

UIA hosts exhibit of contemporary paintings

by Elaine Kryzhanovsky

NEW YORK – The landmark building of the Ukrainian Institute of America in New York has been transformed into a gallery for the “2014 Summer Art Exhibit.” This exhibition merges the historic architecture of a mansion with the contemporary paintings of the Ukrainian fine artists: Ilona Sochynsky, Max Vityk, Vasyl Bazhaj, Mykola Zhuravel and Temo Svirely.

The work of Ms. Sochynsky, a renowned American artist of Ukrainian descent, commences this summer group show. The exhibition begins with Ms. Sochynsky's 1984 canvas titled “Construction in Space with Red.” This pop art painting has realistic details and introduces an intense imagination. The work is conceptually important because it invites the viewer to consider how one will feel under the circumstances of a demanding reality.

The exhibition continues with the memorable art of Mr. Vityk, the Ukrainian-born artist who began painting in the United States and is currently residing in the Netherlands. The artist's works adorn the entire right wing of the second floor of the UIA. This particular arrangement of Mr. Vityk's art emphasizes the stylistic enhancements the artist has persevered as he emotionally evolved from the grim abstract expressionism to the gentle Ukrainian mysticism. As a result, the colors in Mr. Vityk's paintings bear a resemblance to molten rock.

Immediately next to Mr. Vityk's art is the work of Mr. Bazhaj, a contemporary Ukrainian artist whose art occupies an important place in the exhibition on the second floor. Mr. Bazhaj's works combine the expressionist and surrealist styles with black, white, red, blue and yellow. Thus, the

paintings have a snakeskin finish and accentuate the defensive feature of Ukrainian traditions.

The left wing of the second floor is mainly reserved for the work of Mr. Zhuravel. In his paintings, this Ukrainian artist maneuvers by means of a “Bee” palette: colors that resemble steel, milk, fire and smoke. His paintings recognize the allegories of contemporary life (at times with political undertones). Mr. Zhuravel's work leads the viewers up the stairs to the third floor.

The exhibition culminates with the petrified paintings of Mr. Svirely, who immigrated to Ukraine from the republic of Georgia. Mr. Svirely's representational art (earthly group portraits) and abstract art (soothing white fields with Persian green) occupies the expanse of the third floor and, interestingly, is moderated with a soft light to create an affable ambiance.

This exhibition, which opened on July 25, will be on view through September 21.



Ilona Sochynsky's “Construction in Space with Red” (oil on canvas, 48 by 48 inches, 1984).

18th Annual

Bloor West Village

**TORONTO
UKRAINIAN
FESTIVAL**

