

The exhibition and presentation of Ivan Marchuk's artistic heritage in the Pontifical Palace Palazzo della Cancelleria is an event of paramount importance - for the entire cultural space of Ukraine, for the diplomatic sphere of our country, and, I want to believe, for the Vatican and Italy, which is so rich in images and embodiments of the aesthetic and cultural dimension.

Firstly, we cannot but remember that we are talking about an artist whose work constitutes and embraces an entire era in the contemporary cultural process of Ukraine. The point is not only in the timeframe of the period when Ivan Marchuk worked, but also in the magnitude and perfection of his creative achievement - the synthesis of an original, unique style that can never be confused with anyone else. Once you see a painting by Marchuk, your impressions, emotions and understanding will remain for life.

Secondly, it is symbolic and important that this event takes place in the cultural and historical space associated with the tradition of the Holy See. This is extremely significant, as this exhibition will be another evidence that the Ukrainian artistic tradition is not only an integral part of the world cultural field, but is also one of its bright and valuable components, in the context of modernity in particular. It is extremely important to testify to this once again in Rome, the spiritual and artistic capital of the Christian world and the entire Eurocentric civilisation.

Thirdly, another mystically important sign is that we are able to present the achievements of the Giant of Spirit and Creativity in the year that Pope Francis has proclaimed, in accordance with Church tradition, the Year of Jubilee. That is, a year of exceptional witness and equally exceptional responsibility, when every action and every thought is and should be aimed at achieving what is impossible to achieve in ordinary circumstances.

Of course, Maestro Ivan Marchuk is a son of the Ukrainian land. All his work is a hymn and glorification of the Motherland. And at the same time, it is an existential, irrational cry of his soul to the whole world - not to forget about Ukraine! That exhausted, sore, martyrdom-ridden Ukraine, about which the Holy Father speaks every week. Not to forget and to help, to do everything possible to ensure that the efforts of the devil, ugly embodied in Putin's sinister incarnation of war, the devil who is now tormenting Ukraine, are defeated and denied as soon as possible.

Art, culture and the Spirit - the Spirit of faith and the Spirit of inspiration - will always and necessarily prevail. There is no doubt about it.

That is why we are staging this Mystical, Highly Artistic and Sublime Performance - the Opera of Ivan Marchuk's works - in the name of the triumph of beauty, perfection and truth, that is, in the name of a just peace on our Ukrainian land and in the whole world. For peace is harmony, the harmony that the Great Maestro Marchuk testifies to, that he shouts about, and for which the Embassy of Ukraine to the Holy See and the Order of Malta is there, and this exhibition, which the Embassy of Ukraine to the Holy See and the Order of Malta is proud to have joined with great responsibility and joy!

Andrii Yurash, Extraordinary Ambassador and Plenipotentiary of Ukraine to the Holy See and the Order of Malta.