



Jakob Engel-Schmidts tale ved åbningen af Ukraine House in Denmark

Taler

Jakob Engel-Schmidt
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Dato

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Sted

Gammel Dok, Strandgade
27B, 1401 København

Omstændigheder

Kommentarer indsat i firkantede parenteser indsat af taler/taleskriver.

Your excellency, Mr. Ambassador.

Chairperson Nataliia Popovych [udtales: Natalia Popovich]

Ladies and gentlemen.

Today is first and foremost a dark day. It is a day of grief, a day of sadness and a day of commemoration.

Today marks the horrifying day a year ago where Russia launched a full scale invasion of Ukraine and brought more violence, death and destruction to your homeland.

But at the same time, today is also a day of friendship – and a day of freedom.

Although a part of your country is currently under Russian control, you have bravely fought back and the spirit of the Ukrainian nation is free. This is due to Ukrainian bravery and determination to continue to live in freedom and in peace.

On this background, I am therefore very moved to take part in the official opening of Ukraine House in Denmark.

I truly do hope that Ukraine House in Denmark will further strengthen the cultural bonds and friendship between our two countries.

It is also my hope that this will be a house where you can express your innermost thoughts and feelings about art, about your culture, about being here in Denmark far away from home. And that Ukraine House will be a place where you can celebrate the Ukrainian culture and the will to thrive and to fight against the oppressors. Because the preservation of art is crucial for the soul of a nation and the future of Ukraine.

Today, I cannot help but think about a video that has made a strong impression – not only on me but on the world. The video was recorded by a journalist from The Washington Post in the beginning of the war in a hotel lobby in Kharkiv.

At this time, reports were swirling that Russian troops were closing in on the city, sirens were howling and blaring, and people were attempting to flee. And in the middle of chaos and uncertainty and the horrifying sound of bombs falling, a young boy sat down at a glossy white piano and played a piece called ‘Walk to school’. Have you seen it? Some of you have. If you have not – take your time to do so. I imagine that the sound of the piano must have brought hope, comfort and fighting spirit to both the young boy playing the piano and the listeners around him and to all the people watching on all the different various electronic channels. To me, this was an incredibly beautiful, generous and defiant act of art.

Art is indeed a powerful and universal language that speaks to our souls.

And today I am very excited that the exhibition THE MUSES ARE NOT SILENT will open to the public here in Ukraine House in Denmark.

You have chosen a powerful title for this exhibition. Your exhibition is in itself a statement that contradicts the well-known expression: *When the cannons are heard, the muses are silent.*

At wartime we need the voices of creative minds more than ever. And the Ukrainian muses are not silent – just as the boy by the piano was not silent.

I hope Ukraine House in Denmark will be your home away from home, a place where Ukrainian art and culture can flourish. It is a privilege for me to be here

today and to support the opening and the endeavor to fight against the tyranny.
Thank you so much.

Kilde

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