

Taras Gryhorovych Shevchenko (1814 – 1861)



Artist, poet, national bard of Ukraine, Taras Shevchenko was born on 9 March, 1814 in Moryntsi, Kyiv gubernia. He was born a serf. When he was a teenager he became an orphan, and grew up in poverty.

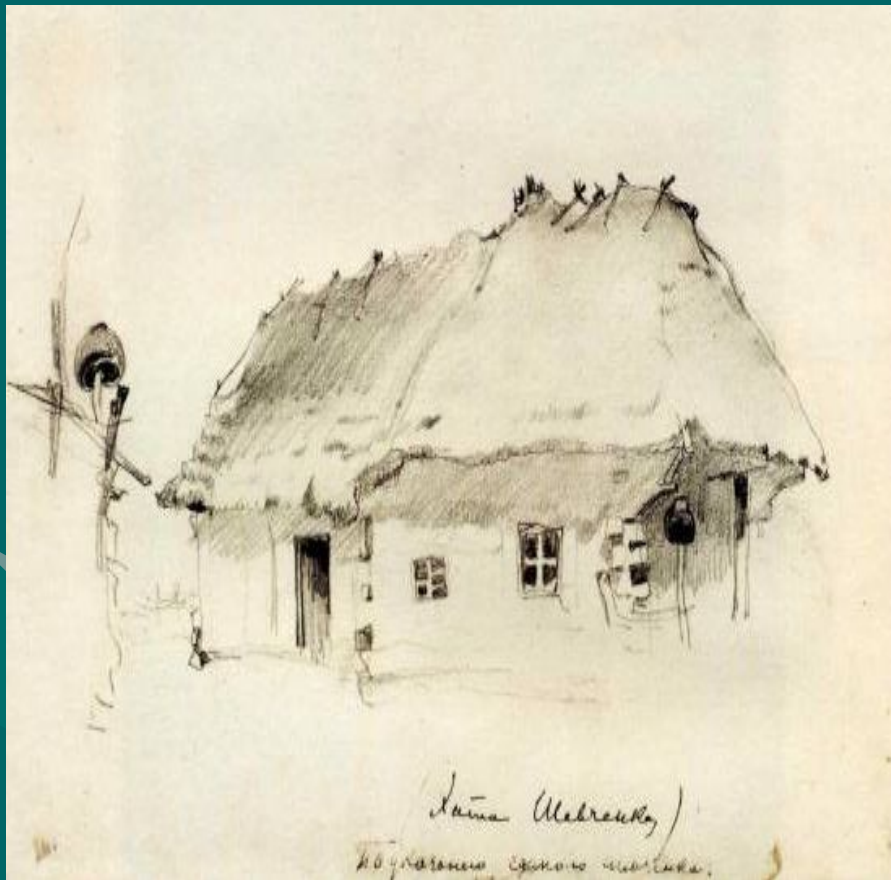
When he was 14, his owner, Engelhardt took him to serve as a houseboy.

And Taras travelled with him to Vilnius and to St. Petersburg.

In Vilnius Taras for the first time heard different languages, Lithuanian, Russian and Polish and there he saw people whom their masters made free.

When Engelhardt noticed the boy's skills in painting he apprenticed him to the painter Shiriayev for four years.

The house where Taras Shevchenko was born



Meetings that changed his life...



Ivan Soshenko



Yevhen Hrebinka



Olexandr Venetsianov

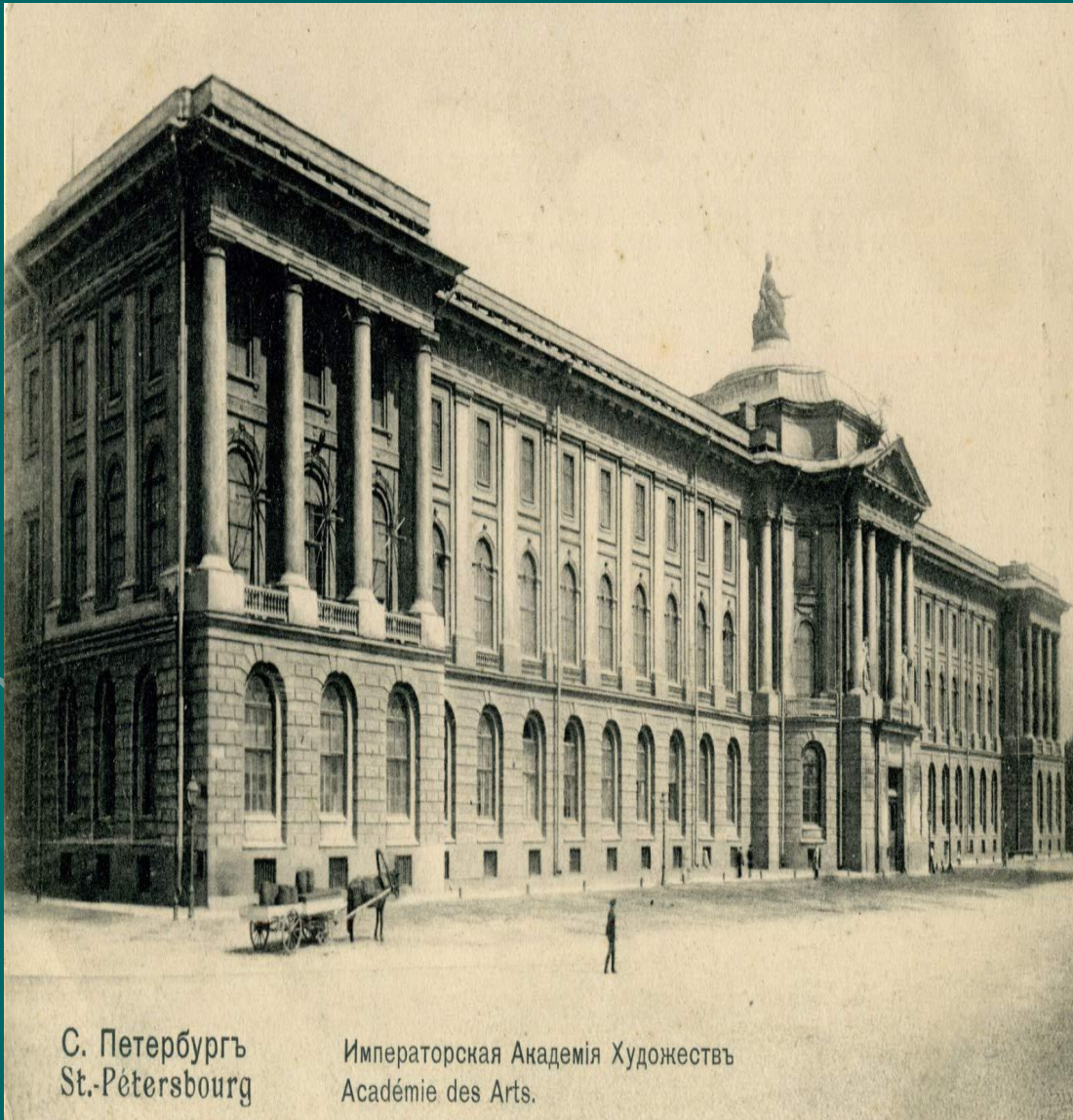


Carl Briullov

At that time the young man met his compatriots Soshenko, Hrebinka, Venetsianov, they showed his works to the famous Russian artist Carl Briullov. Shevchenko's paintings impressed Briullov, and he decided to help him. Carl Briullov painted a portrait of the Russian poet Zhukovskiy and disposed it in a lottery. The money was used to buy Shevchenko's freedom from Engelhardt in 1838.

Academy of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg

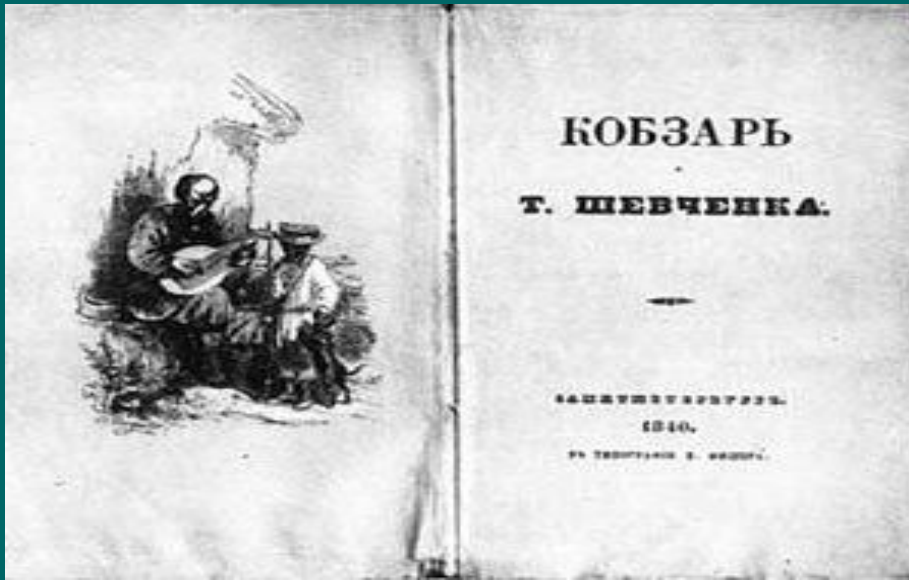
Shevchenko entered the Academy of Fine Arts in St. Petersburg, there he became a student of Briullov. Shevchenko was awarded three silver medals for his works and later he had become an Academician in engraving.



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Académie des Arts.

First collection of poems “Kobzar” (1840)



Studying at the Academy T. Shevchenko understood that his main calling, his true passion was poetry. In 1840 he published his first collection of poems “Kobzar”. In 1841 followed the epic poem “Haidamaky”, in 1844 the ballad “Hamalia”.

Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood



When he graduated from the Academy, he became a member of the Kyiv Archeographic Commission. In 1846 in Kyiv he entered the secret Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood. It was a secret political society, in 1847 it was smashed, and Shevchenko was arrested and sent to the Orenburg special corps, he was deprived the right to draw and write. 10 years of exile ruined his health, and Shevchenko became seriously ill.

In the place of eternal rest



When he was released in 1857 it was forbidden to him to live in Ukraine. He moved to St. Petersburg but on March 10, 1861 the great poet died of heart disease. He was buried in St. Petersburg, but his friends wanted to fulfil the poet's wish that he had expressed in his "Testament" and they transferred his remains to the Chernecha Hill near Kanev, in Ukraine.

Shevchenko was an outstanding poet and a highly accomplished artist. There are 835 works written by him, although 270 are known to have been lost. His collection also contains over 150 portraits, 42 self-portraits.