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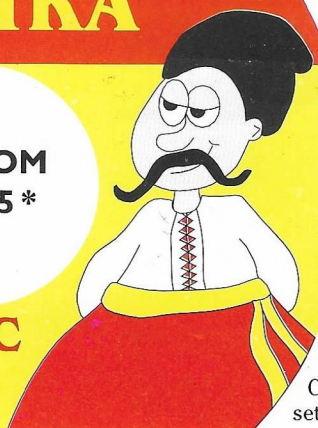
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# Zdorov!

The Magazine of Ukrainian Things

Volume 2 Number 8

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# Editorial

This is our eighth issue!

It represents a full two years of publishing *Zdorov!* We will celebrate our two-year anniversary in of the upcoming Winter 1999 issue. Stay tuned.

The break between the previous issue and this issue has been a long one. As always, summer seems to stretch forever until it is abruptly interrupted by the fall. We hope you, our readers, had a pleasant summer and are now preparing for what should be a nice fall and the inevitable winter.

For your fall reading pleasure we have collected an interesting mix of articles.

The cover story is a profile of Bill Welychka, a VJ on MuchMusic. Although many of our readers may not know who Bill is since MuchMusic's viewership is much younger than our readership, you can catch him on television screens across Canada and in some parts of the United States.

Our second profile is on Marko Polakiwsky, a photographer who wants to travel the world and photograph all the UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

We are still searching for writers from all parts of North America. A few of you have responded with ideas, and a willingness to write, and we will be featuring you in upcoming issues. Although we had a few responses, we need more. We are greedy in this way. The more articles we get in the bigger *Zdorov!* will become. It will also be more entertaining and informative. So send in your ideas and/or express your desire to write for *Zdorov!* We can be a stepping stone to a great writing career. One of Heather Olivetz' articles is being reprinted in an upcoming issue of *Chatelaine*, Canada's women's magazine.

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Nestor Gula

Cover photograph of Bill Welychka by Yuri Dolnycky





## Dear Zdorov,

I was quite disappointed and disturbed by your opinion about Florida ("Central Florida" – Spring 1998). You mentioned that you had been looking for the Ukrainian community in the area and you managed to find a small church in Apopka. That is correct. Since you have not bothered to visit the church, be advised that it is a great place to go on Sunday morning for the service. I went there with my fiancée and had the opportunity to meet with the elderly people (as you should know this is a retirement community) and with the priest. They served us lunch and invited us to their homes. We had a very interesting discussion with the priest, who was young (mid to late 30's) and was very funny and "hip." Even though it was a little hard to find, we enjoyed our visit to Apopka very much.

You also criticized the beaches and salty water. Well, you should be aware that this is why many people go to visit Florida. They appreciate the salty water and sand. Furthermore, be advised that some people love to visit

Disney World and other attractions in the area. For young adults, I strongly recommend Universal Studios, and for you, I would suggest that you do more research in regards to your travel destinations.

If you were looking for a Ukrainian gang to have fun with, you should try to go to Ukraine, not Florida.

Eva Salapata  
Edmonton, Alberta

## Dear Zdorov,

This is a message to the misguided (but probably well-intentioned) individual who threw a hissy fit about Christine Kurys' article ("Olanna Taskey" – Spring 1998) on the beautiful Olanna Taskey: "LIGHTEN UP." Relax and take this magazine for what it is, namely, a bunch of clever, young Ukrainians that have the wisdom and intestinal fortitude to share a lighthearted laugh with (and at) their own people. By reading their articles, maybe we can learn to view ourselves from a different perspective.

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Furthermore, if you want serious articles on Ukrainian women around the world, read *Zhinochyi Svit*, a long-standing and well-respected magazine. And, surprise, I subscribe to and actually read that magazine as well!

Oksana Rozanec  
Mississauga, Ontario

## Dear Zdorov,

I too had similar dreams of obtaining prestigious 20/20 status. Sometimes I would envision tossing my *oku-lary* (glasses) into a deep black abyss and laughing uncontrollably at my triumph. I was the type of eyeglass wearer that found it necessary to change my spectacles once (sometimes twice) a year. And along with that came a necessity to spend obscene amounts on designer frames. So, this procedure described by C. Kurys ("Under the Knife" – Spring 1998) was not only a 'dream come true' just think of the money I saved!

This procedure (a minor miracle if you like) performed by Dr. Jeffery Machat was truly a type of journey. A journey that, I consider, has changed my life. And if the Laser Centre is considered to be a mecca, then Dr. Machat could be some type of messiah. His miracle-equipped facilities and ever-steady scalpel made a believer out of me. Regardless of what my friends say, just because I cannot see immense objects that are directly in front of me, is not an indication that the procedure was unsuccessful!

Short of changing religions, my belief is that this is the best method of correcting one's vision. I am not only a client of the Toronto Laser Centre, I'm also (and not to sound like the Hair Club president) a member. Seeing (in more ways than one) that I took the same journey as C. Kurys, I am sure that she agrees with me – this is a trip well worth taking.

A.N.B.  
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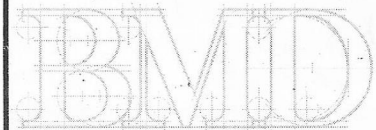
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# 12 Reasons to admit you are Ukrainian

compiled by Nestor Gula

1. There are a hell of a lot of us – well over 60 million world wide.
2. It's not up to YOU to save the homeland anymore – it's been saved.
3. As a nation we dance and sing well, while wearing bright costumes.
4. Embroidered shirts are really cool – especially the ones made from hemp.
5. Ukrainians never invaded anybody.
6. Every fourth Ukrainian writes poetry – secretly.
7. We have our own distinct holidays.
8. Varenyky, borsch and all them other good eats.
9. We can handle our liquor.
10. Ukrainian names are not as unpronounceable as most might think.
11. There are enough prominent smart Ukrainians to counteract the real dumb ones.
12. Compared to the hardships Ukrainians suffered in the 20th century, the 21st should be smooth sailing.

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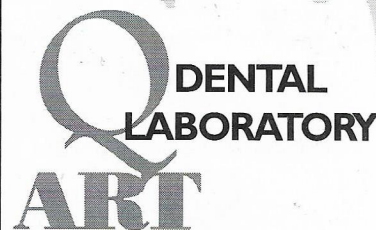
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# NOSPEAK ENGLISH

by Heather Olivetz

Doubtless you have already received the e-mail making its rounds of Ukrainian-owned computers everywhere, proclaiming: "Attention all Ukrainians! Do you know what you are doing on New Year's Eve, 1999? Well, we have a great plan to get 1,000 Ukrainians together for this 'Turn of the Century' New Year's Eve Ball in Disney World, Florida."

Already I'm a-shudder at the prospect of that many Ukrainians in one place. Ukrainians seem to have this innate tendency to seek each other out and gather in large groups. While this flocking instinct may seem delightful when you're a participant, from the outside looking in, it ain't so pretty. When herded into large groups, some of our people are pigs.

I held a summer job at an amusement park for a couple of months many years ago. During concerts, we could deal with the hard rock bands and their groupies. We could deal with the punkers. Even handling the delirious teens screeching for the sensation-of-the-minute was a piece of cake. But there were three events that all park employees dreaded. They were (in no particular order): concerts fea-


turing any popular children's entertainer, Italian Day, and Ukrainian Day.

All three were known for the type of people they attracted: generally rude, short tempered and belligerent. More fights broke out at these events than at all of the other concerts combined. No one was spared the wrath of those who felt they had a right (by virtue of their numbers) to act like idiots. And it was more often than not, the hoity-toity members of our community who behaved the worst. I saw some of the kindest, most patient, most diplomatic of my co-workers reduced to tears.

I can't honestly say that the Ukrainians who descended on the park were the worst, but I did take their behaviour personally. On that day, I was embarrassed to be a Ukrainian.

Their obnoxious conduct was demoralizing. People who spoke perfect English everywhere else, suddenly could not understand simple instructions and replied with a broken "No speak English" when asked to vacate an area or extinguish a cigarette. Funny, many of the same individuals had no trouble stringing together a few choice words

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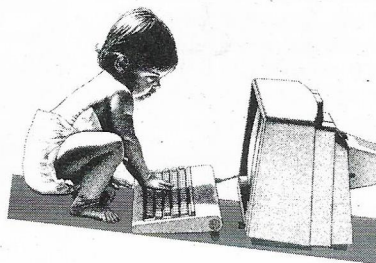
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when they had a complaint about the admission charges or the price of food at the concessions. I had the dubious pleasure of being called to translate for some of these alleged non-English speakers. Not one to discriminate, they were just as rude and uncooperative in perfect Ukrainian.

In Ukrainian school, one of our teachers would often wax poetic about how keeping a clean home and orderly garden was a source of pride to all Ukrainians. "You could eat off the floor of even the most humble village home!" she seemed to imply. Judging from the filthy state of the stadium and surrounding grounds following Ukrainian Day, the participants missed that lesson.

I will say this for our community. The event organizers had the decency to pass up holding any kind of degrading beauty contest like the one held at Italian Day. On that day I watched bikini-clad women vie for the "Miss Italia" crown. Was it just my imagination or was every contestants' dream to finish community college, and then become either a fashion model or pediatric surgeon. This painful display was enough to send any self-respecting individual diving for *mangia-cake* anonymity.

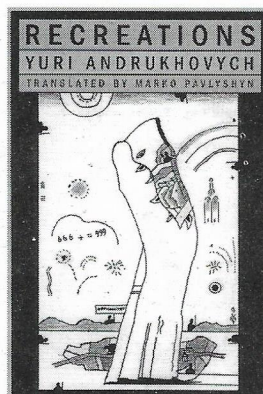
Could it be that only the rude elements of our community came out in force that day and caused the problems? Perhaps Russian operatives had brainwashed our best and our brightest into acting like ignorant louts. Maybe the joy of seeing so many fellow countrymen together caused even the most civilized to lose all inhibitions. Whatever the reason, after working my first Ukrainian Day, I dreaded returning to work to face my colleagues.

I wish the Millennium Party organizers best of luck. They may want to use a false name when dealing with the officials at the Magic Kingdom. No sense being banned from Disney World for life just because a few Ukrainians ran amok.

By the way, the twenty-first century begins on January 1st, 2001.

*The following summer, Heather Olivetz called in sick on Ukrainian Day.*

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# VIRSKY'S CODA

by Nestor Gula

The recently completed tour of the Virsky Ukrainian National Dance Company Ensemble was, without doubt the biggest extravaganza to come to North America from Ukraine since Ukraine's independence in 1991.

By all reports, the artistic success of Virsky was complete. There was no doubt about that. The hype of Virsky never reached the epic proportions of Riverdance, although the promoter, Don Baker, had hoped it would do just that.

As Mr. Baker put it, "it was a cultural success and an artistic smashing success." However, Mr. Baker said that "there is nothing to report financially worth mentioning." All that could be eked out of Mr. Baker was that the tour did not break even. Even so he would

do something similar again, "however under very different circumstances."

Contributing factors to Virsky's less than stellar financial performance were inaccurate assumptions made based on Virsky's North American tour over 10 years ago and low turnouts from the non-Ukrainian community despite the great deal of money which was spent on advertising. The organizers were very aggressive in scheduling performances — large cities had the weekend performances and during the week Virsky would perform in small cities. But the smaller venues did not do well, there were too many shows and the group of dancers and musicians was too large.

Mr. Baker has no regrets, "I knew I was taking some risks. I knew I wanted



North America to see Virsky." He was very pleased to find that given enough lead time the Ukrainian Diaspora was willing to help organize the events. "Now that I'm more knowledgeable about the touring business and the Diaspora I feel there are future opportunities to work together."

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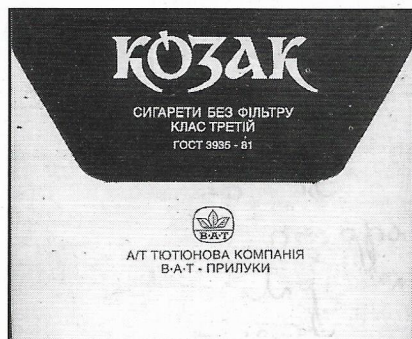


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# UKRAINE SMOKIN' F1

by Nestor Gula



I always wanted to write a story about Formula One racing for *Zdorov!* A definitive lack of any Ukrainian content in the preeminent racing series has always thwarted this ambition.

But now there is a chance. There is a link – however tenuous – that will give me license to write about what I consider to be the One Real Sport.

There was considerable interest towards the end of the 1997 season when the huge tobacco conglomerate known as BAT (British American Tobacco Corp.) announced its intention to go racing in Formula One. This conglomerate, the second largest private tobacco company on this planet, quickly bought the long suffering Tyrrell team, hired one mediocre driver and one abysmally poor driver for the 1998 season, and made

plans for a fresh start in 1999. They hired 1997 World Champion Jacques Villeneuve for next year's season.

What? Jacques is Ukrainian?!

No. That is not the connection.

There are two reasons why the link between F1 and Ukrainian things can be made.

It all centers on BAT.

The first is plain and banal – BAT makes the KOZAK brand of cigarettes in Ukraine.

The second is one of lore and perhaps a little bullshit. Back in the days when the Russian Tsars were exploiting our Ukrainian forefathers (they were serfs, eh!) BAT exported cigarettes to the Russian Empire which featured a nautical figure of a man surrounded by a life ring. This of course is the logo of Players tobacco. A Ukrainian fable has it that this sailor guy's name was Pappy Rosie. (I ain't making this up.) And this is, supposedly, where the Ukrainian word for cigarettes comes from – Pappy Rosie – *papirosy*.

Interested in Formula 1 – à la Ukrainian? – Check out: [www.forix.com/asp/f1.asp?lang=ukrainian](http://www.forix.com/asp/f1.asp?lang=ukrainian) for a site of Formula 1 News and gossip in Ukrainian. (Also available in English and a host of other languages.)

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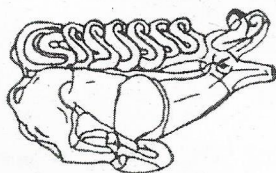
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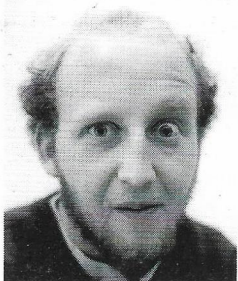
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# NEW FIGURES NEW FACES

by Yuriy Diakunchak



Petro Lopata, a young Toronto artist, has a quietly intense air about him. When you talk to him, you can almost feel the cogs in his brain turning, as if he is about to spring some new idea on you.

*New Figures, New Faces* is Lopata's latest project. The exhibit will be a showcase of young artistic talent in the North American Ukrainian community.

"People in my age group are mostly cooped up in their studios or doing things like graphic design or advertising," says Lopata, explaining the rationale behind featuring new talent in an exhibit. "In terms of artistic exploration, their careers are being put on the backburner."

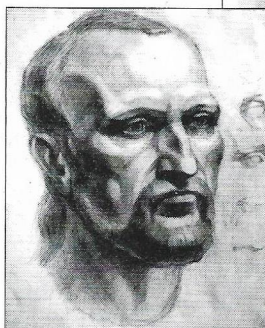
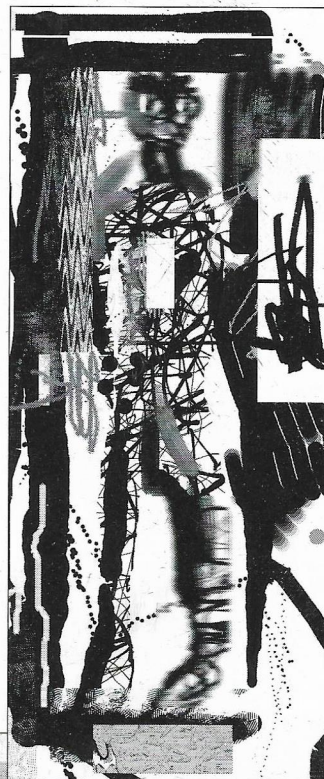
Lopata's goal is to assist emerging artists in the Ukrainian community by providing them with some exposure to the public, the opportunity for feedback, and an exhibition that can be used on their resumé.

The Ukrainian Canadian Foundation of Taras Shevchenko from Winnipeg pitched in \$2,200 for the project which will be used to print a catalogue for the exhibit.

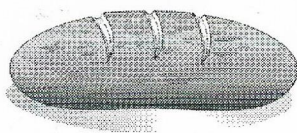
The exhibit will take place at the Ukrainian Canadian Art Foundation (UCAF) in Toronto between December 27, 1998 and January 27, 1999. Any Ukrainian artist, between the ages of 18 and 35, can apply to be a part of this exhibit. The jury committee is comprised of Petro Lopata, Halyna Novakivsky, Pavlo Lopata, Bohdan Holowacki and Oleh Lesiuk. The jury will announce its decision about who will be taking part in this exhibit late in October.

More information can be obtained from Petro Lopata at (416) 767-6111 or [mlopata@interlog.com](mailto:mlopata@interlog.com)

Top left: Petro Lopata. Bottom: three works by Petro Lopata.



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Viktor Hontarov

December 27 - January 27, 1999

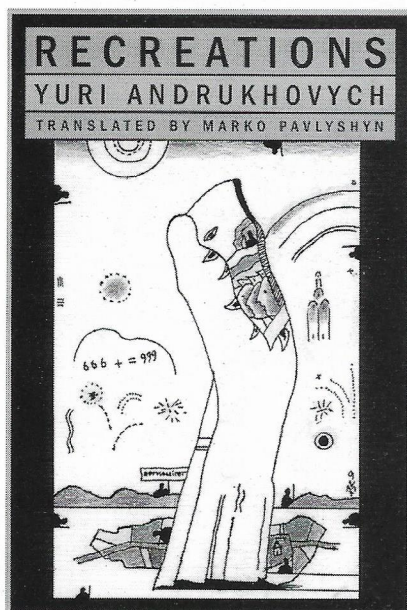
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If you only read one book in the next few months, try to make *Recreations* your choice.

An English translation of Yuri Andrukhovych's first novel, *Recreations* (first published in Ukraine in 1992) is a riveting look at a night in the life of a group of hard drinking poets attending a festival.

Andrukhovych is not yet very well known in Canada. The only other literary work of his that has appeared in translation so far, was a short story in the *From Three Worlds* collection reviewed in *Zdorov!* (Winter 1998). The writer is bound to become more known, since he is appearing at the Toronto Harbourfront Authors Festival and will then tour a number of east coast cities in the United States. New York, Boston and Philadelphia are on the itinerary.

The book's narrative opens in 1991 just prior to Ukraine's independence. Khomsky (Khoma), a poet, is returning to Ukraine from Leningrad to attend a revival of the long forgotten "Festival of the Resurrecting Spirit." Held in the mythical Chortopil, the novel describes the festival as commemorating a time when:

"Emancipated souls celebrated their renewal, Free Laughter and Untrammelled Poetry ascended to waft over the sinful earth, and the Dastardly Skeletal One retreated before the implacable blows of Human immortality."

The festival, "an orgy of popular culture, civic dysfunction, national pride, and sex," becomes a backdrop on which Andrukhovych examines the interactions of four poets, Khoma, Yurko Nemyrych, Hryts Shtundera and Rostyslav Martofliak who contend with the cultural baggage of being Ukrainian. The festival is run by one Matsapura (the name alludes to the scoundrel Pavlo Matsapura, a character in Ivan Kotliarevsky's *Encida*).

Matsapura creates a "total festival" where even a German snake-oil salesman hawking his goods in the town square is just an actor playing a role. Everything is geared to give the festival goers an experience they will never forget. Yet Matsapura, like the rest of the characters, is testing the waters of the new freedom that people are experiencing in Ukraine. How far can one go before it is too far? In the end, Matsapura goes just far enough.

Without giving too much away, things become more and more bizarre as the festival's first evening progresses. From Nemyrych's and Shtundera's first encounter with the demonic Dr. Popel, ("I am not young and I am not old, boys. I am eternal.") to the climactic end, the characters stumble (quite literally) from one experience to another. Although the main characters are a bunch of booze-soaked egomaniacs, the reader develops a sympathy for them.

Andrukhovych is a master at making the reader a part of his tale. As each character stumbles into increasingly surreal surroundings, the reader is transported into the scenes

with them. Nemyrych and Shtundera, each in his own way, discovers a part of the past in this little village of Chortopil. It is a past that is dark, even frightening. Martofliak grapples with alcoholism and Khoma with personal loyalty.

Unlike many authors, who don't seem to know how to write a good ending, Andrukhovych builds the tension in crafty increments, sustaining the reader's interest right to the end, then wallops you with a crescendo that frankly caught me completely off guard. Andrukhovych leaves you wanting more, which is just as it should be. Let's hope his other novels, *Moscoviad: A Horror Novel* (1993) and *Perversions* (1996), are translated into English as soon as possible.

The book does contain some cultural and historical references that the North American reader may not necessarily be familiar with, but these are not crucial to enjoying the book. In any case, a handy section of endnotes that explains many of these references is included.

Andrukhovych, born in Ivano-Frankivsk in 1960, is considered to be one of the leaders of a new generation of Ukrainian authors. With Oleksander Irvanets and Viktor Neborak, Andrukhovych was a founding member of Bu-Ba-Bu (pronounced Boo-Bah-Boo) a group of poets/writers "specializing in literary happenings, scandals and provocations." Bu-Ba-Bu stands for *burlesk* (burlesque), *balagan* (farce) and *bufonada* (buffonery). The members of Bu-Ba-Bu have been stretching the boundaries of Ukrainian creativity since its founding in 1985.

reviewed by Yuriy Diakunchak



## Reviews

Vulcanization is the process of heating rubber in order to make it more elastic and durable. It's how hockey pucks are made. When I saw that Marko Andreychuk named his second recording *Vulcanization* my first thoughts were of explosions, not hockey pucks.

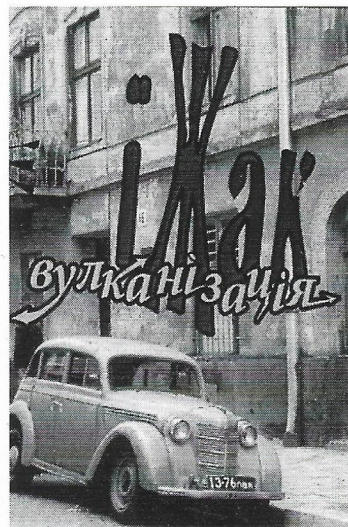
Vulcanization involves a strong, steady, searing heat. I tried to remain conscious of this as I listened to the recording. During the first listen, it was the 'steady' that came through. No jarring jumps, no glaring glitches, just straight ahead songs built on a solid foundation of poetry from the likes of Kost' Moskalets, Ivan Malkovych, and Ihor Rymaruk of contemporary Ukraine, Yuri Tarnawskyj (one of the 'New York Group' poets) and Ivan Franko. Andreychuk added in two of his own poems in English for good measure.

As all songs based on poetry, they do demand some concentration from the listener. This was made difficult by the uneven mix. In some sections of the songs, I found the words indecipherable — too bad! Luckily, I found two of the poems on one of my dusty bookshelves. This made all the difference.

The music is engaging, though at times understated, and you can tell that the Lvivite all-star line-up of musicians were given room to play. However, I'm not convinced that the music and poetry work well together. It is here that we come back to vulcanization. The most effective songs, the ones that sear themselves into your soul, must have both elements working full out.

Of the two poems that I was able to read, Ihor Rymaruk's "Temni, Lehki Snihy" (Dark, Gentle Snows) worked well — at about the lightly browned sear level. The energy and emotion of the poem (actually only a snippet of the original) is evident in the music.

The other, Ivan Malkovych's "Z Narodnykh Motyviv" (From Folk Motifs) worked at about the same level. The poem is an ironic love story/letter written by a phlegmatic lover. Andreychuk's low-key vocal style is perfect for this song and there is quite a lot going on musically. This may be just me. I found the poem quite funny, but I did not hear that in the song!



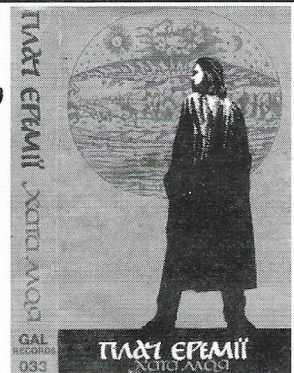
Steady, strong, and slightly soft on the searing — *Vulcanization* is definitely worth a listen.

reviewed by Taras Gula

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For the numerous Ukrainian folk dance troupes mostly in the Western part of Canada, Virsky is a Ukrainian cultural icon. This icon should not be trampled on by any Ukrainian who can't appreciate a bit of dramatic socialist-realism, and most importantly, incredible skill and talent (regardless of the fact they flunked out of ballet school because the shape of their legs wasn't quite right). Virsky's work is based on classical dance and is what most dancers in North America continue to perform, learned from Canadian teachers who travelled to study in Ukraine.

I attended Virsky's concert this spring and, surprisingly, walked away a bit disappointed – because virtually all of the choreography I have either seen or performed myself. The music on this CD is also not new-sounding.

The pieces are different from Canadian renditions, such as those for Cheremosh and Shumka, in that the flourishes used to support solos are far more bombastic (mirroring the difference in dance style). The orchestration is also thinner on the Virsky CD (for example, fewer strings, or violins, violas, cellos, etc.).

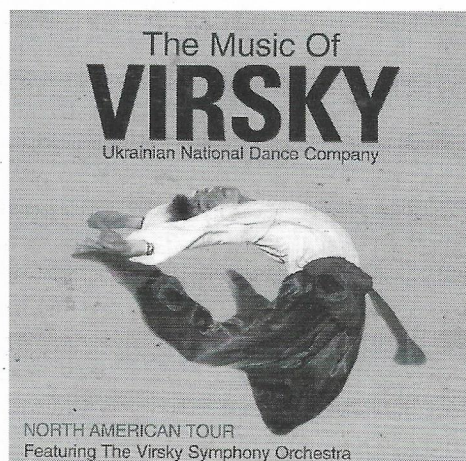
The sound on this CD is high-quality and very clear. This is excellent stage-dance music and a valuable collection of the most cherished classic Ukrainian staged folk dances. The music itself fulfills its practical role for dance teachers and choreographers, but the CD producers made a major oversight. There are absolutely no liner notes, only a

list of the pieces in English on the back of CD. This list, disappointingly, does not include the length of the dances.

Finally, considering that this is the audio-recording of the ensemble, the credits should have listed the orchestra players, soloists, composers or arrangers for the pieces. We'll never know, too, if the thinner orchestration is due to budgetary constraints, or just because ...

Regardless of the shortcomings of the packaging, this CD must be a standard for all dance teachers.

reviewed by Marcia Ostashevski



## ZABAVA'S BEST

This summer the Vegreville Pysanka Festival was celebrated for the 25th time. To commemorate the anniversary, the organizers compiled a CD of singles contributed from various bands who've performed at the grandstand and *zabavas*. But is it really the BEST? Though the contributing bands are some of the finest from the last 20 or so years, I don't think the singles they so generously contributed are their best – this is a bit of a disappointment.

Some of the tunes seem to be jumping onto the world-beat bandwagon. Others are new-agey soundscapes. My personal favourites include the pop/country polkas. This CD is the usual mix of techno-world synthesizers (some of those saxophone sounds are just too even to be real), primeval-sounding *sopilka* (flute) melodies, as well as some decent *tsymbaly*-playing (thanks, Wade from Charka!). Few contemporary bands still include this instrument in their line-up.

The ensemble Schedryk sticks out because of their choral sound, more traditional-sounding instruments, and impeccable language pronunciation. Are they perhaps performers from Ukraine? This is one question that a brief

write-up in the liner notes would have answered. I would like to have seen a listing of who plays what instrument for each of the ensembles. Who are the people that produced these sounds?

Anyway, this CD makes me smile as I remember my Prairie *zabava* experiences, and makes me feel happy to be part of a community that really knows how to have a good party. If you are unable to hire a band for your own *zabava*, just pop this CD in the stereo ... but, assuming you'd like to dance for more than 45 minutes, where are volumes II, III, etc?



reviewed by  
Marcia Ostashevski

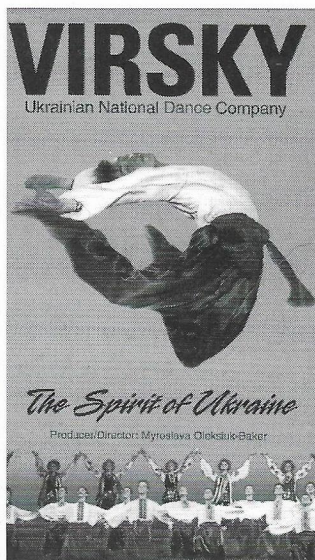


# Reviews

## VIDEO VIRSKY

The beginning of this video makes me think that this will be an interesting adventure movie about the *kozaks*. Right off you see *parubky i divchata* (young men and women) in national costumes styled as if from various regions of Ukraine. They are caked with lots of fabulous makeup – the guys have lipstick and fake eyebrows and some sport fake moustaches, the ladies have fake eyelashes and wreaths of fake flowers securely fastened to their heads – this is what they try to tell us is the “spirit of Ukraine.” As soon as the dancers appear on the stage the ovations begin – these were very professionally recorded in a studio. The unseen audience reacts wildly to any and every action taken by the dancers. When an acrobatic *hopak* trick is performed, one gets the impression that this phantom public will blister their palms with joy.

I must admit that generally



everything is nice and colourful – a great lighting and cinematographic job. The dance sequences are intercut with landscape montages of Ukraine. Perhaps the idea is to induce tears from the eyes of the viewing public – in fact I nearly shed a tear myself.

The *kozak* spear dance, I think it's titled “Zaporozhtsi,” makes a nice impression because everything is so precise.

Among the vignettes interspersed between the dances, there are sequences showing women preparing for the *Kupalo* (summer solstice) festivities, scenes from *kozak* life where they are practicing their swordplay, forging swords, playing the bandura – in a word preparing to battle either the Turks, Poles, Tatars or *Moskali* (Muskovites, i.e. Russians) and other “blood enemies” of the Ukrainian nation. All this is shown with a melange of spacy, suspenseful, patriotic, marching, lyrical, battle music which awakens and accents the Ukrainian spirit. You feel an adrenaline rush and you're ready to go out and fight with the ferocious enemies of Ukraine. I liked the music.

reviewed by Taras Chubaj

## First the BAD...

1. This style of choreography is a typical example of what was produced during Stalin's reign. In those days, the stages of the Soviet Union were laden with productions that gave the impression that the Ukrainian nation was living happily in the “family of nation-brothers.” Meanwhile, the greater part of the populace was starving.
2. The audience cannot be edited in. Either the show is live or it is not!
3. Most of the members of the Virsky dance ensemble normally speak Russian. For much of the Ukrainian population in North America this will come as a shock. However, in the field of dance it might not be that important.
4. I am not convinced that a Soviet-Ukrainian version of the *hopak* represents the “spirit of Ukraine.”

## Now the GOOD

1. The women in the Virsky dance ensemble have nice legs and the men have great *sharavary*.
2. It is very good that something Ukrainian was able to enter the world's marketplace with such high standards of production. Kudos to the camera operators, sound technicians, the lighting personnel, the producers and in fact the whole crew.
3. Without doubt the Virsky Dance Ensemble is the most professional dance company of this type in the world.
4. The dances are tightly choreographed and precisely executed. Although I am not a fan of this genre I must admit that the dances themselves were good.
5. It is evident through the production and packaging of this video that a whole mess of money was invested in this project. The financial backers for this project deserve credit (pardon the expression).



reviewed by Yuriy Diakunchak

<http://www.svitcom.on.ca/>

## **Svitcom Inc.**

Svitcom Inc. Multimedia Productions are the makers of software such as *Kozatska Abetka* and the *Kazky* CD which have been reviewed on the pages of *Zdorov!* in the past. What's cute about this site is the Art Wall, where children can have their art work displayed on the net. So far only Oleh from Toronto has gone public with his masterpieces, but perhaps after reading this, other parents may convince their children that its never too soon to work on that art career.

<http://www.ukar.org>

## **Ukrainian Archive**

Remember when CBS's *60 Minutes* did its hatchet job on Ukrainians a few years back? Well this site devotes a hell of a lot of space to debunking those bunko artists. This site is maintained by Lubomyr Prytulak who has assembled everything ever said or written about that unfortunate bit of propaganda. There is also a Disinformation Gallery dealing with other instances of anti-Ukrainian bias in the media as perceived by the site's owner. While *Zdorov!* can't say that it agrees with everything on this site, it certainly supports Mr. Prytulak in doing his part to remind people that shows like *60 Minutes* rank somewhere below Jerry Springer on the responsible reporting scale. I only hope that Mr. Springer doesn't take offense at my comparing his show to the drivel coming out of the mouths of the *60 Minutes* crowd.

<http://home.echo-on.net/~nemmer/index.html>

## **Blue Skies, Ukrainian Canadian Pioneer Days**

A nice site containing a brief tour of some Ukrainian pioneer churches in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Included are photos of about a dozen churches and short histories about the founders, the churches and the communities they are found in.

<http://www.sabre.org/huri>

## **Ukrainian Research Institute Harvard University**

A handy site for anyone who is interested in research opportunities in Ukrainian studies. This page is a directory for various programs in universities around the United States with Ukrainian related programs. To access this list follow the links from the Institute's main page.

Language courses, research program, summer courses and other things are listed. A useful resource.

**Ukrainian Research Institute**  
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## **The Largest Ukrainian Web Site on the Internet**

InfoUkes is an Internet based information resource about Ukraine and Ukrainians. The Web server provides information through the World Wide Web and a List Server. If you or your organization would like to sponsor dissemination of information about Ukraine or promote your business, organization or product we invite you to advertise on InfoUkes.

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# bill welychka

written by Nestor Gula

with files from Mike Luchka

photos by Yuri Dolnycky

*much more  
than just a  
pretty face*

Sometime in the early 1990s, Bill Welychka first appeared on the television screen.

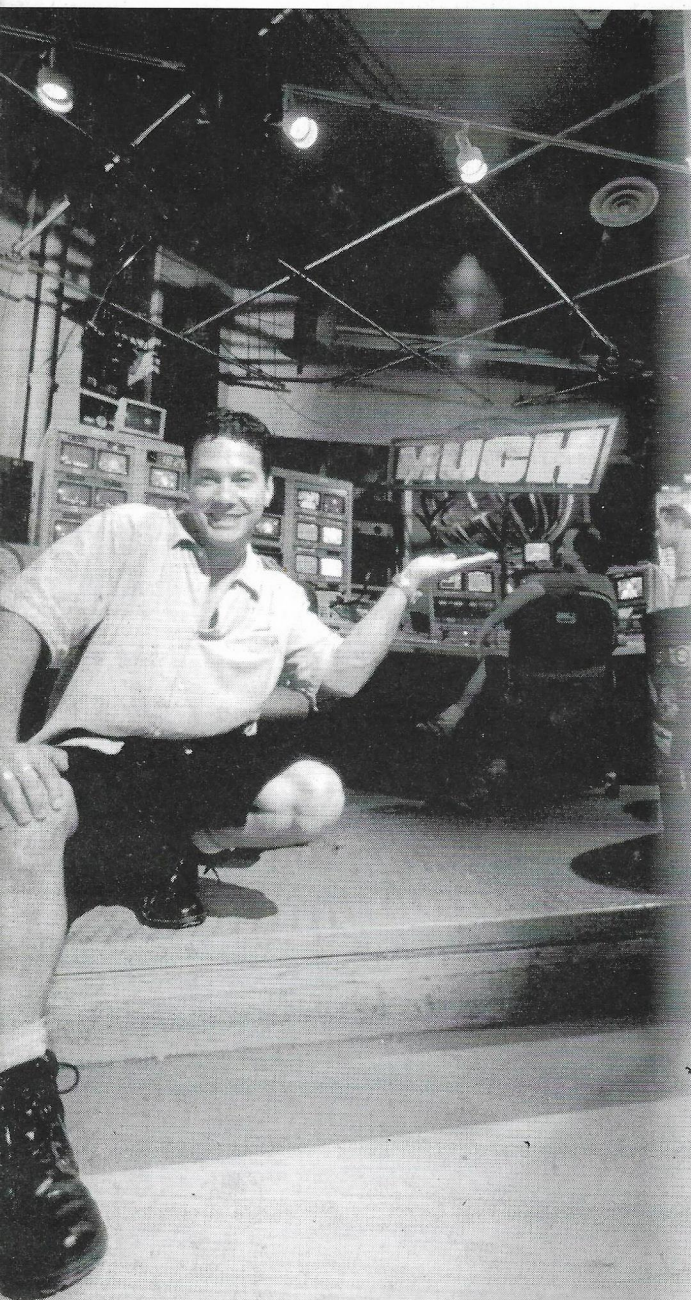
He was hosting a country video show "Outlaws and Heroes," on Canada's Toronto-based music-video station MuchMusic.

When I still had cable, I would occasionally see him on MuchMusic. Lethargically, I would flip through the channels, desperately looking for something that would keep me from doing what I should be doing (sleeping).

Alas, the cable is long gone and I did not recognize Bill as he walked into the bar where we were to meet. I remembered him with long, brown, curly hair. The guy who sat down one table away from me wore short, styled hair held in place with a good measure of gel, or grease, or whatever it is they put in hair to make it resistant to even the strongest winds.

As Bill chatted to the waitress, I overheard him asking something about a Ukrainian magazine. This was the man.

Bill does not speak Ukrainian. He knows a couple of words but not enough to string a sentence together. Bill was born in Welland, Ontario, the youngest of seven children — six boys and one girl. His closest sibling, a brother, is seven years older. Bill's father was married to an English woman and Bill doesn't remember Ukrainian having been spoken much in the household.











"My dad's brothers would come over and they would all speak Ukrainian," Bill reminisces, "My dad would occasionally speak to them in Ukrainian, but mostly in English."

Bill says he had a Ukrainian girlfriend once. "She spoke Ukrainian and did all the traditional things," he says, adding, "I thought that was very cool. She taught me a few things, but I've forgotten them all now."

He now gets his Ukrainian fix on occasion from several record executives who happen to be Ukrainian. "Occasionally somebody goes up to me and asks if I'm Ukrainian," he says, "I tell them 'yes,' and they say they are Ukrainian too. It's great."

Standing with him outside the CityTV/CHUM building where MuchMusic is based, it's hard to have a conversation. He spends most of his time talking to the people on the street who stop and say "hi".

Bill doesn't mind the attention given to him because of his on-air status. "Usually it's just people who want to stop and say 'hi.' Maybe get an autograph and a picture. It rarely bothers me," he says. He did have an unpleasant encounter with a stalker at one point, something which he is not willing to discuss.

Bill has never considered himself a star ("We interview stars," he says), but there are some star trappings in his life. Scores of letters, postcards,

e-mails and faxes come in to him every day. He says that he responds to all of them in time.

"I'm really flattered by the attention," he smiles, "They remember my birthday and create 'Bill Welychka' web sites."

Another thing Bill's fans like to send him is *X-Files* material. Bill is obsessed. "I wouldn't go as far as to call it an obsession, more of a hobby," corrects Bill. He says that an entire corner of his bedroom is devoted to *X-Files* stuff — magazines, memorabilia obtained from the set, etc. One of the main reasons for his, let's say, devotion to this particular show is Bill's major crush on Gillian "Scully" Anderson.

Unlike most people who harbor crushes, Bill had a close encounter with the object of his mooning. A friend worked on the set of *X-Files* in Vancouver and got Bill an invitation to the show's season wrap-up party. Bill of course hopped on a plane and flew to Vancouver for a vacation.

Bill met Gillian. "I couldn't speak. I was tongue tied. I remember mumbling something like 'hello.'" Bill recalls that she asked him to dance. "I danced with her for perhaps 30 seconds then I excused myself and walked away to compose myself." Bill says that Gillian knew of his school-boy crush on her. "My friend told her, and anyway she saw me on

MuchMusic talking about her."

Needless to say, the encounter didn't dampen his feelings for Ms. Anderson. "She is the most beautiful woman in the world," he insists.

Bill, an avid country music fan, helped create MuchMusic's country show *Outlaws and Heroes*.

"We wanted to remind people that country music is not just about line dancing or wearing a cowboy hat," Bill says. He notes that new country music is "more about imagery and marketing and making money — almost being ashamed of its roots."

When Denise Donlon, the former host of *Outlaws and Heroes*, went on maternity leave in the fall of 1992, he was the only one in the station who knew enough about country music to be able to step into her role. The rest is, as they say, history.

Bill recounts that making a transition from the country show to the regular format of MuchMusic in the fall of 1994, proved to be a bit difficult. "There were fans writing letters saying — How can this country guy be playing Oasis?" he laughs. "Well I like Oasis. I like most styles of music."

There are bands Bill hates. "Everybody knows I hate the Backstreet Boys," smiles the veejay. "I did an interview with comedian/actor Denis Leary about a year ago and we were cutting them up ... and having a great time." He recalls he was inundated with mail asking him how he could say such things. "I don't fake that I like something if I don't," Bill rejoins.

However, because of the tight formatting at MuchMusic, a mainstream commercial station just like the Yankee MTV and its ilk, Bill does not have much leeway in determining what is played, so the Boys go on.

Bill has done countless interviews, many with people he considers legends in the business, from Robert Smith of The Cure to Conway Twitty.

The one interview that he really wants to do is with Robert Plant and Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin. He has been a loyal fan of theirs for as long as he can remember.



Besides bemoaning the fact that he missed them when they were in Toronto this year (he was on assignment), Bill notes that many of MuchMusic's young viewers have no clue of what Led Zeppelin was about. "What is really sad is to get a letter from a viewer – Can you play something by that guy does that tune with Puff Daddy – Jimmy Page? Play something from his old band. I don't know what it is. I want to know what they were like," says Bill, incredulous. "It's Led Zeppelin for crying out loud! How can you not know about Led Zeppelin?"

Bill is fully aware that his star can descend as quickly as it rose. Video jockeys who don't have that youth thing going for them any more are discarded quickly and with little ceremony.

Bill is at an age where he does not want to reveal the number of years he has spent on the earth. However Bill does not worry too much about the age factor because he never set out to be an on-air personality. He graduated from Seneca College's Radio and Television Arts course in 1988, where he won the Most Outstanding Student Award. He was lucky to get a job as a volunteer at MuchMusic editing and doing gopher work. The volunteer job turned into full-time employment as a video editor and producer.

Bill leads me on a quick tour of the MuchMusic studio/workplace. Since it's an open space, he could just about do it from one spot and point everything out.

"I like it here," the veejay/producer enthuses. "Where else would I be able to come back from a couple of concerts with EDGEfest (a traveling rock festival akin to Lollapalooza) with several hours of raw footage and be able to edit all that down into several half hour specials? At any other station I would have to hand the tapes to a producer and I would not be involved at all."

Bill says he has no plans for the future – after his career at MuchMusic ends. He might start his own production company or go to work somewhere else. "I don't really think about it because I'm happy where I am. People sometimes tell me that I have the best job in the world. I think about it and I say 'yeah. It is a great job.' The sacrifice is that I'm there seven days a week."

He hasn't had a vacation in two years. Not that he's complaining. "There's always a trip coming up at the right time that you don't go on a vacation," the veejay said.

Recently he went with EDGEfest to Ottawa, Montreal, Barrie, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver – a whirlwind in eight days. He'll be going to Los Angeles for a week to attend the MTV Video Music Awards.

Earlier in 1998 he was in Monaco for the World Music Awards. "When I'm at these sites it kind of seems like a vacation. However, we don't just stay in one location for the whole time and do interviews. We'll go to the beach in Nice, we'll drive and find an art community two hours north of Nice and shoot there for an afternoon."

When it's on location, the crew from MuchMusic records introductions to videos, which are later played on air. This makes it seem that Bill Welychka is calling the shots live from exotic locales like Monaco, Los Angeles or Lethbridge, Alberta.

In short, there's little time for goofing around when he's on location. There is virtually no time for sightseeing as well. "This is the reason I don't want to go to Ukraine with a camera," says Bill about his desire to see his dad's homeland. "When I'm with a camera crew we are always shooting and I never see anything. When I go to Ukraine I would like to see some of it – spend an hour or two in one place as opposed to a few minutes."

If he didn't have this job at MuchMusic and couldn't find another job in the industry, Bill says he'd be a cop. "This is something I've considered," he says. "My dad's brother, my uncle, was a sergeant with the Niagara Regional Police. I was on a 'True Crime' kick for awhile."

In person Bill is fairly loose and relaxed. Similar to what you see on television. His on-air segments are not rehearsed and not scripted. "The biggest compliment I sometimes get is when I meet someone new and they say – You're just like a normal person."

He laughs. "Yeah! Great! Why wouldn't I be?" The veejay says his technical background probably has much to do with his attitude. "I came into television from a background like editing where you aren't coddled. A lot of aspiring actors and actresses who want to be on-air do it for the wrong reasons. I fell into my on-air job – I'm not doing it to satisfy my ego."

As a TV personality balancing a relationship is difficult. He spends a lot of time at the CityTV/CHUM building and he goes on the road quite a bit. He says that he needs someone who is understanding about his busy schedule and also is not awed by his television persona.

"The biggest kick for me is to meet someone who doesn't watch TV, who doesn't watch MuchMusic, or hasn't watched it in years. You can usually tell, because if she doesn't start asking lots of questions about MuchMusic then she really does not care about me being on TV," he explains.

One of his peeves is the labels artists and bands get stuck with. "Most of the categories, like pop, rock, alternative, punk, etc. are all just names derived by the music industry," he says.

"If a band is selling well they'll be in the Rock category in a music store, while a band which does not have as strong sales will be [placed into] Punk or Alternative," the veejay said.

Alternative? Bill says most of the names for the categories are also out to lunch. "Some kids consider themselves Alternative. Why don't they put their money where their mouth is and listen to some Ukrainian music?" he fumes. "Now that's Alternative!" **ZI**



## IN DEFENCE OF THE WAFER

Does the name Pischinger ring a bell?

If you're in the know, you'll probably remember it as the chocolate multi-layered torte your great aunt Marusia made with those thin cake wafers sold in Eastern European delicatessens.

If the odd-sounding name draws a blank, let me explain. Pischinger was a Viennese pastry chef who first thought up of the novel idea to make cakes with waffle-like wafers (*andruty*). He sold the prototype wafer cake — a chocolate hazelnut version carrying his name. The ingenious sweet-toothed inventor also manufactured the wafers, leaving a legacy of torte namesakes after him.

The name stuck, regardless of the fact that most diaspora Ukrainians have yet to purchase a single hazelnut — one of the key ingredients in the original cake. For them, almost any cake made with wafers is referred to as Pischinger.

But if you're like me — and most second generation diasporites — you've probably spent your entire life walk-

ing right past those packaged wafers with but one thought in your head "What the heck does one do with them??"

Quite a lot, in fact. I would even go so far as to defend the wafer as a handy labour-saving ingredient, indispensable in the kitchen of any modern woman secretly dreaming of making a simple torte. Yes, simple. And no, this is not a joke. I realize that "simple" and "torte" seem, well, a somewhat ill-suited match.

But low and behold, wafers do the trick. Forget about Betty Crocker. Think wafers. It's more Slavic. Imagine how proud your aunt Marusia would have been. Even Martha Stewart would probably give you bonus points for originality.

In Ukraine, people make the easiest cake in the world using wafers. In its simplest state, it has only three ingredients: wafers, condensed milk, and butter. To jazz it up, add a chocolate glaze. The result? A melt-in-your-mouth no-talent chef d'oeuvre that tastes like ... a Coffee Crisp bar minus the coffee. Honest. **Z!**

### ANDRUTY (VAFELNY TORTE)

1 package cake wafers (usually 5 or 6 wafers, round ones are best)

2 cans sweetened condensed milk

1 1/3 cups unsalted butter, at room temperature

Glaze (optional)

9 ounces semi-sweet chocolate

1 cup whipping cream

In a double boiler, heat the condensed milk over medium heat until thick and caramel coloured. This should take about 2 hours. Don't bother stirring it. Remove from heat and allow to cool.

Beat the butter until fluffy and pale. Gradually mix in the cooled caramel. Spread over all but one waffle layer. Assemble the layers, leaving the uncovered layer on top. Put the cake on a flat surface, and place a weight on top, such as a pot of water. Let stand in a cool spot for 5 hours or overnight.

Glaze: In a double boiler, heat and stir the chocolate and cream until melted and uniform. Immediately pour on top of the cake, quickly smoothing it over the surface and sides with a spatula.

NB: In Ukraine, people simply boil the unopened cans of condensed milk in a pot of water — making the whole process even more fuss-free. I recommend the safer method of simmering the poured-out contents on top of a double boiler. High heat and pressurized cans can be an explosive mix.



# Marko

# Polakiwsky

*capturing the*

# WORLD

written by Nestor Gula  
photos by Marko Polakiwsky

Marko Polakiwsky's mission is to photograph all the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Heritage Sites in the world.

He has been pursuing photography since he was a kid. This, combined with his love for living in the wilderness, fuels his desire to photograph the UNESCO sites. As of December 1997, UNESCO has designated 552 such sites around the world from the Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona, to the Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump Complex in Alberta, to the St. Sophia Cathedral and the monastic buildings of the Percherska Lavra in Kyiv, and the Jewish cemetery near Brody in Ukraine. Marko has visited and photographed 12 sites to date. His current project is to photograph the 12 sites that are in Canada. By mid-October he will have photographed all but two.

An exhibit of his recent photographs will be displayed in conjunction with the *Rendezvous with Madness Film Festival* between November 18 and 22 in the Workman

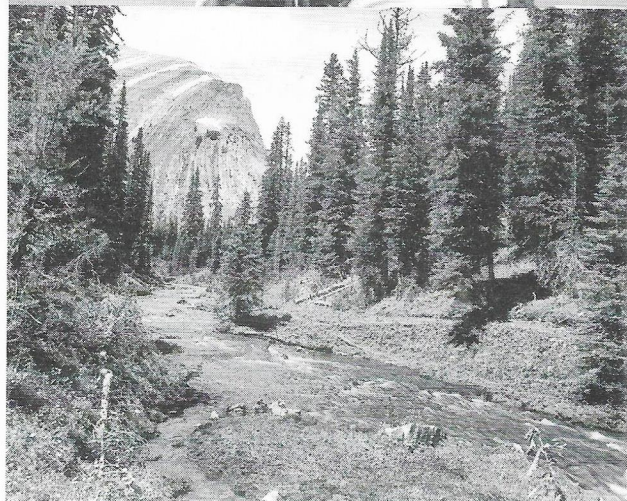


Theatre at 1001 Queen Street West in Toronto. This festival has been in existence for seven years and features films dealing with mental health issues. Although the film program for the festival will not be confirmed until the end of September, last year the festival premiered the movie *Regeneration* and in 1996 premiered

*Shine*. Other featured movies were *Crumb* and *I Love A Man in Uniform*. Marko is participating at this festival due to the fact that at 21 he was diagnosed as a manic depressive. "It is now polite to say I have a bi-polar mood disorder," he laughs.

Marko is not shy about discussing his condition but mentions, "it's not





an issue that is ever talked about in the Ukrainian community." To add to his woes, in 1993, he also suffered a traumatic head injury as a result of a domestic accident. This gave him amnesia and a loss of life skills like taking care of himself.

Through all of this he always took photographs. The pictures featured at the Workman Theatre will be what he titles "Scene T.O." "These photographs are a documentary of graffiti art in the back alleys, the cultural phenomenon of tattooing, as well as formal studio portraits of people from the Queen West scene – bikers, punk rockers, squeegee kids and artists." There will be approximately 60 photos on display. Marko explains that "Scene T.O." is an excerpt from a much larger work that's still in progress; "Scenes in the 90s". "This collection documents different events, people, places which I came across in my travels," he says.

Marko has criss-crossed the North American continent several times and rarely sat still for any length of time. "In the last four years I've been to Guatemala, The Four Corners in the United States, Alberta, British Columbia, Queen Charlottes, Alaska, and the Yukon." He does this travelling not by obtaining massive government grants or drawing on the resources of extremely wealthy, and tolerant parents. "I've got a friend, Dave, who has a van and travels a lot. I also do a lot of hitchhiking. I hitchhiked to El-Salvador when I was 21, (before he was diagnosed with his illness)." At the time he set off for El Salvador he was studying political science at the University of Toronto. "There was a revolution going on in El Salvador," he laughs. "I wanted to find out first hand what was going on. What I found was that there was a lot of beautiful, friendly people who were living in the classic haves and have-nots system. Some had food, most had no money for food."

In El Salvador he had a small camera. Now when he travels he lugs around an immense mountain of equipment. "My backpack is usually between 55 and 85 pounds (between 25 and 40 kilograms). I have to make sure I have all the equipment I need as well as the camping stuff."

Crossing borders is always fun even when you are not hitchhiking. "I got to the Mexican-U.S. border at Nogales and as I'm walking into Mexico there is a guy standing there leaning against the counter. I walked passed him and nodded my head. That was it. I kept on walking," Marko recounts.

Several people contribute to Marko's pursuits. "The main people are my parents Valentin and Valentina," says Marko. "I live with them when I'm not traveling and they are very tolerant and give me both in moral and life support." The other figure is Ed Burtynsky. Marko occasionally calls him "boss," since he works at Burtynsky's firm, Toronto Image Works, but he is more than that. "He is my mentor and teacher as well as my moral support. I've been studying there at the vocational school courtesy of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS)." Marko receives



incentives (in the form of bursaries from VRS) to pursue his education in the field of photography and graphic arts.

Mr. Burtynsky is impressed by Marko. "He is very determined to put together a body of work on the World Heritage Sites. That's a very interesting project for someone to be working on. I've tried to give him encouragement, perfecting his style, and taught him to dedicate himself to an idea." Mr. Burtynsky has known Marko for several years and has seen great improvements and maturity in his work.

Having just obtained a Certificate of Photography from Ryerson Polytechnic University ("Something of which I am very proud of," says Marko), his future plans include doing an internship this fall at the National Museum of Contemporary Photography in Ottawa. This will keep him grounded for awhile but he will be off on more travels as soon as he can.

Although initially liking the title of a "Vagabond Who Takes Pictures," Marko amends it to an explorer: "I consider myself in the league of explorers more than just a vagabond," explains Marko. "I would like to turn my life's work into documenting UNESCO World Heritage sites. I would like to travel overland through all the continents and photograph these sites." Is he determined? You bet. "I'll do it whether I get funding or not. This is what I want to do." **21**



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# A Healthy Shot

## TOSEXANDPROTECT

by Aleksandra Basarab, RN

Contraception is not merely a phenomenon of the 20th Century. People have pursued an unending quest throughout the ages for the prevention of pregnancy. In Toronto, there is a whole museum dedicated to showcasing these efforts. Many of the devices seem archaic and laughable nowadays, but a lot of them have led to the development of modern contraceptives.

The history of contraception can be traced back thousands of years. The first mention of contraception - coitus interruptus - can be found in the Bible, in the book of Genesis, 38:9. Ancient Romans used lead as a spermicide while, it is rumoured that ancient Ukrainians used horilka (vodka) for that same purpose. Condoms were, also, fashioned out of sheep intestines for millennia.

Sexual hygiene is an important part of living and if you disagree, then just turn the page. Abstinence from sexual activity is



a valid choice (see Zdorov! Spring 1998 "Why Varennyky Are Better Than Sex"). It is the only 100 percent effective method of contraception, but if abstinence is not your choice, then read on so you can make a more informed decision. The following is only a guide. For detailed and proper use of various contraceptive methods, please consult your family planning health professional.

Healthy sexuality involves more than just a "plumbing" lesson, but since it has been years since some readers have studied human biology, let's have a quick review:

### A. female reproductive system:

ovaries: every month during the menstrual cycle a tiny egg (ovum) is released from an ovary into a fallopian tube.

fallopian tubes: the egg moves along the fallopian tube (where it can be fertilized by the male sperm) from the ovary to the uterus.

uterus: fertilized egg develops into a baby here. If the egg is not fertilized, the lining of the uterus sheds, resulting in menstruation.

cervix: entrance to the uterus from the vagina.

vagina: leads from the uterus to outside the body.

### B. male reproductive system

testicles: 2 testicles produce the sperm and are suspended outside the body in a sac called the scrotum.

prostate gland and seminal vesicles: these organs produce the semen in which the sperm can travel from the testicles through the penis.

penis: organ through which the semen is ejaculated and deposited in the vagina during sexual intercourse.

### Common contraceptive methods:

the pill: oral contraceptive is usually a combination of 2 female hormones. It prevents the release of an egg from the ovary so pregnancy cannot occur. When taken correctly and at the same time each day, it is a very effective method of birth control. There are over 20 different brands of oral contraceptives available in different strengths and combinations of hormones. Side-effects are common when first starting but usually subside after a couple of months. Oral contraceptives require a medical history, a physical exam and a prescription.

intra-uterine device (I.U.D.): a specially shaped piece of plastic that is inserted into the uterus by a doctor. It is not known for sure how it works. It is believed that an IUD changes the lining of the uterus to prevent a fertilized egg from implanting. This method is not recommended for women who have had children already because of the increased risk of developing pelvic inflammatory disease.

condom: male condom is a sheath made from thin latex. It fits over the erect penis to prevent sperm from entering the vagina during intercourse. Condoms are readily available in all drugstores and sexual health clinics. This barrier method is more effective if used with chemical agents



that kill sperm (spermicides) just in case accidental spillage occurs. It is also important to put on the condom before any genital contact occurs because sperm may be present in pre-ejaculate fluid, and all it takes is one sperm to fertilize an egg. Also, keeping ejaculate away from the vaginal opening is a good idea. One of those suckers can swim right up sometimes, and penetrative sex need not always occur for pregnancy to result – believe it or not!

Condoms also help to prevent sexually-transmitted diseases. Using condoms with oral contraceptives is an excellent way to prevent pregnancy and disease.

**sponge:** the contraceptive sponge is made of soft polyurethane foam and contains chemical spermicides. The sponge is placed over the cervix and works by absorbing and blocking sperm. Available without a prescription.

**diaphragm:** a rubber, cup-like barrier which is inserted into the vagina to cover the cervix and block sperm from entering the uterus. Spermicidal foam or cream must be used with the diaphragm. A doctor fits the patient with a proper sized diaphragm and gives instructions on insertion, removal and care.

**rhythm method:** known as the fertility awareness method, is based on establishing the woman's fertile period (when the egg is released from the ovary) and avoiding intercourse during that time. There are four rhythm methods: the calendar, temperature, cervical mucus and combined methods. All four have a very high failure rate.

**withdrawal method:** "coitus interruptus," is a wholly unreliable method and does not prevent against STDs (see "condoms" above)

**Depo-Provera:** a hormonal injection (progestin) administered every three months at a clinic or doctor's office. It thickens vaginal mucus and stops ovulation. Does not prevent STDs.

**"Morning-after-pill":** an emergency contraceptive method taken within 72 hours of unprotected intercourse. First dose is taken immediately and the second dose is taken 12 hours after. ECPs contain very high doses of hormones and work to change the lining of the uterus to make implantation of a fertilized egg unlikely. They may also prevent fertilization from occurring. You can obtain ECPs from hospital emergency rooms, most walk-in-clinics and some doctors.

### Dispelling sexual myths

- you can get pregnant if you have sex standing up
- douching will not prevent pregnancy
- unprotected sex without a resulting pregnancy does not signify sterility – it's just dumb luck!
- infrequent, unprotected sex is still unsafe
- you can get pregnant the first time you have intercourse
- oral contraceptives don't "mess up" your insides
- you can get STDs from the "clean" Ukrainian community

Birth control is the responsibility of both the man and woman. Which method you decide upon depends on factors such as: contraceptive effectiveness, ease of use, side-effects, whether you have children, and age. Above all, take responsibility for your health. **21**

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by Nestor Gula

Eugene Cholkan is a Chartered Accountant (a public accountant in the United States).

Normally I would not do a story on an accountant. Most of you, dear readers, remember, however dimly, the vicious assaults on accountants took in Monty Python skits. I remember them well. This is what I grew up with. A young mind is very impressionable.

Mr. Cholkan is different. If you happen to live in West End Toronto you just cannot get away from him. Well, his name anyway.

First and foremost, there are Cholkan Realty signs sprouting on lawns. Then there is Cholkan Insurance, and Cholkan & Stepczuk, the accounting firm.

Then you meet Eugene (Gene) Cholkan. A pleasant mild mannered chap who has a calm studious air about him. Tycoon and owner of all of these businesses? "Maybe if you do this story, you'll squash some misconceptions," muses Mr. Cholkan when I confronted him with the feature title Tycoon.

Since his name is on so many 'For Sale' signs, people frequently ask him how the real estate market is doing. "Even some of my close associates do this," he adds incredulously. "How should I know? All I know is what is written in the newspapers. I have no business ties whatsoever to Cholkan Realty." Nor to Cholkan Insurance.

As always, it's "the parents' fault." In 1954, Gene Cholkan's dad, Roman, started a real estate company in Toronto. An insurance agency was started a few years later. The business grew to 22 offices and well over 250 staff in the Greater Toronto Area.

As a teen, Gene wanted to be involved in his dad's businesses. "There was that allure of a business that has signs all over the place" says Mr. Cholkan, "where your name pops up. It's a little bit of fame."

During high school and university years, the younger Cholkan worked summers at his dad's company. He would help collect and assemble infor-



Gene, Christina, Gregory and Roman Cholkan

photo by: Ola Cholkan

mation for real estate catalogues. "I printed some of those myself using the small offset press that dad had."

He remembers his dad discouraging him and his sister Anna from following in his footsteps. "Mainly because of the hours that he kept," comments Mr. Cholkan. The elder Cholkan was in the office usually between nine and ten in the morning and would come home between ten and eleven at night. Then, he would still get several business phone calls that he would have to deal with at night, Gene remembers. "In the real estate business, the work occurs when the client has time and that is usually in the evenings and on weekends."

There was a more profound reason why Roman discouraged his children from following him in the family business. The untimely death of Roman's wife Luba, when their kids were in their mid-teens, was an important factor that influenced his thinking. Roman realized that he could not tear himself away from the office to spend more time with his children. He did not want his kids to be bound by work this way someday.

The irony here is that Gene Cholkan currently has his own Chartered Accountancy firm with partner Roman Stepczuk and frequently works long hours. "I'm not around to drive the kids to piano or to soccer as often as I'd like, but generally speaking I'm home more than my father was" says Gene, "and dad deserves

some credit for that."

Gene lives in the West End of Toronto with his wife Ola, who is a professor of Business at Seneca College, daughter Christina and son Gregory. Developments in technology allow him to be home with his family more. "Because of computers, I can take a diskette home, get on the internet and work another two hours - and say that I'm at home!"

What strikes Gene is that although his father made a very good living in the real estate business, it was nowhere near what many people assumed it was. Because of all the exposure the real estate business gave to his father and his family, through having their name plastered on countless yards, "it made people think that he was making tons of money."

The elder Cholkan sold the businesses in 1985. The younger Cholkan and his sister, also a Chartered Accountant, actually encouraged their dad to sell the companies.

"He worked long hours all his life," says Gene. "It was time for him to spend some of the dollars he made." The real estate business and the insurance business were sold and are now owned by different groups. The Cholkan family now has "none whatsoever" financial interest in those companies.

The name lingers. But, these days, if you are going to do business with a "real Cholkan," you should probably expect an accountant. **Z1**



# DRINKING 101

written and experienced by Stephan Bandera

"Hey Ivan, tell me, can you drink a bucket of water?"  
"What do I look like - a horse?"  
"But Ivan, can you drink a bucket of horilka?"  
"Of course I can - I'm a Kozak, am I not?"  
- popular Ukrainian "anekdot" (joke)

During your stay in Ukraine you will undoubtedly come across the opportunity to have a few drinks with friends, family or business associates on the occasion of someone's birthday, wedding, civic/religious holiday, or sometimes during the course of a business meeting.

For most Ukrainian men, drinking is an activity that defines your virility and social abilities. Women can get away with sipping a glass of wine or a cognac, although some Ukrainian women can keep up with the best of boozers. In Ukraine, drinking is the cheapest form of entertainment.

In a country where not everyone can afford tickets to the show, opening up a bottle, conversing, singing, exchanging jokes (*anekdoty*) actually makes economic sense. If a local does not "brew his own" booze (called *samohonka*) he can go and buy a decent half litre of vodka (*horilka*) for about \$2 US. The danger lies in indulging often, and trying to keep up with the locals. Drinking is an integral part of the Ukrainian culture.

Do not be surprised when you see twelve year old boys and girls drinking a beer or "brandy-cola" or your peers enjoying a "gin-tonic" or "rum-cola" on their way to work.

The Ukrainian drinking culture is a proud one - the *Kozak* steppe warriors are often cited as examples of what it means to "be a man". And part of what it means to be a *Kozak* is

being able to drink - see Tony Curtis and Yul Brynner in *Taras Bulba* for more details. Ukrainians will recount a variety of apocryphal stories and legends from history to justify their drinking "tradition".

Alcoholism is a serious problem in Ukraine - an estimated 1,430 people per 100,000 suffer from alcoholism and alcohol psychosis. And for a North American coming to this part of the world for the first time, it is all too easy to get caught up and swept away by the drinking culture. Indeed, one of the symptoms of Culture Shock is excessive drinking. And the Alcoholics Anonymous program in Ukraine is understaffed, so people often need to remind themselves that the first step is, in fact, denial.

Unless your religious convictions forbid you to do so, or you are a designated driver, you will probably be expected to drink a few shots of *horilka* on more than one occasion. Refusing to do so may offend your host, just as not eating the food will be an affront to the hostess. But moderation is the key, and Ukrainians will generally respect people who may not be able to drink as much as they can, but drink what they can - wisely. "When in Kyiv ..."

The following is a set of tips and guidelines for drinking in Ukraine. Remembering some of them will allow you to save face by walking the fine line of complete and utter drunken obliteration and driving a cultural wedge between yourself and your Ukrainian hosts. You can also impress

## Tripping Ukraine

the Ukrainians by showing them that you know some of the local customs. As a foreigner, you will surprise the locals gathered around the table, who will probably come to the conclusion that you have something *Kozak* in your genes. You may be from South Africa, but they "know" that the *Kozak* could have missed a turn on their way to Turkey and made it all the way to Cape Horn. You're living proof.

### 1. Eat while you drink


Besides drinking, Ukrainians love to eat. The two activities go hand-in-hand, and that is a good thing. The table is set, the shots are being poured, and after downing a shot, make sure you eat something - *zakuska*. This will not only help you kill the taste of the vodka, but will help you in prolonging your sobriety. In the West, people usually enjoy a glass of wine or a beer with dinner, and then go out to bars to drink, supplementing their alcohol consumption with meager portions of salty foods.

In Ukraine, the drinking occurs around the dinner table, and dinner *per se* can last for hours. Note: Ukrainians love to eat *salo* - chunks of smoked pork fat (sometimes flavoured with garlic). The *horilka* will actually help your innards dissolve and break down the 100% fat that you are eating.

### 2. The first and second toasts

Drinking in Ukraine can be quite ceremonious. During dinner it is customary for everyone around the table to say a toast. If you speak and read Ukrainian, there are books of toasts available on Maydan Nezalezhnosti (Independence Square) in Kyiv. Do not be surprised if the host or hostess put you on the spot to say the first toast.





Whether you are speaking the native tongue, or have the help of a translator, the first toast is usually raised to the health of the *hospodary* – the hosts. If you are at a birthday party, most of the toast will be raised in honour of the celebrator.

Toasts need to be something more than a curt “Cheers” or “*Na Zdorovya!*” and require a little preamble. As a foreigner, you are probably best off speaking about the generosity of the Ukrainian people, how you have never seen anything like it anywhere in the world, and how this particular household is a shining example of that generous hospitality. Remember: If you drink without toasting, you will be accused of suffering from a type of sclerosis. If you toast often without thinking, then you will develop a disease of the liver called cirrhosis.

Shots are usually poured in 50 gram portions (about 1.5 ounces), and the first one is usually drunk *do dna* – to the bottom.

You will know that you are in the company of seasoned drinkers when the interlude between the first and second shots is fairly short – Ukrainians like to say that “a bullet shouldn’t pass between the first and second shots.” At this point you are presented with an opportunity to show that you can, in fact, drink wisely – leave half of the shot in the glass.

### 3. Toast Number Three

The saying goes: “The third, ninth, thirteenth and twenty-seventh toast is raised to the women.” The third toast is raised in the spirit of that memorable Iglesias-Nelson ditty “To all the girls I’ve loved before.” The wise toastmaster may choose to divide the drinking of the shot into three parts, and asks those gathered around the table to leave enough in their shot-glass for three gulps.

The first part of the toast is raised in honour of the living mothers, the second gulp for the wives, mistresses,

girlfriends, sisters (choose the appropriate) and the third to daughters, granddaughters, nieces etc. If any of the above-mentioned have passed on, then you should honour their memories by NOT drinking the shot, and think of them whilst the others drink. This “rule” applies for all toasts concerning relatives.

One of the classic third toasts goes something like this: “A ship is sinking. The Captain rushes out to the foredeck, looks to the sky and prays to the Almighty: “Lord, please send me a piece of wood for each time my wife has been unfaithful to me.” A pile of timber falls from the sky, the Captain quickly assembles a large raft, and floats to safety. Seeing this, the First Mate, beckons God to send him a piece of wood for each time his wife has been unfaithful to him. He too builds a raft, a bit smaller than the Captain’s, but manages to land on safe ground. The lowly shiphand, with little time left, asks God to send him a piece of wood for each time his fiancée has been unfaithful to him. Nothing falls from the sky and the poor shiphand goes down with the ship.

“So let’s raise the toast to the women who help us in our times of need!”

The third toast is usually drunk *do dna* also, and the gentlemen customarily drink the shot standing up. At this point you should still be able to do so.

Just as you never give a woman an even number of flowers, you should never end your drinking on an even number of shots. Three is usually the minimum number of shots you should drink, and, if the dinner was an impromptu affair, you can easily excuse yourself after the third by saying that you have a previously scheduled rendezvous.

### 4. *Na Konya!* – “To the health of your horse!”

“Not so fast,” the host may say after

you have politely excused yourself, “we need to drink *na konya!*”

Allegedly a parting toast from the *Kozak* days, the intention is to wish all the guests a safe journey to their next destination. And *Kozaks* got around on horses. This toast is perhaps as important as the third toast, but be wary, for it may be a prelude for a series of additional, silly toasts including: “To the saddle!” – “To the reins!” – “To the horseshoes!” – et cetera – ad nauseam. And keep in mind that if it is the fourth toast, then you are obliged to drink the fifth – recall the “odd number of toasts” rule in #3.

Perhaps the *Kozaks* had it easier then we do today, in the sense that although they were drunk, their horses were not. There is zero tolerance for drinking and driving in Ukraine, and the police need only to suspect you of drinking and driving before seizing your vehicle. Besides, the quality of the roads, lack of street lights and the number of potholes demand a sober and alert driver. Do not drink and drive.

### 5. Taboos – Zabobony

If you are still sitting around the table at this point, perform a little self-test: Stand-up, walk around, have a conversation. If you fall down, or sway back and forth and slur your speech, ask for a cup of tea or coffee. Should those gathered indicate that they expect you to keep drinking, remember to sip your shots. If you refuse outright, then you risk branding yourself as an ungrateful guest. Sipping your shots and eating plenty will prompt the locals to remark amongst themselves “Hey, he/she knows how to drink.”

If you want to impress the locals even more, you can show off your knowledge of the various taboos when it comes to the dinner table and drinking. These taboos, called *zabobony* in Ukrainian, are usually rationalized by the locals who will explain that their forefathers passed



on these customs, and that their forefathers were a hell of a lot wiser than you, dearest guest. On the other hand, if you catch one of the locals transgressing the unwritten law of their forefathers, you absolutely have the right to point it out and ask (politely) "Isn't that a no-no?"

Taboos include:

- Never leave an empty bottle on the table

Always take the empty bottle off of the table. It is considered to be bad luck, and indicates that a quarrel may arise among those gathered. A mostly peace-loving people, the Ukrainians insist that empty bottles are kept off the table. Failure to abide to this rule may result in repeated blows to the head.

- Never pour with your left hand  
The majority of Ukrainians are right-handed, and insist that the *horilka* be poured with the strong, dominant hand. This *zabobon* can be explained by the premise that the imperfect energy of the weak hand will somehow be transferred to the *horilka* and subsequently to those consuming it. If you are left-handed, and someone asks why you are pouring with your left, indicate that you are employing your dominant hand. If you are ambidextrous, explain the fact to the gathered company, provided you are with educated, city-dwelling folk. Should you be in the company of simple country folk in a forgotten village in the Carpathians (the kind of place where you would expect to hear dueling banjos), consider pouring with the same hand, lest ye be deemed to be a *shcheznyk* (minor demon) and be forced to spend the night in the pig-sty.

- Never pour backhand  
A rule, is a rule. You just do not pour backhand. Often explained along the same lines as the "weak hand" rule — poor transfer of bio-energy, or, even worse, transferring negative bio-energy.

- Once up, stay up  
Occasionally a toastmaker will ask everyone to rise for his toast and then launch a verbal barrage that can last for a few minutes. Depending on the quantity of *horilka* consumed, simply standing may be a task in itself. It is considered to be bad manners to sit down again in mid-toast. Falling down, however, is considered to be even more rude, so, if necessary, have a seat.

## 6. How to impress your hosts

The taboos of drinking in Ukraine are more transparent than the canons. By remembering some of the following simple customs, you will manage to impress the Ukrainians with whom you are sharing your evening, and leave an indelible mark in their memories as someone who is a culturally sensitive guest.

When preparing for the night out, remember to bring gifts. A bottle of *horilka* is always welcome (for the host), as are flowers, and little mementos from your home country — pins, postcards (for the kids, if any). Bring along some of your own photographs, as you will inevitably be asked about life in your own country. When entering your hosts' *kvartira* (apartment), remember never to shake hands across the threshold of the open door (also a sign of imminent bad luck). Do not be surprised if the males start laying kisses on you. Ukrainians tend to greet each other with three kisses, each on alternating cheeks (allegedly another *Kozak* tradition). Begin to take off your shoes as a sign of respect to the household. The host may or may not tell you to keep your shoes on. As you proceed to the dinner table, try and remember some of the following drinking customs:

- One hand per bottle — Once a bottle is opened, he who opened it becomes designated as the person who will be doing the pouring. Subsequent bottles

can be poured out by other guests, but the rule here is that an open bottle should not be handled by more than one person.

- Pour yourself first — If it is your turn to open up a bottle and pour, pour a few drops into your own shot-glass first. This is a sign to those gathered that you are not trying to poison anybody, and that you will be drinking the same stuff they are.

- Glasses on the table — Pouring can be a difficult task after the gathered company has enjoyed a few already. The task is not simplified by the fact that the shot-glasses must be set on the table, and not picked up for pouring.

- Look into the eyes — After a toast is said, everyone "clinks" their glasses. When "clinking" smile to the person you are clinking with and look into their eyes. Remember, you are glad to be in their company, and there is no other place that you would rather be.

## 7. The Hangover

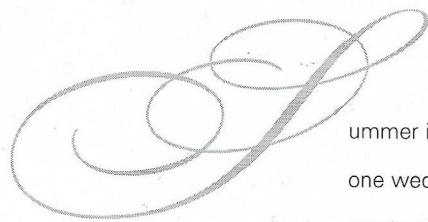
Drinking bouts are best left for Friday or Saturday nights allowing you a day of leisure to recuperate — a day where no one will care that you smell like a distillery and garlic. If you stuck to the *horilka*, then you should not feel all that bad. If, however, you mixed your drinking (usually with beer or champagne), then you are probably hungover. That was Mistake #1. If the local Ukrainians see that the day after is taxing for you, they will suggest that you need to *pokhmelytysia* — drink "the hair of the dog that bit you." They will offer you a beer or a shot to ease the pain. You can refuse — it is acceptable and indeed advisable to do so. Not refusing would be your Mistake #2. Otherwise, out comes the table, the food, the bottle, and you'll have to do it all over again. **Z!**



# Quiz

## Wedding Rating

compiled by Nestor Gula



ummer is over, more or less, and we've all been to at least one wedding. Here is a simple scoring system which you can use to rate the quality of the wedding you attended.

We are not measuring the "Ukrainianess" of the wedding because we assume that a "typical" Ukrainian wedding is excellent. This is the "norm."

Since a typical Ukrainian wedding in Ukraine lasts at least three days, what we are really talking about here is a typical North American Ukrainian wedding.

Recognizing that a few regional characteristics do exist even in North America, we at *Zdorov!* have made this rating system so broad that it should give a fair reading in most circumstances. We have also tried to make the survey objective — sometimes you are just not in the mood and the wedding, therefore, seems bad.

As a bonus this scoring system can also be used when planning a wedding.

### The Ceremony

The location of the ceremony is what sets the wedding off on the right foot. Too pretentious a setting will get the guests gossiping well before the speeches and the food.

- In Ukraine — 0 points
- In the Ukrainian Cathedral/largest church of the city you live in, with the Bishop conducting the ceremony — 2 points
- In the church to which your parents dragged you each and every Sunday — 6 points
- At city hall — 6 points
- In Las Vegas — the minister is dressed like Volodymyr Velykyj — 10 points
- In Las Vegas — the minister is dressed like Elvis Presley — 2 points

### The Reception

The location of the reception gives the overall mood to the party.

Although not a crucial element to the success of the wedding in some cases the location of the reception has either lifted the wedding from mediocrity to respectability or reduced the wedding to a shameful display of putting on airs.

- In the hall of the church you were married at — 6 points
- In the swankiest hotel in town — 6 points
- In a Ukrainian church with a hall big enough to hold all the guests — 6 points
- In a hotel by the airport or the seedy part of town — 4 points
- In a bar across the street from the church — 5 points
- Outside/in a park — 8 points
- No reception — subtract 5 points

### The Menu

The food served at the wedding is crucial — bad food will be remembered forever — great food will usually be forgotten. Portions are not taken into account in this rating system as guests can always run out for pizza slices during the speeches.

- *Varenyky*, *patychky* (meat on a stick) and *borsch* in a Styrofoam cup — 1 point
- The above with chicken and *holubtsi* (cabbage rolls thrown in to add variety) — 3 points
- Chicken broth, shoe leather beef, mashed potatoes and a side salad — 6 points
- Vichyssoise, bacon wrapped filet mignon, scalloped potatoes and Caesar salad — 6 points
- A bucket of chicken on every table, french fries and of course that great green 'slaw — 10 points (for the sheer bravado)

### The Music

Good music is crucial to a wedding. Bad music will drive people to drink more, emptying the bar prematurely. Unless the crowd at the wedding is not into dancing (it happens) the quality of the music provided can either kill the wedding reception or turn it into legend.

- A band that plays only Ukrainian patriotic marches — 0 points
- A band that plays a collection of waltzes, polkas and the like — 8 points
- A band that plays a mix of the above and some pop tunes — 9 points
- A band that does not know anything but covers and plays Macarena three times — 1 point
- A disc jockey who has both the hits and some Ukrainian waltzes and Polkas — 7 points
- A disc jockey who usually does raves — 1 point



## The Guest

The amount of guests assembled at a party signifies either that the persons getting married have big families, have lots of friends or think highly of themselves. The important way to judge the sincerity of the guests is to note the percentage of guests which attended the ceremony at church.

- less than 10% – 0 points
- 11% to 25% – 2 points
- 26% to 50% – 4 points
- 51% to 75% – 7 points
- 76% to 100% – 10 points

## The Booze

Some guest go to a wedding to celebrate the joining of two people in ... Some guests go for the food. Most guests come to drink and dance – in that order.

- Cash bar – does not compute. Put down your pencil and look under forfeit in the scoring section
- Alcohol free event – see previous answer
- Wine & beer only event – 0 points
- Bar runs dry at 10:30 in the evening – see first answer
- B.Y.O.B. event – subtract 5 points
- Bar is stocked with the regular stuff and enough is left over to get everybody drunk at the *popravyny* (day after reception) – 10 points

## The Speeches

Speeches are a necessary evil at a wedding reception. If you are a smoker you can always leave the hall and go outside, with a drink or two, and listen for the sounds of the first dance which signifies that the speeches are over. Non-smokers are always welcome to tag along.

- There are no speeches – Just the bride and groom thanking the assembled guests – 10 points
- The speeches are short but unruly, usually drunk, guests grab the mike and proceed to make long-winded, garbled, speeches – 7 points
- The speeches are long and tiresome – everybody who had anything to do with the bride & groom says something – 0 points

## What it all means

### Good 34 - 67

This sure was a good wedding – perhaps not perfect, but then again what wedding is. A wedding like this is enjoyed by both guests, family and the newlyweds. If the wedding was the first of the season then it will be the benchmark by which all other weddings are measured.

### Bad 1 - 33

At least some things were okay. A bad wedding is not necessarily a complete disaster. Perhaps there were financial considerations. Perhaps one of the families has poor taste. Perhaps there was a flood, an earthquake or the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse rode into town that morning. Needless to say a bad wedding also serves as a benchmark.

### Ugly 0 points or a forfeit

This was definitely a wedding to miss. If the people who got married were your dear close friends – don't say anything. If they are family – grumble at family gatherings. If distant acquaintances put a stop payment on that cheque first thing Monday morning. If you gave a gift – well you are out of luck. One also must remember good and bad weddings are usually forgotten. The ugly weddings are remembered forever by the guests.

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# Final Phrases

## READ THE NEWS

by Nestor Gula

I like to read the news of world events at my leisure. When reading the daily papers or magazines I feel that I am in control of the information, as opposed to having it barked at me from the television or radio. In short, I like it in print.

And yet, even newspapers have their shortcomings, particularly here in North America. For instance, most papers on this continent usually carry very little news from abroad.

The foreign news usually concerns war, famine, drought, floods, disasters etc. There has got to be some real big stink happening overseas to get a mention.

As I was embarking on a trip to Ukraine in 1993, Paul Warnick, the Toronto Star's foreign editor at the time, told me: "We don't really need you to report on anything in Ukraine, but if a war breaks out we would definitely use you."

I spent the next several months looking for a war. Saw a few bar fights – was threatened with a beating on one or two occasions – but no war. As a result, I did not get a by-line in a prominent Canadian newspaper. Damn the passivity of the Ukrainian people.

Recently, a story about Ukraine caught my attention and provoked me to write this piece. It concerned the Ukrainian government's attempt to get private corporations and state owned enterprises to pay their taxes. This story did not fit the disaster/war genre favored by most, if not all, editors of news from abroad. The category here: those funny foreigners and their wacky customs.

The editors had to print this one. It was definitely weird. Unlike the Gestapo methods used by Russian revenue collectors to collect unpaid taxes, not to mention those employed here in North America, Ukraine's approach could only be considered home-baked. The Ukrainian government rounded up all the CEOs, heads, presidents, bosses of concerns which flaunted their fiscal responsibilities and put them in a camp where they were forced to attend lectures about disaster relief. The government's plan was to bore these folks into coughing up their share, a brand-new take on Iggy Pop's "I'm the Chairman of the Bored."

It should be noted that, in a follow-up item, the print media mentioned that the delinquent business denizens were soon allowed to leave the concentrated boredom

camps because Prime Minister Pustovoitenko decided his administration would focus on confiscating the deadbeats' cars, houses, cottages etc. None of the mainstream electronic media covered this aspect of the story. The only TV program to pick up on it (it actually showed the execs sitting in camp) was the Polish show *Rozmaitosci* on Toronto's CFMT channel. *Svitohliad* and *Kontakt*, the Ukrainian TV shows, both missed this news.

I guess the government in Ukraine is just trying to out-weird everybody. Keep everybody guessing. We'll forcibly take you on a one-day field trip, and in the meantime we'll steal your car/house/valuables. Quite a novel idea.

The Canadian government could send deadbeat execs to Cuba for a one-week all-inclusive binge (call it a Team-Canada thing), and meanwhile grab their personal possessions. The Yanks could do something similar, but of course the short-sighted Helms-Burton Bill has cut off the bargain-basement option, and so the U.S. government would have to pay a premium at more upscale Caribbean island before it could snatch up the goodies it is owed.

The more I think about it the more I like this made-in-Ukraine solution. I'll stop paying taxes – easily done. When the Canadian government figures out that I have stopped, (this could be take a year or several decades), they could send me on a trip (I'll even settle for Moncton, New Brunswick) while they try to put a value on my meager possessions.

But alas the great experiment in Ukraine only lasted a mere 24 hours. Who knows if this was long enough for the concept to percolate into the minds of our diligent tax bureaucrats here in Canada. Chalk another one up in the It-Could-Only-Happen-in-Ukraine column.

It's easy to become cynical. There is no news of any accomplishment from Ukraine. Even in the country's own newspapers the well of wild optimism has run dry. No more "Ukraine's greatness is just around the corner" stories are getting out.

I think I'll stop reading any article with the dateline Kyiv/Kiev/Quief leading it. It might be funny. Could be a disaster. I'll just concentrate on the news that I get that my few friends there are all right and still having a good time.



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your mother's copy of  
**The Ukrainian Weekly?**

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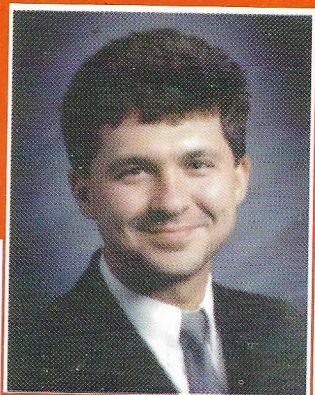
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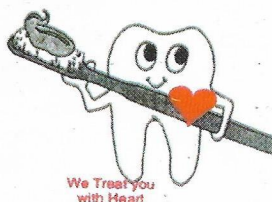
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