

# ProjectsAbroad

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## Salutare Moldova



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## Moldovan Carpets

By Eugenia Doros, supervisor of Projects Abroad Moldova.

The Art of the Moldovan folk carpet has old and authentic traditions. The archeological researches proved that tissue was practiced since ancient times. The carpets of the 18th- 19th centuries, known abroad as “old Bessarabian carpets” are of a high artistic level, the roots of which were cultivated long before. This was the period of highlighting of its traditional features, reflected in ornaments, composition and colour. According to researchers, the Moldovan carpet has developed a lot. Representative for the Medieval Epoch are smooth carpets (secular, rugs, carpets) and terry- obtained by attaching tassels in knots. Instead, the 18th and 19th centuries are a flowering period of our folk art. Every housewife had to know not only how to weave a rug, but even how to obtain different ornaments and colours for the threads, using just natural dyes. The carpets were considered to be family relics that were sent from generation to generation, probably this way “surviving” till nowadays. Originally carpets were not produced for sale, and only on rare occasions, when the family of the peasant had big troubles, for example if they couldn't pay the taxes, the people had no other solution but selling them. The traditional Moldovan house is obligatorily adorned with carpets: on the walls, on the beds, on the floor. The quantity of carpets



belonging to a family has always been considered a proof of a girl's skills and family status, being an important item of girls' dowry. A family that possessed a big number of rugs was respected and appreciated by everyone. The girls of 10- 11 years were already taught the craft of tissue. The traditional decor is based on a certain rhythm and simplicity. The easiest ornament on the vertical fabric is the stripe, usually simple stripes of different colours running through the fabric surface from edge to edge. But there certainly are more sophisticated ornaments, of geometric, zoomorphic, anthropomorphic, or flower motifs.

The decorations are suggestive and reflect human connection with nature and his everyday concerns (the mill, water wave, painted egg, flowers, and vines). Among the commonest ornamental “themes” is the vegetable, geometric, representation of birds, men, working tools etc.



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Among the vegetable representations most common is the tree of life, flowerpot with flowers, bouquets, flowers, branches, wreaths, fruit etc. The geometrical grounds are: cross straight and wavy lines, triangles, diamonds, squares, stars, hooks, broken lines, etc. Some of decorative motifs like diamond, circle, square, star- had in the old times a symbolic meaning.

On the old carpets most frequently are represented different working tools, the bobbin case, glasses, vases. There are often represented birds: roosters, ducks, pigeons, eagles, geese, peacocks, various insects - beetles, spider. Usually, together with geometric or vegetal figures is represented the woman shape, which is a symbol of life and fertility.

The twentieth century marks the exclusive transition in the carpet decorative art to floral compositions at first with a geometric hue, and then with a naturalistic one.

A handmade carpet is more than just a decorative object, is a story, a symbol, a source of memories. Being in Moldova, don't miss the opportunity of visiting the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History, which has the richest Moldovan carpets' collection that date from the 18th- 20th centuries: large wall carpets, narrow rugs (that hung on the wall above the bench), and carpets that were to be put on the bench, beds.



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### Trip to Odessa

By Iana Balta, Social Assistant at Projects Abroad Moldova.



1st of April this day is not listed in any calendar of important dates and national holidays, while it may be counted among the international holidays, as it is celebrated with equal success in Russia, Germany, England and France, Scandinavia and even in the East. In some countries April 1st is called Happy laughter, in others – Day of Fool, and in Odessa – Humorina. This year was the anniversary of day of the humor in Odessa, it has been 40 years since the first celebration. The trip organized by students from Moldova which was joined by some volunteers from Projects Abroad Moldova with a staff member, was very interesting and exciting, there were more than 60 buses going to Odessa for that day. Leaving one day before in the evening was a good idea as we got there in the morning and had all day to look around the old city but very beautiful one, to listen some

music at concerts which were in few places, or to participate at any of contests everywhere around. We began our trip going to the port, which is the biggest one on the black sea. Right in the middle of it stays a new and beautiful hotel Odessa. Later we went up the old streets with all the people who came here to celebrate this magical day. There was ice cream, food, sweets, music, souvenirs, funny masks, huge sun glasses and other funny and humorous things. There were also different contests you could be involved in like checking how strong or sharpshooter you are and others. Also there were carrousel and everyone could have a ride on them. All the coffee and pizza, or any other places were full of people. The wonderful atmosphere was everywhere. On our way to the sea we crossed a lovely park and we decided to stop at the delfinarium. It was a magic view to the sea from out there. On our way back we had a huge dinner and went to the bridge of lovers where there were locksmiths with the names of couples on them. In the evening before the leaving everybody were exhausted, here and there people were falling asleep in the bus.



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Journalism project

### Show of Humor at Fantastic Centre

By Matt Suppelsa from United States of America.



Recently, Moldova celebrated the Day of Humor. There are large celebrations throughout the country. One of these humor events was at the "Fantastic" Community Centre for Children. The show was presented on April 2 instead of the usual April 1, because the children were busy attending other events and parties on the 1st of April. Fantastic is a state institution which gains funding from the government. It first opened in 1991, and has since seen multiple generations of children from the same families. The funding allows them to offer child care at no cost to parents, where they are able to spend time in a safe environment. The presenting children, who all attend Fantastic, come from a variety of different backgrounds, many of whose parents are working abroad or are economically disadvantaged, as well as those from vulnerable families. Each day at Fantastic Centre there are up to 50 children in attendance. The director of Fantastic, Margarita Bohnearscaia emphasizes "aesthetic education", which inspires creativity in her children in a way that cannot be done in school. Bohnearscaia, who has many years of experience, says the children "do what they want to" at Fantastic. But most importantly, says Bohnearscaia, "Every child should know that they are loved by somebody". Some of the activities include work circles, drawing, weaving of beads, crafts, decorative art, papier-mache, theater, modern dance, as well as computer classes. The presentation for the Day of Humor involved two teams, the "Horseshoes" and the "Golden Slippers". The show began with a Moldovan song by a girl wearing traditional dress, both teams presenting a prepared skit, in which each team insisted that they would be the winner. This served as the show's introduction. There was a jury consisting of two judges who rated the performances of each team. Other activities throughout the show included a mime game, where the captain of each team was given a word that he had to act out without speaking. The team that guessed the most words in a specified time limit was the winner. There were also activities such as a tug-of-war, which induced a great amount of laughter from both teams, and audience alike. In addition, there was another prepared skit from each team, called "homework". In one of the prepared skits, a group of boys wore traditional Moldovan women's dress, and danced to traditional music; but the lyrics were changed from their original to be more humorous. At the end of the show, a winner would be determined. The performance for the Day of Humor is yet another aspect of the "aesthetic education" that Ms Bohnearscaia strives to instill in her children. In today's world, it is important to teach creativity, this is especially important for kids living in a disadvantaged situation. In conclusion, the work of Fantastic is not only beneficial for the individual children, but also for society in general.



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## Moldova April Edition 2013

### World Day of Autism is Observed in Moldova

**By Matt Suppelsa from USA. Two months in Moldova.**



Today, the second of April is the World Day of Autism. In Moldova there are some organizations for children with autism, such as ASCCS (Asociația de Susținere a Copiilor cu Cerințe Speciale), and S.O.S. Autism. “Global Autism day is a worldwide event, when all people involved in supporting the children can answer questions [from the public]. Today we can hear the voice of autism, even though the children cannot speak. We try to make the whole society aware of this issue, especially in Moldova, where only the family is there for them. Usually, we want to communicate the existing problems in society; in addition, we want to show successful experiences, to encourage society to support these people.” said Antonina Gavajuc, the president of ASCCS. This is

the sixth annual World Day of Autism. Last year, the Empire State Building in New York and the Hungarian Parliament Building in Budapest both featured special blue lighting in observance of the day, according to Autism Speaks, an American organization. ASCCS was opened in 2009 in Durlești with assistance from Star of Hope Finland. Each week, up to 20 different children visit ASCCS to seek care from the two specialists: one psychologist, and one pedagogist. The pedagogist tries to make daily activities, as well as educate the parents of children with disabilities. “The services we offer are supported by Sweden and Finland. Now we have good relations with ICare4Autism [a non-profit organization based in New York, USA]. We would like to make an autism society for Moldova. They [ICare4Autism] would also like to organize conferences here [in Moldova] for all of Eastern Europe,” said Gavajuc. Although ASCCS works primarily with children suffering from autism and epilepsy, they also work with those suffering from mental retardation, and Down syndrome. Gavajuc said that they are making great efforts to integrate children suffering from these disabilities into mainstream schools and kindergartens, but this has proven to be very difficult, since the teachers do not have the necessary training to work with children with these disabilities. As a result, ASCCS has provided a lot of activities for both teachers and young people to educate them on the topic of autism. In addition, an event is held annually at the Pedagogical University in Chisinau where Swedish experts come and educate students. This year, there will be a one week seminar for pedagogists on how they can improve their work here in Moldova. Although there are many steps ahead, Gavajuc is optimistic. “I hope...I know these children will have a good future,” she said.



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Photos Page

## Volunteer's Happy Moments



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Photo collage



Old Orhei, Monastery

## THE MUSEUM OF ETHNOGRAPHY AND NATURAL HISTORY

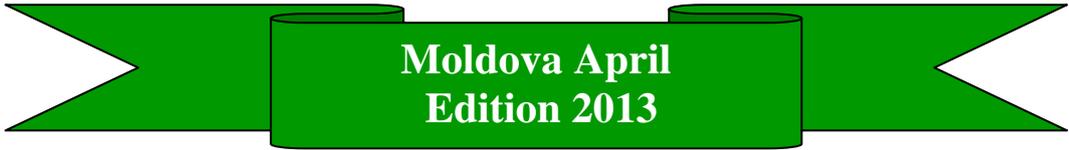
By Ana Zaiat, student at  
the State University of Moldova  
and collaborator of Projects Abroad.



The National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History is the oldest museum institution of Bessarabia. It was established in the 19th century based on exhibits of the Agricultural Exhibition which was held in 1889. At the beginning this institution was called the “Museum of the Bessarabia Gubernia’s Zemstvo” and after it was called “The Zoological, Agricultural and Handicrafts Museum of Bessarabia Gubernia’s Zemstvo”. The founder of the museum was Baron Alexander F. Stuart. The building of the museum was erected in a Mauritian style during 1903-1905, after the design of the architect Vl. Tigank. On 30th of April it was inaugurated the first exhibition, which took place inside the new building. According to the structure of the museum, it is divided into three major parts -ethnography

(which includes material, spiritual culture, and folk art); natural sciences (geology, paleontology, zoology, botany, botanical garden and others) and a pavilion exhibition called “The Ecology of nature and the culture of the Republic of Moldova”. The collection of museum accommodates 140.000 showpieces of undeniable scientific and patrimonial importance. A unique value has the the skeleton of a gigantic dinothere who was discovered 1961, near the Pricipeni village-Rezesi. A great value represents as well archaeological treasures of the museum funds such those from: Carbuna, Valea-Rusului, Frumusica, Mateuti, Marcauti, Sestaci, Hansca, Dorotcaia villages and others. Within numismatic treasure from village Larguta have been discovered coins which dates from the 4th century BC. These contain the effigies of the King Philip II of Macedonia. The ethnographic collections of the museum cover over 50.000 pieces. A great importance represents as well the bessarabian traditional costumes and carpets which is the oldest, the richest and the most representative collection of the Republic of Moldova. The area of the exhibition halls of the museum is over 2300 square metres. In 1994 took place the inauguration of the permanent exhibition of works entitled “Nature. Man. Culture.” The showpieces of the museum collections were exhibited in many European, American, African and Asian countries. Being the oldest institution of the field, the National Museum of Ethnography and National History contributed significantly to the establishment and development of museum network of the Republic of Moldova. At the moment, under the aegis of the museum are the museum complex from Ivancea village (district of Orhei) and The Village’s Museum from Chisinau.





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Thank you all for your collaboration!  
Thank you for being with us!  
If you have anything you'd like to contribute,  
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