



UKRAINIAN ART CENTER NEWS

THE UNSTOPPABLE FORCE OF THE ARTS

A Quarterly Newsletter | Issue No. 04 Spring 2017

My Tato

Peter (Prokosh) Artemonovitch Stetzenko was born in Kvitky, Ukraine. "Kvitky" means flowers in Ukrainian. In Spring time the village was full of Flowers and Cherry Blossoms – Peter's first awareness of colors! Peter was very proud of his Heritage. His Paternal Grandmother was a descendant of the famous Hetman Petro Doroshenko (1627-1698) who fought for Ukrainian Independence. She had two sons – Artemon (Peter's Father) and Grigory. As a young boy, Peter was introduced to painting by his favorite Uncle Grigory, whose son Kyrylo Stetsenko (1882-1922) became a famous Ukrainian Musical Composer and his other son Petro Stetsenko (1884-1937) became a Musical Conductor and Professor. Uncle Grigory was commissioned to decorate and restore the Churches in the Villages and he would bring along three young little helpers – Peter (Proosha), Kyrylo, and Petro. It was there that Peter learned about the mixing of colors, drawing, and the history of the Church and their Icons. Peter's artistic talent was evident at an early age and he was sent to Kyiv to study Art and later to the prestigious Straganoff School of Art. He also graduated from the Academy of Art in Moscow. Peter worked in restoration at the Tretyakov Gallery. However, he preferred working in the Theater and Opera designing and drawing the sets and scenery. He worked and toured extensively with the theater groups. He saw many famous artists of that time and his favorite was the legendary opera singer Feodor Chaliapin. His favorite painting was "Reply of the Zaporizhian Cossack to the Sultan" by Ilya Repin, born in Ukraine.

Peter decided to further his artistic studies in Italy, France and America. He was offered a job with the Eastman Kodak Co., which brought him to Rochester, New York. Afterwards, he decided to work for Warner Brothers and when Warner Brothers made the move to Hollywood, they invited Peter. Peter settled in East Los Angeles (the international melting pot at that time)! He worked for the major motion picture studios as a Scenic Artist, Artistic Director and "Story Board Artist" due to his brilliant knowledge of world history. He was admired by his colleagues for his genius and stature and nicknamed "Peter the Great"! Peter had an amazing 40 year career in Motion Pictures and worked for every major Studio and later Television. He worked with the best – Charlie Chaplin, Jimmy Stewart, Frank Sinatra, Cecil B. De Mille, Billy Wilder, Marlena Dietrich (his favorite), Kim Novak, etc... And let's not forget the Ukrainians – John Hodiak, Danny Kaye, Jack Palance (Volodymyr Palahniuk), and the brilliant director Anatole Litvak (Snake Pit & Anastasia). The Movie Industry attracted talented stage actors and



artists from Ukraine, Russia, Hungary, Germany, and the Yiddish Theater. Their talent was enormous. I often wonder how differently Hollywood would have evolved without their contributions!

Peter knew Bill Tytla, born in America of Ukrainian heritage. Bill was the original Disney animator and worked on Snow White, Fantasia, Dumbo etc. When working on a project at the Walt Disney Studios, Peter used to visit his friends in animation, and they would occasionally give him some cells (Celluloid Sheets) of their cartoon characters, which he bought home. He would explain to us how tedious the drawing process was as each character's movement had to be drawn on a separate cell. We played with them and when we got tired of them, my parents would throw them away. How I wish I saved them!

Peter liked working with the Irish Art Director and Production Designer, Cedric Gibbons, who designed the Oscar Statuette in the twenties. Gibbons was the Art Director, and nominated for an award for the movie "Wizard of Oz". Stetzenko worked with Gibbons and drew the scenery, it was filmed in the MGM Lot in Culver City, CA in 1938. The MGM production was challenging. The story starts off in Kansas and to achieve a dull grayish feeling, it was filmed in Sepia Tones. When Dorothy and her companions reach the Land of Oz, it becomes Magical, thus transitioning into Technicolor, which was a new medium. It took the Art Department several days to find the correct yellow tone for "Yellow Brick Road"! The Background had to be painted in

mutated tones because of the lighting for technicolor, which was so intense that the sets would get very hot and reach 90-100F degrees! My Father said that he felt sorry for the little Munchkins in their costumes!!

Stetzenko was an active member of the Scenic Artists Union. He was proud to be a member of the California Art Club and Artists & Sculpture Club of Southern California until he died. His works were displayed in many exhibitions in America and Mexico. The most recent exhibitions were at the Pasadena Museum of History in September 2015 and the Bridge Gallery at the Los Angeles City Hall in August 2016. He loved nature and drew in the "Plein Air Art" style. He was frequently seen in Southern California with his easel, brushes, paints, and canvases. Today, many of his works are a record of Southern California History, as modernization has taken place!

My Father was a true Renaissance man and helped many starving artists! He told us to never judge a person by his nationality or looks, only by his intellect and talents. Also, to be proud of your heritage, loyal to your cause and county, and "Be the best you can be"! I miss my Father's genius, his dynamic energy and stature. But most of all – the little girl inside of me misses the magical Folk Tales he told me when tucking me into bed at night, especially the ones about the legendary "Baba Yaga"!

Good Night Tatochko, I love you!!!

By Deanna Stetzenko Boulton

A Word From the President

Ukrainian Art Center is striving towards creating a significant impact on the community with our outreach programs in line with our mission. At the same time, we are fundraising for our most ambitious goal of establishing a Museum of Ukrainian Art in Los Angeles. Every one of us can make a difference – we are counting on you!

We were invited to a preview screening of *Bitter Harvest* at Lionsgate in Santa Monica on February 12 dealing with the Ukrainian tragedy “Holodomor – Artificial Famine, 1932-1933”, which was ordered by Stalin. Although the reviews were flat, the film was shown in theaters throughout the United States and therefore seen by the general public that might not be aware of that part of Ukrainian history.

At the Shevchenko Concert held at Ukrainian Culture Center on March 5, 2017, Olenka Krupa introduced the Art Center’s theme for 2017, dedicating events and programs throughout the year to our great poetess “Majestic Woman – Lesia Ukrainka”.

UAC joined UCC on April 2, in its Annual Pysanka Festival that is attracting an ever greater following. Not only were participants able to learn the ancient art of egg writing, but among a huge and most ambitious number of artists/vendors, everyone enjoyed folk dancing by Chervona Kalyna Ensemble, Ridna Shkola (Ukrainian language school), our talented singer/choreographer-Asya Gorskaya and many other performers. The program was lengthy and amazingly it was FREE, sponsored by the Ukrainian Culture Center.

UAC had on display and for sale art from A. Terlecky collection, and “Medivka” (Ancient Ukrainian Honey Liqueur) provided by our member Olenka Krupa and husband Scott Griffies from Olenka’s father’s original recipe. All proceeds from the event were donated to the UAC MUSEUM FUND.

On April 22 UAC, Inc. held its Annual-General Meeting where a new Board was confirmed. Our membership is steadily growing. We are inviting all like-minded people to join us as members in order to make UAC a successful non-profit arts organization.

UAC was invited to the screening of “Breaking Point: The War for Democracy in Ukraine” on April 26 at the School of Cinematic Arts, University of Southern California. It is a very interesting documentary about the revolutionary events in Ukraine’s “Maidan” in 2014, including current events in Eastern Ukraine. UAC member Maxim Kuzin proposed to arrange a separate screening of the movie for our Ukrainian community at the Ukrainian Culture Center. We hope that this proposal will come to fruition.

Looking forward to a successful rest of the year!

By Daria Chaikovsky



Majestic Woman – Lesia Ukrainka

The Ukrainian Art Center has dedicated the year 2017 to the Majestic Woman – Lesia Ukrainka.

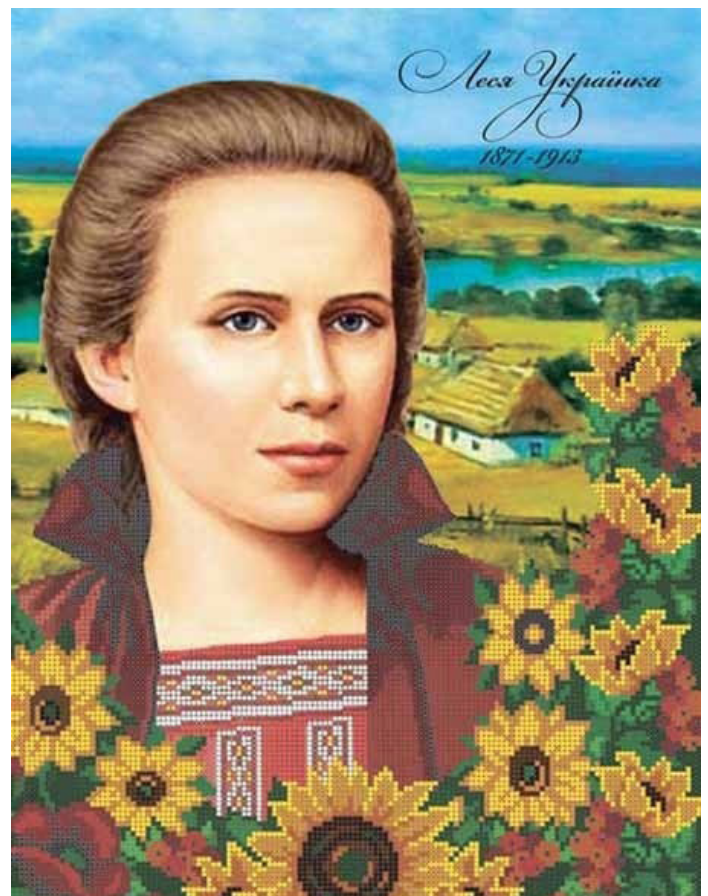
This Fall, Ukrainian Art Center, along with the Los Angeles Branch of Ukrainian National Women’s League of America, is planning a program in honor of the great poetess, Lesia Ukrainka. The program, which promises to be entertaining and educational, is being prepared by the talented Ms. Victoria Kuzina, who will also be the M.C.

Here are a few interesting facts about the immensely talented Lesia Ukrainka: Lesia Ukrainka was born Larissa Kosach on February 25, 1871 in the Region of Volhyn, Ukraine. She was the oldest of six children born to wealthy Ukrainian intellectuals. Because the schools were Russified, Lesia and her siblings were home schooled by their mother, Olena Pchilka and private tutors. As a result, the children were highly educated, well-read, and politically as well as nationally conscious.

From an early age Lesia played with the village children. She was fascinated by the villagers who on many occasions sang round-dance songs and told legends and tales. She listened to the fairy tales, legends and ballads and became immersed in the enchanting world of folk mythology. These folk songs and fairy tales she heard provided the framework of “Lisova Pisnya” (“Forest Song”), one of her most famous works, which she wrote in 1912.

At the age of 12, Lesia was diagnosed with tuberculosis of the bone which eventually spread and took her life in 1913, at the young age of 42. Her fight against this disease led her to many foreign lands where she sought treatment – Crimea, the Caucasus, Berlin, Italy and even Egypt. While abroad, she continued to write and read the best works of world literature in the original languages. During these times, her writings were steeped with thoughts about the destiny of her Ukrainian people, her great love of the beautiful Ukrainian landscape and above all, her Volhynia homeland.

By Luba S. Keske



Further details about Majestic Woman Lesia Ukrainka will be announced in future publications of “Visti” and the Ukrainian Art Center newsletter.

Marijka Oharenko Eulogy

Marijka was born 12/25/1950 in Lucian, Belgium, where her father was a professor at the local university. The family moved from Europe to Chicago one year later. Marijka's parents Volodymyr and Luba were academics which helped to form her young life. Both parents were also fiercely patriotic Ukrainians.

Marijka was educated at the local Ukrainian Catholic Schools and went on to Northwestern University. In 1972 Marijka graduated with honors with a B.S. and obtained her masters also with honors in 1973. The US Atomic Energy Department recruited Marijka from College and she made her first move to Washington D.C. There she worked with the Department for 10 years during which they reformed to the US Department of Energy.

In 1981, Northrop Corp. recruited Marijka to head Corporate communication world wide. She moved cross country to Westwood, CA. This is the year I had the honor to meet this incredible woman who would become a sister and aunt to my children. Marijka and I shared a common interest in preserving Ukrainian arts and traditions. Together we shared this interest with Natalie Orluns-Gebet. After teaching her how to write pysanky, Natalie went on to become an incredible egg artist. The 3 of us were asked to become founding members of the Ukrainian Arts Center in Los Angeles. We joined Daria Chaikovsky, Zenovia Wyshnievsky, Vera Zachar, Luba Doliniuk and Zirka Domchivskyj in bringing in Ukrainian Artist exhibits, traditional arts classes and the original Pysanky Festival.

Marijka made another move within Northrop in the late 80s and became a manager for Northrup Grumman in El Segundo, putting on exhibits worldwide at airshows. She traveled the world and came home with wonderful stories and pictures.



Marijka took advantage of an early retirement in 2012. As she had already traveled the world she chose to spend her time with family and friends. She went on many trips with her brother John Oharenko, sister in law Natalya and their children Marianna and Roman.

She spent time a lot of time in San Diego and considered relocating.

Marijka was dedicated to her church and the Ukrainian communities in Los Angeles and San Diego.

By Linda Mudlo



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You shop. Amazon gives.

New UAC Website Coming Soon

We are excited to share that our new website www.ukrainianartcenterla.org is under construction and will be up soon. We will make an official announcement once the site is complete.

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THE HISTORY OF THE UKRAINIAN ART CENTER

Based in Los Angeles, California. UAC, Ukrainian Art Center is a non profit community organization. It was initiated by Daria Chaikovsky together with a group of like minded people in 1986 to preserve, promote and develop the Ukrainian arts in Los Angeles and California. It's initial goals reflect its present plan to create a new Ukrainian Museum in Los Angeles and to develop cultural and educational programs, alongside festivals and exhibitions. Mrs. Chaikovska worked tirelessly with the UAC Board alongside her own business, presenting folk festivals, lectures, workshops and community projects on a small scale,

consistently providing a much needed resource for the local area. Over the years UAC was the main focal point for Ukrainian arts and culture on the West coast and involved people from all ages and backgrounds including non Ukrainians. During these fruitful years the local city council and private patrons funded its activities including regular Annual Easter Pysanka and Holiday Yalynka events, exhibitions, concerts and more, encouraging many diverse groups and individuals to explore the richness of Ukrainian Culture.

Become a Member of UAC If you enjoyed any of UAC programs/events like Maidan, Road to Freedom, Pysanka Festival, Museum Fundraiser Auction, and other events and workshops over the years, you are invited to become Member of UAC and take part in development or have the opportunity to help the organization grow. A Ukrainian background is not necessary - just a passion for and a need to learn about Ukrainian contemporary arts and folk arts. You will work closely with our artists, board directors and other members. We could use your help and expertise in running future programs. **Email: ukrainianartcenter@gmail.com Tel: 818-635-8999**

Newsletter The Board worked together to create a newly formatted newsletter. Previously several editions of the UAC Newsletters were published and after a break has reemerged in its new form and will be available soon online.

The UAC is run by a newly formed Board, each bringing with them unique skills and life experience that enriches the organization with a true commitment to developing its long term goals.

'The Ukrainian Art Center News' Editorial Group

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