



# UKRAINIAN ART CENTER NEWS

## THE UNSTOPPABLE FORCE OF THE ARTS

Issue No. 11

Summer 2021

### UAC REOPENED WITH THE CELEBRATION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF UKRAINE'S INDEPENDENCE

Dear Members, Supporters and Friends,

I am sharing with you the prominent date and the ensuing celebratory event of the 30th Anniversary of Ukraine's Independence.



After so many months of pandemic shut-down, Ukrainian Art Center officially reopened with a special art exhibition dedicated to the successful Independence Day concert, VIP reception and program organized by Ukrainian Culture Center of Los Angeles on August 22, 2021. UCC's beautiful auditorium was filled to capacity with guests who have endured this long period of inactivity and were ready to enjoy and participate in this joyful celebration.

Many VIP guests who were Counsels of their respective countries together with Ukraine's Counsel General from

San Francisco Dmytro Kushneruk and a huge throng of local attendees enjoyed the concert program under the direction of our Cultural Directors Victoria Kuzina and Asya Gorsky including the energetic Kalyna Dancers, several nostalgic and delightful singers and other artists. The success of the program was received with unending applause. Comments from the VIP Counsels and their partners were extremely positive regarding the collection



of traditional folk art as well as the fine art exhibited, all connected by Ukrainian themes but with different styles and periods of history. Not to mention the raves regarding the beautiful hall, saying that they do not have anything comparable.



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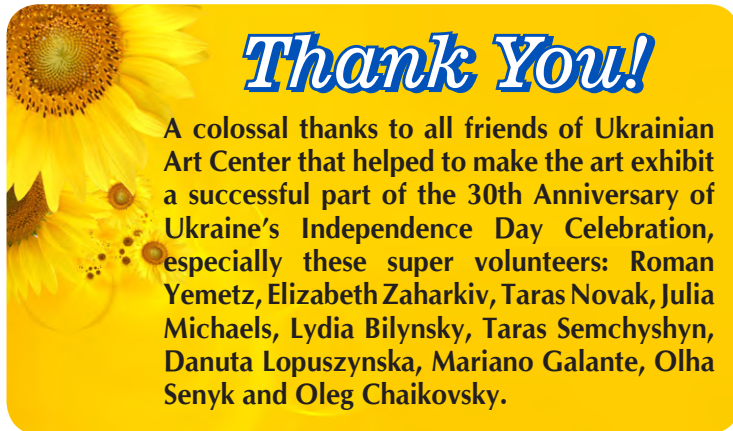
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Great appreciation to all organizers, artists, vendors and the tireless volunteers that made the celebration of this historic day a huge success!

Please check our website [www.ukrainianartcentersocal.org](http://www.ukrainianartcentersocal.org) or Facebook and Instagram for many more photos.

My best to everyone and sincere appreciation for your continued support.

*Daria Chaikovsky, UAC - President*



**Thank You!**

A colossal thanks to all friends of Ukrainian Art Center that helped to make the art exhibit a successful part of the 30th Anniversary of Ukraine's Independence Day Celebration, especially these super volunteers: Roman Yemetz, Elizabeth Zaharkiv, Taras Novak, Julia Michaels, Lydia Bilynsky, Taras Semchyshyn, Danuta Lopuszynska, Mariano Galante, Olha Senyk and Oleg Chaikovsky.

## GREETINGS ALL GIVING TUESDAY SUPPORTERS & FRIENDS

With 60 days until the biggest giving day, UAC is getting ready and sharing this promo.

UAC is urging all of our supporters and friends to take action on November 30th for **GIVING TUESDAY**

**GIVING TUESDAY**



**DAYS UNTIL WE GIVE**

## WELCOME OLENA KALISH TO UAC

Hello to everyone, my name is Olena, and I came to Los Angeles from Kyiv. I continue getting my major in psychology in one of the Ukrainian universities and working remotely as a representative of a contemporary art gallery in Kyiv.



Art came into my life quite spontaneously. At the age of 20, I started working at the Museum of Kyiv as an exhibition consultant and coordinator. At this place, I got a chance to work with the most prominent artists of independent Ukraine: Ivan Marchuk, Anatolii Kryvolap, and others.

The most powerful impression I got, when Ola

Rondiak – without exaggeration one of the most influential artists of the Ukrainian community – had her solo show in the museum. I was struck by the fact that the American-born woman with Ukrainian roots had such a strong connection with her ancestors' past, as well as the deepest feeling of Ukrainian history, culture, and wounds, because of all-known circumstances.

Work at the museum gave me important experience, knowledge, and desire to pursue an art occupation. After two years, I left this job and worked as an exhibition guide and consultant at the gallery of art and culture center ARTERIA. There I also did inventory and cataloged an art collection that contained 4,000+ objects.

After that and now on, I work at Kirisenko Art Gallery, which specializes in Ukrainian contemporary art, and promotes a group of famous artists and also young ones worldwide. The goals I aspire the most here, in the United States, are to show Ukrainian art in all its diversity, beauty, and topicality, to make it recognizable and acknowledged, to demonstrate that it is more than worth being on the international art stage.

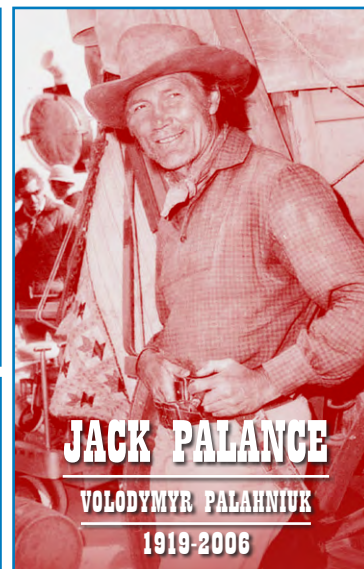
One of the main tools for this cultural mission is to write about art, in which I was engaged while working in Kyiv. To be clear, I chose a psychology major for one simple observation: it is quite connected with art, helping to analyze and understand it better. Besides, knowledge of psychology is useful while working with clients. In addition, I find art therapy a very interesting practice and would like to try it in the future.

I am grateful to God for this marvelous opportunity – to try my best in the United States and to become a part of the Ukrainian community. Ukraine lives in my heart and I feel the responsibility of remembering where I came from and what I can do for my motherland following my vocation.

# PLEASE SUPPORT US!

JOIN US AS A MEMBER AND VOLUNTEER - CONTACT US TODAY!

LET US CONTINUE TO BRING TO YOU THESE BEAUTIFUL EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS



Donations can be made at: [www.UkrainianArtCenterSoCal.org](http://www.UkrainianArtCenterSoCal.org)

The Ukrainian Art Center is a federally recognized 501c3 and your donation is 100% tax deductible



## SPOTLIGHT ON KHRYSTYNA SHEVCHENKO

*Recently I had an opportunity to meet and interview a young Ukrainian multi-media journalist Khrystyna Shevchenko who opened Voice of America news bureau in Los Angeles. Voice of America is an American international broadcaster. It is the largest and oldest US funded broadcaster that produces digital, TV, and radio content.*

*My objective for this interview was to learn from a journalist that is usually the one with the questions.*

### THE ROAD TO JOURNALISM

As a young girl I was very fond of writing and reading, especially Ukrainian literature. I wrote very many essays on varied topics and one professor told me “z tebe budut liudy” - “you will become a person”. And in the tenth grade I started writing articles that were especially interesting to me on the prevailing corruption. When I was fifteen, I won a prize for an article and that encouraged me to help people expose the truth in a country that needed it. Journalism was a great fit for me, Khrystyna explained. I studied at Ivan Franko University in Lviv, Ukraine.

### THE POWER OF INFLUENCE

I was influenced on my journey by an essayist and oral historian Svetlana Alexievich who wrote about her experiences interviewing many regular folks during the challenging times of World War II. Alexievich would describe all the traumas that these families experienced. As a young person at the age of sixteen, and just entering university, Alexievich was the inspiration and an example of how one can expose the truth. I continued my interest in literature and devoured as many books as I could on varied topics from Ivan Franko, Vasyl Stus, Ukrainian movie director Les Kurbas.

### THE KEY TO INSPIRATION

When I became independent and was on my own, I received a recommendation from a friend to work at a new channel ZIK. The new project “Provocation” was very exciting. Journalists became secret agents uncovering corruption in all its phases. As an example, I would expose hospital’s false diagnosis where tea proved to have white cells. Sometimes these shoots became dangerous and we had guardians, but not always. I was the creator of the project. But, after a disagreement with my boss, I left ZIK and applied to a TV News Channel 24 – Kanal 24. There I did news reporting

on all spheres, social news, politics, and began investigative reporting. I reported on criminal topics, controversial topics such as bribes in schools and hospitals and was sent to Kyiv to start a CAI Pproject – Breaking Hot News in Ukraine. Some examples were when diamonds were found in the prosecutor’s home, prostitution in Kyiv, a Major with criminal background, all scandalous topics.

### REVOLUTION – MAIDAN

This revolution period was the most emotional experience while working in the media. It was all news – working 24/7 – non-stop. I was going from one building shoot to another, filming all the time. “Night of Rage” – was a time of fires, police department on fire, prosecutor’s office on fire, all documents flying in the air, everything burning. Enraged people, an extremely emotional time and I was witness to the rebirth of the nation.

Activists sacrificed all for ideals, with hope for a better future for their children. The Revolution was an awakening for me. People were not driven by money, only ideas and hope for the future of the nation. I was taken over by the spirit and empathy for the country and such high emotions. And, than when the war started in the East and the bodies began to arrive it was unreal. I documented fifteen deaths and cried all the time. Ordinary people, that gave up their ordinary lives and went to fight, and now coming back as corpses. The dignity of the people who honored these fallen soldiers with flowers – such dignity was amazing to watch.

### “FIGHT OR FLIGHT”

The emotions were so extreme, in fight or flight mode all the time. It was surreal. One’s organism could not take it. People were so compassionate – but after some time people began to live their ordinary lives, enjoying themselves, enjoying coffee, and socializing again.

### JOURNALISTS ARE WATCHING DUCKS OF DEMOCRACY

There were many reforms in our new country. I began to cover new topics going to Transcarpathia and covering the destruction of forests or cigarette smuggling, investigating “nashi hroshi” – our money and other old schemes. Journalists became very important in our country. We exposed so many corruption schemes and this is what differentiates Ukraine from Russia. Truthful media, not controlled by oligarchs. For me this was birth of journalism – birth of a nation.



Before the revolution, the government was interfering in media “zakazucha” to benefit certain candidates. But after the revolution the journalists were ready to criticize the government. People in government became more open and after several attempts, government workers started to speak. Organized tours for the press – much was uncovered about the condition of the military such as no decent clothing, no supplies and very scant food. Many courageous journalists exposed the mishandling of soldiers and the army.

## NEW EXPERIENCES

Khrystyna tells me that when she came back to Lviv, she was doing productions on channel 24. I worked on documentaries, which was my favorite format and function. During 2016 and the rebirth of patriotism, everyone was talking about why we have certain ideals and understanding our identity. One project was interviewing veterans of UPA and the women that shared their stories of life in UPA during World War II.

We made a film on Holodomor that became very known in Ukraine. Very emotional were stories of children who passed on the tragic circumstances of their families living during this period, people starving and dying. There was a ninety year old woman from Zhytomyr who told me about neighbors that turned in people, turncoats who were Soviet cooperators.

While I was shooting (filming) families with children and how they survived in the war zone, and how those children could recognize each artillery sound, they knew every firearm sound. These families lived under such stressful conditions.

I interviewed and reported on the multiple movements of refugees from Crimea, Donets and Luhansk, who relocated to Kyiv and even to the western Lviv. They were opening businesses, restaurants, cafes and settling down to live. The new country offered stability, collective psychology of capitalism, processes that were difficult for the people to accept and understand. The President of Ukraine Poroshenko was needed at that time.

## NEW CHAPTER BEGINS

When I relocated to US, my biggest dream was to make movies. I was passionate about films. So when the opportunity presented itself, I applied to VOICE OF AMERICA. It was an

ideal fit because of my extensive journalism experience. I became the first representative in California. Voice of America is very popular in Ukraine, as are all the stories about Ukrainians who achieved success in America. People in Ukraine love stories from America because they idealize America, just as I did.

Our team in Washington, headed by Myroslava Gongadze approves all proposals and stories. There is no pressure whatsoever to post or deny stories on any topic. I cover all breaking news, the recent fires in California, Black Lives Matter, Ukrainian community events in California and elsewhere. While covering protests in Santa Monica, I was injured by an unknown assailant requiring surgery on my foot.

Recently I filmed a story about Lydia Bodnar-Balahutrak, a Ukrainian artist living in Texas who created a compelling 26 mixed-media artworks to honor the victims of Holodomor. And coincidentally UAC did a virtual presentation of this exhibit for Holodomor commemoration from November thru end of December 2020 here in LA.

## UKRAINE HAS CHANGED

This year, August 24th 2021, Ukrainians in Ukraine and diaspora in all countries that Ukrainians find themselves, celebrated the 30th Anniversary of Ukraine’s Independence with great events, concerts receptions and programming in every corner of the world. I hear from Khrystyna that she is very positive about the future of independent Ukraine. I have great hopes for the future of our nation! Ukrainians are amazing people, I know that patriotism unites our people, no matter what language you speak. The younger generation, although Russian speaking, is united by the spirit of patriotism, by literature and music. I think everyone

should learn Ukrainian, but we should be more understanding and compassionate. We should find ideas that unite us – Independent Ukraine. Generation made the change, being influenced by Ukrainian festivals, young rock, contemporary literature, films and theater.

## KHRYSTYNA’S MANIFESTO

I am very excited about the future of my life and film career. My journalistic career is not in vain, so many stories and knowledge which will influence future projects. I follow Viktor Frankl’s philosophy that “life has meaning”. I feel alive, I strive to know myself better, to know human beings better and to be able to share stories



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in film, in order to be able to penetrate in depth the human psychology and share it with others in order for people to know themselves better.



#### SYNOPSIS

*I am very impressed with the depth of Khrystyna's knowledge, enthusiasm and energy. That tells me that if her thinking is representative of the young generation, than Ukraine has a great future.*

*On behalf of Ukrainian Art Center, I thank you for your willingness to openly share your life story and your road to becoming the professional multi-media journalist. Thank you and good luck in all your future endeavors!*

*Daria Chaikovsky*

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*Thank you in advance!*

# HOLODOMOR REMEMBRANCE

FAMINE GENOCIDE OF  
UKRAINIAN PEOPLE  
1932-1933

SUNDAY  
NOVEMBER 14, 2021  
at 2:00pm

at the **Ukrainian Holodomor Memorial**  
at Grand Park in Downtown Los Angeles

Grand Park is located at  
200 N Grand Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90012



# IN MEMORIAM

**With sorrow and eternal memory we acknowledge the passing of members and supporters. They were active community members and provided their experience with useful knowledge.**



**AIDA GONZALES MAKARA 1921-2021**

Aida Gonzales Makara lived a full life to the amazing age of 100, loved by her family and cared for to the end by her loving son Carlos. Aida came from Colombia where she studied to become a nurse and came to America at the young age of 18 to California. In Los Angeles she was smitten by Ivan Makara who emigrated to US for a new life. After a brief courtship, she married Ivan in 1962. Aida was the love of his life and soon he bought a house on Normandy as a wedding gift and the family still lives there to this day.



**VASYLYNA LENA SCHWEJKO 1923-2021**

Vasylyna Schweiko's life's journey took many harsh immigrant detours from Kyiv, than Germany until she arrived in Los Angeles and started her new life. She became active in Ukrainian community and one of the organizers of St. Andrews Orthodox parish. In her fifties Vasylyna picked up the needle and thread and quickly learned the art of cross stitching. She became a master at it. It became her passion. She embroidered 70 blouses, numerous pillows, napkins and runners (rushnyky)..

In April 2013 Vasylyna showcased her collection of exceptional embroideries at the Pysanka Festival organized by UAC and held at UCC. On her 90th birthday in Kyiv, Ukraine in 2013, her embroidery skills came to the attention of Kyiv Post publication and they featured Vasylyna's talents. Vasylyna enjoyed many hobbies and skills like gardening and cooking. She kept abreast of all the happenings in Ukraine as well as the communities in the states. Her daughter, Valentyna tells me that Vasylyna never forgot her heritage and her love for Ukraine.



**STEPHANIA SHUMNY 1928-2021**

As a young girls from Stryj, Ukraine, Stephania emigrated as a displaced person to America in 1947, became a proud American citizen and was very active in the Ukrainian community. She was a long standing parishioner of Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church in Hollywood, it's Sodality and for many years a member of Kobzar, the leading Ukrainian choir in Los Angeles when in the early years, was directed by Volodymyr Bozhyk, a renown bandurist and choral conductor. Stephania was surrounded by a loving family of three sons, Daniel, Roman and George and grandchildren with their families. She built a solid platform for her family to fulfill her American dream.



**ZENON A. ZACHAR 1933-2021**

From the words of Zenon's son Andy on Zenon's passing May 24, 2021. "My dad was a good man. I will always remember that he lived his life never having a bad thing to say of anyone, and would always offer or volunteer when someone needed help." The Zachar family were longtime parishioners of NBVM Catholic Church in LA and Zenon was active in many Ukrainian organizations such as the Engineers Society of LA, CAAU, PLAST, UCC and a devoted supporter and helper of UAC. When the Zachar's relocated to Michigan, it was a great loss to the community.



**MARIA BUCHYNSKY 1924-2021**

We are sharing another passing of a very active community member, who in her younger years belonged to several social, political and religious organizations and was a very long standing parishioner of Nativity of Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church as well as St. Mary's Sodality at that parish. Maria Buchynsky was well known in the Ukrainian community and we remember fondly her cheerful personality and smile.

**Eternal Memory! Вічна пам'ять!**

## 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. Its 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. Chaikovsky 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, Magestic Woman-Lesia Ukrainka, 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](mailto:ukrainianartcenter@gmail.com) | **Tel:** 818-635-8999  
**Website:** [ukrainianartcentersocal.org](http://ukrainianartcentersocal.org) | **Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/UkrainianArtCenterLA](http://www.facebook.com/UkrainianArtCenterLA) "Ukrainian Art Center Los Angeles"

## 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 is available 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:** Daria Chaikovsky, Editor in Chief; Olenka Krupa Griffies, Editor; Petro Brecko, Designer

**Contributors:** Olenka Krupa Griffies, Daria Chaikovsky, Luba Keske; **Printing:** Petro Brecko, Printer/Pretation

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