked on a significant undertaking – to place a monument to Taras Shevchenko, Ukraine’s national poet, on the grounds of the Manitoba Legislature. \$175,000 was raised for this endeavour.

Two years later, on July 9, 1961 nearly 25,000 Ukrainian Canadians from across the country gathered in Winnipeg to witness Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker officially unveil the monument.

The fundraising for this monumental project led to a surplus of \$30,000, which was invested into an endowment fund dedicated to the preservation and development of Ukrainian culture in Canada – the Ukrainian Canadian Foundation of Taras Shevchenko. The Shevchenko Foundation was incorporated by an Act of Parliament in 1963, with its first Board of Directors appointed in 1964.

Over its 52 year history the Foundation has grown its capital fund to nearly \$20 million, and over the same time period paid out grants totalling over \$12 million.

More than 200 Ukrainian Canadian individuals and organizations in Alberta have benefitted from the support of the Shevchenko Foundation since the early 1970’s,



with over \$1.6 million in grants distributed to date for nearly 600 projects in the fields of arts, heritage, education, and community development. Among the first grants recipients in Alberta was Ukrainian News and the Ukrainian Music Society of Alberta.

The Shevchenko Foundation is a Ukrainian Canadian institution of common ownership to all Ukrainians. It takes pride in the 125 years of creativity, scope and diversity of our artists, educators, community leaders and heritage establishments, which serves as the impetus to remain ever-engaged in the needs of the Ukrainian Canadian community. ^{AV}

Over its 52 year history the Foundation has grown its capital fund to nearly \$20 million, and over the same time period paid out grants totalling over \$12 million.



TOP TO BOTTOM: SHEVCHENKO MONUMENT OPENING: THE UNVEILING OF THE TARAS SHEVCHENKO MONUMENT IN WINNIPEG - JULY 9, 1961; PHOTO PROVIDED | SHEVCHENKO FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS - NOVEMBER 19, 2016. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: ADRIAN BOYKO, IRKA MYCAK, SCOTT ARMSTRONG, OREST SKLIERENKO, LIDIA NARODZNAK, GORDON GORDEY, ANDREW HLADYSHEVSKY, O.C.; PHOTO PROVIDED

FAITH, HOPE, & CHARITY

By Robin McHugh

*T*his section of ACUA Vitae is dedicated to those people who have committed themselves to serving their community through their faith. Their continued dedication to preserving the rights of passage, the culture, the traditions, and the faith are to be commended.

These organizations have been instrumental in preserving Ukrainian heritage and culture not only in Alberta, but across Canada. The church is a place of worship, however, in many cases it was also, and continues to be, the hub for the community. This community allows people to celebrate being Ukrainian, preserve their traditions and culture, and pass these on to further generations.

Since their inception, the women's and men's organizations of the Orthodox and Catholic churches have had hundreds of members spread over numerous branches across Alberta. They have contributed, supported, and organized numerous events and projects aimed at promoting Ukrainian heritage. The various executives and members of these organizations have worked countless volunteer hours to ensure the success of these organizations in the community, and to promote Ukrainian culture and heritage within the community.

Orthodox Organizations

"When we lose our art, our culture, our faith we lose our distinctiveness. Our heritage is a link to our families and our ancestors. It is a way of honouring those that came before us. Our great grandparents and grandparents brought with them to Canada a rich cultural heritage and traditions. It is up to us to pass on the torch of our love of our faith and culture to the next generation and we can do that by continuing to celebrate all that is Orthodox and all that is Ukrainian," Vivian Skakun, President UWAC-APE.

The **Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada - Alberta Provincial Branch (UWAC-APE)** has a long-standing presence in the Ukrainian community, as they have been active in Alberta for the past 86 years. Their purpose has been to promote, sustain, and preserve their faith, Ukrainian culture, language and heritage. The UWAC-APE is an umbrella organization of the national organization - Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada (UWAC), which has been active for 90 years.

WOMEN'S AND MEN'S ORGANIZATIONS



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: UWAC AT SVIATO 25 TO CELEBRATE 25TH ANNIVERSARY SINCE UKRAINIAN INDEPENDENCE AND 125 YEARS OF UKRAINIAN SETTLEMENT IN CANADA; PHOTOGRAPHED: VIVIAN SKAKUN & LESIA PERRITT AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM UWAC BRANCHES; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UWAC-APE | INTERNATIONAL HERITAGE LANGUAGE DAYS DISPLAY. NADIA KRYSHCHUK AND MARION OSTAPCHUK FROM ADULT UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE CLASSES HELD AT ST. ANDREW'S; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UWAC-APE | LARISA SEMBALIUK CHELADYN FLOWERS OF THE BIBLE EXHIBIT; BACK: BETTY CORLETT AND JUDY SHEWCHUK FRONT: VIVIAN SKAKUN; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UWAC-APE | PHOTOGRAPHED ARE PAST PRESIDENTS: FRONT ROW LEFT TO RIGHT JOANA JANIS, ALEXANDRA HOHOL, ANNA ZWOZDESKY, BACK ROW LEFT TO RIGHT: VIVIAN SKAKUN, NADINE HYMANIK BROW, DR. GERALDINE NAKONECHNY, SHIRLEY WOZIMIRSKY, OKSANA ENSSLEN (PAST PRESIDENTS NOT PRESENT: CHERYL MOISEY, CARLA KOZAK, LELIA ZUBRITSKY MILLER, GLORIA FERBEY, ISABELLE BOYKO DARCOVICH, NADEYA BODNAR); PHOTO PROVIDED BY UWAC-APE

WOMEN'S AND MEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

UWAC was founded in the 1926 and one of the main purposes for establishing UWAC was to promote self-learning and higher education while sustaining Ukrainian heritage. Savella Stechishin, National UWAC President, initiated the establishment of branches across Canada. "Savella Stechishin's two main purposes for establishing Soyuz were to assist Ukraine and to promote self-learning and higher education while sustaining our Ukrainian heritage in the home. To reverse the discrimination that Ukrainian Canadians suffered in the early 1900's, Savella Stechishin promoted self-learning and education so that women could develop self-esteem, self-worth and self-enlightenment." As Vivian states, "[Stechishin] wanted equality and acceptance of Ukrainian Canadians into Canadian society not through assimilation but

through integration. Her philosophy was that it is the mothers that transmit and sustain the language, culture and history of Ukraine."

The first Alberta Provincial Executive of the UWAC was elected in December 1930.

In 1934, there were eighteen branches, and by 1975 the number had increased to 27. Today there are 14 branches with 545 members. The motto for Soyuz was: "In education lies our strength!"

Over time the organization evolved, and in keeping with the original vision of UWAC, UWAC-APE has organized, supported and contributed to number events and projects that promote Ukrainian art and culture in Alberta. These include museum exhibits, conferences, workshops, Ukrainian language classes, Ukrainian sadochok (play school), and PROMIN magazine.

The **Alberta Ukrainian Self-Reliance League (AUSRL)** is an umbrella organization of the Ukrainian Self-Reliance League of Canada. They also, have a long-standing presence in the Ukrainian community. Their purpose is to promote their faith, educate Albertans about Ukrainian heritage and culture, and support charitable activities.

LEFT TO RIGHT: UWAC-APE COMMISSIONED JOHN WEAVER TO CREATE THE MADONNA OF WHEAT.; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UWAC-APE AND GLORIA FERBEY | UNVEILING CEREMONY OF THE STATUE OF PIONEER WOMEN, AUGUST 23, 1981. UWAC-APE DEDICATED THIS STATUE TO ALL THE PIONEER WOMEN OF ALBERTA; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UWAC-APE AND GLORIA FERBEY

Over the years AUSRL has provided financial assistance in the form of bursaries and community donations to a number of youth and community organizations in need. They have also organized, supported, and contributed to a number of events and projects that promote Ukrainian art and culture in Alberta.

Since their inception, the UWAC-APE and AUSRL have had hundreds of members spread over numerous branches across Alberta and have contributed, supported, and organized numerous events and projects aimed at promoting Ukrainian heritage. The various executives and members of these organizations have worked countless volunteer hours to ensure the success of these organizations in the community.

Catholic Organizations

Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada (UCWLC) - Eparchy of Edmonton is the provincial executive that oversees 21 UCWLC branches in Alberta, with 780 members plus 6 Life members. The provincial branch reports nationally to the Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada. The UCWLC began in 1944, and has been active for 72 years.

They aim to develop and enrich the religious and spiritual life of each member of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and preserve and promote Ukrainian heritage, culture, language, traditions, and art. They participate in and support many events and projects in the Ukrainian community across Alberta and as a provincial executive strive to fulfill their organizations objectives.

In the past 72 years, they have organized and funded many workshops that teach adults and children Ukrainian culture including embroidery; baking pasky, babky, kolachi, struslyi, tortes, and korovai; writing pysanky; weaving; jewelry making; and Ukrainian literature and poetry. Many UCWLC members facilitated these



WOMEN'S AND MEN'S ORGANIZATIONS



LEFT TO RIGHT: MRS ANNA ZWOZDESKY DISPLAYS HER BRAIDED BREAD; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UWAC-APE | UCWLC DELEGATES AND GUESTS AT THE 2015 EPARCHIAL CONVENTION; PHOTO PROVIDED BY UCWLC - EPARCHY OF EDMONTON

workshops held in Edmonton and in other centres in Alberta. The UCWLC also supports Ukrainian language learning.

They share their heritage and traditions by participating in Heritage Days and other festivals in Alberta and financially supporting the UCWLC Museum. The UCWLC Museum preserves and promotes Ukrainian culture at the museum and in the community. Displays at the UCWLC Museum, which houses a wonderful collection of Ukrainian artifacts

brought to Canada by Ukrainian immigrants, are open to the public for viewing. Various

Ukrainian cultural workshops have been held over the years. At the beginning of November, this year, the museum was one of the museums involved in the “Наші Скарби / Our Treasures” exhibit celebrating 125 years of Ukrainians in Canada.

In addition to assisting local organizations and charities with monetary donations, the UCWLC Eparchial Executive in the past three years, held two very successful fund-raisers for the ‘Home of Hope’ in Lviv, Ukraine. This is a safe home for young

girls who otherwise might find themselves living on the streets and some falling prey to human trafficking. By staying at this home, they acquire an education and many life skills that prepare them for an independent life outside the home.

Joyce Chrunik Rudiak, President of the provincial executive believes, *“It is very important that our people, of Ukrainian heritage, know their culture [and] be proud of it, pass it on to following generations, and promote it in our communities. Our*

Ukrainian people have been in Canada for 125 years. [They] have worked very hard to make Canada a better place and deserve their

rightful place in the Cultural Mosaic of Canada. As more cultures enter our Canadian society, it would be very easy for our Ukrainian culture to fade away. We must work at elevating our Ukrainian culture to its rightful status.”


The history of the conception of the UCWLC, which is very complex, is well documented in a new historical resource to be launched in early 2017. The book, written by Lena Sloboda, HLM, is titled, UCWLC: Builders of Home, Faith and Community.

Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood of Canada (UCBC) - Edmonton Eparchy

is the provincial executive that oversees 6 UCBC branches in Alberta with a membership of over 100. They are part of the larger Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood of Canada. The organization was started in 1932 in Saskatchewan by Right Reverend Milrat Stefan Semczuk.

The objectives of organization members are charity, culture, faith, fraternity, patriotism, and stewardship. Over the years UCBC - Edmonton Eparchy has supported many events and projects that promote Ukrainian heritage, culture, and traditions.

One of their most notable contributions, has been supporting and promoting Ukrainian heritage at Edmonton’s annual Heritage Days festival. They have been involved with organizing and volunteering at the Ukrainian pavilion for over 40 years and will continue to do so in the future. As well, they have provided financial contributions to many Ukrainian arts and culture projects over the years.

They publish a bi-annual magazine, *HOLOS BRATSTVA*, that goes out to members and the Ukrainian community across the country. 

AS MORE CULTURES ENTER OUR CANADIAN SOCIETY, IT WOULD BE VERY EASY FOR OUR UKRAINIAN CULTURE TO FADE AWAY. WE MUST WORK AT ELEVATING OUR UKRAINIAN CULTURE TO ITS RIGHTFUL STATUS.

The Lady on the Radio


By Andrea Kopylech

Halya Lyps'ka Wilson has dedicated over 55 years to the Ukrainian Canadian arts community as a volunteer, "I feel truly blessed to have been part of those 125 years of Ukrainian Settlement in Canada."

She started her volunteerism when she proudly planned and organized a dance for CYM. When asked why she volunteers in the community she said it was because volunteering gave her the opportunity to do the things she truly enjoyed and to be immersed in our Ukrainian culture. Halya has devoted her energy to the Alberta Council for the Ukrainian Arts, the Ukrainian Radio Show "Radiyo Kalgari" on CJSW, Echoes of Ukraine TV, Calgary's 3 parishes and their choirs for the annual Festival of Carols, Ukrainian Schools, CYM, Plast, the Ukrainian Canadian Professional & Business Association and the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association. She was President of the Calgary Branch of UCC and as Past President she continues organizing cultural events, the Holodomor Commemorations, Shevchenko Concerts, Independence Day Celebrations, rallies and fundraisers for Calgary's joint organization, "Support for Ukraine, and assisting Iryna Kalinovich with Bandura Lessons for Calgarians.

When asked what her favorite volunteer experience has been, she noted the Ukrainian Radio Program. "Ukrainian music really had such an impact on my life as a volunteer not only for the love of Ukrainian music but also wanting to share that love with my Canadian community. Wanting to support everyone who spent their free time spreading the word so to speak. Our Surma men's choir in Calgary

started in the early 50's with the third wave of immigrants (our parents) and as we became teenagers we joined to make it a mixed choir in 1961. Ukrainian music truly is a gift 'From God Our Song Our Language / Від Бога Наша Пісня Наша Мова' even in Ukrainian it sounds better. In 1978 seven of us formed a singing ensemble with Marusia Fedkiw-Goj and Halya Fedkiw (now Lazurko) working with us. Calgarians always seem to have a connection with Edmonton, and both Eugene and Willi Zwozdesky helped us to produce an album called Veselka. As an artist in the Ukrainian Community I saw how important it was to support those who had their art to share. I have volunteered over the years in order to unite and support anyone who respects and loves our culture and is willing to spend precious free time sharing it with our community. At Festival '88 in Edmonton and at the one and only Ukrainian Music Awards I saw how, Ukrainians from all of North America were displaying and performing many aspects of our music and art. It was an amazing production which has yet to be repeated. As many talented performers, choreographers, and artists started arriving in the 90's our culture united both Ukraine and Canada which was very exciting. As announcer and producer of the Ukrainian Radio show it gave me the opportunity to meet and support artists from Ukraine. It's then that I got involved in the volunteer work mostly."

Having organized many city-wide initiatives, Halya is a pillar in our community, respected for her dedication to her Ukrainian roots. Always striving to promote others in the community and to enhance the profile of Ukrainian arts, Halya's work will continue to nurture growth in the Ukrainian arts for generations. 



TOP TO BOTTOM: HALYA LYP'S'KA WILSON AT A RALLY IN FRONT OF CITY HALL IN CALGARY; PHOTO PROVIDED | HALYA LYP'S'KA WILSON WITH STEPHANIA ROMANIUK AFTER A CAROL FESTIVAL; PHOTO PROVIDED | HALYA LYP'S'KA WILSON WITH IHOR BILOZIR, EARLY 90'S; PHOTO PROVIDED

STRENGTHENING OUR COMMUNITY WITH TIME AND TALENT

By Shawna Dirksen


Gene Zwozdesky has been lending his talents, skills and experience to Alberta's Ukrainian community for decades. Whether he's raising funds, chairing a committee, composing music or singing in a choir, Zwozdesky makes a difference in our community every day.

Zwozdesky often volunteers 40 hours in a given week, and takes on many roles. A recent success was last summer's SVIATO 25, an event celebrating the 25th anniversary of Ukraine's declaration of independence. As Executive Producer and fundraising chair, Zwozdesky says it was "the largest single-day outdoor celebration of Ukrainian art, culture and spirituality in the history of Canada."

SVIATO 25 has wrapped up, but Zwozdesky's fundraising efforts certainly haven't; he is working with the Council of Ukrainian Orthodox Churches of Edmonton (CUOCE) to help raise \$150,000 to revive Camp Barvinok at Pigeon Lake. "I was the volunteer chairman for the organizational meeting of the newly formed Barvinok Society and I am working on two of its committees. We have over 40 members already."

In addition to helping COUCE, Zwozdesky is an honorary patron for the Shevchenko Foundation (which provides grants to artists), and will help the Ukrainian Canadian Archives and Museum Association (UCAMA) raise money for a new museum in Edmonton.

Zwozdesky is also a dedicated choral member, performing with the St. John's Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral Choir and the Ukrainian Male Chorus of Edmonton (UMCE), and a talented composer. He is composing new music for UMCE, and is working with Shumka (where he spent 25 years as music director) to write lyrics for his classic hopak for Kobzari: A Celebration of Shevchenko. "It's a special show with the world-renowned Ukrainian Bandurist Chorus and it celebrates Ukraine's famous poet Taras Shevchenko." He is also pioneering Ukrainian bluegrass music on mandolin and is a member of St. John's Fraternal Society, the order of St. Andrew, and several other community groups.

With so much on the go, it's clear Zwozdesky won't be slowing his volunteer efforts anytime soon. "I love our vibrant, colourful Ukrainian culture. It's my ancestry, my heritage. I will continue to preserve, promote and present it at the highest level possible." 



TOP TO BOTTOM: GENE ZWOZDESKY AT THE JUBILEE CONDUCTING FOR CHEREMOSH IN THE LATE 1970'S; PHOTO BY ROMAN PETRIV AND PROVIDED BY CHEREMOSH UKRAINIAN DANCE COMPANY | GENE ZWOZDESKY; PHOTO PROVIDED



ALBERTA UKRAINIAN
DANCE ASSOCIATION

ТОВАРИСТВО УКРАЇНСЬКОГО ТАНЦЮ АЛЬБЕРТИ (ТУТА)

GROWING THE DIVERSITY OF DANCE IN ALBERTA!

Did you know there are **over 60 Ukrainian dance schools** in every part of Alberta.

Over 4,000 children, teens, and adults participate in Ukrainian dance enriching the cultural life of our communities.

The Alberta Ukrainian Dance Association, AUDA, financially assists Alberta Ukrainian dance with workshops, scholarships, new music development and promotions.

Last year AUDA provided support for Ukrainian dance schools to perform at over **80 community events to over 30,000 people.**

Help grow the diversity of dance in Alberta!

For information visit **www.abuda.ca**



Photo Credit: Carlin Getz
Alberta Zirka Ukrainian
Performers
Nicholas Blush & Kristina
Wurban



Photo Credit: Angela Waite Photography
Kvitka Red Deer Ukrainian Dance Club



Photo Credit: Cheremosh School of Dance

AUDA Board of Directors

Gordon Gordey
Markiana Melymick
Paul Olijnyk

Emily Belke
Graham Currie
Shane Gibson

Trevor Shular
Bogdan Tkachishyn

Executive Director: Andrew Wujcik

Sponsored by Edmonton Catholic Schools Ukrainian Bilingual Parent Advisory Society

UKRAINIAN ENGLISH INTERNATIONAL

Bilingual Program



Experience Ukrainian...
through language, arts and culture.



*Celebrating Over 40 Years
of Ukrainian Catholic Education*

(Opening Sept. 2016 -
Ukr. offered in Jr. High Only)

St. Martin Elementary

11310-51 Ave.
ph: 780 434-4848
[www.stmartin
.ecsd.net](http://www.stmartin.ecsd.net)

St. Matthew Elementary

8735-132 Ave.
ph: 780 473-6575
[www.stmatthew
.ecsd.net](http://www.stmatthew.ecsd.net)

St. Brendan Elem/Junior High

9260-58 St.
ph: 780 466-1281
[www.stbrendan
.ecsd.net](http://www.stbrendan.ecsd.net)

Austin O'Brien Senior High

6110-95 Ave.
ph: 780 466-3161
[www.austinobrien
.ecsd.net](http://www.austinobrien.ecsd.net)

...Ukrainian Dance Academy...
is being offered at St. Martin and St. Matthew Elementary

Gallery & Artisan Boutique

Unique & original pieces of art and artisan crafts for sale

Fine & Folk Art Workshop Series

Instruction from master fine and folk artists & you take your project home

Signature Artist Series

Monthly special art exhibits by Alberta Ukrainian fine and folk artists

Programs and Services

Artist Directory, ACUA Vitae, Information & Referrals, Community Space for Rent, Scholarships



Twitter: @AcuaArts
Instagram: @acuarts
www.facebook.com/ACUArts

SUPPORT UKRAINIAN ARTS - JOIN ACUA

- ☐ I would like to become a member.
- ☐ I would like to volunteer.
- ☐ I would like to be on your email list.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Organizational Membership \$50/year

Individual Membership \$25/year

Please make cheques payable to ACUA. Visa and MC payment can be called into the office during office hours, 780.488.8558.

- ☐ Membership fee enclosed.
- ☐ I would like to make a donation to ACUA.
Amount: \$ _____
- ☐ I give permission to publish my name on the donor gratitude list

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY

**As a member
you will receive:**

- ACUA Vitae Ukrainian arts and culture magazine
- ACUA News - our quarterly newsletter informing members of the people, places, and events that help shape our Ukrainian arts community
- Invitations to openings and events
- 10% discount on art education courses
- Access to artist workshops
- Discounts at supporting community businesses