



Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861)

Taras Shevchenko Museum NEWSLETTER

March 2022, NO.17

LUDMYLA NELIPA DONATION TO THE MUSEUM

Ludmyla Nelipa, long-time friend and supporter of the Shevchenko Museum, has generously donated her collection of art, ceramics, embroidery and books to the Shevchenko Museum.

Throughout her life, Ludmyla Nelipa supported Ukrainian Canadian artists, crafters and writers, and amassed a unique collection of distinctive books and art. Among the items donated to the Shevchenko Museum, are magnificent oil paintings by renowned Ukrainian Canadian artists Ivan Stecenko-Belsky, Petro Magdenko, Pavlo Lopata, Mykola Bidniak, and Shirley Deaville; copies of paintings by Bryullov, Kramskoiy, and Levin, all masterfully executed by V. Belska; beautiful Kosiv ceramics by talented makers of Ukrainian decorative art, embroidery, and much more.



Portrait of Ludmyla Nelipa
by Ivan Stecenko-Belsky, 1975. oil

A calligrapher and painter of porcelain, Ludmyla Nelipa was an artist in her own right. She expressed her love of Ukrainian culture by making and decorating plates, vases, jugs, and mugs herself. Ludmyla never sold her works but gave them to family and friends on special occasions. Her beautiful hand-painted pottery and embroidery will make an important addition to the Shevchenko Museum's extensive collection of Ukrainian decorative art and will bring great joy to all who are interested in Ukrainica.



Cossacks in Battle at Zhovti Vody by Ivan Stecenko-Belsky, 1976. oil



Among the Shevchenkiana donated to the museum library, is the rare *The Life and Works of Taras Shevchenko*, published in 1884, by Shevchenko's first biographer, Mykhailo Chalyi. Additionally, there are rare books on Shevchenko published in Canada and Germany.

The Shevchenko Museum, in agreement with Ludmyla Nelipa, was pleased to give three paintings from the valuable collection to KUMF Gallery in the spirit of sharing with another art institution. Two out of the three paintings are works by Ivan Stecenko-Belsky.

The Shevchenko Museum is sincerely grateful to Ludmyla Nelipa, of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, for the very generous donation of her collection. And we are also thankful to Olena Swrydenko, Natalia Girardi, and Nina Kolosowski for their assistance in making this exceptional collection available to the Shevchenko Museum.



Cossacks Returning from Turkish Captivity by Petro Magdenko, 1972. oil

**Museum and Office: 1604 Bloor Street West, Toronto ON, M6P 1A7, Tel: (416) 534-8662, www.shevchenko.ca
shevchenkomuseum@bellnet.ca**

DONORS TO MUSEUM'S EXHIBIT, PROJECT & LIBRARY FUND

May 2021 – March 2022

We express our sincerest appreciation to everyone who has generously donated to the Shevchenko Museum and who continues to support our work. We thank you for seeing in the museum the potential to meet higher standards for exhibitions, research, collections-care and educational and public programs. The 2021-2022 fund-raising campaign was directed towards helping the museum accomplish its *Mural by John Kuna* project, intended to be executed on the exterior back wall of our building. A Ukrainian-themed mural for that wall will not only prevent graffiti, but also bring the public closer to art and culture. Highly visible from the subway line, the mural is expected to be a great advertisement for the museum. One of the most accomplished mural artists in Canada, John Kuna, is expected to execute the piece. The Shevchenko Museum would like to thank the following donors for their generosity:

Mary Nemis (in memory of Patricia Dzatko)	\$100.00	Bob & Liz Ivanochko (in memory of Wilfred Szczesny and Brent Stearns)	\$100.00
Federation of Russian Canadians (in memory of Patricia Dzatko)	\$100.00	Rudy Wasylenky (in memory of Mary Wasylenky)	\$150.00
Lyudmyla and Yevgen Pogoryelov (in memory of Wilfred Szczesny)	\$100.00	Walter and Mary Petryschuk	\$100.00
Vera and George Borusiewich (in memory of Wilfred Szczesny)	\$100.00	Nick Pelowich	\$50.00
AUUC Welland branch (in memory of Clara Babi)	\$100.00	Paul Osadchuk	\$100.00
Shevchenko Seniors, Welland (in memory of Clara Babi)	\$50.00	Ayah Victoria McKhail	\$25.00
Shevchenko Seniors, Welland (in memory Wilfred Szczesny)	\$50.00	Vicki Gilhula (in memory of the Sawchuk family of Sudbury)	\$50.00
Maria S. Saxe	\$30.00 US	Dennis Harrison (in memory of Helen & Nick Hrynychshyn)	\$100.00
Vera and George Borusiewich (in memory of John Boyd)	\$100.00	Dianne Garrett	\$50.00
The Co-Operators National Claims Strategy Execution Team (in memory of Clara Babi)	\$100.00	Lyudmyla & Yevgen Pogoryelov (in memory of Nancy Stewart)	\$100.00
Federation of Russian Canadians of Ontario (in memory of Nancy Stewart)	\$50.00	Olesya Pogoryelova (in memory of Nancy Stewart)	\$100.00
Donation Box	\$315.00	Mark Stewart	\$100.00
Marta Voytovich & Laurie Gauper	\$200.00 US	Alan & Sarah Doucette (in memory of Bud and Grace Doucette)	\$50.00
Federation of Russian Canadians of Ontario (in memory of Natalie Mochoruk)	\$100.00	Bernardine and Jerry Dobrowolsky (in memory of Nancy Stewart)	\$200.00
AUUC Shevchenko Seniors (in memory of Wilfred Szczesny, Natalie Mochoruk, Pat Dzatko, Margaret Panasiuk)	\$150.00	Prodigy Construction	\$300.00
		Vera and George Borusiewich (in memory of Natalie Mochoruk)	\$100.00
		Vera and George Borusiewich (in memory of Bill Malnychuk)	\$100.00
		Cristina Oke (in memory of Andrew Gregorovich)	\$150.00

We thank Ludmyla Nelipa, Walter and Mary Petryschuk, and Roberta Mackell, for the donation of paintings, pottery, family archival records, books, photographs, embroidery, and artifacts. We thank Nadia Huovinen for her donation of a Bandura which once belonged to the famous musician Ivan Romanoff. We thank Terry Harasym for his donation of paintings, wooden and metal works, posters and books from the estate of Bill and Marie Harasym; June Morris for her donation of paintings, embroidered shirts, textiles and books; Linda Pauk for her donation of ceramics and embroidered textiles; Philp Share for his donation of display props. We sincerely thank everyone for their enthusiastic support of the museum, and particularly REC members and volunteers, whose help and commitment continue to make the Shevchenko Museum a success.

WILFRED SZCZESNY (1941 - 2021) IN MEMORIAM



Wilfred Szczesny
(1941-2021)

On May 13, 2021, Wilfred Szczesny, president of the Shevchenko Museum in Toronto, passed away. Journalist, editor, translator, and community activist, Wilfred Szczesny was born to Ukrainian parents who were positive role models for their three children, instilling in them a strong sense of responsibility and

an awareness of social issues.

In his youth, Wilfred participated in AUUC cultural activities and served on different committees in various leadership roles. In time, he wrote for and edited two English-language periodicals and became editor-in-chief at the *Kobzar* Publishing Company.

From 1976, Wilfred served as a volunteer and member of the organizational committee of the Shevchenko Museum.

Wilfred served on the Lands Development Committee, formed to research the creation of the Shevchenko Park in Oakville and on the Museum Renovation Committee which was planning to relocate the museum to new premises.

As chair of this committee, Wilfred was instrumental in overseeing the architectural plans and all stages of work over the 20 months of renovation. He did all this volunteer work on top of tirelessly performing his main function as newspaper editor.

Wilfred will also be fondly remembered as a very fine performer who entertained audiences for years as a member of more than one mandolin orchestra; as a choir member and soloist; as a concert emcee; and as a passionate reciter of Taras Shevchenko's poetry in both Ukrainian and in English. Wilfred's family is planning a Celebration of Life to be held as soon as it is safe to gather.

Obituary of Nancy Dora STEWART (nee Dobrowolsky)



Nancy Stewart
(1947-2021)

Long-time museum board member, treasurer, and volunteer, Nancy Stewart passed away on July 16, 2021. Born in Lachine, Quebec, Nancy moved to Toronto, Ontario in 1954, where she built a family and a wonderful life. She was an amazing human who

being who would light up the room when she walked in and was the life of the party. There was never a dull moment when Nancy Pants was there! She touched so many lives and so many of us share our best memories with her. She was truly the definition of young at heart with her fiery red hair and contagious spirit. She was the best mom, wife, friend, neighbour and person to hug when you were having a bad day. She lived her life dancing, listening to Steely Dan, laughing, playing cards, joking around, and telling stories of all her adventures. Whether it be at Camp Palermo, on the beaches of Cuba, backpacking around Spain, enjoying the rodeo at

Stampede, or sitting on the back deck at 68 Evans, Nancy always kept us smiling with her energy in life.

A Celebration of Life will be held in Toronto soon, when we can get together safely. Details of the gathering will be sent to loved ones later. Until then, please remember Nancy and all the joy she brought to our lives and keep her spirit alive.

In loving memory of Nancy Stewart, a tree will be planted in the Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area by McInnis & Holloway Funeral Homes, Crowfoot, 82 Crowfoot Circle NW, Calgary, AB T3G 2T3.

SPIRITUAL DIMENSIONS

A kaleidoscope of Pavlo Lopata's Symbolist-Surrealist paintings and iconography illuminated Toronto's Taras Shevchenko Museum

By Ayah Victoria McKhail

An exhilarating journey into Pavlo Lopata's world of wonder and intrigue captivated patrons at the Taras Shevchenko Museum from October 24, 2021, to January 28, 2022. The renowned Ukrainian Canadian visual artist and iconographer's exhibition opened to much acclaim, coinciding with the second anniversary of the museum's revitalization and grand reopening in a new location.

According to Lyudmyla Pogoryelova, the museum's director, the timing of the exhibition held tremendous significance and was particularly poignant as humanity continues to grapple with the pandemic. "The isolation, immense suffering and tragic deaths that have characterized a world turned upside down, have ushered in a period of intense introspection for many people. Lopata's thought-provoking artistic works implore us to look deep into our souls."

The contemplation his artistic works compel, offers revealing insights into the fascinating life he has lived and the generation to which he belongs. Additionally, his Ukrainian identity and national pride are focal features in his artistic works.

Pavlo Lopata was born on March 20, 1945, in the village of Kalinov in the Prešov region of Czechoslovakia (present-day Slovakia). Also known as Kalyniv, Priashiv, this area is the traditional homeland of a small



Self Portrait, Pavlo Lopata, 2019, oil on canvas

community of ethnic Ukrainians.

A prodigious child who was enchanted by the pristine beauty of the Carpathian Mountains that encircled him, he dreamed of becoming an accomplished artist. He would often leaf through his mother's Bible, which was adorned with the wood engravings of the French artist, Gustave Doré. Intrigued, he would replicate the dramatic and evocative compositions, working diligently to gain aptitude and hone his skills. He also yearned to create Byzantine icons, such as the ones that were painted in his village church by Antoni Bogdanski and Michał Bogdanski, two of a multi-generational group of seven iconographers from Poland. Mesmerized, he would often gaze at their compositions utterly intrigued. "Icon-writing, as a classical art form, has many hidden symbols, which I wanted to uncover for myself and the general public. My iconography is the result of over 40 years of work and in that period, I have written close to 500 icons."

Examples of his iconography, which appeared at the museum include 'St. George the Great Martyr' (2000), 'Nativity I' (2016), and 'Guardian Angel with little Girl' (2021), which were all done using wood, linen, egg tempera and 24 karat gold leaf.

Lopata's educational odyssey has had several twists and turns. Following the Soviet Union's 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia, he became involved in student protests for which he was expelled from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava.

In 1969, he left for Canada in search of a better life and a more progressive environment in which to discover his potential and pursue his artistic aims. In 1978, he embarked on studies at the Ontario College of Art, (currently known as the Ontario College of Art and Design University). Immersing himself in the canons of Byzantine iconography and perfecting his technique in a variety of artistic mediums, he graduated with a diploma in Fine Arts in 1986.

Having mastered the techniques of pencil drawing and painting in egg tempera, oil and acrylics, he paints portraits, landscapes, wooden churches and icons, infusing characteristics of realism, linear expressionism, surrealism and symbolism with every brushstroke.

As for the themes depicted in his paintings, he credits the Symbolist painter, Frida Kahlo and the Surrealist painters, Salvador Dalí and Max Ernst with having a profound effect on his creativity. He also derives a palpable sense of inspiration from the Flemish artist Peter Paul Rubens, in addition to the Italian Renaissance artists Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael, among others.

He describes his personal visual language as embodying a synthesis of eastern traditions in art, which are abstract and decorative, along with western ones, which are concrete and naturalistic. “Just as a healthy marriage of spirit with matter, art exists as a concrete manifestation of the internal dynamic of human reason and imagination. In my paintings, I strive for balances, both on a conceptual level and in terms of composition.”



Pavlo Lopata, Guardian Angel with little girl, 202, wood, egg tempera

As Dr. Halyna Kostiuk, an art critic, author and member of the Shevchenko Scientific Society of Canada observed, “It is noticeable that Lopata considers the sky not only as a space to populate with his compositions,

but also as a vast expanse where he shares his philosophy and aesthetic with the viewers. In Lopata’s aesthetic world, symbols often are multi-semantic.”

The depiction of hands also figures prominently in Lopata’s artistic works. “In iconography, God’s existence and presence are often depicted by an outstretched hand through the composition of clouds,” he explained. He also pointed to Ukraine’s rich folkloric tradition, which is replete with references to hands in fairy tales, songs and proverbs. “Hands feature in Ukrainian literature, such as in the poetry of Ivan Drach, Andriy Malyshko, Uliana Kravchenko, Bohdan Ihor Antonych and Shevchenko.”

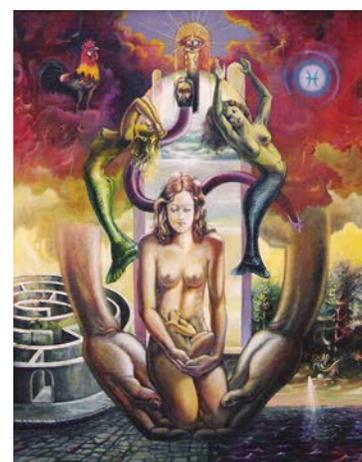
Noting civilization exists as a result of the inventiveness, creativity and industriousness of hands, he added, “In my paintings, I express my concept by accentuating and glorifying hands because it’s also with my own hands that I create my art for the world.”

One of the most striking characteristics of the many paintings that were on display, which were primarily done in the 1990s, is his sophisticated use of colour. As Dr. Kostiuk elucidated, “The palette often is overly dramatic: juxtaposition of darkness and light, coldness and warmth with undertones of in-between hues.” This is particularly evident in the oil paintings ‘Born Pisces’ and ‘Omnipotent’. His signature flair can also be seen in ‘Faith, Hope and Love’, which was done using tempera.

Reflecting on another defining aspect of his artistic works, Dr. Kostiuk remarked, “Lopata’s surrealistic paintings embrace

both European ideas of this art movement and the deepest Ukrainian traditions in a contemporary aesthetic fashion.”

An award-winning artist, he has held over 35 solo exhibitions – including one showcasing his iconography, which was titled ‘Windows to Heaven’ last spring at Toronto’s Ukrainian Canadian Art Foundation’s KUMF gallery – in addition to participating in over 90 group shows.



Pavlo Lopata, Born Pisces, 1997, oil on canvas

Today, more than 1000 of his artistic works grace private and museum collections around the world, including the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Québec, (formerly the Canadian Museum of Civilization); the Embassy of Ukraine in Ottawa, Ontario; the National Art Museum of Ukraine in Kyiv; the Museum of Ukrainian Culture in Svidník, Slovakia; and the Embassy of Ukraine in Prague, Czech Republic.

In addition to being an accomplished artist, Lopata is also a prolific writer who has authored over 450 articles related to the arts, culture and history. His written works have been published in numerous local and international publications, such as *New Pathway* in

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Toronto; *Dukla* in Slovakia; and *Vyzvolnyj shliakh* in England.

Living in his dream home in Kingsville, Ont., complete with two working studios, three gallery rooms and ample space throughout the entire house to showcase his artistic works, with his loving and supportive wife, Mary, who has played a pivotal role in supporting her husband, the sprightly 76-year-old shows no signs of slowing down. Creating art is an indispensable part of his identity and he admitted that a sense of melancholy sets in if he does not. "I take a brush into my hands everyday and create a variety of paintings and icons. Recently, I wrote the icons of St. Zachary and Our Lady of Perpetual Help. In between, I do research on artists and write about them."

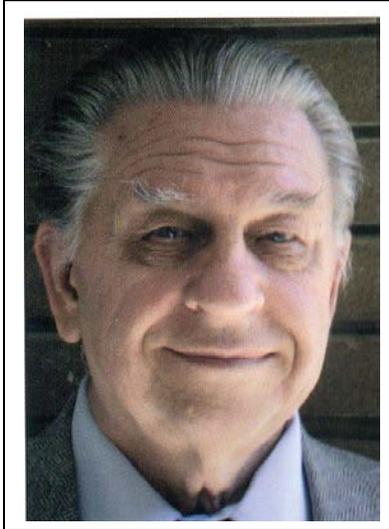
Reflecting on the many meaningful aspects of his career, what is particularly inspiring to him is when a painting or icon finds a new home and resonates with symbolic significance. "Through my art, I try to convey a message of hope and beauty through the balance that comes from the harmonious coexistence of spirit and matter. I hope that my art provides a refuge to all that is anti-spiritual in the world."

About Ayah Victoria McKhail



Ayah Victoria McKhail is a Toronto-based journalist who's passionate about arts and culture reporting. Her writing has appeared in numerous publications, such as the *Literary Review of Canada*, the *Whole-Note*, and newspapers affiliated with the East Coast's SaltWire Network.

IN MEMORY OF ANDREW GREGOROVICH



Andrew Gregorovich passed away peacefully after a brief illness in Toronto, Ontario, on February 26, 2022. Andrew was born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan on July 18, 1935, the son of Alexander and Mary Gregorovich (nee Pawluk). The family's origin is in Pokutia and Bukovina, Ukraine, and arrived in Canada in April 1899. Andrew's father was a founder and the first national president of the Ukrainian National Federation.

Andrew was a revered pillar of the Ukrainian Canadian community for decades. His prolific contributions and accomplishments are impossible to capture in their entirety. Proud author of *Forum: A Ukrainian Review*, *Ukraine in World War II*, *Roxelana*, *Anna Yaroslavna*, *Holodomor* and many other publications. Librarian Emeritus of the University of Toronto and Department Head for 30 years. He served as Chairman of the Toronto Historical Board, President of the Ontario Library Association, and President of the Canadian Multilingual Press

Federation. He was a board member of the Governing Council of the University of Toronto, and the Canadian government appointed him to the Canada Post stamp design committee. He served many years as executive Director of the Ukrainian Canadian Research & Documentation Centre, and as the President of the Taras Shevchenko Museum. He was honoured with a City of Toronto Medal, a Shevchenko Medal by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, and a medal awarded by the government of Ukraine. Andrew dedicated his life to the Ukrainian community and a free and independent Ukraine.

In his teenage years Andrew was a champion long distance cyclist. Throughout his life he was a great collector of antique Ukrainian maps and books. He was sought out for his exceptional oration on Ukrainian history, and known for his skilled photography. He loved travel, symphonies, movies and was friend to painter William Kurelek and actor Jack Palance. He cherished Ukrainian food, dancing, culture, Cossack lore, the poet Taras Shevchenko and four creams in his coffee.

Beloved father of Michael, Nadia and Larissa, and beloved husband of Jennie (nee Harman-sky d.1982) and later Pat McElcheran (d.2004). Andrew was the always independent, middle child of the five children: John (d.2016), Hanya (Cirka d.2015), Basil (d.2018) and his beloved little sister Lesia. He is remembered with love by his cousins Gloria Munn and Beverly Prokopchuk, their families, as well as many nieces and nephews. **Memory Eternal.**