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**MUSEUM HOURS**  
Monday-Friday: 10 am - 4 pm  
Sunday: 2 pm - 4 pm

*Groups are welcome by  
appointment*

*Visits may include viewing of  
fresco paintings at the Serbian  
Orthodox Church  
"Gracanica". Light lunches  
provided for groups of 15 or  
more people.*

*Serbian Heritage Museum  
of  
Windsor*

## **EASTER EGGS**

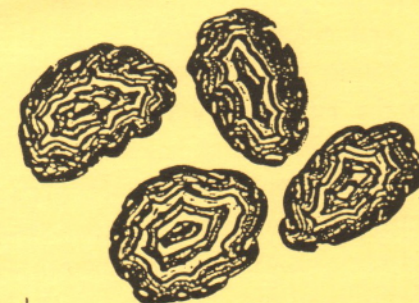


Exhibit: April 1- 26, 1996



## INTRODUCTION

Easter Eggs are decorated and dyed eggs prepared for the day of Easter. Serbs and other Orthodox communities make them to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ. The process of making Easter Eggs relates to the prayers or dialogue with Christ Himself. When finished Easter Eggs signify New Life.

Decorating Easter Eggs is a popular Serbian traditions. Also is a great joy for Children to welcome Easter. After the days of fasting they look forward to good food and plenty of sweets and most of all "battle" with colourful eggs. On the day of Easter young children wake up early to look for the hidden eggs rabbit leaves on the night when Christ has Risen. They play with them and with each other's by cracking. Moreover, each household member chooses an egg and knocks with other household members on the tip and bottom of the egg. The egg that remains whole becomes the guardian of the home. Some families put aside the first cooked and dyed egg for that purpose. When families have visitors, they greet them with eggs, some exchange eggs.

The most common way to decorate Easter Eggs is to dip them in a red dye or other

complementary colours. Those eggs are first cooked and are well to eat and crack.

Other ways to decorate and dye Easter Eggs is more complex. There are three major types of ornaments in the Serbian way of decoration. The oldest one is the human figure, also, are outlines of different animals, often birds, rooster and hen or fish. Second type of ornament is purely geometric in which the line plays important role. The way it wiggles or breaks, crosses or zig-zags makes the pattern and shapes intricate and such decorated egg quite unique. A variety of crosses is a frequent geometric design in this category. The third type is floral design. Flowers from the Serbian gardens and everywhere else in the fields are incorporated in the way eggs may appear as God's garden itself. Combination of two or three of the types is quite common and the results are usually stunning.

The oldest method to dye Easter Egg is known as *encaustic* technique or popularly called *wax* procedure. When decided pattern is drawn, the selected area is covered with wax before the egg is dipped in a chosen dye. A special wire tipped conical metal pencil, *pisanka*, through which melted wax flows, a tool is used to draw the pattern and to fill up the

areas with wax. Egg is dipped in the lightest colour and then filled with a new layer of wax till the whole egg is covered and all selected colours protected. Wax is then removed with the candle flame. The appearance of the ornaments and colours makes this process unique. It is the experience of revelation.

Serbian Heritage Museum features 44 works made by Serbian children, some made by the friend's of the Museum and some Easter Eggs from the private collections of the Serbs. All displayed eggs reflect a colourful and decorative nature of the Easter Eggs tradition and its continuation to decorate them in Canada as well. Incorporating old visual experience with new makes Easter Egg design quite pronounced.

### **Acknowledgment:**

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