

PRESS RELEASE

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U.S.-UKRAINE BUSINESS COUNCIL (USUBC)
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**THE FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL ARTS & EDUCATION (FIAE) IN
COOPERATION WITH THE U.S. - UKRAINE BUSINESS COUNCIL (USUBC)
DEBUTS
THE GLORY OF UKRAINE
EXHIBITIONS IN THE UNITED STATES**

Washington, DC, April 2010 – Highlighting a rare glimpse into the extensive artistic collections of the famous National Kyiv-Pechersk Historical and Cultural Preserve (the Monastery of the Caves) and the National Lviv Museum Named for Andrei Sheptitsky, and the Museum of National Cultural Heritage PlaTar, the Foundation for International Arts & Education (FIAE) will present two major exhibitions in five American cities during the next 18 months.

In cooperation with the U.S.-Ukraine Business Council (USUBC) and with the support of the Embassy of Ukraine in the United States, FIAE will present *The Glory of Ukraine* in two separate exhibitions – *Sacred Images from the 11th to the 19th Centuries* and *Golden Treasures and Lost Civilizations* – in New York, Washington, Minneapolis, Omaha and Houston. A separate press announcement about *Golden Treasures and Lost Civilizations* will be released later.

The Glory of Ukraine: Sacred Images from the 11th to the 19th Centuries, which debuts at the Museum of Biblical Art (MOBIA) between June 17 – September 12, 2010, will then be on display at the Meridian International Center in Washington, DC between early October and December 2010. The concluding venue is Joslyn Art Museum in Omaha, Nebraska, between February and May 2011.

More than 70 objects including icons, liturgical objects, textiles, and very rare crosses dating from the 11th century will be on display. This visually rich and historically intriguing exhibition traces the evolution of Ukrainian iconography from its early Byzantine roots through the Baroque and Renaissance periods highlighting the unique nature of the Ukrainian school of icon painting. Anchored by the history of the citadel of the Eastern Orthodoxy, *Sacred Images from the 11th to the 19th Centuries* provides an insight into the journey from the adaption of Orthodoxy in Kyivan Rus' to the establishment and unity of a Ukrainian national ethos. The exhibition demonstrates that throughout centuries of political

and ideological battles, including significant religious divisions within Ukraine, Ukrainian icons have preserved a continuity in their general style.

Commenting upon The Monastery of the Caves' incredible and rarely seen collection, Greg Guroff, President of FIAE, noted, "One can simply marvel at the masterpieces, which have been produced over the centuries, and enjoy the artistry as well as the religious and cultural symbolism that they provide. Yet we invite the visitors of the exhibition to join in this journey to learn how Ukrainian iconography fits into the broader world of Eastern Orthodoxy."

Wonderful colors will give the museum-goers a glimpse into one of the distinctive features of Ukrainian icons: gold representing the radiance of Heaven, red for divine life, blue for human life, and white for the essence of God (used only for the Resurrection and Transfiguration of Christ). Dr. Guroff also emphasized that the "figures in Ukrainian iconography are more *human* and more emotional than in the stricter canonical forms of their northern neighbors, especially in facial features where they are less severe and elongated."

Exhibition Highlights

Cross of the Holy Monk Mark of the Caves (Encolpion), 11th century, Kyivan Rus'.

This rare pectoral reliquary cross dates from the 11th century, the pre- Mongol period of Kyivan Rus', when The Monastery of the Caves was founded. According to the *Pechersk Paterik*, it belonged to one of the early monks of the Monastery, Mark, who was responsible for burials in the caves. For his great ascetic life, God gave him the gift of miracle-working. The holy monk Mark died at the age of 35 or 40 (around 1090) and is buried in the Near Caves in a grave which he himself dug.



Among encolpia of the Kyivan Rus' period, the monk Mark's cross is not only distinguished by its unmatched size, but also the right angles of the intersecting bars. Copper alloys were used for the making of reliquary crosses in Kyivan Rus' at that time and this cross was probably made in Kyiv by visiting Greek masters.

Mother of God Hodigitria, 1370, Lviv Region. This image of *Mother of God Hodigitria* is one of the oldest existing Ukrainian icons. The dating is based not only on stylistic and technical features, but also primarily on isotopic studies conducted in 2007.

The half-figure of Mary and the small figure of Christ are highly



expressive. Mary is depicted with broad sloping shoulders, wearing a mantle with deep geometric folds, visually anchoring the icon, while the supple figure of Christ is rendered with freedom and confidence. The elongated bodies are out of proportion with the size of the heads, hands, and feet. The bright red-orange tunic of Christ vividly contrasts with the dark clothing of His mother. His right hand gestures in blessing, while His left hand holds the Gospel in the form of a small black scroll. His hands and feet are almost miniature. The faces are painted with great skill and delicacy.

Congregation of All the Saints of Pechersk Lavra, late 18th – early 19th centuries, Kyiv.

The icon portrays the numerous saints of The Monastery of the Caves – monks and ascetics whose feats were described in the Kyiv-Pechersk *Paterik* at the beginning of the 13th century. This icon was created in the 18th century to honor the official canonization of these 118 saints, when they were included in the general veneration of the church throughout the Russian Empire. Remains of these saints are still kept in the caves of the Lavra.



In the center of the icon is the main church of the Monastery, the Dormition Cathedral, above which two angels are holding an icon of *The Dormition of the Mother of God*. On the left side are the saints of the Near Caves led by St. Anthony, on the right – by St. Theodosius. This icon demonstrates the mastery of the Lavra iconographers of the 18th century, particularly in the virtuosity of the miniature Dormition icon.

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