

# Ukrainian Paralympic Medallist Offers to Sell His Championship Medals

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, April 11, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A week after Canadian auction house Waddington's announced their fundraising auction for Ukraine, a Ukrainian Paralympic athlete contacted the Toronto-based company to sell his gold and silver medals to raise money for his country.

It was after seeing a video about children who had lost their parents in the war that Oleksander Devlysh decided he needed to do something. "It was a strong trigger for me because I have a three-year old daughter. So, I thought about selling my medals."



Oleksandr Devlysh (centre); Semi-final match at the London 2012 Paralympic Games. Ukraine won 2:1 to receive the silver medal.

Devlysh immediately sent out inquiries to several auction houses around the world about selling his medals. Connections made through the International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee ultimately directed the footballer to contact Waddington's in Canada.

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The Beijing Games were the greatest tournament I've ever been in. Unbelievable to be on the highest step of the podium after victory over Russia. Now, we must win the most important victory of all."

*Oleksandr Devlysh, Ukrainian Paralympic Champion*

In his initial email to Waddington's, Devlysh said, "I have always been proud of my medals, my sports victories, but now my people have been attacked by a fierce enemy. And our people must win the most important victory. I can't physically defend my country with weapons in my hands, but I want to help the army, and children who lost their parents in the war. Can you help me sell my medals to use the proceeds to help the Ukrainian army, and children orphaned by the war?"

A flurry of overseas emails and Zoom calls later, a plan was

developed that would allow Devlysh to keep his medals, and through a partnership with Canadian-Ukrainian Olympic gold medalist Lucas Makowsky, see the creation of a unique mentorship/engagement initiative. Working together, the two athletes will develop a customized program to meet the interests and aspirations of all involved and has the potential to create a foundation for a legacy program.

Makowsky said, "It is an absolute privilege to join Oleksandr and be part of this [unique opportunity](#). Like Oleksandr, I feel that it is our duty to give and to help whenever we can. I look forward to making this engagement as meaningful and impactful for the successful bidder as we continue to raise awareness and funds for the ongoing needs in Ukraine. First, to come out victorious; then second, to rebuild the beautiful Ukraine we have come to know." Whether football, speedskating or any form of sport; for an organization, team or individual, this an unimaginably inspirational opportunity.

Now retired from competitive football, Devlysh is studying sports marketing and management at Barça Innovation Hub University while working for a medical laboratories network company in Lviv.

## CANADIAN ART HIGHLIGHTS

The auction also features art and decorative arts donated by generous artists and collectors , including the following noted artists.



Ukrainian Gold Medal Football Team, Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games. Devlysh back row, second from left.



'Protect Ukraine', Gary Taxali

#### GARY TAXALI

"The recent events in Ukraine are nothing short of an atrocity. Every day, genocide is being committed as the world watches helplessly. My artwork, 'Protect Ukraine' is meant as a call to action, in any way a person can. The beautiful souls of Ukraine are fighting tirelessly to defend their land, their culture, their history, their artifacts, and their people. My image conveys their power and resilience in the shadow of increasing terror by Putin. But we all need to do our part to send him the message that his invasion and acts of genocide will not go unanswered. It's the greatest act of love we can show our sisters and brothers in Ukraine. We are all one."

#### WANDA KOOP

Koop was one of the first artists to respond to our call for consignments. "Ukraine is my family's homeland. My mother lived on the Dnieper River. It is a beautiful and mighty river that has been an endless source of inspiration for me." Koop is one of Canada's most accomplished painters, creating large-scale paintings and mixed-media events that incorporate video, music and dance for over four decades. Her art is beautiful, monumental and mesmerizing.

#### NATALKA HUSAR

Natalka Husar is the daughter of Ukrainian immigrants. Husar's identity, and by extension her art, is split between North America and Eastern Europe, drawing the curtain back on the nostalgic romanticism and harrowing realism of both places. 'Study for Wounded Boy (Witness)' was literally torn from her sketch book. It stems from her first visit to Ukraine after independence in 1992. "The country still felt metaphorically wounded and I was collecting images to express that collective state of being."

#### MARTIN RUSSOCKI

"As President Volodymyr Zelenskyy faces the immense pressures and responsibilities of leading his country in war, he remains calm and resolute, determined to defend his people. He is an inspiration to his people and to the world. Inspired by the courage and leadership that Zelenskyy is showing in this crisis, I decided to paint a portrait of him, titled "The Face of Courage".

View and bid on all lots on Waddington's [online bidding platform](#).

#### AUCTION INFORMATION

The auction includes over 100 lots of art, decorative arts, art gallery and museum memberships, and more. 100% of all proceeds from the auction will go directly to the Canada-Ukraine Foundation.

The auction is open for bidding until April 14 at 8 pm ET. The gallery is available to view online at [www.waddingtons.ca](http://www.waddingtons.ca)

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