

# Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
9 A.M. EDT, May 17, 2011

## **UNVEILING OF THE TARAS SHEVCHENKO MONUMENT IN OTTAWA**

OTTAWA, CANADA, MAY 16, 2011:

Ottawa Taras Shevchenko Monument Committee and the Embassy of Ukraine in Canada organize the unveiling ceremony of the Taras Shevchenko Monument in Ottawa on June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at 2:30 p.m. on the grounds of St. John the Baptist Ukrainian Catholic National Shrine (952 Green Valley Crescent, K2C 3K7).

Political, religious and community leaders of Canada and Ukraine have been invited: Senators, MPs, MPPs, diplomats, and representatives of local and national businesses and organizations. The invitees list includes all donors who have contributed to the project.

The unveiling also marks 120 years of Ukrainian settlement in Canada and the 20th anniversary of Ukrainian independence. The colorful unveiling program will include a ceremonial tree-planting and the embedding of soil from Shevchenko's grave in Ukraine into the monument base.

The ceremony will be followed by a gala concert featuring the celebrated Canadian Bandurist Capella of Toronto under the leadership of Dr. Victor Mishalow and Yaroslav Dzhus, bandurist and finalist of the "Ukraine has Talent" contest, together with well-known Ukrainian-Canadian choirs and performing groups. The Ottawa-based Svitanok Dance Ensemble will also make an appearance.

Donors will be acknowledged during the unveiling ceremony.



**Taras Shevchenko**

The monument commemorates Taras Shevchenko, famed 19<sup>th</sup> century Ukrainian humanist, poet and artist. His writings were instrumental in rekindling Ukrainian national spirit and mobilizing Ukraine's struggle for freedom under the feudal landlords and Russian Empire. For daring to speak out, he was harshly punished: Exiled and forced into military service for ten years, and strictly forbidden to paint or write by the Tsar himself. The authorities sought to suppress all his pro-Ukrainian, pro-independence writings. But his oeuvre has made its mark: The Kobzar, as his collection of poetry is called, has been translated in over 100 languages, and his memory is alive and well. Today, we remember him as a champion of democracy and as a role model whose ideas, expressed through his poetry, are still as important as ever.

**Leo Mol**

The monument itself is the work of the renowned Ukrainian sculptor Leo Mol (1915-2009), who has to his name over 300 other bronze sculptures, many located in the Leo Mol Sculpture Garden in Winnipeg. His statue of Canada's Prime Minister, the Rt. Hon. John Diefenbaker, graces Parliament Hill. He created the Taras Shevchenko memorials in Washington DC., Buenos Aires and St. Petersburg, amongst others. He was inducted into the Order of Canada in 1989 and the Order of Ukraine in 2002 for his artistic contributions.

Additional information about performers, special guests and other event details:

Website: [www.infoukes.com/tarasinottawa](http://www.infoukes.com/tarasinottawa)

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/user/UkeTube](http://www.youtube.com/user/UkeTube)

Facebook: Taras Shevchenko Monument in Ottawa, Canadian Train of Ukrainian Pioneers

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Direct line for Donations: 613-983-9094

The project needs your support to collect \$75,000. in its final fundraising drive. Please offer us your generous assistance.

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