

SHEVCHENKO MUSEUM

Past Present Future

A black and white portrait of Taras Shevchenko, a Ukrainian poet, writer, and artist. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark coat and a high collar. His face is partially obscured by a vertical wire mesh, which is a common motif in his self-portraits. The background is a light, textured surface.

SHEVCHENKO

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Past Present Future

WHO WE ARE

The Taras Shevchenko Museum is a non-profit institution founded for the purpose of popularising the life and work of Taras Shevchenko, the Bard of Ukraine, and the contribution of Canadians of Ukrainian descent to the social, economic and cultural life of Canada.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to promote appreciation of the great Ukrainian poet, Taras Shevchenko, and Ukrainian-Canadian culture and heritage as a contribution to Canadian multiculturalism.

OUR VISION

Our vision is to be a thriving and growing museum which celebrates Taras Shevchenko and the rich Ukrainian culture and heritage with the Ukrainian-Canadian and international community.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Taras Shevchenko Museum wishes to express its gratitude for the generosity and financial contribution of all institutions, organisations, donors and friends who continue to support us in 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.

We are very thankful to our volunteers and REC members whose help and commitment have made the Museum a success and we deeply appreciate the decades-long support from the AUUC and its members.

We are particularly grateful to our architect, Christopher McCormack, for the design of the new Museum, and for believing in us and going out of his way in support of our vision.

A special thank-you to Wendy Robertson for her enormous help with marketing and promotion.

Finally, we owe a deep debt of gratitude to the founders of the Taras Shevchenko Museum who, 70 years ago, had a dream and the courage and tenacity to bring it to fruition.

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Cover photo: Façade of Shevchenko Museum by Jerry Dobrowolsky, 2019.



To the staff and volunteers of the Shevchenko Museum,

I would like to congratulate the Taras Shevchenko Museum on the grand opening of your new location on Bloor Street in our riding of Parkdale-High Park. This is a special occasion for many Ukrainian-Canadians who call this riding home and a testament to the strong will and resourcefulness of the staff and volunteers at the Shevchenko Museum, including Director Lyudmyla Pogoryelova. The importance of educating younger generations on the legacy of Taras Shevchenko cannot be understated and this museum is a vital institution committed to achieving that goal.

Taras Shevchenko was born into serfdom in 1814 to a family whose forefathers had been said to be Cossacks. From these humble beginnings, Shevchenko grew into an icon as a Ukrainian poet, writer, artist, public and political figure, as well as a folklorist. His literary repertoire is regarded to be the foundation of modern Ukrainian literature and, to a large extent, the modern Ukrainian language. Shevchenko is also known for his many masterpieces as a painter and an illustrator.

Shevchenko is rightfully considered a Ukrainian hero within artistic and political communities. Not surprisingly, his influence stretches even further as he has become synonymous with Ukrainian culture and heritage. There are many monuments to Shevchenko throughout Ukraine, most notably at his memorial in Kaniv and in Kyiv, which also boasts a University that bears his name along with a Metro station. Other notable monuments to the poet located throughout Ukraine are the ones in Kharkiv, which is also in front of Shevchenko Park, Lviv, Luhansk and many others.

Shevchenko deserves all of these accolades and I am extremely thankful that the Taras Shevchenko Museum here in Toronto strives to ensure that his legacy is not just kept alive within the Ukrainian community, where it flourishes, but that other communities and individuals like myself can also be introduced to this iconic Ukrainian figure. Dyakuyu!

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Arif Virani', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Arif Virani
Member of Parliament, Parkdale-High Park



Bhutila Karpoche

MPP / Députée / བློ་སྒྲུབ་ཀླུ་མ་ཀུ་པེ་མ། • Parkdale—High Park



Congratulations to the Taras Shevchenko Museum on its Grand Opening

Congratulations to the Taras Shevchenko Museum for the Grand Opening of its new location at 1604 Bloor Street West, Toronto.

The Taras Shevchenko Museum has been a vital part of the vibrant cultural fabric of Parkdale—High Park. The museum's dedication to popularizing Taras Shevchenko's poetry and artistry, and commitment to promoting and celebrating Ukrainian culture and Canadians of Ukrainian descent and their contributions to our community, is admirable and deeply valued.

In Toronto, we are proud of our rich diversity and cultural fabric, and Parkdale – High Park in particular is home to many people of Ukrainian descent. It is so important for us all to appreciate and amplify the voices and stories of the Ukrainian community, and the Taras Shevchenko Museum has been successful in connecting thousands of visitors, both local and from afar, to these voices and stories. I am so glad that the museum will have a beautiful and expanded space to continue and expand this important work, and I am grateful that this wonderful organization is a part of our community.

As the Member of Provincial Parliament for Parkdale-High Park, I am honoured that such an important cultural and historical organization exists in our community. Thank you, Taras Shevchenko Museum, for your hard work and your passion.

Warmly,

Bhutila Karpoche,
MPP, Parkdale – High Park





Message from the Mayor



It gives me great pleasure to extend greetings to everyone attending the opening of the Taras Shevchenko Museum.

I extend a warm welcome to everyone attending this event that celebrates the opening of the museum that will serve to showcase the life and work of Ukrainian poet and artist Taras Shevchenko, Ukrainian culture and the many contributions of Canadians of Ukrainian descent.

Museums are institutions that encourage, promote and foster the best of a nation's heritage, culture and history and are positive partners in the development of societies around the world. I am delighted that a new museum and one that celebrates the Ukrainian community has called Toronto its home.

On behalf of Toronto City Council, I wish everyone an enjoyable and memorable event. Please accept my best wishes for continued success.

Yours truly,

John Tory
Mayor of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
100 QUEEN STREET WEST, TORONTO, ONTARIO, M5H 2N2

MINISTRY OF CULTURE OF UKRAINE
TARAS SHEVCHENKO NATIONAL MUSEUM



Дорогі колеги та співвітчизники!

Вітаємо вас із визначною подією в українському культурному просторі – відкриттям Музею Тараса Шевченка в Канаді (Торонто) в новому приміщенні.

Щиро радіємо разом із вами, адже наші дружні та партнерські стосунки тривають вже багато років. Ми пишаємося тим, що причетні до створення вашої колекції, для нас це важлива та почесна місія!

Бажаємо вам нових успіхів та досягнень у сфері розвитку української культури, популяризації великого Тараса Шевченка та музейній діяльності.

Сподіваємося на подальшу співпрацю та реалізацію нових проектів!

Дмитро Стус

Генеральний директор

Greetings and Congratulations

On the occasion of its new opening, we extend warm greetings to the Shevchenko Museum whose decades-long mission has been to bring the name and legacy of Taras Shevchenko, Bard of Ukraine, to Canadian and international audiences. We send our sincere wishes to the Shevchenko Museum for lasting success in serving the public with its impressive community and educational work.

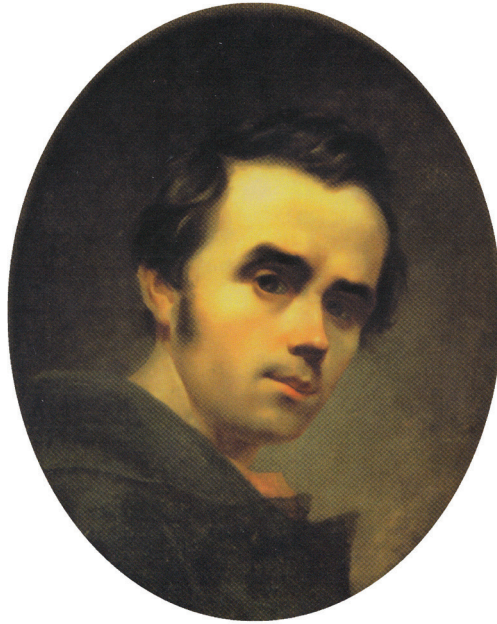


As a performing arts group, we are proud to have carried the name of Taras Shevchenko in Canada for 70 years. With our songs and music, we honour his legacy and express his hope that the people of the world live in peace and harmony.

National Shevchenko Musical Ensemble Guild of Canada
626 Bathurst Street, Toronto, ON M5S 2R1

_____ The _____
Association of United Ukrainian Canadians
proudly continues our support for
the Shevchenko Museum.
October 20, 2019





Taras Shevchenko
1814 - 1861

And in the great new family,
The family of the free,
With softly spoken, kindly word
Remember also me.

Taras Shevchenko. My Testament. 1845

He was the son of a peasant and has become a prince in the realm of the spirit. He was a serf, and has become a giant in the realm of human culture. He was unschooled, and has shown to professors and scholars newer and freer paths. Fate pursued him cruelly throughout life, yet could not turn the pure gold of his soul to rust...

Ivan Franko

WHO WAS TARAS SHEVCHENKO?

He was born into misery and poverty with very little early education, yet rose to become a revered poet, thinker, humanist, man of letters, and ardent patriot of world renown.



Paternal House in Kyrylivka.
Pencil drawing by Taras Shevchenko, 1843



Taras Listening to his Grandfather's Story About
the Haidamaks. Painting by M. Derehus

Taras Shevchenko was born a serf in 1814 on the estate of Baron Engelhardt, a Baltic German nobleman with large holdings in Ukraine. One of six children, he was little more than another possession of his master.

*That tranquil cottage in the grove
You call a paradise — I know.
In such a cottage once I dwelt,
'Twas there my first hot tears were
spilt,
My early tears! I know no vice,
No wrong or ill, however rare,
That's not found in that cottage
fair ...
And yet they call it paradise!*

*Taras Shevchenko
Young Masters, if You Only Knew..., 1850*

A great influence on the young Taras was his paternal grandfather who often related stories of the struggles of the peasantry and the frequent rebellions and violent uprisings. These stories of Ukraine's heroic past captured the young lad's imagination, as did the tales of the kobzars (wandering minstrels).



Taras as a Shepherd.
Painting by I. Izhakevych

At that time, young Taras was already sketching and, when copying liturgical materials, he would often illustrate the margins of his pages. Orphaned by the age of eleven, he performed various tasks, including serving as a shepherd.

At fourteen, despite his many requests to study art, he was assigned to be a servant to his owner, Paul Engelhardt. In 1829, at age fifteen, Taras travelled in his master's entourage to St. Petersburg, the capital and centre of cultural life of Imperial Russia.

Recognising his talent, in 1832, Engelhardt apprenticed the young Taras for four years to V. Shyrayev, a famous painter and decorator of St. Petersburg churches, public buildings, and homes of the elite.



This is the earliest surviving artwork of Taras Shevchenko that he did at the age of 16



Engraving of mid 19th Century St. Petersburg



Summer Garden in St. Petersburg

«In St. Petersburg, I could spend the moonlit spring nights in the Imperial Summer Garden and make drawings of the statues which embellished that creation of Peter the Great. It was there that I made the acquaintance of the artist Ivan Soshenko, a fellow countryman who has been like a brother to this day. Upon his advice, I began to try my hand at watercolour studies from nature.»

An excerpt from Taras Shevchenko's Autobiography, 1850

In St. Petersburg, as he began moving within the circle of the Russian intelligentsia, he won the hearts of this enlightened segment of society. Realising that the young man's talents could only be properly developed if he were free, these men held a lottery in which the prize was a portrait of the poet Vasilii Zhukovsky, painted by the artist Karl Bryullov.



Portrait of Vasilii Zhukovsky. Oil painting by Karl Bryullov, 1838

On April 22, 1838, shortly after his twenty-fourth birthday, Shevchenko's freedom was gained with the proceeds from the lottery which totalled 2,500 rubles. His friends also sponsored his studies at the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts where, on scholarship, he began writing poetry.



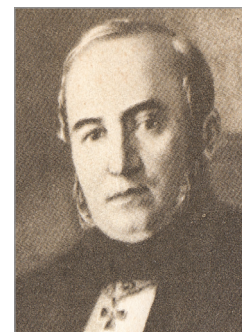
K. Bryullov



O. Venetsianov



M. Vielgorsky



V. Gregorovich



Royal Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg



Young Taras Shevchenko in the Studio of Karl Bryullov. Painting by G. Melikhov



T. Shevchenko. The Gypsy Fortune Teller. Watercolour. 1841

In the library of the Academy, Shevchenko familiarised himself with anthologies of Ukrainian folklore and the works of the romantic poets, as well as those of various Russian and world writers.

In 1840, the world first saw the *Kobzar*, Taras Shevchenko's first collection of poetry, published in St. Petersburg.



This book, "...immediately revealed, as it were, a new world of poetry. It burst forth like a spring of clear, cold water, and sparkled with a clarity, breadth and elegance of artistic expression not previously known in Ukrainian writing."

Ivan Franko

In September of 1841, the Academy of Arts awarded Shevchenko the third Silver Medal for his picture "The Gypsy Fortune Teller".



T. Shevchenko. An illustration to Shakespeare's drama King Lear. Etching. 1843

He avidly read literature - Homer, Goethe, Schiller, Sir Walter Scott, Dickens, and Shakespeare among others. In art, he became a critical realist, and applied his approach to portraiture, etching and illustrating.



T. Shevchenko. In Kyiv. Etching. 1844

In 1843, Shevchenko visited Ukraine where, after a fourteen-year separation, he reunited with his brothers and sisters. The oppressive social and national conditions he encountered there, gave rise to new themes in his poetry.



T. Shevchenko. Peasant Family. Oil. 1843

In 1845, following graduation, he returned to Ukraine where, as a member of the Kyiv Archeographic Commission, he travelled widely to sketch and paint cultural and historical sites. By this time, he had become a well-known poet.



T. Shevchenko. Pochaiv Lavra. Southern View. Watercolour. 1846

O lovely maidens, fall in love,
 But not with Muscovites [*],
 For Muscovites are foreign folk,
 They do not treat you right.
 A Muscovite will love for sport,
 And laughing go away;
 He'll go back to his Moscow land
 And leave the maid a prey
 To grief and shame...
 It could be borne
 If she were all alone,
 But scorn is also heaped upon
 Her mother frail and old.
 The heart e'en languishing can sing –
 For it knows how to wait;
 But this the people do not see:
 "A strumpet!" they will say.
 O lovely maidens, fall in love,
 But not with Muscovites,
 For Muscovites are foreign folk,
 They leave you in a plight....

T. Shevchenko. *Kateryna*. (excerpt) 1838

* *Tsarist army soldiers and officers*



T. Shevchenko. *Kateryna*. Oil. 1842

My Testament

When I am dead, bury me
In my beloved Ukraine,
My tomb upon a grave mound high
Amid the spreading plain,
So that the fields, the boundless steppes,
The Dnieper's plunging shore
My eyes could see, my ears could hear
The mighty river roar.
When from Ukraine the Dnieper bears
Into the deep blue sea
The blood of foes ... then will I leave
These hills and fertile fields –
I'll leave them all and fly away
To the abode of God,
And then I'll pray But till that day
I nothing know of God.
Oh bury me, then rise ye up
And break your heavy chains
And water with the tyrants' blood
The freedom you have gained.
And in the great new family,
The family of the free,
With softly spoken, kindly word
Remember also me.

Taras Shevchenko. 1845

In 1845, Shevchenko wrote his immortal *Zapovit* (My Testament), employing a deceptively simple art form for his manifesto to the downtrodden to rise up against tyranny and persecution.



Taras Shevchenko. Self-Portrait.
Pencil. 1843

In 1846, while in Kyiv, Shevchenko became associated with the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood, one of the aims of which was the abolition of serfdom. The views of the poet had a great influence on the program of this secret society. In 1847, along with other members of the Brotherhood he was arrested near Kyiv on a ferry crossing the Dnieper River. The following day, he was sent to St. Petersburg, where upon arrival, on April 17, he was put in prison.



First Arrest of Taras Shevchenko.
Painting by M. Shtaerman

*It makes no difference to me,
If I shall live or not in Ukraine
Or whether anyone shall think
Of me 'mid foreign snow and rain.
It makes no difference to me,
In slavery I grew 'mid strangers,
Unwept by any kin of mine;
In slavery I now will die
And vanish without any sign.*

...

*It makes great difference to me
That evil folk lull now to sleep
Our mother Ukraine, and will rouse
Her, when she's plundered, in the
flames.
That makes great difference to me.*

Taras Shevchenko
It Makes No Difference to Me... 1847



T. Shevchenko. Self-Portrait. 1847

In June 1847, Shevchenko was sentenced, without trial, to military service and exiled to a remote eastern outpost of the Russian Empire. "Under strict surveillance, with prohibition to write and to paint" – was the order of Tsar Nicholas I. From the very first days, Shevchenko violated the tsar's order by continuing to write poetry in a secret little notebook which he kept hidden in his boot.

In 1848, while still in exile, Shevchenko was included in the Aral Sea Survey Expedition. While serving, he rendered the landscape with such expression and sensitivity that, in time, these sketches and watercolours came to serve as important artistic documents.



T. Shevchenko. *Fire on the Steppe*. Watercolour. 1848



T. Shevchenko. *Garden Near Novopetrovsk Fortress*. Watercolour. 1854

In 1850, Shevchenko was arrested for violating the tsar's orders and sent to an even more remote eastern fort where, despite being subjected to even more rigorous surveillance, he managed to execute over one hundred water-colours and pencil drawings.

FATE

*You did not play me false, O Fate,
You were a brother, closest friend
To this poor wretch. You took my hand
When I was still a little tot
And walked me to the deacon's school
To gather knowledge from the sot.
"My boy, just study hard," you said,
And you'll be somebody in time!"
I listened, studied, forged ahead,
Got educated. But you lied.
What am I now? But never mind!
We've walked the straight path, you and I,
We have not cheated, compromised
Or lived the very slightest lie.
So let's march on, dear fate of mine!
My humble, truthful, faithful friend!
Keep marching on: there glory lies;
March forward — that's my testament.*

Taras Shevchenko. 1858



T. Shevchenko. Kazakh Boy Playing with a Cat. Sepia. 1856–1857



T. Shevchenko. Kazakh Katya. Sepia. 1857

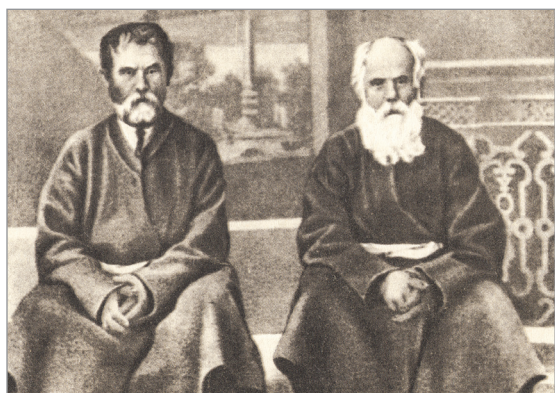
Many of Shevchenko's pictures, made in exile, depict the life of the indigenous Kazakhs.



Portrait of Ira Aldridge
by T. Shevchenko, 1858

«In 1858, Shevchenko became friends with the African actor-tragedian, Ira Aldridge who came to perform in St. Petersburg. They had much in common – both were noble spirits; both were artistic; both were oppressed in the years of youth...»

K. Yunge. Memories About Shevchenko



Mykyta and Josyp, brothers of Taras Shevchenko

"It is terrible to me that my brothers and my sister are still serfs." – From Shevchenko's letter to the editor of the magazine Narodnoe Chtenie, February 18, 1860

In 1859, Shevchenko visited his family and friends in Ukraine where he planned to build a house and settle down. There, he was rearrested and sent back, under convoy, to St. Petersburg. He continued to work, now applying himself to engraving in order to make his message available to even wider circles.



Shevchenko printing his etchings. Lithograph by V. Kassian

An outstanding master of painting, graphic art, etching and a pioneer in modern aquatint, in 1860, he was the first in the Russian Empire to be granted the title of Academician of Engraving.

The decade of exile took a punishing toll on Shevchenko. His declining health already weakened by illness, was further compromised by unimaginable grief and longing for his homeland. By the end of 1860, he had deteriorated to such a degree that, by the early months of 1861, he became confined to his bed.

On March 9, 1861, friends gathered around a bedridden Shevchenko to celebrate his forty-seventh birthday. Sadly, on the morning of the following day, he passed away from a sudden heart attack.



Funeral of Shevchenko at the Smolensky Cemetery, St. Petersburg, Russia. Painting by V. Petukhov



Shevchenko's grave in Kaniv, Ukraine. Photograph. 1861

At the funeral, both the church and the Academy were packed with mourners and the burial at Smolensky Cemetery was held under the watchful eye of the police for fear of student and activist anti-government protests. Because Shevchenko was regarded as a political criminal, his friends needed to procure official Russian state permission to bury him in Ukraine according to his wishes.

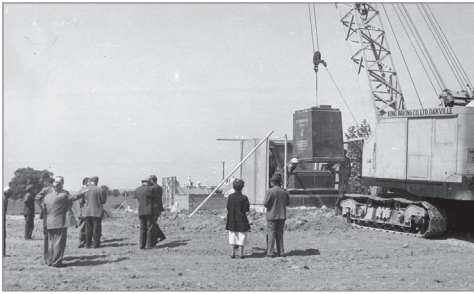
In April 1861, his coffin was taken by funeral procession to Ukraine. Two weeks later, on May 22, Taras Shevchenko was buried on Chernecha Hill in Kaniv. Shortly thereafter, it became a sacred site for the Ukrainian people.

The decades of fear and hate inspired by Shevchenko's name, even in death, prompted the Russian authorities, in 1914, on the centennial of his birth, to post a police guard at his gravesite to deter visitors.

Commemoration of centennial of Taras Shevchenko's death at his gravesite in Kaniv, Ukraine. May 21, 1961



HOW THE SHEVCHENKO MUSEUM CAME TO BE



Pedestal being positioned. Spring, 1951



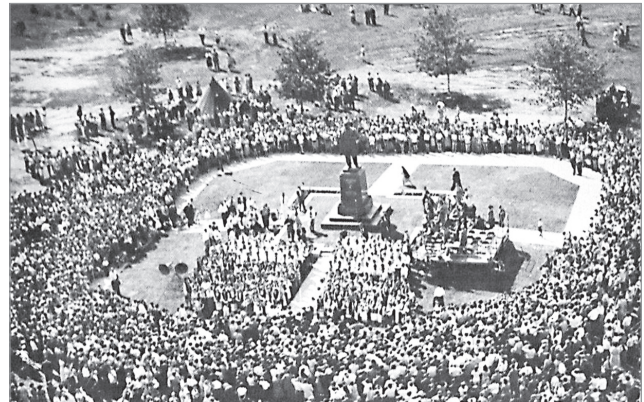
In 1950, a 10'8"-high bronze statue weighing 51 metric tons and a 10'3"-high granite pedestal arrived in 121 pieces. Here, the figure is being hoisted into place by crane. Spring, 1951

In 1947, the Toronto branch of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians purchased a 120-acre plot of farm land on the Dundas highway, west of Trafalgar Road in Oakville.

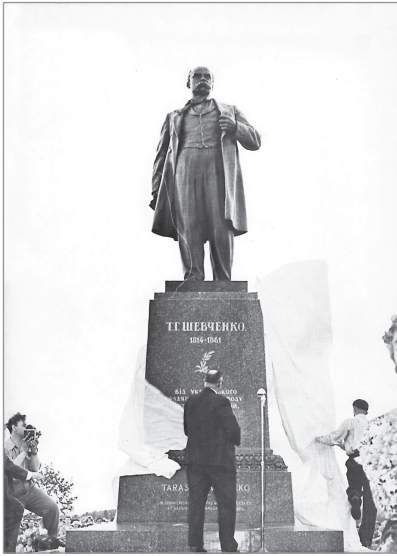
In 1950, to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Ukrainian immigration to Canada, the Association began plans to hold a national festival of song, music and dance and to establish on that purchased land a monument to the great Ukrainian poet and artist, Taras Shevchenko.

Later that same year, following a request submitted to Ukraine, a gigantic statue of the great Kobzar, sculpted by M. Vronsky and O. Oliynyk, arrived in Canada.

To cover the costs of erecting the monument and developing the Memorial Park, a Canada-wide fund-raising campaign was held. The response was so generous that it allowed for plans to build an adjacent museum to house exhibits representing the life, creative works, and legacy of Taras Shevchenko, and reflecting the history of Ukrainian settlement in Canada.



Shevchenko Memorial Park. Monument-unveiling ceremony. July 1, 1951



Wasył Pylypiw, son of Ivan Pylypiw, one of the first Ukrainian immigrants to Canada, cutting the ribbon. July 1, 1951

On June 30, 1951, the 60th anniversary celebrations were launched with a concert at Maple Leaf Gardens staged by 1500 performers, followed the next day, Canada Day, by the unveiling of the monument at the Memorial Park. The second event drew a crowd of 45,000.

Within a year, the building of the Museum was complete, and the surrounding farmland was transformed into a park with the planting of 600 young trees. On Canada Day, 1952, the Taras Shevchenko Museum was officially opened to the public.



Shevchenko Memorial Park gate. 1976



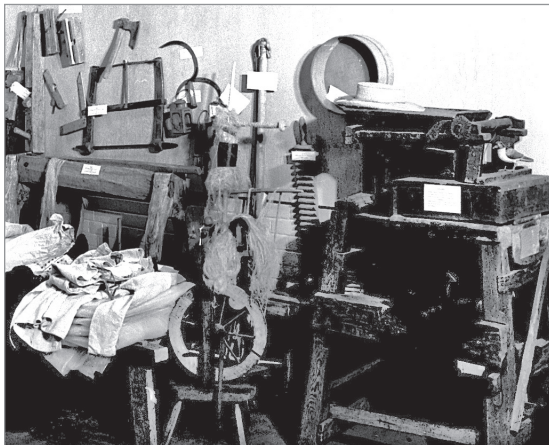
Shevchenko Museum. Oakville, 1976



Shevchenko Museum. Oakville, 1976



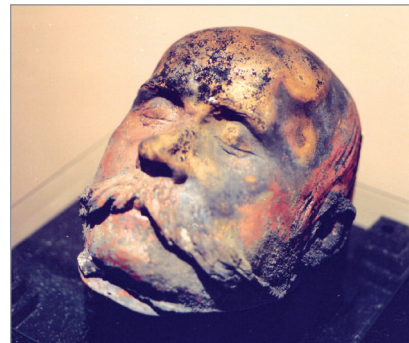
Shevchenko Museum. Oakville, 1976



Tools, farm implements, and handicrafts made by pioneer settlers. Shevchenko Museum. Oakville, 1976

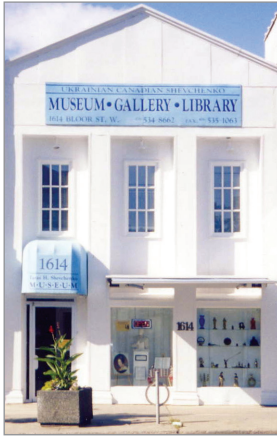
By the opening, the Museum had received some 500 exponents, primarily from the National Shevchenko Museum in Kyiv, Ukraine. Among them were 23 magnificent oil paintings representing the life and work of the great poet, together with cultural artifacts such as embroideries, wood carvings, ceramics and much more. All of these were displayed, together with tools, farming implements and handicrafts made by pioneer settlers, within four rooms occupying approximately 2,000 square feet.

Over the following decades, the Museum received visitors from Canada, the USA and Ukraine as well as many other countries. Tragically, in the early hours of September 16, 1988, a fire consumed the Museum, destroying everything except the bronze death mask of Taras Shevchenko.



Death Mask of Taras Shevchenko. Bronze

A strong determination to rebuild the Museum was supported by generous Canada-wide financial donations, the promise of rich exhibits from Ukraine, and enticing possibilities of provincial and federal grants. Thousands of dollars were donated selflessly by members, friends and supporters along with hundreds of artifacts from individuals and institutions, the world over. During her visit to Canada, Olga Polyanychko, director of the Taras Shevchenko National Museum in Kyiv, generously presented us with 30 works of art.



Shevchenko Museum. Toronto, 1995



Shevchenko Museum gallery, 2007



T. Shevchenko. Vozdvyzhensky Monastery in Poltava. Watercolour. 1845

In 1995, the Taras Shevchenko Museum reopened at 1614 Bloor Street West in Toronto. Unique in the Americas, it has amassed collections superior in size, quality and variety to its original holdings, including a library of rare books and extensive research materials.

Tragically, in 2006, the bronze statue of Taras Shevchenko was stolen from the Memorial Park. The head was eventually retrieved from a scrap metal foundry and remains on permanent display in the Museum. The remainder of the statue was never found.



The head of the stolen statue. 2007

The central focus of the Museum is on the art, life and literary legacy of Taras Shevchenko. On display are many editions of his *Kobzar*, just a few of the over 120 in the Museum's collection, and a philatelic collection of stamps and covers honouring Shevchenko. As well, it houses expertly rendered reproductions of Shevchenko's paintings, specially commissioned in Ukraine, and all of professional museum quality.

Donated by the Ukrainian collector Oleh Ovcharenko, a rare Shevchenkiana book collection constitutes a valuable segment of the Museum's ever-expanding research library and archive.

Additionally, the Museum houses works of prominent Ukrainian artists and, in its gallery, holds exhibits of their work as well as those of contemporary Ukrainian-Canadian artists.

In keeping with its mandate to preserve and promote the history of our immigrant forebears, the museum holds an extensive collection of Ukrainian handicrafts and folk art, pioneer tools, farming implements, documents, and memorabilia.

Since its opening, the Museum has shared our heritage, with passion and dedication, with thousands of Canadian and international visitors.

In 2018, it was decided to relocate to a newly-renovated, two-storey building at 1604 Bloor Street West so that the Museum might better fulfill its mission.



Ukrainian Canadian Archives exhibit



M. Hluschenko. Landscape. 1975



Museum Folk Art Gallery

FIRST UKRAINIAN IMMIGRATION TO CANADA



A group of Ukrainian immigrants wait for a train to the prairies. 1896



The first shelter of a Ukrainian pioneer family was called a burdei or kurnyk. Manitoba, circa 1900



Track farming. Gonor, Manitoba, circa 1900

Over one hundred years ago, on September 7, 1891, Ivan Pylypiw and Wasyl Eleniak, two 33-year-old peasants from the village of Nebyliw in Eastern Galicia (part of present-day Western Ukraine), stepped off the steamship Oregon in Montreal. Their arrival signalled the beginning of four waves of Ukrainian immigration to Canada, and marked the origins in this country of over 1,200,000 Canadians of Ukrainian descent.

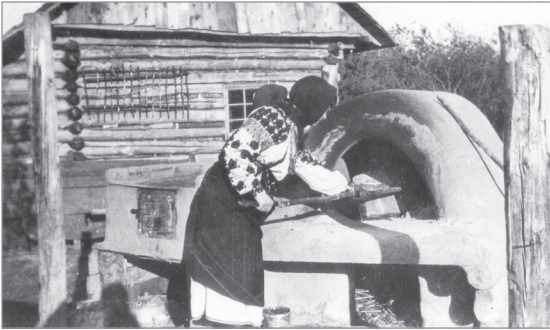


An advertisement encouraging immigration to Canada

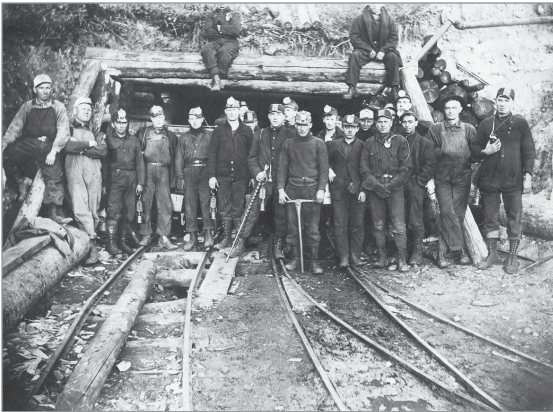
Ukrainians left Ukraine for many reasons including national and social oppression, grinding poverty, and an ever-increasing lack of land. Additionally, in the late 19th century, Canada was encouraging immigration in order to open and settle its vast prairies, to build its railways, to develop its industries and urban infrastructure, and to work its mines and forests. Ukrainian peasants filled a need for hardy settlers and cheap labour.



*A pioneer couple breaking newly cleared land.
Elma, Manitoba, 1915*



Baking bread. Smoky Lake, Alberta, 1915

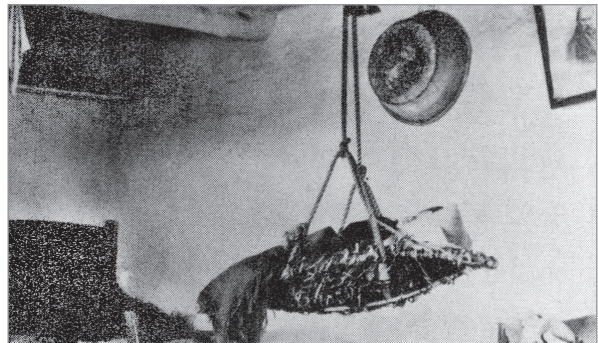


Ukrainian miners. Brule Mines, Alberta, 1921

The immigrants, driven by hardships at home and the promise of a brighter future, abandoned family, friends and native soil, and set out on a perilous journey to the new world. Most brought little with them – a few tools and supplies, and a paltry amount of money. But they also brought a willingness to work hard and a love of their culture and traditions.

They also brought a deep love and reverence for Taras Shevchenko – a poor peasant who fought for the rights and dignity of his people and who became a champion of the rights of all humankind.

Many brought Shevchenko's poetic works to the new world together with his immortal *Kobzar*. His love of the common people and his courage in the face of adversity inspired the settlers in their daily struggles to establish themselves and build a better future for their children.



*Interior of an early Ukrainian pioneer home.
Shevchenko's portrait is on the wall*



Reading Room. Members of the Ukrainian Branch of the Social Democratic Party of Canada, Phoenix, British Columbia, 1907



The Ukrainian Society for Self-Education. Edmonton, Alberta, 1916



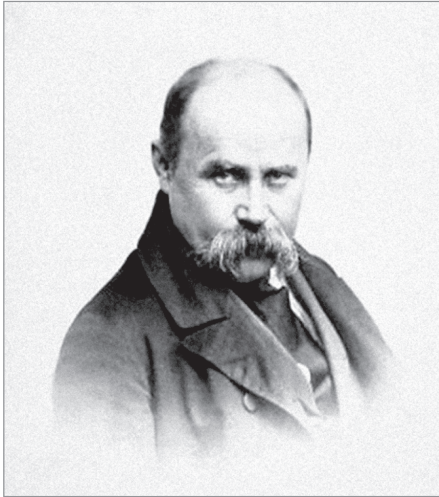
The Shevchenko elementary school in Vita, Manitoba, circa 1910

Organised cultural-educational life established itself early amongst the first Ukrainian immigrants. While much of community life was centered in the various churches, a network of educational reading rooms was becoming well established. A T. H. Shevchenko Reading Room was operating in Winnipeg by 1903 and the first-known Shevchenko concert took place on May 1, 1904.

There have been many changes since the first *Kobzar* was brought to Canada by early immigrants from Ukraine. Their descendants can be found in all walks of life. But the humanity and pride in our traditions, which can be found throughout the works of Taras Shevchenko, continue to inspire us and give us direction in our cultural life.

It should be noted, that from the beginnings of organised life in Canada, despite the diversity of our community, respect for Shevchenko and acknowledgement of his place in the traditions of the Ukrainian people is perhaps the one issue around which all Ukrainians can come together.

SHEVCHENKO'S LEGACY FOR CANADA AND THE WORLD



Photograph of Taras Shevchenko. 1961

TRIBUTE BY A CANADIAN POET

*He was the Ukraine
In body, soul and brain –
As the tree is the root
And the river is the rain,
And so his verses go
Thro' lands he did not know,
Bringing them the light
That he kindled long ago.
We cannot be his peers
But in our smaller spheres
We can make our lives a light
That will set the world aglow.*

J. S. Wallace. Toronto. 1959

HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

More than a writer and an artist, Taras Shevchenko was a poet of the people who wrote powerfully and articulately about social injustice and oppression. His poetry championed the downtrodden and dispossessed and served as a clarion call for the struggle against tyranny. His impassioned call for equality, justice and humanity continues to serve as an inspiration to all who love and cherish freedom.

EDUCATION

Having achieved world renown, his works were published abroad numerous times in thousands of editions and have been translated into over 100 languages. They can be found in libraries, schools, and higher bodies of learning on every continent and in most countries.

INFLUENCE ON DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

With his literary works, Shevchenko laid the foundations for a modern Ukrainian literature and for the development of the modern Ukrainian language. In his relatively short lifetime, Shevchenko wrote some 275 poems, most of epic proportion, and made over 1,000 paintings, drawings and engravings. Not only have his poetry and philosophical ideas inspired the most prominent Ukrainian writers of the 19th and early 20th centuries, but he has also earned his place among the classics of world literature and art.



The National Shevchenko Museum in Kyiv was opened in 1947. It has 24 halls and over 4,000 exhibits. Of these, 800 original works of art are by Taras Shevchenko



Shevchenko monument in Kharkiv erected in 1935

Shevchenko was twice recognized and celebrated by UNESCO as an intellect of world stature. His legacy is today celebrated throughout the world.

MUSIC

Even in Shevchenko's lifetime, folksongs based on his words, were carried from village to village throughout Ukraine by wandering minstrels called kobzars. To date, over 150 composers have written almost 1,000 compositions in all genres to his words – songs, choral symphonies, ballets, and operas.

PATRIOTISM

A talented genius and principled patriot of his beloved Ukraine, his poetry was greatly influential in the development of Ukrainian national consciousness.

IMMIGRATION

The first Ukrainian immigrants to Canada knew Shevchenko well and many brought his immortal *Kobzar* with them, relying on its words to help them overcome the hardships they were to find in this new land. His writings gave the newcomers strength in the face of adversity and seemingly insurmountable obstacles; his words gave them dignity in the light of discrimination and instilled in them a social consciousness. Libraries, public schools, settlements, cultural groups and centres were named after Shevchenko.

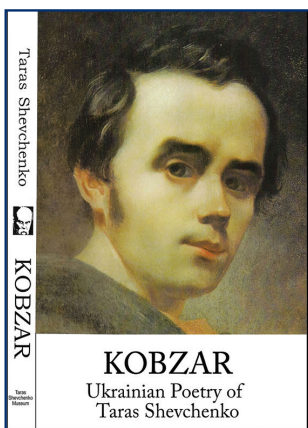
MONUMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS

There are 1,384 monuments to Shevchenko throughout the world. The first on Canadian soil was erected in 1951 near Oakville, Ontario. Today, there are eleven Shevchenko museums in existence.

The Shevchenko Museum
is proud to present

KOBZAR

in Ukrainian, English and French to celebrate
the 200th Anniversary of Taras Shevchenko's birth.



This 230-page book of 50 poems by
Shevchenko with colour illustrations
is available for purchase at the
Shevchenko Museum

1604 Bloor Street West Toronto, ON M6P 1A7
Tel: 416-534-8662; www.shevchenko.ca

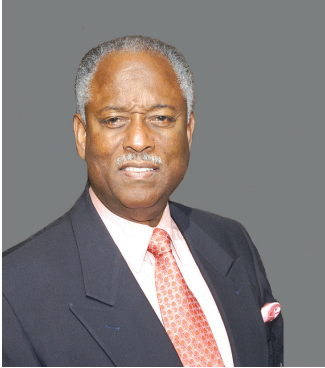


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Congratulations

Grant Morris Associates Ltd. has served as the Planning and Development Consultant for the Taras Shevchenko Museum for over 15 years.

It is therefore with pleasure that we take this opportunity to congratulate the Museum on the re-opening of its new well designed headquarters at 1604 Bloor Street West, Toronto.

Best Wishes

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Grant Morris". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Grant" being more prominent.

Dr. Grant Morris
Dip. Eng. Tech., B.A., M.Ed., LLD (honoris causa)
Planning & Development Consultant

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Тараса
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Торонто, Канада

A small, dark-colored statue of Taras Shevchenko, seated in a chair, facing slightly to the right. The statue is positioned between the Russian and English text of the publisher's name.

Taras
Shevchenko
Museum
Toronto, Canada

website: www.shevchenko.ca
email: shevchenkomuseum@bellnet.ca

