

—Story photos: Jerry Dobrowsky

Museum Unveils Exhibition



Many people attended the opening of the *Picturesque Ukraine* exhibition, which will be on display to December 20, including a representative of the Consulate of Ukraine in Toronto. After the museum is relocated in 2019, events like this will be more comfortably accommodated.

Rare excitement filled the air on October 14 when the Taras H. Shevchenko Museum unveiled the exhibition *Picturesque Ukraine*. After all, it is not often that lovers of art in Canada can view 49 works by over 40 contemporary Ukrainian artists, all gathered in one place.

The excitement was heightened by the first impression on entering the museum. While there are some darker canvasses in the collection, the overwhelming effect is of bright colour, of energy, and of optimism.

The excitement was well justified. The participants saw a display which is accurately described as varied. Varied in all ways — in the sizes of the works, of course, but more impressively, in the range of



Introduced as guest of honour was Oleh Nedoshytko, who has three works from his series *We Write, In Blood, On Our Motherland* in the exhibition.

media and in the diversity of styles.

There were various examples of abstract art, including some which were clearly influenced by Picasso, as well as works which clearly were not. Between those extremes, the styles and techniques were representative of the richness of current Ukrainian culture.

The reception began with an opportunity to view the exhibition which was spread over all the rooms on the main floor and the display space on the second floor.

The reception formalities were opened by Museum Director Lyudmyla Pogoryelova, who bade the audience welcome, and spoke about the exhibition.

Ms. Pogoryelova reported that most of the 49 works on

display were part of the collection of 200 gathered in 2014 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Taras Shevchenko, and displayed at the National Shevchenko Museum in Kyiv, Ukraine. Following the anniversary year, Yulia Shylenko, Head of Fonds and Collections at the National Shevchenko Museum in Kyiv, arranged to make the art available to the only museum in the Americas dedicated to Taras Shevchenko.

The Taras H. Shevchenko Museum was unable to accept the entire collection, but gratefully received a selection, which arrived in August. Ms. Pogoryelova expressed the honour felt by the Taras H. Shevchenko Museum at being entrusted with these treasures of Ukrainian culture.

Ms. Pogoryelova introduced Oleh Nedoshytko, guest of honour, who has three works from his series *We Write, In Blood, On Our Motherland* in the exhibition.

Speaking in Ukrainian, with translation, Mr. Nedoshytko spoke of the art works as gifts of the artists' selves: their feelings, their outlooks, their consciousness. Ukraine is living through difficult times, he said, but it exists, and will continue to exist.

An invitation had been issued to Yulia Shylenko to at-



Andrew Gregorovich, Vice-President of the REC of the Taras H. Shevchenko Museum, read a message from Yulia Shylenko of the National Shevchenko Museum in Kyiv.



Alisa Osavelyuk and Oksana Zelinska entertained on the bandura before and after the formal program.

tend the unveiling. Unfortunately, she was unable to attend, but she did send a message which was read in English translation by Andrew Gregorovich, Vice-President of the Resident Executive Committee of the Taras H. Shevchenko Museum. (The message appears on this page.)

Next, Ms. Pogoryelova introduced Oleh Lesiuk, President of the Ukrainian Association of Visual Artists of Canada.

After thanking the hosts for the invitation to appear, Mr. Lesiuk noted that this was the Day of the Artist, and extended a greeting to all attendees. (Continued on Page 7.)



Oleh Lesiuk, President of the Ukrainian Association of Visual Artists of Canada, informed his audience that the event was occurring on the Day of the Artist.



Lyudmyla Pogoryelova, Museum Director, opened the formalities with a welcome to those attending, and comments about the exhibition.

Welcome to the only Taras Shevchenko Museum in the Americas!

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Greeting from Kyiv

Dear Friends, Dear Colleagues!

In 2014, we all celebrated the 200th anniversary of Taras Shevchenko's birth. It was the first Jubilee of the poet in independent Ukraine. We were preparing for this event.

But at that time the war in Ukraine began and, unfortunately, many events planned by the State for this bicentennial could not be realized. Therefore, the project of the National Shevchenko Museum, *200 Artists on the 200th Anniversary of Taras Shevchenko* and the exhibition of original art of the Shevchenko in the art Arsenal were almost the only events to celebrate this anniversary.

I am very grateful that you found the opportunity to take a part of this collection to the Shevchenko Museum in Toronto and to prepare the exhibition *Picturesque Ukraine*. That was exactly the idea that the artists had when they worked on these art pieces — to continue the traditions of Taras Shevchenko, founded by him in the middle of the 19th century— to show the world his beautiful Ukraine.

I want to thank the administration of the Museum for the great work they did to get these works to the Museum, and you could see them. I am happy that this unique project has received such a continuation!

I wish you all success and pleasant emotions that you will get at this exhibition! I am very grateful to all those present, and to those who made it possible to implement this exhibition project!

Yulia Shylenko, Kyiv, Ukraine

Museum

(Continued from Page 5.)

ing artists. Mr. Lesiuk said that he was honoured to represent the artistic community.

Mr. Lesiuk spoke in Ukrainian of the importance that this wonderful exhibition was the result of cooperation between the museum in Ukraine and the museum in Canada. He said that each artist's gift was magical.

Ms. Pogoryelova closed with a "thank you" to everyone present, and particularly to the Resident Executive Committee and to the volunteers who helped with the reception. She also invited them to enjoy the refreshments being offered on the main floor.

The ceremonies on the second floor ended with a performance of "*Osynnye zoloto*" (Autumn Gold) by Alisa Savelyuk and Oksana Zelinska, who sang and played the Bandura, and "*Bile anhel'stvo*" (for which they were joined by flautist Anna Kubovych).

Having been informed of the beautifully printed catalogue of the exhibition, the participants moved to the main floor for refreshments, more music, conversation and more study of the newly received works of art.

The exhibition has been widely advertised, so the museum is anticipating hosting many visitors before the art comes down in December.