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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Olya Glotka, Mariya Khomutova, and Sasha Shevchenko share \$30,000 “REACH Mentorship/Residency for the Arts” funding**

Emerging Canadian artists Olya Glotka, Mariya Khomutova, and Oleksandra (Sasha) Shevchenko are sharing the \$30,000 **REACH Mentorship/Residency for the Arts** for 2024, a project of the Shevchenko Foundation in partnership with the Ihnatowycz Family Foundation.

Now in its sixth year, the REACH program calls on emerging Canadian artists to reach for their career dreams by seeking opportunities for mentorship, residency, internship, training, workshop, and research.

**Olya Glotka**, a filmmaker and award-winning cinematographer and director based in Toronto, ON, received REACH funding for training and a mentorship in underwater cinematography skill advancement. When notified of the award, Ms. Glotka said, “I am incredibly honoured. Being an immigrant in Canada and a woman in a male-dominated industry, it took me a long time to get where I am. Receiving the training I need means I can reach even further in my dream of becoming an established cinematographer, and I can tell more stories about my country and my people.”

**Mariya Khomutova**, an award-winning playwright, actor, and screenwriter based in Toronto, ON, received REACH funding to undertake a mentorship toward adapting her play *First Métis Man of Odesa* into a screenplay. Ms. Khomutova said, “I’m humbled and honoured. With REACH funding for a screenplay, there is the possibility of making a feature film to keep Ukraine in the hearts and minds of many more people as the war goes on.”

**Oleksandra (Sasha) Shevchenko**, an artist based in Mississauga, ON, who practises in sculpture, textile, archaeology, and intimate ethnography, received REACH funding to research Ukrainian embroidery and its role as a storyteller for Ukrainian diasporic experiences. Ms. Shevchenko said, “I am beyond thrilled by the generous REACH award. This funding will play a critical role in developing new and exciting work that expands the beauty of our heritage into a new generation of Ukrainian fine art.”

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The REACH adjudication panel included **Gordon Gordey**, an internationally recognized professional arts stage director, producer, and librettist/writer of 25 original dance works for Shumka Dancers, recognized as one of the 100 most influential people in the development of theatre in Alberta in *Theatre 100*; **Andrea Ludwig**, a JUNO and Dora award-winning mezzo soprano, a recording artist, and an in-demand vocal coach and clinician; and **Roxy Toporowych**, an award-winning writer/director of *Julia Blue* and other films, and a producer on documentaries for HULU, HBO, and Tribeca Enterprises.

Mr. Gordey complimented Mariya Khomutova's application, saying, "The *First Métis Man of Odesa* touring production was embraced by thousands of theatregoers across Canada. I am thrilled that this REACH award enables Ms. Khomutova to expand her unique love story into a film script which will move thousands more through the lens of cinema."

Ms. Ludwig said, "I was immediately drawn to Olya Glotka's story of her birthplace and the horrific damage done to the Kakhovka Dam during the war on Ukraine. Ms. Glotka's commitment to showing her art through the medium of underwater cinematography is unique and inspiring."

Ms. Toporowych said, "I am excited about Sasha Shevchenko's journey to create new work inspired by traditional embroideries. By leaning into the past to create something new for the future, Ms. Shevchenko demonstrates that something old can indeed be new again."

The **REACH Mentorship/Residency for the Arts** was established for emerging artists who are 40 years of age or younger; have a connection to Ukrainian heritage through background, art, culture and/or language (with no requirement to be Ukrainian Canadian); and work actively within the Ukrainian arts community in Canada and/or worldwide. Applicants are required to have practised at a peer-recognized advanced career level for a minimum of two years in visual, literary, or performing arts, new media, or arts management. The applications for 2024 REACH funding came from British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec.

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