



St. Mark's Coptic Museum Newsletter

Fall 2016 • Vol.10 No.3

Twentieth-Century Revival of Coptic Iconography Expressions of Spirituality and Cultural Identity October 2-30, 2016 • December 18, 2016 – January 15, 2017

The Fall issue of St. Mark's Coptic Museum's Newsletter is devoted to this exhibition.

St. Vladimir Institute in Toronto hosted our Museum's month long icon exhibition. The exhibition included a selection of icons written by Isaac Fanous and Bedour Latif & Youssef Nassif — pioneers of the revival of Coptic iconography since the 1950s. The objective of the exhibition was to showcase the progression of their search to write icons that express Coptic spirituality and cultural identity. To enrich the exhibition, the Museum was able to have the loan of icons from two private collectors. This also gave the opportunity to discuss the differences and similarities between artistic styles of the two schools of iconography. Ukrainian visitors especially seemed to resonate with the objective of the exhibition because they are also searching to have icons that reflect their artistic and cultural history. Also on display were Museum's Victor Fakhoury narrative icons that chronicle the impact of the 25 January, 2011 popular uprising as it affects the Coptic Church and Christians in Egypt. Two lectures were offered to support the theme of the exhibition, one on the history of Coptic iconography and the other on Victor Fakhoury's icon *The Martyrs of Maspéro*.

Back at the Museum's "home" base, the exhibition may be viewed from 18 December 2016 to 15 January 2017. We are also excited to show the renovations of our Museum space!

Visitors Comments:

- Impressive and emotional;
- Inspiring, Relevant, Surprising;
- Fascinating history of Coptic icons;
- Thank you for sharing this exhibition with our community;
- The Coptic icons moved me to the depth of my heart;
- This has been an amazing experience that broadened my understanding of iconography.

Over the one month period we received 125-150 visitors a week. St. Vladimir Institute is a cultural centre buzzing with activities that draw a wide range of people with diverse cultural interests and backgrounds. The Ukrainian Museum of Canada, Toronto Branch is also housed at the Institute. Our exhibition was viewed by people participating in the Institute's activities, the general public, and people just walking past the building and spontaneously came in to find out about the Institute! Located literally at the doorstep of the U of T St. George campus a number of students and faculty from the University of Toronto also viewed the exhibition. Mrs Lidia Smilka, the Cultural Director was most hospitable and even included our exhibition in the programme of an Ukrainian School's "Cultural Day". We offered the children and icon drawing workshop where we talked about the meaning of icons in both traditions.



*The Theotokos and the Divine Child (1984)
Bedour LATif and Youssef Nassif*



*The Theotokos and the Divine Child (1988)
Isaac Fanous*

