



DESNA

UKRAINIAN  
DANCE  
COMPANY

ANNIVERSARY

1974-1999

*Gala Concert and Banquet*

*May 29, 1999 5:30 PM*

*UNF (UNO) Hall, 297 College Street  
Toronto, Ontario*



# DESNA

Ukrainian Dance Company of Toronto  
& School of Ukrainian Dance  
P.O. Box 18524, 250 Wincott Drive,  
Toronto, Ontario, CANADA, M9R 4C8

[www.icomm.ca/desna](http://www.icomm.ca/desna) e-mail: [desna@icomm.ca](mailto:desna@icomm.ca)  
Registered Charitable Organization # 11922 9755 RR 0001



May 29, 1999

It gives us great pleasure to welcome all alumni, dancers, friends and families on the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of DESNA. As memories are shared today and friendships rekindled, the spirit of song and dance moves in all of us. Over the years, many concerts, performances and festivals have been enriched by the talents displayed by each and every one of you through the songs and the dances performed by DESNA. As we reminisce, we are all filled with pride and rejoice in our accomplishments.

Today's members of DESNA carry that same spirit that has lived for 25 years. They are the core of what is the start of the next 25 years for DESNA. With the inception of a school to perpetuate the spirit of Ukrainian dance, DESNA has established firm roots for many years to come

At this time, I would like to thank, on behalf of DESNA, the Anniversary Committee who have organized this anniversary evening. The members of the committee are Larysa Chalupa (co-chair), Alex Czoli (co-chair), Tania Lysiak, Hanya Kohut, Yvan Oleksiuk-Baker, Zoryana Grod, Sophie Parzei, Marian Lysiak, Darka Chandon, Constantino Czoli, Taras Pawluk and Roman Parzei. With dedication and commitment that goes above and beyond, the committee organized this celebration in a relatively short period of time. From the telephone calls that put together the alumni list, to the gathering of memorabilia and photos from the past 25 years, to looking after all the details to make this evening the success that it is, the committee has brought us together as one big family - the DESNA family.

Enjoy the evening and enjoy the renewal of friendship and sharing of memories.

Многая Літа

Roman Parzei  
Vice-President  
DESNA

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*Jerry Moroch, President, (416) 483-7030, Roman Parzei, Vice-President, (416) 249-9492,  
Yvan Oleksiuk-Baker, Treasurer, (416) 259-3202, Zoryana Grod, Secretary, (416) 622-3727  
Marian Lysiak, School Administrator, (416) 769-3530*

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# ~ DESNA ~

**DESNA** first appeared on the Toronto arts scene in 1974. Named after the majestic river in north central Ukraine, DESNA sprang forth into Canadian, American and European circles, perpetuating the richness and beauty of Ukrainian culture and tradition.

The DESNA Ukrainian Dance Company grew out of a successful choral ensemble, the DESNA Choir. Under the artistic direction of Alexander Chmil, the choir performed extensively throughout Ontario, demonstrating enthusiastic yet sensitive renditions of sacred, folk and contemporary Ukrainian repertoire. It was after a government funded cross-Canada tour that a number of choir members decided to form their own dance troupe. Under the artistic direction of Andrew Malette, the DESNA Dancers gave their first Toronto performance in 1976 at West Park Collegiate to a standing room only audience.

In 1979, Mark Olynyk began his seven year term as artistic director and choreographer of DESNA. Under his guidance, DESNA's repertoire expanded from dances representing the Poltava region of Ukraine to a repertoire covering several regions of Ukraine. It was also during Mark's tenure that DESNA began their successful trips to France in the summers of 1983 and 1985, at the invitation of the French Folk Arts Council.

In the summer of 1988, under the artistic direction of Andrej Baczynskyj, DESNA embarked on a third tour of France, dazzling French audiences wherever they performed. During the summer of 1989 DESNA performed at the Metro International Caravan at the Kyiv Pavilion in Toronto, and won the "Best Traditional Show" award.

In 1992 DESNA concentrated on touring and promoting their musical *Ukrainians on Broadway* to audiences throughout Canada and the United States. The show featured guests such as Ihor Baczynskyj, Ron Cahute, Kris Mychalkiw, and Orest Sushko..

In 1996, under the artistic directorship of Valeri & Lesia Movtchan, DESNA opened the DESNA School of Ukrainian Dance. This was a period of tremendous development and growth for DESNA. With the inception of a school to perpetuate the spirit of Ukrainian dance, DESNA took to the stage with a dynamic, energetic and inspiring repertoire of folk, classical, and character dance from various regions of Ukraine. The men exhibit Kozak vigour through their energetic leaps and acrobatics, while the women gracefully display their agility with spins and intricate footwork. Ornate costumes of brilliant colours and exquisite embroidery create a vibrant spectacle on stage.

Today, DESNA is honoured to be working with Alexander Sokurenko, formerly of the famed Virsky Ukrainian National Dance Company and the recipient of the Presidential decreed title of "Merited Artist of Ukraine".

DESNA is proud to display the art form of dance to audiences of every ethnic background. The dancing not only preserves Ukrainian history and folklore, but is also a valuable contribution to the Canadian mosaic. After 25 years, DESNA has established firm roots for many years to come.



**UKRAINIAN CANADIAN CONGRESS**  
TORONTO BRANCH  
**КОНГРЕС УКРАЇНЦІВ КАНАДИ**  
ВІДДІЛ ТОРОНТО

29 травня 1999 р.

Управі танцювального ансамблю "Десна"

Шановні учасники ансамблю "Десна" !

З великою приємністю вітаю Вас дорогі члени танцювального ансамблю "Десна" з нагоди Вашого ювілею 25-ліття існування ансамблю. Українська громада міста Торонто - надзвичайно горда за Вас дорога українська молоде. Ми щиро вдячні за Вашу участь не тільки в імпрезах нашої громади - але і за Ваші виступи в міжнародних фестивалях. Ви є нашими амбасадорами в світі і за це ми Вам є вдячні. Ваші професійні виступи українських танців чарують чужинців і поширюють знання про українське мистецтво, культуру і фолкльор.

Бажаємо Вам дальших успіхів у Ваші надзвичайно коресні праці в нашій громаді міста Торонто - нехай вони стануть Вам закликом до дальшої праці на добро українського народу тут у Канаді і на наші батьківщині, Україні.

Бажаємо Вам багате сили, здоров'я і витривалості для продовження Вашої плодотворної діяльності.

Хай Бог благословить Вас і Вашу надзвичайно коресну працю.

За управу відділу КУК Торонто

Марія Шкамбара  
голова

Петро Бубела  
секретар



**Mayor**

City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N2

**Tel:** (416) 395-6464  
**Fax:** (416) 395-6440  
mayor\_lastman@city.toronto.on.ca

### A Message from Mayor Mel Lastman

It gives me great pleasure to send greetings to the DESNA Ukrainian Dance Company on the occasion of your 25th anniversary celebration.

Few activities spur the pleasure and community support that arts and culture do. People love to be entertained and they appreciate great quality performances, and that's what the DESNA Ukrainian Dance Company delivers.

This special anniversary celebration adds to the exciting cultural diversity that is such an important part of our City, and provides the community with an opportunity to show their appreciation for this outstanding dance company.

On behalf of Toronto Council and the people of our great City, I congratulate the DESNA Ukrainian Dance Company and extend best wishes to everyone attending this special anniversary banquet.

Please accept my warmest personal regards.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mel Lastman".

Mel Lastman  
Mayor

# *The Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Toronto*

## *Українська Католицька Єпархія Торонто*

139 Franklin Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6P 3Y9 - (416) 538-1436 fax: (416) 538-1639

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Христос Воскрес!

20-го квітня 1999 р.

До Світлої Управи Танцювального Ансамблю "Десна"!

Ваш 25-літний ювілей заслуговує на окреме відзначення, й я радий мати цю нагоду скласти Вам щирі gratulacii та ювілейні побажання з приводу Вашого свята.

За чверть сторіччя Десна, своїми артистичними виступами в Північній Америці та Європі, була гідним речником культури українського танцю перед нашими й чужими, та причинюється до збереження й розповсюдження культурного й мистецького життя України й Канади. А при тім Ваші виступи принесли багато веселої розваги широкій публіці. Ваші заслуги справді великі!

Хоч я на жаль не матиму змоги брати участі у Вашому святі задля вже домовлених обов'язків, я Вам щиро дякую за запрошення, та бажаю Вам усім щасливої й успішної праці на многі й благі літа!

Щасти Вам Боже!

Зичливий Вам у Господі,

+ Корнелій Пасічний, ЧСВВ

+ Корнелій Пасічний, ЧСВВ  
Єпарх Торонто й Східної Канади



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

May 29, 1999

Dear Friends:

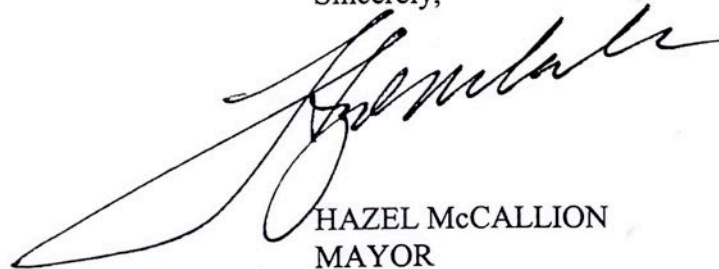
On behalf of the members of Council of the City of Mississauga, I am pleased to send greetings to the DESNA Ukrainian Dance Company of Toronto as it celebrates 25 years as a member of the Greater Toronto multicultural folk arts community.

I am always pleased when multicultural groups join together to celebrate their cultures. DESNA provides Mississauga's Ukrainian community with a valuable opportunity to demonstrate the spirit of its heritage.

I understand that your organization contributes to the tradition of Ukrainian folk dancing by performing to audiences around the world. The folk performances planned for the 25th Anniversary banquet will certainly add to the excitement and nostalgia of the evening.

Once again, on behalf of my colleagues on Council, congratulations and best wishes for a memorable 25th Anniversary celebration.

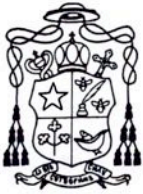
Sincerely,



HAZEL McCALLION  
MAYOR







**UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC EPARCHY OF TORONTO CHANCERY OFFICE**

61 GLEN EDYTH DRIVE, TORONTO, ONTARIO M4V 2V8

Tel.: (416) 924-2381

• Tel.: (416) 967-1557

• Fax: (416) 962-7725

Школа Українського Танцю "Десна",  
Етобіко, Онтеріо

Травень, 1999

СЛАВА ІСУСУ ХРИСТУ!

Шановні танцюристи "Десни"!  
Дорогі учителі!

Витаємо Вас щиро і сердечно з нагоди Срібного Ювілею, 25-ти ліття Школи українського танцю "ДЕСНА". Ми твердо і глибоко віримо в Вас, в Ваш талант, Вашу професійність, згуртованість, Вашу відданість українській справі. Ви розробляєте і виносите в народ українську музику, спів, танець, талант..

Нехай і надалі у Ваших юних серцях і душах народжується і квітне іскра негасимої української культури, українського мистецтва і фольклору.

Дорогі мої! Нехай ласка Господня і благословення повсякчас будуть з Вами у всіх Ваших творчих стараннях, починах, сподіваннях та успіхах.

Щиро здоровимо Вас у Христі Господі,

з Архиєрейським Благословенням

+ І З И Д О Р, Єпископ



**Ministry of Citizenship,  
Culture and Recreation**

Minister

6th Floor  
77 Bloor Street West  
Toronto ON M7A 2R9  
Tel.: (416) 325-6200  
Fax: (416) 325-6195

**Ministère des Affaires civiques,  
de la Culture et des Loisirs**

Ministre

6<sup>e</sup> étage  
77 rue Bloor ouest  
Toronto ON M7A 2R9  
Tél. : (416) 325-6200  
Télec. : (416) 325-6195



## *Greetings from the Minister*

May 29, 1999

Dear Friends,

As Minister of Citizenship, Culture and Recreation, it is my pleasure to extend greetings to everyone attending the **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the DESNA Ukrainian Dance Company of Toronto.**

The company has established a strong presence in the city, and has a history of delighting audiences across the province. In doing so, DESNA provides opportunities for its talented dancers to showcase their talents and build their creative experiences.

I want to commend company organizers, members, donors and volunteers for bringing live colourful and exciting Ukrainian folk dancing to Ontario.

On behalf of the Government of Ontario, all the best for a wonderful evening and another rewarding year of performances.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Isabel Bassett".

Isabel Bassett  
Minister

УКРАЇНСЬКА ПРАВОСЛАВНА ЦЕРКВА В КАНАДІ  
THE UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH OF CANADA  
СХІДНЯ ЄПАРХІЯ EASTERN EPARCHY

†

Преосвященний Єпископ ЮРІЙ  
Єпископ Торонта  
і Східньої Єпархії



†

The Right Reverend Bishop YURIJ  
Bishop of Toronto  
and the Eastern Eparchy

6-го Травня, 1999.

Танцювальний ансамбль "Десна"  
Торонто, Канада.

Христос Воскрес! Воістину Воскрес!

Шановна Уprawo,

Вітаємо Вас, усіх учителів, танцюристів і батьків з нагоди 25-ліття від заснування танцювального ансамблю "Десни".

Протягом тих 25 років танцювальний ансамбль "Десна" був гідним представником українського танцювального мистецтва і для свого рідного любителя танцю в Торонто так і для не-українського глядача далеко поза Канадою.

Неможливо недоцінювати важливість цього ансамблю в процесі розвитку позитивного наставлення своїх членів до української культури й як чинник українського суспільно-будівництва.

Ми бажаємо Вам многих літ творчої праці на ниві української культури і молимо Всевишнього щоб Він на Вас зіслав Своє небесне благословення.

З любов'ю у Христі,

+Юрій, Єпископ

+ЮРІЙ, Єпископ





**Community  
Folk Art Council  
of Metropolitan  
Toronto**

Honorary Chairman:  
Mel Lastman

Desna Ukrainian Dance Company  
PO Box 18524,  
250 Wincott Drive  
Etobicoke, ON  
M6R 4C8

April 30, 1999

Dear Members of Desna,

On the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Desna Ukrainian Dance Company, it gives me very great pleasure on behalf of the Community Folk Art Council to congratulate you. Attaining the milestone of one quarter century of folk dance is no mean achievement and you are all to be commended. The level of success you have achieved is outstanding, and you do great credit to Ukrainian dance.

Keep up the good work. Keep dancing!

With warm greetings

*Betsy Abarquez*  
Betsy Abarquez  
Chairman



# Шкільна Рада Конгресу Українців Канади

Відділ Торонто

UKRAINIAN CANADIAN SCHOOL BOARD - TORONTO BRANCH

Executive Office: 4180 Dundas Street West, Suite 200 • Etobicoke, Ontario • M8X 1X8 • Tel: (416) 236-0844 • Fax: (416) 236-0925

24 березня 1999 року.

До: Керівників та учасників танцювального ансамблю „Десна”.

Шановні!

В імені Управи Шкільної Ради міста Торонто, директорів та вчителів українських шкіл сердечно вітаємо керівників та учасників танцювального ансамблю „Десна” з 25-літнім ювілеєм.

Приємно усвідомлювати, що в Торонто Ви так широко зацікавлені українською культурою, а зокрема ділянкою мистецтва - українськими народними танцями.

Запальний український танець здавна приваблював не тільки наш народ, а і народи всього світу. Тож плекайте нашу культуру і в різних ділянках, чи то громадського життя, чи мистецтва старайтесь на високому рівні представити наші надбання.

Бажаємо Вам успіхів в майбутньому творчому житті.

За Управу і членів Шкільної Ради

Люба Зараска - Голова



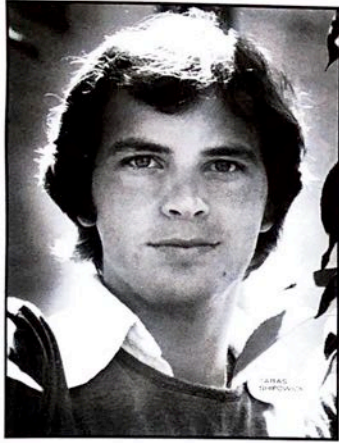
**DESNA's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration was made possible by the generous sponsorship of the following companies or individuals.  
Thank you to all of the sponsors.**

Accurate Micro Systems Inc.- AMSI  
Allstate Insurance  
Arka Queen Street  
Arka Shoes  
Armstrong, Szweczyk, Tobias -Chartered Accountants  
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Dr. Y. Pawluk - Dental Surgeon  
Dr. Bodnar - Doctor of Chiropractic  
Dr. M. Rozeluk - Dental Surgeon  
Dr. Rozgoni - Family Dentist  
European Meats  
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Kostruba & Sons  
Mad Apples Restaurant

Malabar Ltd.  
Marian Lysiak  
Mitchell, Bardyn & Zalucky - Barristers & Solicitors  
Molson Breweries  
Ontario Acoustic Supply  
Onyschuk & Co. Ltd.  
Paul Kolodij, Insurance Broker  
Phantom Screens  
Planet Bowl  
Quality One Hour Photolabs  
Royal Bank - R. Atamaniuk  
Royal LePage - Joanne Gludish  
Shelton Corporation  
Sievert & Associates, CA  
So-Use Credit Union Ltd.  
St. Mary's Credit Union  
Stychin Tyme - Penny  
Sutton Group - Gary Zazulak  
Swansea Pharmacy  
Tanchak Auto Service  
Taras Pawluk  
The Co-operators - Leo Sokolowski  
Tri-Can - B. Vlahopoulos  
Trypillia Arts  
Ukrainian Credit Union  
Wellness Institute - Taras Rodak  
West Arka  
William Gludish, Barrister & Solicitor  
Zbrucz - Musicians











## 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert Program

*Featuring:* DESNA Ukrainian Dance Company  
DESNA School of Ukrainian Dance  
and Tonia & Ira Ermolenko

*Instructor:* Alexander Sokurenko

*with Master of Ceremonies:* Ihor Baczynskyj

- Pryvit** DESNA Ukrainian Dance Company welcomes everyone to this evening's festivities with a traditional Ukrainian welcome dance  
Choreography: M. Vantukh
- Dubotanetz** performed by the children of the DESNA School of Ukrainian Dance
- Carpathian Suite** performed by DESNA, a spectacular dance highlighting 3 regions of Western Ukraine - Hutschulshyna, Bykovyna and Zakarpatyia.  
Choreography: M. Vantukh
- Pictorial Retrospect** a fond look at DESNA over the years  
Thank you to Adrian Woloszanskyj and to all who supplied the photos
- Old Leacher** a comedic dance from DESNA's past repertoire  
Choreography: L. Kerstburg
- Let's Celebrate** a video look back - television broadcast aired in December 1992 highlighting DESNA's participation in the celebration of Canada's 125<sup>th</sup> birthday and the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Ukrainians in Canada
- Hulianochka** taken from the Volyn region of Ukraine, a colourful and rhythmic dance  
Choreography: Lutsk
- Love of Song** tribute to the DESNA choir... featuring one of our own DESNA dancers, Tonia Ermolenko an accomplished pianist and singer will entertain with a few of her favorite Ukrainian folk songs, accompanied by Ira Ermolenko
- Zaporozchi** a thundering spear dance by the DESNA male dancers.  
Choreography: P. Virsky
- Hopak** DESNA Ukrainian Dance Company closes the gala concert with Ukraine's national dance  
Choreography: P. Virsky

## Celebrating 25 Years of Dance....

- well known to Caravan audiences in Toronto, performing for many years at the *Poltava, Odessa and Kyiv Pavilions* (1974-1998)
- invited by the *French Folk Arts Council* in the summers of 1983 and 1985, DESNA participated in a series of concerts across France. *Tour of France* in 1988, representing Canada in the annual *French Summer Festival*
- participated for many years in the *Ukrainian Heritage Day* at Ontario Place, Toronto
- performed at the *Ukrainian National Festival*, Dauphin Manitoba, 1979; at the *Kingston Folkloric Festival*, Kingston Ontario, 1981; two years at the *National Arts Centre* in Ottawa, 1989, 1991
- nine consecutive years at the annual *Windsor Carousel of Nations Festival* (1990-1998)
- participated in the annual *Dragon Boat Festival* - 1992, 1993, and 1997, Centre Island, Toronto
- 100 Years of Ukrainian Immigrants to Canada* celebration in 1991, Camp Kyiv, Oakville, Ontario
- Ukrainian Independence Day* celebrations, 1992-1997, at camp Kyiv, Oakville, Ontario and at the *Dibrova Ukrainian Park* August 1991 & 1992, Brighton, Michigan, USA
- "Let's Celebrate" in 1992, a national television broadcast commemorating *Canada's 125<sup>th</sup> Birthday*
- toured extensively throughout Canada and the USA during 1990-1992 performing the musical "*Ukrainians on Broadway*"
- 1996/97 was the inaugural season for the *DESNA School of Ukrainian Dance*
- Special Olympics Banquet for Ukrainian Athletes* from Ukraine, January 1997, Toronto
- DESNA Showcase '97 and '98 Annual Concerts*, Toronto Ontario
- featured at *Verkhovyna Annual Youth Festival*, July '97 and July '98, Glen Spey New York, USA
- featured performers at the *11<sup>th</sup> Annual Sunflower Festival*, August 1997, Warren Michigan, USA
- 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Bloor West Village Ukrainian Festival*, August 1997 and August 1998, Toronto
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Youth Festival of Ukrainian Dance*, February 1998, Toronto
- featured performers at the *Echos of Ukraine Cultural Show*, April 1999, Buffalo, New York, USA
- over the past 25 years DESNA has also had the pleasure to perform at various local functions sponsored by the *Community Folk Arts Council of Toronto*
- DESNA has also performed for numerous weddings, banquets, Malankas, and private functions over the last 25 years both in Canada and the USA.



## EVENING'S PROGRAM

- 5:30** Cocktails - displays, photos, etc.
- 6:30** Gala Anniversary Concert  
MC Ihor Baczynskij  
DESNA Ukrainian Dance Company
- 7:30** Dinner Banquet
- 10:00** Zabava  
featuring Ron Cahute & Burya



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### ARTISTIC DIRECTORS .....over the years

#### Year

1973 - 1976

1974 - 1979

1977

1979 - 1987

1988 - 1989

1990 - 1992

1993 - 1995

1996 - 1998

1999

#### DESNA Choir

Alexander Chmil

#### DESNA Ukrainian Dance Company

Andy Malette

Daria Strohyj

Mark Olynyk

Andryj Bachynskij

Tami Pawluk

Taras Pawluk

Valeri & Lesia Movtchan

Alexander Sokurenko

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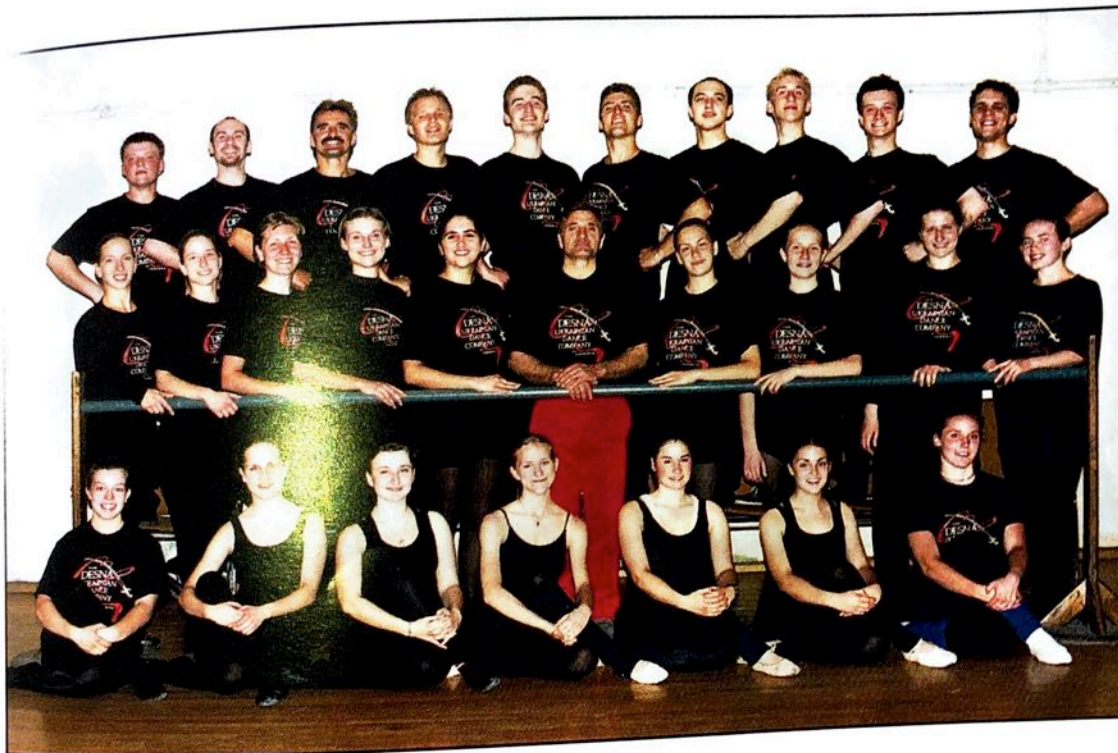
### DESNA PARENT ADVISORS AND BOARD MEMBERS: 1973 - 1999

Balan, Anna +	Hamara, Olga	Malette, Anne	Shipowick, Irene
Balan, Yaroslaw +	Hawrylak, Steffie	Mandziuk, Ray +	Sklepkowycz, Helen
Chandon, Darka	Kereliuk, William	Moskaluk, Anne	Stanko, Olga
Cikalo, Olha	Koropeccki, Orest	Olynyk, Dr. Walter	Strohyj, George
Demeda, Dorothy	Kukurudza, Stephan	Parzei, Roman	Yonka, Steve
Dorosz, Marg	Kulyk, Natalie	Pawluk, Wasyl	
Drozd, Paul	Liber, Dorothy	Plishka, Michael	
Evanytsky, Walter +	Lysiak, Marian	Romanko, Julian +	

*and thank you to anyone who we may have unintentionally overlooked -  
we couldn't have done it without you*

# ~ DESNA ~

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1999



*Back Row:* Mykhailo Loboiko, Rob Pinchak, Yuriy Pawluk, Adrian Woloszanskyj, Yvan Oleksiuk-Baker, Taras Pawluk, Andrij Biliak, David Gludish, Stefan Kuziw, Alex Czoli

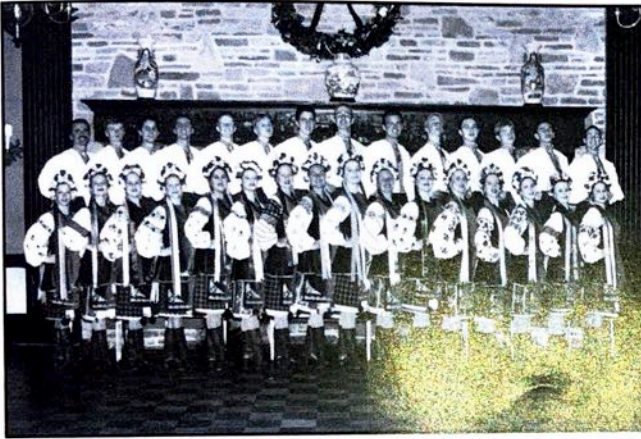
*Middle Row:* Slavka Kobilnyk, Larysa Chalupa, Zoryana Grod, Tanya Lysiak, Hanya Kohut, Alexander Sokurenko, Natalie Mueller-Kuczuk, Olyana Grod, Tonia Ermolenko, Maria Polanska

*Front Row:* Arienne Parzei, Natalya Grod, Nadia Masliak, Talia Lysiak, Odarka Kolodij, Tamara Chandon, Carolyn Gludish

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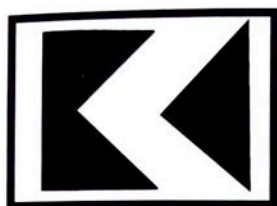
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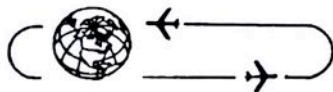
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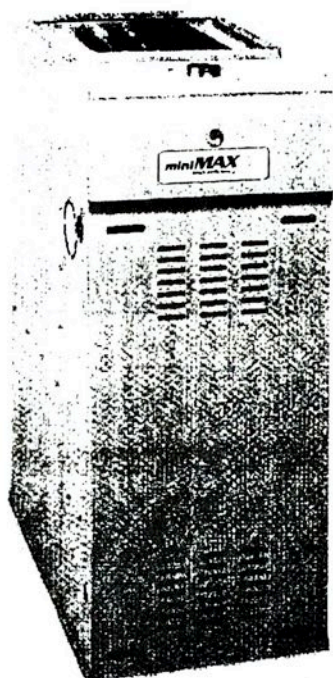
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