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8

ways to fake Ukrainian

The Magazine of Ukrainian Things

Scythian
Gold

Andy's
solo
music

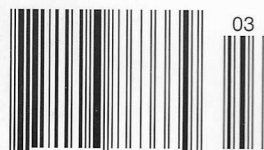
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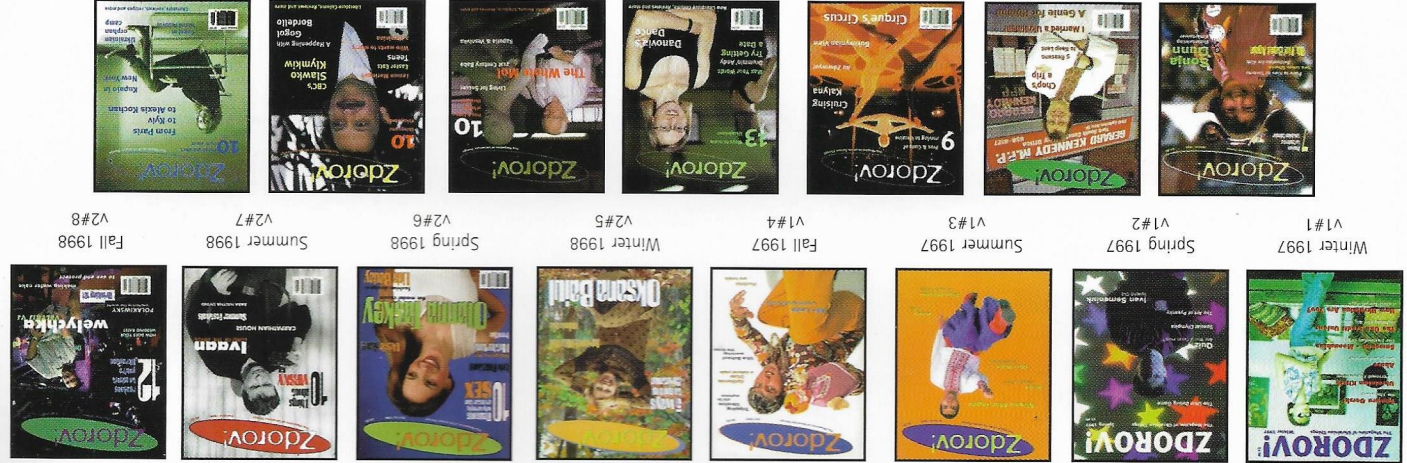
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what's inside...
what's inside...

Zdorov!

The Magazine of Ukrainian Things

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Zdorov!

The Magazine of Ukrainian Things

Volume 4, Number 16 October 1, 2000

editor

Nestor Gula

associate editors

Taras Gula,
Andrij Kudla Wynnyckyj

art director

Christine Kurys, RGD

circulation manager

Agata Koloda

technical guru

Orest Dorosh

contributors

Marko Andryczyk, Aleksandra Basarab,
Kathryn Gaitens, Roma Ihnatowycz,
Maya Zorya Johnson, Martyn Lotowsky,
Heather Olivetz, Marcia Ostashewski,
Sophia Peniak, Rosemary Woodel

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Zdorov!: The Magazine of Ukrainian Things,
12 Lorahill Rd. Toronto, Ontario, M8Z 3M6 CANADA
phone:(416) 236-2346
email: editor@izdorov.com
www.izdorov.com

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Editorial

Editorials are always the last things to be written. It is a summary of everything that happened and everything that was written in the issue. Usually it is because the editor has not had time to sit down and write the editorial, there is always some pressing issue to be dealt with. Editorials are written under the gun, with the deadline looming large; in the last possible minute; When everything else is done, more or less, and the editor is able to close the door, physical and mental, to outside distractions and blast out what he/she thinks is the cornerstone of the magazine.

The deadline to have this issue out has been missed because of reasons too numerous to mention. The newest deadline is right around the corner. Actually just down that short corridor in front of me. I'm ignoring the Olympics and glad that autumn has descended on the Northern Hemisphere because there are fewer distractions outside. This Fall issue of *Zdorov!* has six reviews (three books and three CDs.) This is as many reviews as we have ever run. Singling out any review subject over another is not fair because all these items are interesting. However of particular interest are Paris to Kyiv's newest release (Alexis Kochan, the force behind Paris to Kyiv was the cover story of the last issue), Myrna Kostash's latest book and the *Partyzany* CD from Taras Chubaj and Skriabin. But then again Lesia Herasymchuk's CD is interesting as is Ania Savage's travelogue and the Ukrainian travel guide.

Our main feature is about Andy Stochansky, whose CD we reviewed in our Winter 2000 issue. Currently he is touring North America. As I write this he is playing a show in Halifax, Nova Scotia. As you read this I don't know where he'll be. Check the dates of his tour on his Web site which you can find as part of the article.

There is lot's of good stuff in these pages.

Enjoy!

As always you can reach us at...

Zdorov!
12 Lorahill Rd.
Toronto, Ontario
M8Z 3M6 Canada
www.izdorov.com
editor@izdorov.com
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Cover photograph of Andy Stochansky by Kathryn Gaitens



Dear Zdorov,

Congratulations on a well done issue. The summer 2000 issue was one of the best. The story on Alexis Kochan was well done. I have *Variances* and am looking forward to getting *Prairie Nights and Peacock Feathers*. I hope this will be her "breakout" recording.

I'm writing about the tone of the last few editorials. I detect a note of uncertainty in the editors position on the future of *Zdorov!* Both the Spring and Summer issues mention the questionable future of this magazine. Whether the problem is financial or of a different nature I hope the editorial staff figures out the problems and *Zdorov!* survives. It would be a shame to see it disappear.

Take care,

John Kravchuk
Columbus, Ohio

Dear Zdorov,

What's with Mr. Gula's "Final Phrases" in the summer 2000 issue? I mean, how obscure can you get? Adrian Belew walking in a strange New York versus Mr. Bilozir sitting in a cafe in his home city.

I too listen to and like King Crimson. I don't know Mr. Bilozir's music. Why the parallel then? The conclusion that you draw, a dangerous place, is a very shallow one. Yes Ukraine is a dangerous place. So is the United States, Canada and Europe. The whole world is dangerous, in fact. It is dangerous to draw far-reaching conclusions from the senseless murder of one individual. Paranoia is very destructive and robs humans of the sense of reason.

Mixing cool, borrowed, lyrics in a paranoid text is the proof of this.

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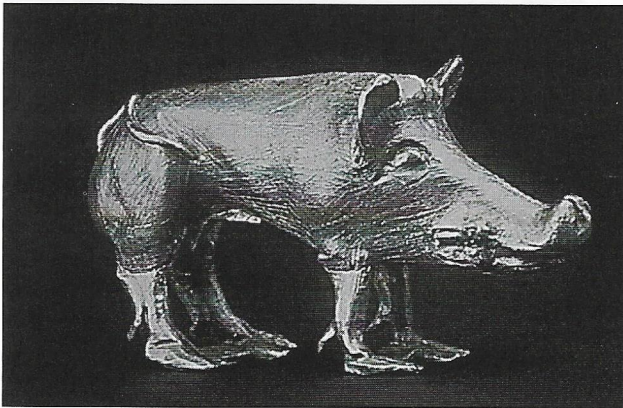
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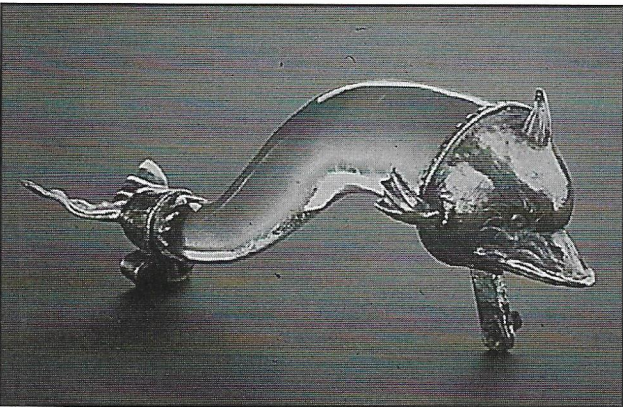
by Nestor Gula

They are coming to Canada.

The most ancient and treasured objects in Ukraine, gold objects created by the ancient Scythians, are cross-



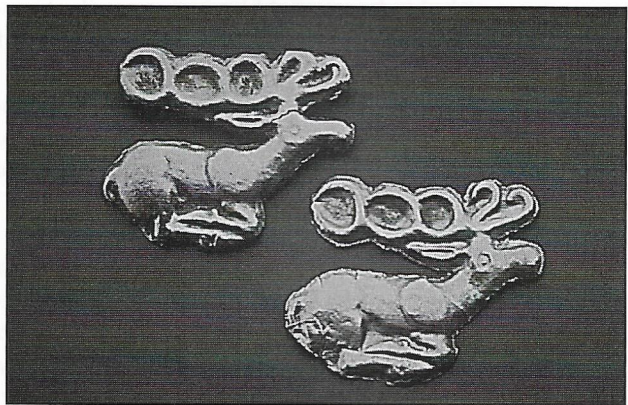
Boar — 4th century BC. Gold and silver



Dolphin Fibula — Late 1st to early 2nd century AD (from the Sarmatian period). Gold, bronze and rock crystal.

ing the Atlantic and are going to be exhibited at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM).

The Scythians lived on the Ukrainian steppes in the eighth century BC. They were primarily a nomadic people who had no written language but created extraordinary works of art in gold. The best known symbol of Scythian art are the stags pictured below, but these will be just some of the 171 objects that will be exhibited at the ROM.



Stag Plaques — Late 7th to early 6th century BC. Gold.

This particular exhibit has been a long time coming. Several years ago, *Treasures of Ukraine* was supposed to come to the ROM but that project fell through. This exhibit, titled *Legacy in Gold: Scythian Treasures from Ancient Ukraine* opens at the ROM on February 18th, 2001 and will wrap up on May 6.

Photo by Bruce White courtesy Museum of Historical Treasures of Ukraine. Provided by the Royal Ontario Museum.

Paul Kolodij

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8 ways to Fake Ukrainianianess

1. Take all the Ukrainian holidays (make some up if you are not sure)
2. Drink to excess (well, at least brag about it)
3. Find fault with everything
4. Hate everything
5. Blame all your problems and shortcomings on your neighbours
6. Have a loud opinion on all subjects (especially ones you know nothing about)
7. Be outwardly belligerent, inwardly submissive
8. Be confused

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The great Ukrainian camping debate

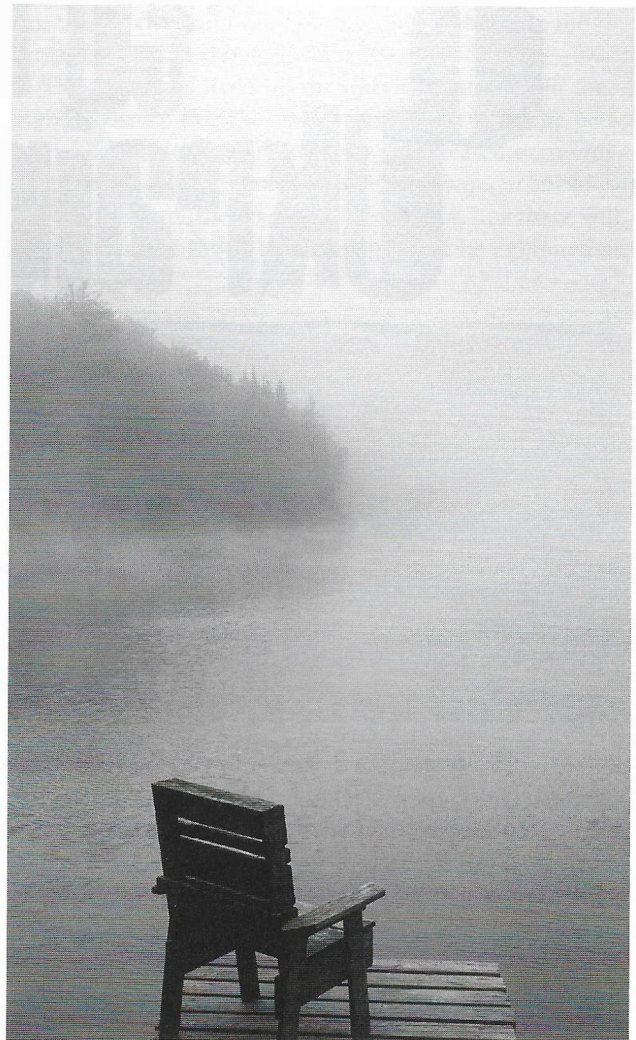
by Heather Olivetz


This summer, we took our 15-month-old daughter camping. Yurko and I felt it was time to awaken her five senses to the wonders of nature. From savouring the sooty texture and flavour of scrambled eggs cooked over an open fire, to hearing the gentle snort of the large beast pawing at our tent at three in the morning, we wanted Adia to know the adventure that is the great outdoors. And so we joined our friends Christopher and Carole and their kids for a long week-end camping trip.

Adia had little trouble adjusting to life in the bush. In fact, she couldn't believe her good fortune the first night we settled down to sleep.

She eschewed the makeshift bed we devised for her: a sheepskin rug lining a shallow container used for storing rolls of gift wrap. Without a crib to contain her, Adia spent two hours literally bouncing off the tent walls before collapsing in a heap in the middle of my sleeping bag. While all two feet, two inches of her luxuriated on six feet of self-inflating pad, guess where I ended up spending most of the first night? For the record, it is possible for a grown woman to sleep in 29.5 inches worth of space.

Camping was tougher on her folks than on Adia, and not just because of the logistics of dragging a toddler through the woods. Mostly, our weekend away was an eye-opening experience in cultural differences. Christopher and Carole are not Ukrainian; they're just regular white folk. And regular white folk don't camp like you or I. The campground programs we attended together over the weekend – such as the communal



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sing-a-long by the campfire – were completely foreign to me. Christopher and Carole also introduced us to the wonder of fireside treats; they showed us how to add a bit of heat and elevate the humble marshmallow to an epicurean delight.

For Christopher and Carole, silliness is as much a part of camping as mosquitoes and partially cooked macaroni. Thanks to the Ukrainian scouting organization to which I belonged, the camping experiences of my youth revolved around self-improvement. Hence we could be found marching for hours in our non-natural fibre uniforms and speaking *po nashomu...* or else! The songs we sang were more often about dying in battle (with smiles on our faces because we had laid down our life for the homeland, of course) than about eggs, eggs with little hairy legs. We never once toasted marshmallows around the nightly *vatra*. Now, many years later, I looked around the bright, shining faces of all these English kids having fun, and I felt ripped off.

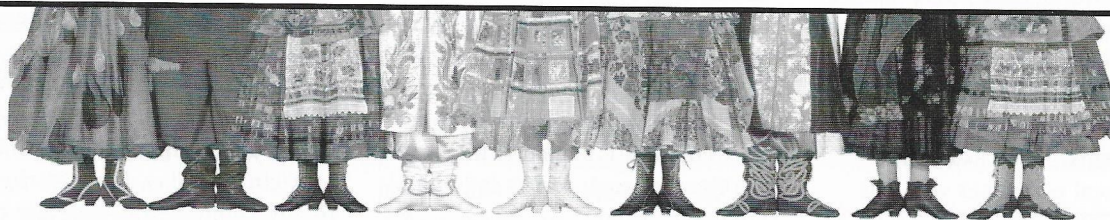
Perhaps I had the misfortune of joining this particular scouting organization when its *kommanda* was made up of a particularly dour and earnest bunch of hard-line Ukrainian patriots. Maybe we young'uns were spoiled brats, made soft by the luxuries that sur-

rounded us. But surely one evening toasting marshmallows and singing nonsensical songs wasn't going to send the Muscovite hordes scampering across North America willy-nilly.

If we do decide to send Adia to *tabir*, I think we should also expose her to the "English" side of camping, for balance. That way she'll learn to sing Ukrainian songs of loss and past glory in perfect harmony with her fellow campers, but she'll also know all the words to "Poor little bug on the wall," and "Herman the Worm." After Ukie boot camp, she'll be able to build an engineering marvel of a campfire (lit with only one match, thank you very much). But she'll also experience the sticky pleasures of eating banana boats – a gooey mass of sliced bananas, marshmallows and chocolate chips wrapped in tin foil packets and cooked over the coals of that perfectly built campfire.

And who knows, maybe one day she'll drag her toddler all over God's green acre in a box meant for holding wrapping paper, too.

Heather is thinking about opening a restaurant dedicated to that versatile foodstuff, the marshmallow.



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Unplugged: The Ukrainian Alternate Romance

Lesia Herasymchuk & Korolivski Zaitsi

Independent release

9 Tracks

Minutes 37:42

Those lucky enough to have stumbled upon any of the few rock clubs that exist today in Ukraine (such as Kyiv's Barvy or Lviv's Lialka and Picasso) have had the chance to see contemporary Ukrainian musicians play live in a setting more intimate than that offered by stadium mega-shows. Although much of Ukraine's populace has accepted stadium concerts as the norm, there is still a discernable group of music fans who demand a more stimulating concert experience.

Lialka is a club located in the basement of Lviv's Puppet Theater (thus the name). In the last five years, the venue has hosted shows for musicians playing various styles of music (rock, jazz, punk). Lialka has showcased bands from Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and North America but most frequently Ukrainian bands, especially Lviv's local talents.

One local performer who has played Lialka's stage numerous times throughout the years is Lesia Herasymchuk. Her band, Dragline, made a name for themselves in the mid-1990s by playing a mix of hard rock, new wave and ska. Fronted by a confident, charismatic woman, the band stood out in Lviv's male-dominated rock scene. Today Lesia has emerged with a new band, Korolivs'ki Zaitsi, and a new sound. Although still primarily a rock band, Zaitsi have an alter-ego presence as an acoustic, string quartet-based combo. This unplugged version of the band offers complex musical arrangements with subtle nuances that are

especially suited for a performance in an intimate setting. *Unplugged: The Ukrainian Alternate Romance* is a CD of Korolivs'ki Zaitsi recorded live during a concert at the Lialka club. It is the first recording of a show at this important venue to be released as a recording.

The album's sound presents a string quartet complimented by acoustic guitar, bass and percussion, all backing Herasymchuk's elegant, powerful voice. Herasymchuk's songs offer beautiful melodies that occasionally venture into challenging structural changes. A former student of Lviv's Conservatory of Music, Herasymchuk arranged intricate string patterns that highlight the enchantment of the play between dissonance and harmony. Her voice stands up to these complex compositions and is the uniting force of each song's individual temperament.

The choruses in the songs "Iluziji" (Illusions) and "Slova" (Words) immediately stick in your memory. Herasymchuk is a master of alternating catchy choruses with short instrumentations that elevate her songs beyond mere pleasant pop melodies. The CD's best song, "Ptytsi Zeleni" (Green Birds) is a case-in-point. "Rais'ki ptytsi" (Birds of Paradise), although alluringly tinged with Middle-Eastern influences, seems a bit forced in its attempt to combine classical and rock music sensibilities. Fortunately, the band bounces back with the enchanting "Zalyshyla Hory" (She Left the

Mountains) and the bouncy "Prosty-Lechu" (Forgive me, I'm off).

Herasymchuk uses texts by Ukrainian poets (Oles', Sosiura, Ukrainka, Tychyna, Kostenko and Debelianov) in painting a rather psychedelic portrait of the mysterious world of nature, full of magic and mysticism. The imagery presented in Lesia Ukrainka's play *Lisova Pisnya* approximates the collective feel of the lyrics. As such, they perfectly complement the enticing complexities of the music.

Unplugged is one of the most talked-about albums in Ukraine's rock circles today. Herasymchuk has finally committed to tape her considerable and unique talents. By making her first CD a live recording of intricate songs, which also documents the existence of one of Ukraine's premier live venues, she demonstrates her innovation and guts. The sound quality of the recording is remarkable considering Lialka's cavernous sound and outdated recording equipment. This CD really is a unique accomplishment and will be appreciated by those who enjoy being challenged yet enchanted by the music that they listen to.

reviewed by Marko Andryczyk



Nashi Partyzany (Our Partisans)

Taras Chubaj and Skriabin
 КАРПАК CD
 10 tracks
 CD and cassette

Nashi Partyzany (Our Partisans) is the latest collaboration between two of Ukraine's most popular musical groups: Andrij Kuz'menko and Serhij Hera from Skriabin and Taras Chubaj from Plach Jeremiji. Skriabin is a keyboard-based combo that made their mark in Ukraine by offering 80s-flavored, bittersweet, alt-pop tunes with quirky, introspective vocals. Chubaj is counted among Ukraine's most recognizable musicians due to his work in Ne Zhurys', his solo performances and as Plach's frontman. Both bands hail from western Ukraine but are now primarily based in Kyiv.

Two years ago, these musicians teamed up to record modern versions of a few traditional Ukrainian Christmas carols and termed their project *Nashe Rizdvo* (Our Christmas).

Nashi Partyzany expands this idea to a full album and presents their interpretations of nine classic Ukrainian partisan songs. As was the case with the Christmas carols, these songs feature Chubaj singing and playing guitar backed by Skriabin's keyboard-produced rhythms and textures. Diaspora Ukrainians are probably familiar with most of these songs ("Hey-hu hey-ha," "Povijav viter stepovyj," [A steppe wind blew] "Ked' my pryshla karta" [Waiting for that card]) but will find these arrangements to be new.

After a short introduction, the album starts out with a chuggy, distortion-guitar-driven "Hey-hu hey-ha." As may be the case with

other songs on this album, purists will be surprised to hear Chubaj singing a slightly different text than they are used to.

Side A closes with "Ne plachte, ne zhurit'sja," (Don't cry, don't worry) the album's most entertaining song. Here, Chubaj and the Skriabin guys simulate Ukrainian guerrillas sitting around singing in the forest at night as they are visited by unwanted guests. Kuz'menko and Hera put their studio prowess to good use in providing various sounds, samples and a Beck-like keyboard riff.


Side B features "Ked'my" with a signature Skriabin keyboard intro and Chubaj's rather straight-Ukrainian delivery of the Lemko classic. The album closes with the beautifully melancholic "Bude nam z toboiu shcho zhadaty" (We'll have something to remember).

As a whole, the album is a great listen, full of cool ideas and excellent production. Unfortunately, Kuz'menko (Skriabin's vocalist) doesn't sing. It would have been interesting to hear his more subdued vocal delivery alongside Chubaj's powerful voice. It may seem strange or cliché to some Diaspora Ukrainians to hear these versions of songs they grew up with. *Nashi Partyzany* will undoubtedly be criticized for messing with the classics. However, it is important to remember that these songs were banned in the Soviet Union, and

much of Ukraine's youth are unfamiliar with this period of Ukrainian history and the culture that it spawned. For that reason alone, *Nashi Partyzany* is an important album that offers a fresh spin on Ukrainian standbys that you can sing along to, and even shock your Ukrainian school teachers with.

reviewed by Marko Andryczyk



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Reviews

Return to Ukraine

Ania Savage
Texas A&M University Press
251 pages
ISBN: 0-89096-961-7

Return to Ukraine, grabs your attention from the start as author Ania Savage describes a haunting scene in the Carpathian mountains that captures the spirit of the book. The hush-hush excavation of a World War II mass grave shocked Savage, an American journalist, as she learns about the ruthless execution of Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) soldiers by the Communist secret police. For Savage, the landscape suddenly is filled with the courageous spirit of these young and idealistic Ukrainian guerrillas as she muses: "I am a solitary figure on the road – a lone shadow illuminated by the blue light of the full moon. Did UPA couriers climb this hill fifty years ago to deliver messages to the bunkers deep among the conifers?" The flood of nostalgic childhood memories of stories about the heroic deeds of these patriots was the beginning of an unexpected bond between the author and this strange land. Nothing could prepare Savage, who believed to have been firmly grounded in American society, for the emotional and difficult pilgrimage back to her birthplace.

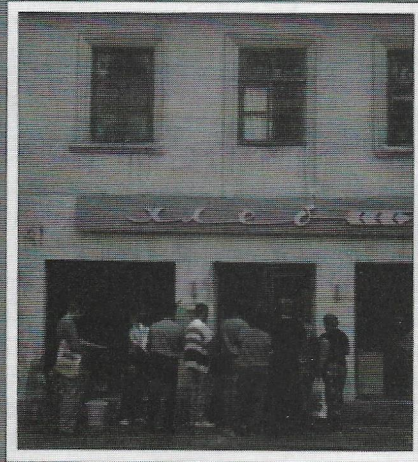
Ania Savage was one of those many Ukrainians forced to flee her bucolic childhood home during World War II along with her family because of the looming threat of the Red Army advance. She grew up in the "charmed safety of the United States" while in her mind, Ukraine slowly turned into a surreal fairy tale where *kniazi* had ruled and Cossacks roamed. Savage returned to Ukraine in 1991 on an

invitation to teach journalism at the Kiyv State University. Before reporting to her assignment, Savage decided to tour various regions of western Ukraine of sentimental importance for her mother and aunt. Just as they were to leave for Ukraine, the August 1991

putsch seized the world's attention, and the USSR began to implode. Besieged with uncertainty, Savage, her mother and aunt doggedly visited each village and region that seemed to be plagued with chaos and disorder. Half a century of Communist rule smashed their naïve perceptions of a homeland, now exotic and foreign. Savage remarks ruefully about the irony of her mother's visit to Ukraine: "She was a stranger, an alien in a land she had called her own her entire life," a remark that rings true for so many other Westerners returning, or visiting for the first time, a country they believed to be their motherland.

Savage describes more than just her encounters with lively characters, beautiful vistas or her absurd day-to-day Ukrainian life. Ukrainians seem to genuinely touch a soft spot in Savage, who before her trip, was an assimilated

Return to Ukraine



ANIA SAVAGE

American, married to a non-Ukrainian, with little to do with the diaspora. The journey that brought her back to Ukraine twice in one year, changed her profoundly in ways not easily explained. Newly independent Ukraine seems to have awoken within her the need to reconcile her identity as an American with her Ukrainian background. Savage asks herself: "What are the ties that bind us to our past... My life experiences and my outlook were American, as were my values, particularly those concerning the freedom of the individual and the equality of women... How was I to make sense of this hodgepodge?" Her predicament is hardly unique. Many visitors to Ukraine return back to the United States or Canada with the same kind of feeling that, regardless of where one

has traveled in the world, this trip was not like any other. There is something special about going to visit a country that you learned about through your upbringing.

Savage excels with humorous light-hearted anecdotes about everyday survival. She admires the spontaneous visits where feasts appear out of nowhere: "One day, there is a knock on the door. I open it to Andrij Ivanovich... He marches into my room, places the bag on the chair by my desk, and begins to set the desktop for a meal..." She writes about mastering the (very undemocratic and un-American) art of bribery to get train tickets and toilet seats. What we could do without, however, are the anecdotes that, on occasion, take on a patronizing America-the-great tone, such as when Savage flashes to an amazed group of Soviet-educated students her Gold American Express Card.

The final few chapters relate Savage's second trip to Ukraine taken shortly after the first one. She taught English in Crimea. Here we find more anecdotes, diary entries and landscape descriptions. At a climactic moment in her journey she finally comes to a very important realization: "One of the reasons I returned to teach in Crimea was because of a quixotic belief that people like me could be conduits of modernity ... at a crucial time in Ukraine's history." *Return to Ukraine* makes a valid comment about certain individuals in the diaspora who view themselves as the true saviors of Ukraine. They aren't. As Savage's instructive story shows, Ukraine doesn't need Western know-it-alls invading its borders.

For everyone who has also made the pilgrimage back to Ukraine, Savage's well told story sounds remarkably familiar yet unforget-

tably unique. Her engaging first-hand account of the abysmal (and scary) state of Ukrainian hospitals has the reader turning the pages quickly while in another fascinating chapter, she makes the rarely heard voices of Ukrainian women talk about the feminist development in Ukraine. Even though the text occasionally gives way to a flat narrative, especially in the chapters dealing with Crimea, the intriguing subject matter, experiences of an immigrant returning to his or her country of origin, is extremely relevant to today's global society where people constantly move around the planet. Undoubtedly, Savage's journalistic instinct for good stories has shaped a compelling book where diaspora's myth-like Ukraine becomes a reality.

reviewed by Sophia Peniak

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Open
 DIALOGUE

Reviews

The Next Canada

Myrna Kostash

327 pages

McClelland and Stewart Inc.

ISBN: 0-7710-4561-1

Images and stories of police battling young people have become more commonplace in the last 10 years. In Canada we had Clayquot Sound, APEC, and a few bust-ups at Ontario's legislature. In the States Canadians figured prominently in the WTO protests, also known as the Battle in Seattle.

Yes, some young people are making millions of dollars and participating in the new world order, but others are restless; Myrna Kostash's *The Next Canada* aims to help us gain a better understanding of these Canadian 25-35-year-olds and the direction in which they may nudge Canadian society.

Kostash calls it a search. The result is over 300 pages of stories with analysis and commentary by Kostash and other writers and thinkers as the glue that holds them together. The stories are based on "hundreds" of hours of interviews with that generation's activists, from all walks of life. Through it all Kostash is trying to find out what makes them tick, and how are they different from those a little longer in the tooth.

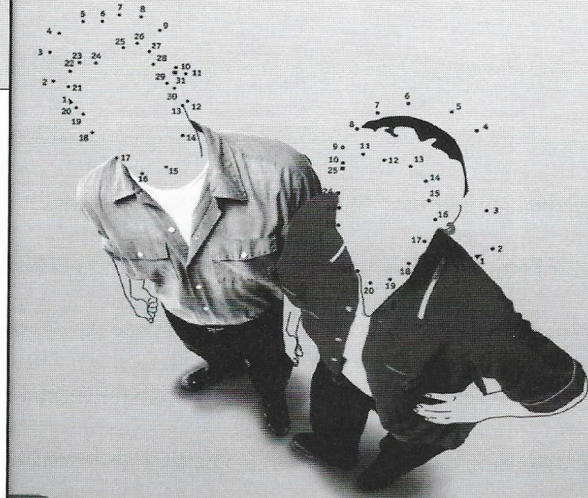
Most intriguing to me is their ability to take on multiple, seemingly incompatible identities without batting an eye. Kostash tackles this and other discoveries with enthusiastic zeal, and seems to enjoy telling the reader about situations in which she is the one bemused by it all.

Her openness and ability to tell a story make the book a good read. Politically, she was fascinated by the same things that I was: the MAI victory, the playfully radical Reclaim the Streets events (one of which took place outside the window of Subway Academy Two, the alternative school where I teach), APEC, and the various self-published 'zines popping up all over the place, to name just a few. She spices up discussions of these with thought provoking gems, like Mark Kingwell's: "Happiness is a function of engagement in political and ethical action" or Marshal McLuhan's: "Canada is the only country in the world that knows how to live without an identity."

Though Kostash calls it a search, through it all I had a sense that she was actually on a mission. She was serving up a beautiful knuckleball, that dippy doodled in all kinds of unexpected trajectories, but ultimately she had a fairly good idea where it was to end up.

Kostash is unabashedly an Old Lefty feminist, as she

"Every 5 or 6 years, Kostash produces an uncompromisingly original book." - Stan Persky



THE NEXT CANADA

IN SEARCH OF OUR FUTURE NATION

MYRNA KOSTASH

calls herself; she is also a Canadian nationalist and strongly connected to her Ukrainian roots. For her, as for me, the neo-conservative forces riding on the backs of global capitalist power pose a real threat to the Canada (with all its blemishes) where these ideals stood a chance. To illustrate: public space is disappearing, too few people care about the CBC, immigrant voices condemn multiculturalism and open immigration policies, the education and health care systems are being sucked dry and privatized...

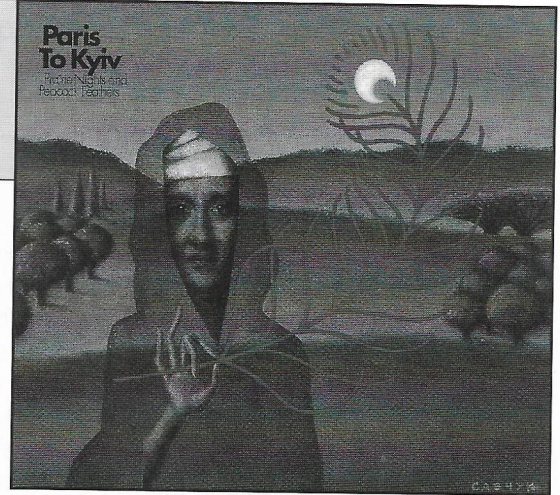
However, given this passion and the fascinating journey, Kostash's conclusion is tepid to say the least. What she finds in her subjects is a continuity with the politics of her generation "in which ... the public interest dominated over the private." Don't get too excited though, for even she admits that this continuity is there only to the extent that the public space "has not been completely evacuated." And where does she see evidence for this ringing endorsement? In her subjects' sense that our public health care system is a foundation for their Canadian identity. One in which we (Canadians) take care of the little guy, in which community is essential.

No, there is no orgasmic send off. The knuckleball journey then becomes the point of the story - and I must say that it was good enough for me!

reviewed by Taras Gula

Prairie Nights and Peacock Feathers

Paris to Kyiv
Olesia Records
12 tracks
Time: 57:14



If the aim of artistic endeavours is to take the audience outside of themselves in some way, to unbound them, at least for the moment, then Paris to Kyiv have again succeeded in a most beautiful way. With *Prairie Nights and Peacock Feathers* they continue to explore Ukrainian folk music like no one else.

It seems simple, but what they've done over the three recordings is to translate the chosen songs into contemporary musical language, trying not to lose any of the essentials. I as a listener am then transported into the place that brought these songs into being. At the same time, they've torn them out of the Ukraine of the past and placed them squarely into the Canadian Prairies of the 21st century.

The *Variances* recording had made a profound impact on me a few years back, and I knew that it would be a hard act to follow. After a first cursory listen I could not help but feel that something was missing.

Oh! Oh! I went back and listened to *Variances*.

Drums!: the udu drum, the buffalo drum, the dumbek, the congas and the djembe with their players have all moved on and left what seemed like a void.

Aha! Now I could listen again. What I found was that even though I did miss the grounding and energy the drums gave to the music, the stories told by the songs came more into focus.

Particularly poignant was Richard Moody's (also of the Arrogant Worms) response to the lament of a mother over a lost child. Other stories told are in the form of koliadky and shchedrivky, which seem to be of particular interest over the three CDs, and a variety of other songs of love and spring and loss.

Alexis Kochan and Julian Kytasty continue to dazzle with their duets and his bandura and sopilka accompaniments. Martin Colledge adds nice touches with the cittern and

northumbrian pipes, and Nenard Zdjelar rounds out the ensemble on double bass.

Prairie Nights is not only filled with laments and other songs. There is also dancing. The dances provide interludes between the songs – it is where we take a breather. However, these are not the dances that pick you up and fly you around the room in a whirlygig. These dances are curiously restrained, just the bandura and Julian Kytasty's fingers dancing away across the strings.

Paris to Kyiv is a class act and *Prairie Nights and Peacock Feathers* is another feather in their cap.

reviewed by Taras Gula

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Reviews

Language and Travel Guide to Ukraine

Linda Hodges and George Chumak
Hippocrene Books, Inc.
387 pages
ISBN: 0-7818-0802-2

Most travel guides are exhaustive manuscripts full of detail some of which might even be useful to a traveller. There will be short and vague descriptions of some, but not all, hotels, restaurants, bars, tourist areas and of course, places to shop. There will be a brief synopsis of the history and culture of the travel guide's subject. The information will be superficial, full of clichés, and will rarely answer the questions you have. Because they are generally useless, I always wonder who buys these guides.

With this baggage and a whole lot of trepidation, I approached the third edition of *Language and Travel Guide to Ukraine* by Linda Hodges and George Chumak. It starts off typically, giving the reader a small dose of Ukraine's history, a smidgen about "Heroes, Poets and Patriots," and some other trivia.

Generally speaking, the authors do well by not pulling any punches ("When Westerners come bearing

hard currency, some [in Ukraine] have trouble distinguishing the concept of 'free enterprise' from that of 'highway robbery'"), but have a propensity for the howling understatement. For example, the chapter and subsection titles often made my eyebrows arch. Chapter two's first section is titled: "Expect a few changes." A sentence in that chapter reads: "You might see evidence of corruption."

In terms of practicalities, the writerly tandem is helpful in outlining the process involved in securing a visa, and offers suggestions for what to pack that fit Ukraine's reality.

Where *Language and Travel Guide to Ukraine* shines is in the language section. Over half of this 387-page tome is devoted to helping a tourist navigate Ukraine in Ukrainian. There are chapters that deal with most of what will be thrown at you when walking down a street or entering a shop in Ukraine. These chapters are not a simple listing of some phrases the authors though might be useful on a certain subject, but logical lessons underlining the accepted practices and the cultural relevance of what is before the tourist.

Take for example the "Dining Out" chapter. A page is devoted to types and styles of restaurants in Ukraine. The guide then takes you on a step-by-step romp through the process of going out in Ukraine, from making a

Language and Travel Guide to UKRAINE

Third Edition

Linda Hodges & George Chumak

reservation, pointing out that Ukrainian restaurants don't have high table turnaround so reservations are recommended, to problems one might encounter at the restaurant. These chapters are excellent.

The back of the book is taken up by profiles of three major tourist destinations in Ukraine – Lviv, Kyiv and Odessa. These city chapters are quite standard, giving a listing of hotels, restaurants, bars, tourist areas, places of interest and, of course, places to shop. Perhaps inevitably, given that the book is aimed at a North American audience, it gives the location of the McDonald's franchises in Lviv and Odessa, and mentions that there are ten in Kyiv.

This travel book deals with the real nuts and bolts of travelling – communicating with the host people.

reviewed by Martyn Lotowski

A. W. Lebed, B.Sc., D.D.S.

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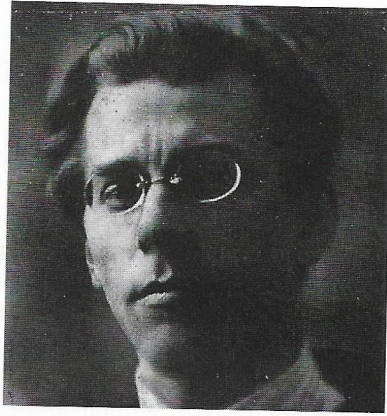
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Blasts From the Literary Past

by Maya Zorya Johnson

In our last issue we examined the tragically brief career of Mykola Khvylovyj, who chose death instead of life under the repressive Stalinist regime. Now we will consider one of Khvylovyj's colleagues from the same turbulent period, who decided to capitulate to the government authorities in order to survive: Pavlo Tychyna (1891-1967).

Unlike Khvylovyj, Tychyna was a prominent member of Ukraine's literary reawakening prior to the Communist takeover of the country in 1920-22. His first extant poem dates from 1906, and his first published work, "Vy znajete jak lypa shelestyt'" (You know how the linden rustles) appeared in the *Literaturno Naukovyj Vistnyk* in 1912.



By the time he published his first collection of poetry, *Sonjashni kljarnety* (Sunny Clarinets, 1918) he established his own, uniquely Ukrainian style of symbolism and his own poetic style, which he dubbed *kljarnetyzm* (clarinetism), full of exuberant pantheism and spectacular synaesthesia. As the literary scholar Ivan Koshelivets wrote, "Finding himself in the centre of turbulent events during Ukraine's struggle for independence, Tychyna was overcome by the elemental force of Ukraine's rebirth and created an opus suffused with the harmony of the universal rhythm of light."

This work established him as the country's pre-eminent poet, and his genius was confirmed in *Pluh* (The Plow, 1920) and *V kosmichnomu orkhestri* (In the Cosmic Orchestra, 1921).

Despite the chaos and ruin of the War Communism period, Tychyna still maintained his optimism about the potential of revolution. In the title poem of *Pluh*, Tychyna thus celebrated the arrival of the revolution by likening it to a great plough, which triumphantly turned the old

order upside down in order to sow the long-awaited seeds of the new:

"And a new world will be born, and men shall be as gods.

And everywhere, across future fields,
Will stand plough after plough ..."

After 1922, the Soviet regime conscripted Ukraine's intelligentsia into the effort to consolidate its grip on the country through a policy of "Ukrainization." Hopes ran high because, as well as thoroughgoing reform of Ukraine's educational system, the policy resulted in a genuine Ukrainian cultural renaissance.

In 1924, Tychyna published the poem "Viter z Ukrajiny" (Wind from Ukraine), which he dedicated to Khvylovyj. The latter drew Tychyna into an ambitious and openly elitist association known as VAPLITE (a Ukrainian acronym for "The Free Academy of Proletarian Literature"), which placed aesthetic excellence at least on equal footing with ideological concerns.

Given the regime's predilections, this could not last. In 1928, VAPLITE was dissolved, and severe criticism, then repressions against individual activists began. In 1931, Tychyna, the Orpheus of a truly Ukrainian revolution, capitulated, and went into a desperate retreat, publishing his first collection in the socialist-realist style, *Chernihiv*. In the aftermath of the bloodbaths 1933 (which included the Famine and Khvylovyj's suicide on December 13), Tychyna converted outright into an energetic hagiographer of tyrants, with his *Partija vede* (The Party Leads, 1934).

He lived on, winning the USSR's highest awards, even a post as the Ukrainian SSR's minister of education, submerging his awesome talent in banality or worse, and did not take part in the cultural revival in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Tychyna even attacked the *shestydesiatnyky* (Sixtiers), prior to his death in 1967.

Maya Zorya Johnson, Ph.D. is a freelance writer and editor who has recently and happily relocated from Toronto to Pittsburgh. Questions or comments pertaining to this column may be directed to <shkoliarka@hotmail.com>.

Excerpts from Pavlo Tychyna, *Soniachni Klarnety: Poezii* (Kyiv: "Dnipro," 1990): 74. Translation by the author.

NEXT ISSUE: The sly surrealism of Majk Johansen

From Toron

Andy Stoch

by Nestor Gula
photos by Kathryn Gaitens

The physical distance between musician Andy Stochansky's home in the Ukrainian enclave of Poltava and the downtown Toronto music scene is not that great. It is a world apart.

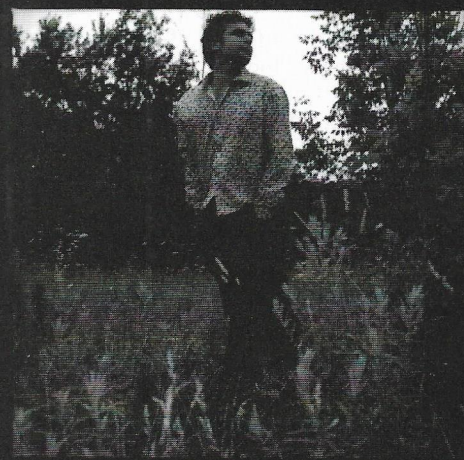
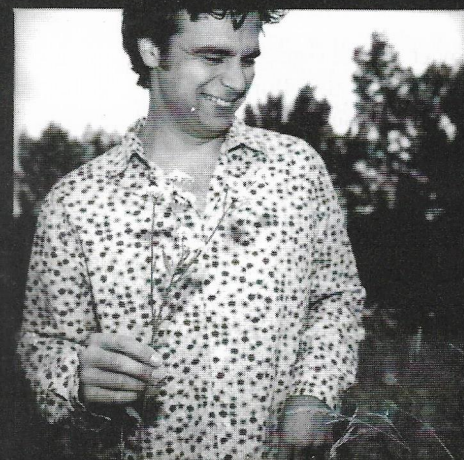
Toronto's music scene is no different from any other city's. Downtown clubs, after hour rooms, whatever. This is where Stochansky cut his teeth, drumming for a variety of musicians. It's where he still performs.

Poltava is the name for a collection of cottages and homes near the town of Terra Cotta, northwest of Toronto. Ukrainians built cottages on this parcel of land and called the hamlet Poltava, after the historic city in eastern Ukraine. It used to be farm country set in rolling hills. The city is starting to encroach upon this idyllic setting. Monster homes on landscaped lawns are starting to pop up around it. Ugly sub-divisions are just down the street.

Despite the onset of urbanization, Poltava is still in a beautiful area, says Stochansky. He moved there eight years ago because it was "a cheap place to live." He took over his parent's cottage. "It was always an idea of mine to move out of the city," he says, "but I guess Terra Cotta is much closer to Toronto now than it used to be. The area is expanding and becoming just another suburb."

And yet, the popularity and growth of the Terra Cotta areas have not dampened Stochansky's enthusiasm for the place. "It would be really tough to move back to Toronto, especially in the summer, it's so beautiful here."

There are other bonuses of living in the country for this musician, "I can make noise at pretty late in the night without bothering people," Stochansky laughs.



to to Poltava

Stochansky's music

bridges two worlds

Fellow musician, Adrian Lawryshyn, who is in Zoe-Bliss, Zoloto Station, and played bass on Stochansky's albums, lives right across the street from him. His studio, Zoloto Station, is in the basement of his house. "We moved up at the same time, same year," says Stochansky. "It's weird cause we did it without knowing of each others intention. We've known each other since kids."

Stochansky has been a working musician since he was 20 years old. "I started touring early. I did my first tour with Bobby Wiseman, from Blue Rodeo," he recalls. "Basically, I've always been working. Doing soundtracks for theatre, dance, teaching percussion and whatever else."

In the 1990s, Stochansky's main gig had been touring and recording with fiercely independent U.S. artist Ani DiFranco. She is known for her acutely political lyrics and her refusal to sign deals with large music corporations, forming her own label instead: Righteous Babe.

"She tours 90 per-cent of the year. There is not much rest time," Stochansky said of life in that fast lane. And yet, despite a busy touring and recording schedule, Stochansky also found time to work with the likes of Joni Mitchell, Meryn Cadell, Jonathan Richman, the Indigo Girls, Janis Ian, Jane Siberry and John Gorka.

In 1995 he also managed to put out a solo CD, *While You Slept*, as an independent release. It garnered critical praise but, more importantly, established Stochansky as a solo drummer as opposed to a session drummer. Late in 1998, he left Ani's "army" to concentrated on his own music. His *radiofusebox* was released last year and

he has been touring with his band ever since.

The first albums this Toronto-born drummer made used a varied collection of musicians. For the past year he has been touring with the same group. Band members include: Tom Beckham on vibe and piano, Les Cooper on guitar, Allisdair Jones on bass, and Jean Martin on drums. This has transformed his music. The band is tight. The music focused. Most of the songs he performs are from his previous albums, but they sound much different, and Stochansky likes the change.

"Why should live music sound the same as music made in a studio?" he asks. "Live stuff should not sound like the recording. It should be bigger. It should be changed. Why would people come if it was the same? It should have something in it."

The band's tightness is just a question of familiarity, he explained. "It is definitely what happens after touring with the same people for a year. After you play together for a while, you just get used to each other. Everybody now knows what the other person likes. That really helps," he says. "We've been basically touring around the United States and Canada for the past year. It is great to have these songs sound like they do. The best part about touring is working everything out, getting used to your voice and getting everything in order. There's nothing like it."

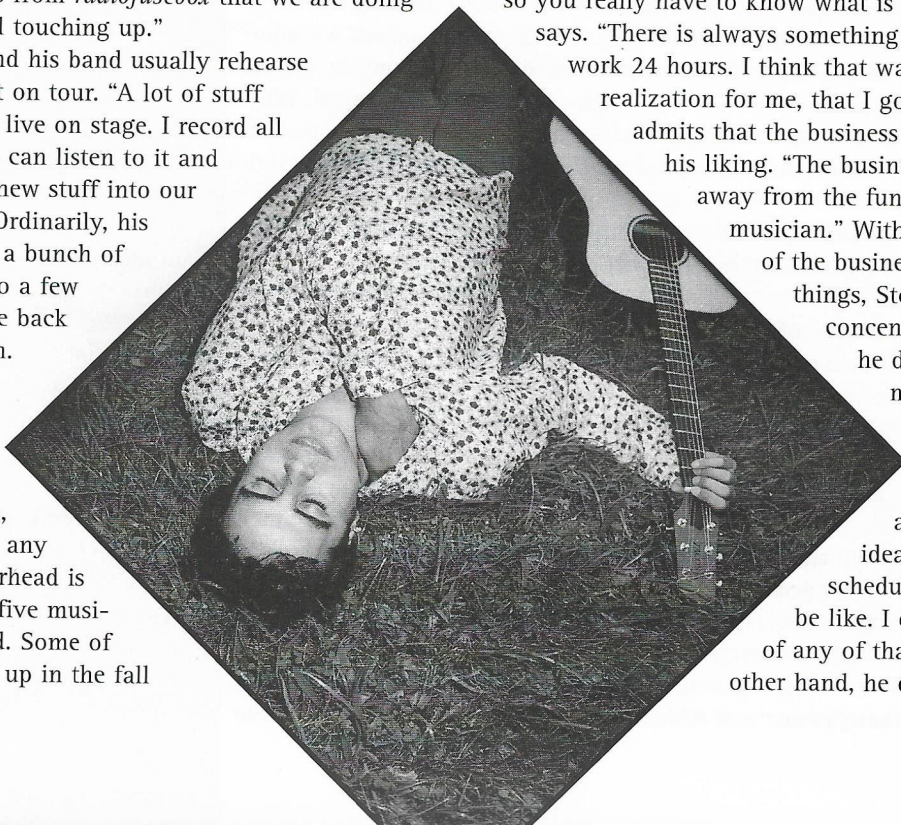
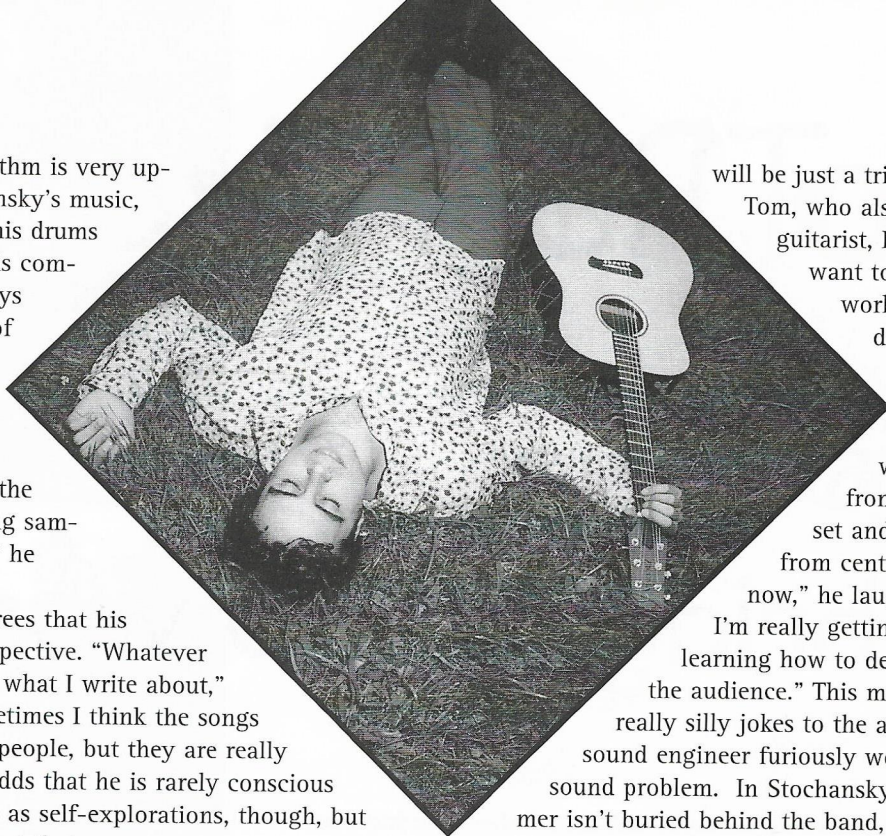
On stage, Stochansky plays drums, keyboards, guitar and a rusty oil drum. "I feel like a kid in a candy store. I say 'Wow look at all these toys,' the sampler and all. It gives me a break, gives me something else to do, something else to put my focus on. As opposed to always having a guitar. And the songs are all structured for different instruments."

Although rhythm is very up-front in Stochansky's music, he doesn't use his drums as a basis for his compositions. He says he wrote most of the material for the upcoming album using a guitar. "I wrote the last albums using samples and piano," he explains.

He readily agrees that his works are introspective. "Whatever grabs me, that's what I write about," he muses. "Sometimes I think the songs are about other people, but they are really about me." He adds that he is rarely conscious of writing songs as self-explorations, though, but they just come out that way.

Stochansky also called composition an arduous task. "Everything is labour intensive for me. To try and come up with something that interests me," he says. "I work on my craft every day. I just want to become a better and better songwriter. A day does not go by where I don't write, but I'm very picky about what I put out." His tweaking of songs does not end with it being recorded and released on a CD. He points out: "There are songs from *radiofusebox* that we are doing live that I'm still touching up."

Stochansky and his band usually rehearse before going out on tour. "A lot of stuff usually happens live on stage. I record all the shows so we can listen to it and incorporate the new stuff into our arrangements." Ordinarily, his band's tours are a bunch of dates packed into a few weeks. "We come back and go out again. Van instruments and hotels, that's basically it," he says. "It's just us, no sound guy or any support. The overhead is quite large with five musicians in the band. Some of this tour coming up in the fall



will be just a trio. The vibe player Tom, who also plays piano, the guitarist, Les and myself. I want to see how that works. I'm trying out different things."

Initially, Andy was not too comfortable with coming out from behind his drum set and leading a band from centre stage. "I love it now," he laughs. Now I think I'm really getting off on it. I'm learning how to deal with people in the audience." This means cracking really silly jokes to the audience while the sound engineer furiously works on some sound problem. In Stochansky's act, the drummer isn't buried behind the band, but sits sideways on stage right. "I put my drummer beside me because I think it's more interesting to watch."

Taking a page out of Ani DiFranco's book, Stochansky has been an independent musician who releases his CDs through his own music label, Population 60, or Pop60 for short. This is a business which controls most of his musical affairs. Running the business with his partner, Lisa Whynot, he realizes that there is only so much he can do. "It's our own business so you really have to know what is going on," he says. "There is always something to do. You can work 24 hours. I think that was the biggest realization for me, that I gotta stop." He admits that the business side is not to his liking. "The business side takes away from the fun of being a musician." With Lisa in charge of the business side of things, Stochansky can concentrate on what he does best — music. "Right now I am writing songs all time and I have no idea what the tour schedule is going to be like. I don't take care of any of that stuff." On the other hand, he doesn't see

himself being as much of a stickler as his former bandleader. His upcoming demo deal with mega-label EMI has him contemplating the possibility of getting a recording contract. "I'm always open to everything. I'm not an idiot about it, but if somebody wants to write me a contract I would be interested to see what they have to offer," he explains.

Stochansky plans to record his third album, as yet untitled, this December, with a release slated for the spring of 2001, with many of the songs currently part of their performances put to disk for the first time. This is a new experience for Stochansky, as he has never performed any of his songs live before recording them. "On the first two albums, I never got to test the material, but now I have all these new songs," he says. "I haven't gone to the studio yet, and everybody in the band knows what they are doing already."

Stochansky says that being the driving force of a band still feels new to him. "I'm always open to people's ideas, but I also found out in the past year that I am pretty headstrong about what I wasn't to do," he says. "I have a definite agenda as to how I want it to sound." This is likely to be challenged in the near future when he will be producing that EMI demo with the legendary producer Don Dixon. The U.S.-based producer worked on some early R.E.M. albums, (*Murmur*, *Reckoning* and *Dead Letter Office* as well as with Guadalcanal Diary, Hootie & the Blowfish, among others.

"It's really exciting for us, and me, to work with a producer," Stochansky says. All his previous solo efforts have been self-produced.

"It will be very interesting for me to see where Dixon takes the stuff," he says with a laugh, but adds: "I really feel that at this point I would like to give up the reigns a bit in the studio and see what somebody else does to my music."

The press has been very kind to Stochansky. He has appeared on the cover of Toronto's entertainment weekly, *Now*, and all his recordings and shows have gathered very positive reviews, including in Toronto's

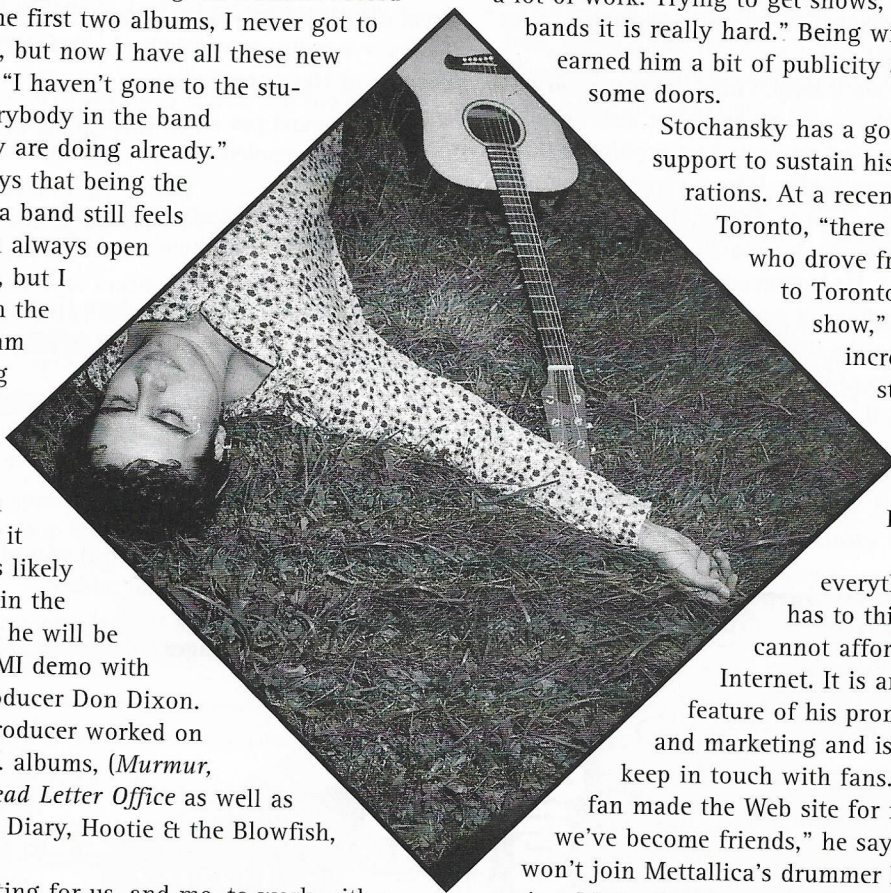
"national newspaper," *The Globe and Mail*. His music has found a home on college radio and on the CBC's programs.

Stochansky says he is quite pleased with his relationship with the CBC: "I've done so many live shows for them and recordings." He would like to get more radio airplay, but will not do anything for it. "I don't want my music to be just for audiophiles," he explains. "I would love everybody to hear it for it to be played on [commercial] radio, but I won't fit my music into that." To break into the scene is incredibly hard according to Stochansky. "Every step forward is a lot of work. Trying to get shows, transportation, bands it is really hard." Being with Ani DiFranco earned him a bit of publicity and opened some doors.

Stochansky has a good base of fan support to sustain his musical explorations. At a recent show in Toronto, "there were people who drove from Wisconsin to Toronto to go to the show," he said. "That's incredible. That stuff freaks me out — I've seen it with Ani DiFranco."

Along with everything else, Andy has to think about he cannot afford to ignore: the Internet. It is an important feature of his promotional work and marketing and is a great way to keep in touch with fans. "I was lucky, a fan made the Web site for me, and now we've become friends," he says. Stochansky won't join Metallica's drummer Lars in railing against MP3s, Napster or the "Interweb." His Web site does have MP3s. "It spreads the music around. To me, bootlegging just helps people in music. The Grateful Dead never really got any radio airplay. It was all people and word of mouth." He records all his live shows and will put some of these recordings on his site.

Keeping busy is not a problem for Stochansky. But what he really enjoys doing is relaxing at his home in Poltava, creating music and thinking of the basics, like setting up a couple of beehives in his yard and having fresh honey. **Z!**



in the pot

by Roma Ihnatowycz

Burned any pans lately? Chances are that you, like me, reached for the SOS pad and scrubbed the living daylight out of it until it sparkled.

Stinky garlic-scented fingers? Any number of anti-bacterial soaps will have you smelling like a spring garden in no time. Too much like a spring garden, for some people's tastes.

The fact is, we have it easy. There are a myriad of choices available down any supermarket aisle to take care of all our little kitchen pests and problems. Our babas weren't quite so lucky. Like ancient homemakers across the globe, they had to devise all sorts of tricks of the trade to master the bumps along the road of happy homemaking. Be it storing the rare lemon in a bucket of salt, or softening herring in a bowl of milk, there was no end to the little ploys they concocted to rise to the challenge of the odd kitchen crisis. Or just to make their hard lives a little easier, and their daily

bread a bit tastier.

Today, these tidbits of advice can be amusing, outrageously impractical, or, more often than not, just as good as any SOS pad. Useful or not, they always make for fun reading. Below is a compilation I've gathered from old Ukrainian housekeeping manuals and cookbooks – a collection of babas' helpful hints from all corners of Ukraine. Enjoy.

- A new enamel pot should have some water boiled in it, and then cooled. The pot will last longer.
- To clean blackened aluminum pans, boil a water-vinegar mixture in them.
- Burned pans are easier to clean if you leave a thick layer of salt in them for a few hours.
- Grind some paper through a meat grinder to clean it.
- Wrap a lemon in wax paper and place it in some dry sand. It will keep for months.
- Peeled potatoes won't darken if you place them in water with a bit of vinegar added.
- Fresh yeast lasts longer when stored in salt.

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- Fish, onion, garlic, sauerkraut and herring odours will disappear from pans if you rinse them with a water-vinegar mixture.
- To test the freshness of eggs, place the egg in a glass of water to which a teaspoon of salt has been added. A fresh egg will fall to the bottom, an old egg will rise to the top and a very old egg will rest somewhere in the middle.
- Eggs should be boiled in salted water. If they crack when you add them, quickly add a bit of vinegar. It will stop the egg white from escaping.
- Eggs whites beat up faster and lose volume slower if you add a bit of lemon juice or a pinch of salt while beating.
- Boiling milk won't froth over if you rub the edge of the pot with oil before you boil.
- Boiling milk won't burn if you rinse the pot with cold water before adding the milk to heat it.
- When adding milk to mashed potatoes for a puree, be sure to add hot rather than cold milk. Cold milk will give a greyish cast to the mixture.
- To prevent cheese from drying out, add a sugar cube to the container and cover it tightly.
- Sea fish has a specific unpleasant odour. When preparing fish soup with it, add a pickle, or some dry wine, and the odour will disappear.
- Chopped onion won't burn if you coat it with flour before frying. This will help it turn a nice golden colour.
- When frying potatoes, add salt only when the potatoes have slightly browned. If you add it sooner, moisture will seep from the potato and you won't be able to get that crisp edge.
- To prevent knives from smelling of onions, rub them with salt.
- Pork fat, butter and oil will spurt less when heated if you first sprinkle some salt on the frying pan.
- Unlike other vegetables, beets should be boiled in unsalted water. If boiled in salted water, they lose flavour.
- Anything sour, such as lemon juice, vinegar or tomatoes, slows down the cooking of vegetables. That's why these ingredients should be added to borshch only when the vegetables are almost completely cooked.
- To prevent boiling potatoes from falling apart, add some vinegar, or liquid from pickles or sauerkraut, to the water.
- To prevent staining your hands from cleaning certain vegetables, soak them in vinegar first and don't wipe them. After working with the vegetables, rinse your hands with water.
- Potatoes boiled in their skins peel easier if they're rinsed in cold water after boiling.
- Wilted dill, parsley and celery leaves freshen up if you soak them in water that's had a bit of vinegar added.
- Soak herring in strong tea or milk. This will soften it.

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Memories dance at the

Vegreville, Alberta's annual Ukrainian Pysanka Festival was celebrated for the 27th time this year, on July 7-9. This festival showcases dancers from across western Canada, welcomes guest performers from Australia, includes craft and history displays, offers hand-made Ukrainian foods, and invites dance bands to play into the wee hours of the night. Having grown up in the center of Canada's largest block settlement of Ukrainians on a farm about a 40 minutes drive away from Vegreville, and participated in this festival since childhood, as a singer, craft maker, dancer, teacher, choreographer, and just another Ukrainian who enjoys communing with others, Vegreville's Pysanka Festival will always hold powerful emotional significance for me.

And yet this year, my attendance was part of my job as an academic, at the outset of a research project on Ukrainian diasporan communities that will span two or three years.

As my father and I drove up to the gates to purchase our entrance tickets to the grounds, I remarked to him: "Isn't it

interesting that all the gatekeepers are men?" Catching my meaning, he replied that you could look at the situation another way. The job of standing outside, in the rain or under the lazing sun, is not pleasant; it's very kind of these particular men to take this job so the women don't have to suffer the unpleasantness of the outdoor elements.

"Hmmm... Well, yes," I agreed; but then thought more quietly to myself: "isn't that the point..."

The Festival centres on dance competitions that run all weekend long. These are held on a competition stage in an arena used for hockey during the wintertime. There was a booth with ladies selling ice-cream treats, next to it stood a cotton-candy machine, and bags of pink fluff ready for sale, another booth offered T-shirts for sale.

I was reminded of what used to be my favourite t-shirt, even when it was worn out, with the legend: "I'm a cute Ukrainian chick," showing a fluffy yellow thing cracking out of an egg (funny, shouldn't that be a pysanka from which she's breaking free? No... that would mean something else).

I found myself at the opposite end of the arena in front of a large booth with tables off to the side – I'd drifted up to a food table... Mmm, I thought, I'm going to have some pyrohy for lunch, and holubtsi, too. Then I made out the words on the sign; none of the good stuff is here, only



Pysanka Festival

by Marcia Ostaszewski

Kubi-burgers, egg-mcmuffins and iced tea. I passed.

Beyond the booths, rows and rows of chairs reminded me what this space was all about. All of the chairs, and multiple levels of wooden bleachers behind them, faced the raised stage with banners behind it announcing the Festival competitions. I noticed a young costumed girl flying across the performance space. I panicked—the young girls' solos section had already begun! I hurriedly ran over toward the centre and set up my video equipment. I settled into a weekend of watching, and of numb feet from standing on the concrete.

Through two full days of competitions, I listened to the adjudication commentary of the judges. The choreographies for female dancers that received the highest marks and most favourable commentary were lyrical dances that required the girls to dance with delicate grace (supported by good ballet technique). The boys' dancing received endless positive commentary regarding their bravado, showmanship, enthusiasm and strength

in performances of acrobatics.

I couldn't get out of my head something I'd read recently in hopes of understanding the place of this dancing in young peoples' lives. "The role of men and women, sharply defined in everyday life, is reflected in their roles during the dance." (Balkan dance specialist

Richard

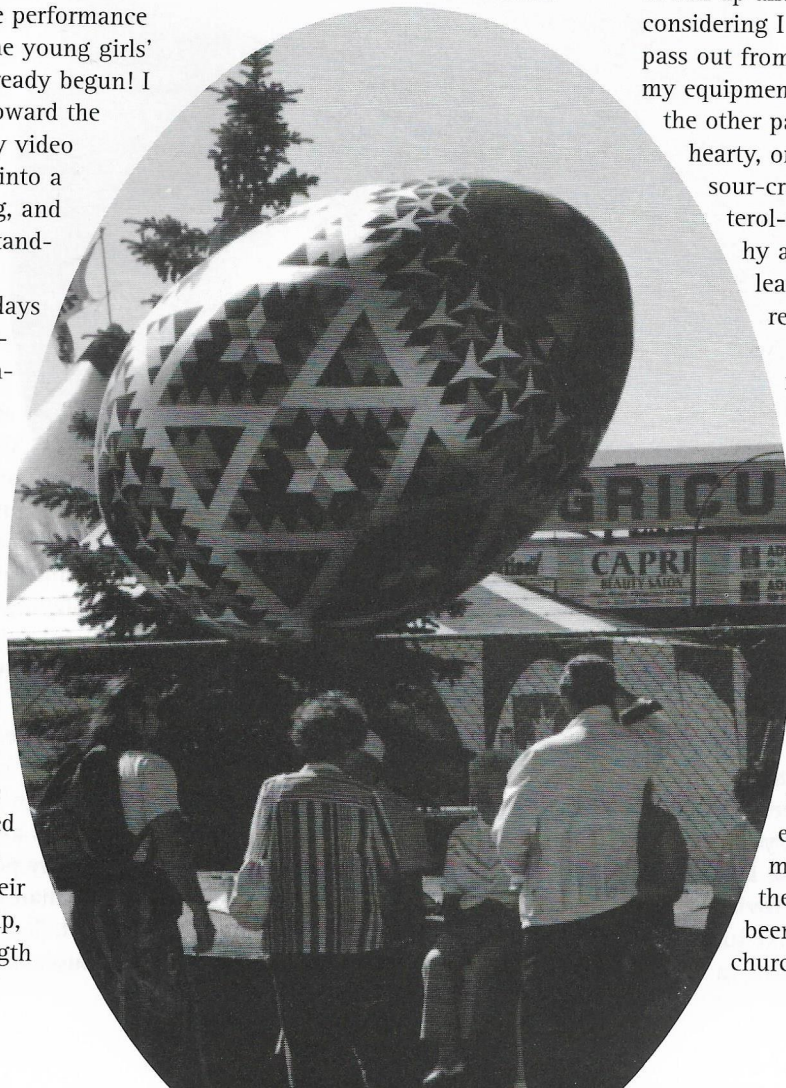
Crum, when requested to produce an academic analysis of Ukrainian dance in 1961.)

Well, that was 1961, right? Surely, things have changed.

I was sad the long and wonderful day of watching the dancers compete was at a close. Often with tears in my eyes, it was all I could do not to run up and dance myself. But, considering I felt nearly ready to pass out from hunger, I packed up my equipment and trekked over to the other pavilion for some

hearty, onion-smothered and sour-cream drenched, cholesterol-and-flavour-rich pyrohy and holubtsi. (I'd learned that's where the real food was.)

I hiked across the muddied grass into the dining hall, and straight toward the row of food under heat lamps. I knew there were two halls—there were always two separate halls—one organized by the Orthodox parish, one by the Catholic parish. I wondered which one I was in, then noticed everyone staring at me, and wondered if they knew how long it'd been since I'd last been to church, or if people could



tell I was a farms ex-pat who'd deserted for the big city of Toronto.

Isn't it interesting, I thought to myself, that in this kitchen space the women are the gatekeepers. The women are up front and fill your plates and take your money for the food; there are some men in the far back of the kitchen, cooking, making jokes with the women who are their "bosses." There is a man taking money for drinks, off at a side table away from the food and kitchen. I wolfed down the food in what was surely less than a minute (maybe that was why they were staring).

After supper, I walked a few meters with a swollen belly to the grandstand, and climbed the stairs to the top to sit with my father. We watched a big-name group present us with bread and salt; pretty girls, of course, offered this ritual food while bowing gracefully, smiles drawn on their perfect faces, their pretty ribbons blowing in the wind. I cried. We watched Cossack men jump and spin and flip and lift girls into the air, and our hearts were pounding, and we applauded with great enthusiasm.

Dancing on stage is one thing... what about the zabava afterwards? This is a place where that which is performed on stage intersects with everyday lived lives of young people—the kolomeyka! The kolomeyka is a circle dance that provides a chance for people to take turns executing solos in the centre. In

kolomeyka solos, girls repeatedly attempted all kinds of spins and pirouettes. They also got spun around by the boys in various lift positions (a vulnerable position, you'll know, especially if these boys have already been drinking for a few hours). I also, once, saw a group of girls attempt a boys' step, joined at the



shoulders for support. The boys did their best to construct complicated 3 and 4-story human towers (who's can be bigger), consume alcohol while attempting convoluted solos or 2-

and 3-person stunts – often ending up with blood on someone's chin... but they're boys, they're tough, right?

In between performances, I found some time to wander into the Yarmarok. In a barn-like structure with a hard-packed dirt floor, this place had been a treasure trove to me as a child. I still get a lump in my throat when I see the embroidered-decalled ceramics (go ahead, laugh, purists but I will hold to my memories as a diaspora Ukrainian and be forever proud of who I am).

In the centre of the space was a large map of Ukraine displayed on an easel.

The caretaker of the table offered visitors the chance to trace their roots, find on the map the place while their ancestors hailed.

Against the walls of the building, encircling the table of origins, were jewelers (who made a pretty penny off of me, boy), tables of music CDs and tapes, an "Ethnomusicologist and Instrument Maker" displaying tsymbaly, books and craft items. A wheat weaver was selling wares made of triticale—a hybrid between wheat and something else. Interesting, I thought, kind of like the Ukrainians, eh?! This man is brilliant!

There was an old, wrinkled couple, the only people I heard speaking Ukrainian in the place, selling finely detailed woven cloths, vests and blouses. They looked like they

had just been transported from a bazaar in Lviv.

I walked by a booth where a woman was selling elaborately decorated dolls, costumed as young Ukrainian women and men, like dancers. A prized pair of dolls sat on a table by themselves, next to a sign saying "SOLD."

At the next booth, I met up with a woman who used to hang out with my older sisters when I was only a young kid in elementary school. Darlene was strolling through the market place with her daughter who, by the looks of the shining medal proudly displayed around her neck, had just competed on the dance stage in the next building. She was giving something to her mother, "Because it's you." I felt like I'd just been zinged through a wormhole and suddenly everything had become crystal clear again. On the magnet was an artist's rendition of a Ukrainian woman; a young woman in stylized Ukrainian costume, smiling graciously as she offers the viewer traditional bread and salt.

Although it is questionable to what extent the prescribed gender roles that are choreographed and performed in staged-dance—grace for girls, strength and solo bravado for boys—are played out in the everyday lives of Ukrainians in their communities, this example clearly demonstrates that these constructs and images continue to

be a part of the identities and understandings of young girls' and womens' roles in contemporary Ukrainian lives.

This festival, and Ukrainian dance more generally, offers young girls and boys opportunities to build self-esteem and participate in important ways in Ukrainian communities.

The



confidence I gained at age 15, having won 3 gold medals in one year at the festival, and the next year having my student win a gold medal for her performance of my choreography,

is not lessened when I include my understandings of how these performances are part of gendered discourses of Ukrainian-ness.

Furthermore, in dance groups, we all learn to work together and care for one another; these are precious values for everyone to learn. Festivals are a wonderful time for families and communities to come together in work and celebration. Particularly as a mother of a young child, I wonder what

this means for young people growing up in these contexts (recognizing that

Ukrainian communities are likely only part of their interactions of everyday life) and how they learn to be "girls" and "boys," women, men, mothers and fathers.

These observations of the festival and understanding of particular events and performances are only what struck me immediately, at the outset of a research project that will span 2 or 3 years. As an academic who writes on issues of diaspora Ukrainian communities, I invite you to write to me via the magazine regarding your own perceptions of these and similar situations of Ukrainian cultural production. I ask that you share with me your understandings, as I endeavour to learn how these issues and elements of Ukrainian-ness are part of our changing lives. ²¹

A Healthy Shot

Seasonal Allergies

By Aleksandra Basarab, RN

Summer is nearing its end and with it ends allergy season, or so you think. Spring is usually the main season when allergies begin to bother people, but fall brings with it a whole different set of blossoming plants as well as leaf mold. To add to the misery: dust mites, pet dander and molds can lurk indoor in any season.

But what is an allergy in the first place? Well, try to imagine the following scenario: your nose is running, your head hurts, your eyes are tearing up, you start to itch, sneeze and you find yourself short of breath. No, I am not describing dinner, with your future in-laws, when the discussion of politics or religion inevitably arises or when the Plast/CYM debate enters the forum. The preceding is a description of signs and symptoms affecting allergy sufferers. Basically, an allergy is the body's hypersensitivity to substances in the environment. The body fights these invaders by producing an antibody called immunoglobulin E (IgE) in the intestines and lungs. IgE triggers immune cells to release a number of chemicals such as histamine that

works to produce hives, watery eyes, sneezing and itching. It is believed that millions of years ago IgE worked to kill parasites and invading worms but, without modern parasites (your long lost cousin from Kyiv does not count!) IgE reacts to other foreign substances in the body.

The most common nuisance of seasonal allergies is allergic rhinitis or hay fever. Simply put, this means a very runny nose. Hay fever can drag on for weeks or months, whereas a cold much causes havoc with your life for 7 to 10 days. In colds, your nasal discharge might be thick and yellow. In allergies, the stuff coming out of your nose is thin and clear. Ok. Enough about that already!

Once the causes and severity of a person's allergies are determined, a treatment plan can be prescribed. This may involve antihistamine therapy, allergy shots or nose sprays. Consult with an allergy specialist to find out what strategy is best for you. You can minimize your allergic misery if you take steps to keep your house clean. Dust your book collections. Try to minimize: clutter and those little souvenirs given out at Uke weddings. Wash your hair everyday to rinse off dust and pollen (I guess that means forgetting about the anguished-poet-from-Lviv-look.)

If you make a trip to your garden to tend to your *kapusta* patch, make sure to leave your shoes at the door and wash your clothes in hot water as soon as possible. If you really want to get fancy, think about buying an air filter to clean out pollens, molds and dust.

Also, get rid of that wall to wall carpeting. Wood floors are much better, as they are easier to clean. Obviously you won't be able to eliminate every allergen from your home, but with these steps you can make it a more comfortable place. Here's wishing you lots of health and easy breathing!

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Two slices of life

By Marko Andryczyk

Since Ukraine opened its doors to the world in the last 10 years or so, the country has proved to be one of contrasts. It's a country of both the disgustingly rich and the inhumanly poor. And while it is a country suf-

focated by an inherited bureaucracy, it is one that allows for certain day-to-day freedoms and liberating philosophies of life that are frowned upon in the West. Ukraine simultaneously nauseates and enchants its

visitors. I have traveled to Ukraine many times and each trip presented both awful and great experiences. My most recent three-month trip presents a telling example of this duality.

The Bad

Most people know that to travel to Ukraine one requires not only a visa but also an invitation from someone in Ukraine. (Many travel agencies have developed ways of sidestepping the invitation requirement by registering you at a hotel.) Last year, the Ukrainian government added a new wrinkle to the process.

Upon arriving at Kyiv's Boryspil airport, I dutifully joined the line of foreigners who had just arrived and were waiting to advance through passport control and enter this land of wonder. After about a 20-minute wait (not bad!), it was my turn to meet with the passport inspector. Enthusiastically whipping out my passport and opening it up to the visa stamp, I handed it to the official and then was promptly asked: "Where are your insurance papers?" "Excuse me? What insurance papers?" I asked. This time the official said nothing but just pointed towards another corner of the room. His motion meant: "See that line over there, buddy? The one made up of confused foreigners? You also have to wait in that line before you can come to me!"

Bewildered and incensed, but eager to get out of Boryspil, I proceeded to wait my turn in "that line." Of course no one at the Ukrainian consulate back home mentioned anything about insurance, so my curiosity was angrily piqued. When I finally got to "the insurance woman," I was told that, as a service to visitors, Ukraine now provides a mandatory insurance policy for each day that you stay in Ukraine. Payment of a flat fee for each day you are visiting assures you access to the Ukrainian health care system. "How long will you be in Ukraine?" she asked. Quick on my feet, I answered that I am here for four days and proceeded to pay my \$5 or so. But, knowing very well that like most things in Ukraine, the health care system is, in reality, held together by acquaintances and favours, I could not resist asking her, "Does this mean that if I get sick, I don't have to approach the doctor with chocolates and champagne?" She was clearly offended and began explaining the legitimacy of this new stipulation as I took off for the other line.

The Good

My last day in Lviv before a night train to Kyiv and a subsequent flight back home is spent mostly in my favourite cafe: eating, gifts, drinking, farewells, ... Two hours before my train, I decided to exchange another \$20 for one last round of drinks with my Lviv buddies. Three of them came outside with me as I approached an exchange booth, which was made up of a long sign of exchange rates for various currencies and a tiny window, about the same height as my waist.

I crouched down and asked "the

window" to exchange my \$20. "The window" responded with: "No. I don't have any more hryvni... but would you like a shot?" I consented and grabbed the plastic cup of horilka that was handed to me through the window. "The window" announced: "It's Volodymyr's Day! Drink to my health!" My friends, seeing me drinking, asked me what was going on.

Suddenly, the side-door of this tiny booth opened and a large, sweaty, shirtless, moustached man came out and invited all of us into the booth. He recognized the voice

of my friends (who are singers and DJs in Lviv), and wanted to experience the honor of drinking with them on this, his special day. We barely fit into the tiny room, filled with five other people and a huge, mixed-up pile of various foreign currencies. Moustache-man sent someone for another bottle and...

Ukraine's bureaucracy can be an inhibiting presence, which makes you promise yourself that you will never come back to that country. However, random scenes of amiable craziness are addictive. Get in line.

Uncle Ted on the Internet

By Rosemary Woodel

Last month, my five-year-old home computer clanked and whirred but the monitor was darker than a moonless night. I asked Arnold, the computer guy, to check it out and fix it if possible. The bad news was that it would take a fair amount of money to fix and upgrade. The good news was that he could build me a much more powerful, smaller machine loaded with Windows 98, compatible software and a free Internet connection for just a few hundred more.

Arnold's pronouncement was like God nudging me to examine my Luddite attitude toward technology. At work, I spend so much time doing the computer's bidding, that out of revenge I'd decided not to connect to the Internet at home until after I retired, if then. I wasn't ready to revert to pen and paper, but I was suspicious of society's growing reliance on what seemed like an impersonal way to communicate. On the other hand, sending e-mail to friends was cheaper than the phone. I had also decided to write a book with Gene, my spouse, and research on the Web might be helpful. So Arnold delivered the new machine and Gene and I entered this century cautiously playful.

We eventually found a Web site where Gene can hear the BBC news from Ukraine in Ukrainian and download daily news printed in the Cyrillic alphabet. Gene was born in 1919 in a Ukrainian village where people walked or drove oxen; there were no cars. He sometimes reflects on how amazed his parents would be if they could see him driving to Atlanta at 65 mph. Could they ever imagine hearing news transmitted by satellite from Ukraine to our home in Bishop, Georgia?

But back to Uncle Ted.

Two days after I plugged in the new PC, I hooked up

with Amazon.com because I wanted to learn about a Latin musical group. I plugged in the group's name and was taken to a page which described the group and offered samples of their music. Excitedly, I called to Gene so we could explore this marvel together.

I asked the Amazon search processor to find Ukrainian music. The first page showed a list of 10 CD titles. One looked promising: "Ukrainian Village Music." I clicked on it and got the list of songs on that CD. I began reading the names of the artists while Gene perused the titles, some of which were in Ukrainian. He was literally stunned when I shouted next to his left ear, "That's my Uncle Ted, Theodore Swystun, the Ukrainian heart throb of Philadelphia!"

Uncle Ted, an attorney Monday through Friday, had a Ukrainian radio show in Philadelphia on Saturdays. When I was a little girl, in the 1950s, I'd visit my Aunt Anna on Saturdays after my piano lesson on Randolph Street. Aunt Anna would be ironing while I was eating her famous chicken soup, minus the chicken feet, she served my grandmother. We'd hear back-to-back broadcasts of every large ethnic group in Philadelphia. I loved every kind of music, but understood none of it. Uncle Ted played some of his own songs on his show. My Aunt often chuckled that Ted saw himself as a romantic figure, whose singing voice attracted Ukrainian women. She, however, was not smitten.

My father had been fond of calling Uncle Ted a "wet-back" because, he said, he had entered the U.S. illegally from Canada. I guess he thought Ted had swum one of the Great Lakes to get here. When I remember my Uncle, I see him at my grandmother's long dinner table, surrounded by my father's family who had just finished

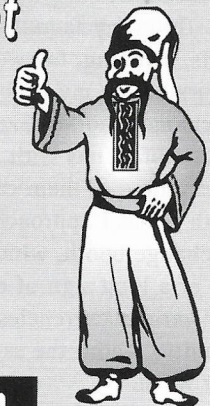
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borscht, "soft" chicken falling off the bone, potatoes, holubtsi, and poppy seed braid after numerous highballs and beer. Uncle Ted would rise majestically, holding his glass in the air with a slightly misshapen hand, indicating we all had to rise. He would lead us with a booming voice, singing with a slow and steady cadence, "Mnohaja Lita", which translates to Wishing You Many Happy Years.

I don't think I ever saw Uncle Ted in his own home. But I do remember his wife, my Aunt Tussy, and I standing in their living room after he had died. I asked about the imposing painting on their wall. A man in an elegant be-ribboned uniform sat sternly on a white horse. Perhaps she said that was Uncle Ted, as a

Ukrainian Cossack cavalry officer, fighting against Poland. Maybe that is how he injured his hand. Theodore Swystun died 30 or more years ago of a heart attack but here was his name appearing on my computer screen, on a CD offered by Amazon.com. I clicked on the title of his song and from the speakers came the voice of my Uncle Ted! I immediately made my first on-line purchase. Then I retrieved my album of old family photos, to look at Uncle Ted's distinguished face. A week later, the CD arrived. The cover says, "Ukrainian Village Music: Historic Recordings 1928-1933. The liner notes for Uncle Ted's song, written by Richard K. Spottswood (Library of Congress), with lyrics translated by Stefan Maksymjuk, reads as follows:

15. Kozaczka Szumka by Theodore J. Swystun. Vocal with Pawlo Humeniuk-violin, clarinet, piano and string bass. New York, ca. April 1930. Theodore Swystun lived in the Philadelphia area, where he practiced law following graduation from Temple University. He also reputedly hosted a popular local radio program for a number of years. Compared to Ewgen Zukowsky, he was a more polished singer, and his kolomyjka records enjoyed somewhat greater favor amongst Ukrainian-American upper classes.

"Kozaczka szumka" celebrates young cossacks and pretty girls. There are forty of the latter at the market, one of whom says, "You, cossack, have fun but don't touch me!"

"How can I have fun if I don't?"

Cruising the Internet was an unexpectedly personal experience. It brought back my Uncle Ted and verified my childhood memories. I embrace it. **Z!**

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Quiz

Do you sing like a

Ukrainians are known, not just for their acrobatic dancing, but the wonderful songs they carry in their hearts. Sure, some are bellowed on occasion. Sure, they might be sung atonally and out of rhythm. But it is the sentiment, the feeling, that counts. Right.

Due to the fact that Ukraine has not been free for most of history, most of its songs are sad. This often encourages people to bellow them. There are a few happy songs, but these are rarely favoured, perhaps early in drinking sessions, and by children.

1. To kick off a bout of singing, you
- a) start with a loud sad song.
 - b) start with the Ukrainian anthem (see a).
 - c) look for a song book..

2. You sing
- a) loudly.
 - b) quietly.
 - c) drunkenly.

3. While singing, your
- a) eyes fill with tears.
 - b) heart starts to pound.
 - c) lungs and liver give out.

4. Your favourite type of Ukrainian songs are
- a) sad.
 - b) patriotic.
 - c) children's.

5. You like to sing
- a) with a group of people.
 - b) solo.
 - c) moving your lips but making no sound.

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Ukrainian?

Quiz

7. When somebody refuses to sing you
- a) shun the oaf.
 - b) beat the oaf.
 - c) join the oaf.

6. Your favourite place to sing is
- a) while showering.
 - b) at a campfire.
 - c) during a gathering in a musty old hall.

9. You like to sing
- a) accompanied by a guitar.
 - b) a capella.
 - c) accompanied by an orchestra.

8. While singing when somebody is out of tune, you
- a) shut that person up.
 - b) join in this counter melodic harmony.
 - c) switch to goof-proof tunes.

10. You only stop singing
- a) when you go hoarse.
 - b) when everybody else leaves.
 - c) when the police show up.

What it all means:

Give yourself 3 points for every a, 2 points for every b, 1 point for every c (except number 9, which gets you 4 points).

Below 10

Yeah, yeah, you didn't read or answer all the questions. Check your math and do the quiz again. On the other hand maybe you are an elusive Ukrainian anti-singer.

10 to 16

You are a singer of renown. Your voice summons small furry creatures from miles around, while driving away all that is human.

17 to 23

You are a singer of questionable distinction. You can hold a tune but your alcohol addled mind can't remember the words too well.

24 to 30

You are a singer of the purest sort. You lead. Others follow. Others are mesmerized by the quality of your voice and your knowledge of songs. They hate you.

Above 30

You are just reading this because it is the first result. But then again, you might be the second coming of Dmytro Hnatiuk (Ukraine's Mario Lanza), or Solomea Krushel'nytska (Ukraine's Maria Callas).

by Mark Andryczyk

Notes on Ukrainian music

As someone who has watched Ukraine's music industry up close, and from my current perch in Toronto across the Big Pond, I've noticed a problematic trend.

Kyiv has become a monopolistic centre. In the early 1990s, Lviv was at least equal with Ukraine's capital as a talent pool and as a base for production and performances. Today, musicians must be completely oriented towards Kyiv if they expect any commercial success.

Of course, this is not unique to Ukraine: Many countries have one cultural centre (often its capital and/or largest city), which attracts aspiring talents. However, the near-absolute dominance that Kyiv has assumed over the last ten years (as in many other, but not all, spheres of social life) is so powerful that it has basically become impossible to succeed as a musician without kowtowing to Kyiv's show business élite.

Working with this show-biz élite often results in succumbing to ridiculous artistic compromises and entering a world in which creative talents are crassly forsaken in favor of politically-inspired, money-propelled promotion. With the proper financial and political/mafia connections, the Ukrainian music machine can create a star out of anyone. The most obviously example of this is the recent ascension of Mykhailo Poplavs'kyj to pop-star status.

Poplavs'kyj is the Dean of the Kyiv Institute of Culture and a man completely devoid of any musical talent. In search of his dream of becoming a pop-star, he has capitalized on his influential position to attract the ass-kissing of some of Ukraine's biggest stars. Through relentless promotion, Kyiv's show-biz power brokers have bamboozled Ukrainian citizens into accepting that this man is an *estradna zirka*. It's almost as if everyone is in on a joke or a challenge to see if this was possible.

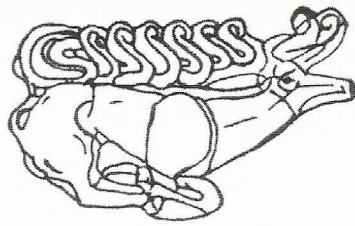
In similar fashion, new levels of idiocy are reached in show business every two-to-three years, or so. For example, as the 1990s progressed, performing live during a concert was discouraged by promoters. Consequently, many marginal artists happily adopted lip-synching as a means of performance and rode it to star-

dom. Musicians who refused to compromise their artistic integrity, and instead insisted on performing live for their fans, were excluded from most of the music business's most prestigious and profitable happenings. In fact, lip-synching has even become an art form in Ukraine – performers and concert-organizers are consistently dreaming up new ways for musicians to pretend that they are actually performing in front of an audience.

Today, not only do featured singers pretend to sing into a microphone, but the dancers that circulate them on stage are now equipped with head-set microphones so that they can pretend that they are singing background vocals while dancing!

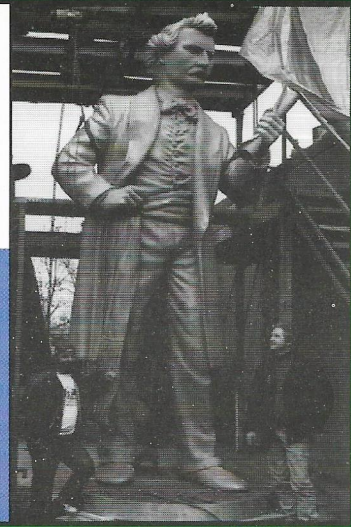
Recently, this phenomenon has been inverted. Some of Ukraine's biggest pop-stars, its lip-synch kings and queens of the 90s who helped establish this form of performance as the standard in Ukraine, have decided (or rather, steered by their image-makers) to actually perform live at concerts. In an absurdist "marketing" maneuver, they are now championed as the pioneers of show business who bravely extend themselves for their fans. Those few artists who, for years, were shunned by Kyiv's show-biz scene for actually singing are never mentioned in this so-called revolution.

To my mind, the problems with the Ukrainian music business today are at least partly the result of an absence of critical journalism. One man, Kyiv-based Oleksander Yevtushenko, made several, commendable attempts to fill the void, notably with the newspaper AUT and the glossy magazine *Halas*. Unfortunately, and for obvious reasons, they were not supported by the capital's show-biz cabal, and eventually fizzled out. All that remains of Yevtushenko's efforts are occasional articles and reviews in the excellent but also-teetering *PiK* magazine. A good forum for criticism (which does exist in art and literature) would keep established performers honest and would help new musicians to reach an audience. In the end, fans of happenings in contemporary Ukrainian music would greatly benefit, as would the quality and reach of today's Ukrainian music as a whole. **Z1**



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