

UKRAINIAN HISTORY AND
EDUCATION CENTER

WEDDING
RUSHNYK
WORKSHOP

CRAFTS FOR KIDS @ UHEC

SUNDAY, JULY 17, 2022



Ukrainian History & Education Center
135 Davidson Avenue
Somerset, NJ 08873
info@ukrhec.org
732-356-0132
www.ukrhec.org



UHEC folk art programming is made possible by funds from the Somerset County Cultural & Heritage Commission, a partner of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.

Wedding Rushnyk & Rituals Workshop

A Ukrainian wedding is a marriage ceremony, filled with traditional rituals, that was practiced both in Ukraine and in the Ukrainian diaspora. A wedding featured a rich assortment of folk music, singing, dancing, greetings, and visual art rituals. One visual art ritual surrounded around the use of the *rushnyk*.

A *rushnyk* is an embroidered long ritual cloth. *Rushnyky* were not only a part of the bride's dowry but also played a role in the wedding ceremony itself. The couple would be blessed by the parents with a *rushnyk* and a decorated *korovai* (wedding bread) and during the ceremony the couple would stand on a *rushnyk*, their hands would be tied with a *rushnyk* and their *starosty* (or matchmakers) would have a *rushnyk* tied around their bodies.

The wedding *rushnyky* were usually embroidered in red (with a little bit of black and white) designs and usually featured the Tree of Life motif. The Tree of Life symbolized a connection between different generations of the same family, the infinity of life or the 3 levels of Universe (roots are the underworld, trunk is the earthly life, and upper branches are the heavenly powers). The wedding *rushnyk* would also feature designs symbolizing their new life and new beginnings. Along with the tree, there would always be a pair of birds embroidered on the cloth, which represented the new married couple.



The Tree of Life motif includes a plant with the main trunk, roots or vase at the base, many branches, and plenty of flowers, leaves or birds even abstract details that cover the branches.

In this workshop, young artists will learn about Ukrainian wedding rituals and make their own wedding *rushnyk* (ritual cloth) with the Tree of Life motif.

Supply List for Workshop

- White cloth (could be precut to resemble an embroidered cloth) or purchase a white kitchen towel, muslin cloth, or flour sack towel (can be cut into two narrow strips)
- Glue or Fabric glue
- Scissors
- Red Yarn
- Red Felt
- Templates from packet (pg. 4)
- Protected Workspace

Crafts for Kids with the UHEC

Sunday afternoon workshops will provide a hands-on opportunity for kids to learn about Ukrainian art, culture and history based on objects found in the UHEC Museum Collection. Participants will go home with a craft at the end of the workshop. Suitable for grade school aged children.

