



Ukrainian Institute
London

UKRAINIAN INSTITUTE IN LONDON

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

OCTOBER 2015 - JUNE 2016

by Marina Pesenti, Director of the Ukrainian Institute

This reports covers:

- Events organised by the Ukrainian Institute
- Partnerships developed
- Language classes and the Book Club
- Public and media appearances and research
- Organisation and marketing

EVENTS

11 events have been held over the period, 5 of them in partnership with other organisations. All events were moderated by Marina Pesenti, unless indicated otherwise. The Institute's events attracted between 15 and 100+ people.

13 November 2015

War in Ukraine and the Propaganda Battles of the 21st Century



Peter Pomerantsev, Senior Fellow at the Legatum Institute, and Marina Pesenti discussed key challenges Ukraine had to face in its information war with Russia, the role of the state, Ukrainian media and civil society in building its narrative, responding to fakes and manipulations, and challenges in the course of developing a trusted public broadcaster.

The event was moderated by Andrew Foxall, Director of Russian Studies at the Henry Jackson Society.

1 December 2016

In Wartime: Stories from Ukraine by Tim Judah: Book Launch & Discussion



Tim Judah had spent the past 3 years in Ukraine, travelling through both the East and the West of the country. He talked about the conflict in the East, pondered on Ukrainian history and regional Ukrainian identities. The talk was illustrated by a selection of his photographs taken in Ukraine.

17 December 2015

Mamushka. Recipes from Ukraine and Beyond. A talk by Olia Hercules



“Despite a very diverse ethnic mix of my family, I feel Ukrainian, beyond any doubt,” says Olia Hercules, an author of “Mamushka. Recipes from Ukraine and beyond”. Olia spoke to a packed room of some 50 people at the Ukrainian Institute.

This event was keenly anticipated: many were eager to get to know Olia, whose book became an instant hit, while her TV appearances are drawing an ever growing pool of supporters.

21 January 2016

BBC Book of the Year Award. Talk by Svitlana Pyrkalo



Despite the political and economic turmoil Ukraine is going through, its literature is experiencing a period of tremendous development. This was the inspiring summary by Svitlana Pyrkalo, EBRD's Advisor on Culture and a founder of the BBC's Annual Book of the Year Award, given for the best pieces of Ukrainian literature.

Svitlana offered a review of the books which received the prestigious award in 2015: a collection of short story called "The House by Bating Hallow" by Vasyly Makhno ("Дім у Бейтінг Голлов") and Andriy Bachynsky's "140 Decibels of Silence" ("140 децибелів тиші") which won the BBC Children's Book of the Year 2015 accolade.

1 February 2016

Strategic, Humanitarian & Propaganda Dimensions of the Conflict in East Ukraine



This discussion looked at the events in Donbas from a variety of angles and gave the floor to Anna Matveeva, Visiting Senior Research Fellow, King's College, London; Aleksei Bobrovnikov, Journalist, 1+1, Kiev, Ukraine; and Dana Pavlychko, Director of Osnovy Publishing, Kyiv, Ukraine.

It was moderated by Dr Natasha Kuhrt, Lecturer, Dept of War Studies, King's College, London. The discussion included the presentation of “War. Journalism from the Frontline”, a photo album published by Osnovy.

4 February 2016

Ukraine's Publishing: How to Make Ukrainians Read Books and Run the Business. Talk with Dana Pavlychko, Director of Osnovy Publishing



Dana Pavlychko explained key trends on Ukraine's publishing market and the approaches Osnovy Publishing deploy to stay competitive and profitable, while driving ahead Ukraine's cultural development.

24 March 2016

How Crimean Tatars stand up to repression in Russia-occupied Crimea. Talk by Refat Chubarov, Chairman of the Mejlis of the Crimean Tatar people



"Crimea is and always will be part of Ukraine," said Refat Chubarov, leader of the Crimean Tatar people, addressing the audience of some 100 people at King's College in London on 24 March 2016. Mr Chubarov spoke extensively about the situation in which the Crimean Tatars, an indigenous population of Crimea, had found themselves since the peninsula was annexed by Russia in early 2014. A film by Christina Pashyn, "A Struggle for Home: The Crimean Tatars", was shown, followed by a discussion.

21 April 2016

Military and Security Dimensions of the Donbas Conflict. Talk by Igor Sutyagin



Igor Sutyagin, Senior Research Fellow, Russian studies, Royal United Services Institute, spoke at the Ukrainian Institute. He delivered a presentation, followed by discussion and a wine reception. The issues covered included the scale and nature of Russian military involvement in this conflict, long-term scenarios, the future of the Minsk agreement, as well as information operations in the context of this conflict.

18 May 2016

Child Survivor of the Holocaust in Poland and Ukraine tells the story. Film screening and discussion



As a little boy, Shimon Redlich survived the Holocaust in Poland under Nazi German occupation after being rescued by a Ukrainian and a Polish family. He returned to the places of his childhood to re-connect with this past, to understand what the Holocaust meant for those communities and how it is remembered. Event held in partnership with Spiro Arc, the Polish Embassy and the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain.

24 May 2016

Ukraine's post-Maidan Transformation: Glass Half-Full or Half-Empty? Talk by Yevhen Hlibovytsky



The Ukrainian Institute's regular speaker from Kyiv, Yevhen Hlibovytsky, talked about transformations taking place in Ukrainian society, the role of civil society and media, the emerging Ukrainian identity in the East of Ukraine and whether current changes laid the foundation for Ukraine's sustainable development.

30 June 2016

How to Stop Disinformation: Lessons from Ukraine for the Wider World. Talk by Peter Pomerantsev, Senior Fellow at Legatum Institute, and Marina Pesenti, Director of the Ukrainian Institute.



Peter and Marina unveiled their joint research paper, *"How to Stop Disinformation: Lessons from Ukraine for the Wider World,"* published by the Legatum Institute. Peter and Marina spoke about new realities of the information age: "echo chambers" in which audiences reside, the impossibility to fight for truth with facts, the importance of engaging the audience by sharing human stories everyone can relate to. Moderated by the writer and journalist Anna Reid.

DEVELOPING PARTNERSHIPS

The Institute developed partnerships with London-based think tanks, academic institutions and other community organisations.

The following partnership events were held:

1/ War in Ukraine and the Propaganda Battles of the 21st Century. Talk by Peter Pomerantsev and Marina Pesenti. Held in partnership with the **Henry Jackson Society**.

2/ Strategic, Humanitarian & Propaganda Dimensions of the Conflict in East Ukraine. Held in partnership with the Russian and Eurasian Security Research Group, Department of War Studies, **King's College, London**

3/ How Crimean Tatars Stand Up to Repression in Russia - Occupied Crimea. Talk with Refat Chubarov. Held in partnership with **Research Turkey**

4/ Child Survivor of the Holocaust in Poland and Ukraine tells the story. Held in partnership with the **Embassy of Poland, Spiro Arc and the Association of Ukrainians in Great Britain**

5/ How to Stop Disinformation: Lessons from Ukraine for the Wider World. Held in partnership with the **Legatum Institute**.

UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE CLASSES

Three language groups have been maintained over three semesters, with around **20** students attending. Three qualified freelance language teachers - Volodymyr Oleyko, Lilia Nakonechna and Iryna Sandalovych – have provided the group tuition.

UKRAINIAN BOOK CLUB

9 Book Club sessions have been held over the period. All sessions were moderated by **Volodymyr Oleyko**.

The following topics have featured:

26 September 2015 Overview of the books written over the summer and recent trends in Ukrainian contemporary literature

31 October 2015 “Voloshylovhrad,” a novel by Serhiy Zhadan

29 November 2015 “Tango of Death”, a novel by Yuri Vynnychuk

19 December 2015 a medley of Ukrainian poetry

- 30 January 2016** Mykola Khvulyovy's prose
- 20 February 2016** science fiction by Olexander Teslenko
- 16 April 2016** "Beyond the Threshold of Pain". A novel by Osyp Turyansky
- 21 May 2016** Prague School of Ukrainian literature and the legacy of Leonid Mosendz
- 18 June 2016** "Last man. Last woman." Poetry by Lyudmyla Taran

PUBLIC AND MEDIA APPEARANCES

Marina Pesenti has given about 15 interviews to Ukrainian and UK media, among them **BBC Newsnight, BBC World Have Your Say, BBC2 Jeremy Vine Show, Voice of America Ukrainian desk, Hromadske TV, Hromadske Radio, Ukrainske Radio, UA Pershy State Broadcaster, Espresso TV, ICTV**. The topics covered include: Brexit, Nadya Savchenko, Eurovision. An opinion piece on Brexit was published in the Ukrainian Weekly **Novoye Vremya** on 13 March 2016.



Marina appeared as a guest artist at **Dacha**, a cultural platform hosted by **Dash Arts** in London on 3 July 2016, speaking about Ukraine in 1917 and the meaning of that period for Ukraine's post-Soviet history.

The Institute made a significant contribution to the debate about cultural diplomacy at the 2nd **Cultural Diplomacy Forum** held in Kyiv on 27 April 2016.

Marina Pesenti presented a vision for the development of Ukrainian cultural institutes abroad, urging the state to come up with a structured plan and to mobilise business support.



RESEARCH

Marina Pesenti published a research paper, commissioned by the Kyiv office of the Kennan Institute, **"Ukraine's public and cultural diplomacy in Great Britain in 2014-2015"**, which offered an overview of activities of state and non-state actors to promote Ukraine's current affairs agenda and its cultural heritage in the UK public space, as well as mapping models of future development. The paper was part of a collection of research papers published in the *Agora* magazine and presented at the Cultural Diplomacy Forum in Kyiv.

ADMINISTRATION AND MARKETING

A new **website** of the Institute has been launched – www.ukrainianinstitute.org.uk, which gives a thorough overview of its activities and provides a lot of content: articles, picture and video galleries, relevant links etc.

The Institute produces a regular **e-newsletter** and is constantly expanding its database of contacts.

Anna Morgan was hired as **Social Media Manager** to maintain and develop the Ukrainian Institute accounts on Facebook and Twitter. The Institute's FB page received 5000 likes, while the Twitter feed has 230 followers.

14 July2016