

Book Launch - March 15, 2009

Presentation by Joan Brander

Good afternoon members of Ukrainian Community Society of Ivan Franko, friends and family.

Thank you Theresa for your kind comments.

Many of you know me as the "egg lady". The one who breathes and dreams about her passion. My passion is not just the simple egg—but the extra-ordinary and beautiful Pysanka that we Ukrainians are known for the world over.

When I began collecting pysanky books I wanted to have the most comprehensive list that I could. I found that every time I went to a new book store, into a library or museum, I looked for books to feed my passion. What I **wanted to find** was a pysanka bibliography--a book that listed all the titles for me. But I couldn't find one. So I decided to write my own.

My research took on a new life of its own. I had to dig deeper to find the titles I was looking for. I used the internet and my network of other people whose passion is also pysanky. Baby steps turned into giant leaps and soon I had acquired a large collection.

The next step was to go through the contents and see which ones were appropriate.

I was surprised at the quantity of material in so many different languages. Not only in Ukrainian and English, but also German, French, Portuguese and even Japanese to name a few. One big challenge for me was to transliterate the foreign titles. I asked friends to help me.

No wonder nobody had published a bibliography--it was a huge task.

Although I am not a cataloguer, I had to learn quickly how books are entered into a bibliography. The list needs the author, title, and publication date as minimum bits of information.

I've always been one for making lists. I even have a "honey do list". It's not the honeydew melon that I'm talking about, it's my To Do List for my honey.

The title of my book came to me long before my research started. The title has different levels of meaning. The first level of meaning is that there are books written about this ancient tradition. The word pysanka comes from the verb "pysate". So the second level is that we say pysanky are written. Therefore: About the Pysanka : It Is Written! The subtitle clearly shows that it is not a how to book or a story book, but a bibliography.

This book is very unique. It lists pysanky books, children's story books, videos, newsletters and noteworthy articles. You can look at many of these on display.

I also wanted to show how colourful our beautiful tradition is. So I began photographing the book covers. I included the ones that I found especially eye-catching.

Once the book was printed, I applied to have it cataloged by the National Library and Archives Canada so that other people could find out about it.

Last March I was invited to present my new book to a first ever international pysanka symposium. This international conference was held in Washington, DC. As chance would have it, the organizer of the event was the **Ukrainian cataloger at the Library of Congress**. To my delight, he made a special announcement about my book at the symposium. He said that when

the Library of Congress cataloged it, they had never seen this type of book ever published before. They had to make a new classification for pysanka bibliographies.

The British Columbia book launch today is a celebration of my Ukrainian heritage and my love for pysanky. Soon we will have the Olympic torch to inspire people. My hope is that **this book will be the torch** to inspire people to write more about Pysanky or to simply write a Pysanka.

Again, I wish to thank the board of directors and to publicly acknowledge the generous contributions of Ukrainian Community Society of Ivan Franko, Ukrainian Studies Foundation of British Columbia, and Ukrainian Canadian Foundation of Taras Shevchenko.

Thank you to Theresa and everyone who helped organize this beautiful event and everyone for attending. Before turning the podium back to Theresa, I would like to present a small token of appreciation to the Society with a selection of pysanka books for its library.

Thank you.