

Explore and Experience Our Past at the Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford

Curator Lubow Wolynetz shares Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky's Gift to the Ukrainian Museum and Library

The first gift that the Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford received in the 1930's was from Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky – a painting (sketch) of Our Lady by the renowned artist and educator, Oleksa Novakivsky, (March 14, 1872 - August 29, 1935).

When, in the early 1930's, Bishop Constantine Bohachevsky announced the establishment of the Ukrainian Museum and Library of Stamford, CT, he chose Father Leo Chapelsky as its first director and curator. Father Chapelsky immediately made contacts with Ilarion Svientsitsky-director of the National Museum in L'viv, Dr. Yaroslav Psternak-director of the Shevchenko Scientific Society Museum in L'viv, and various specialists and collectors of folk art and fine art, such as Sister Severine Parylle, OSBM

and others. As a result of these contacts, Father Chapelsky accumulated a representative collection of both fine and folk art, which are in the possession of the Museum to this day.

Father Chapelsky also wrote to Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky, informing him of the establishment of the museum and library. In a typed letter dated October 29, 1935, the Metropolitan wrote "...soon I will choose a gift for your museum



which I will gladly donate..." At the bottom of the letter, the Metropolitan added a hand written post-script which states, "I chose a painting of the recently deceased artist, Oleksa Novakivsky - a sketch for a larger painting which he was to do for St. George's Cathedral."

Metropolitan Sheptytsky commissioned Novakivsky in 1935 to do a sketch for a large painting of Our Lady for St. George Cathedral. The sketch that was donated to the museum is one of the few sketches that the artist did shortly before his death.

The painting was brought from L'viv to the museum in person, by Stefania Chyzhovych (Pushkar) in November, 1935.

Oleksa Novakivsky is a renowned painter and educator; who studied painting in Odessa and at the Cracow Academy of Fine Arts. He moved to L'viv in 1913 after receiving patronage from Metropolitan Sheptytsky. He founded the Novakivsky Art School in L'viv, in 1923, which became the center of art culture and produced such renowned artists as R. Sel-sky, M. Moroz, L. Perfetsky, S. Zarytska, A. Maliutsa, S. Hordynsky, S. Gebus-Baranetska, S. Lutsyk, V. Lasovsky, E. Kozak, M. Levytsky and others.

