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**UKRAINIAN SYMBOLISM IN MYKOLA LYSENKO'S ART SONGS AND
TARAS SHEVCHENKO'S POETRY**

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ABSTRACT

Composer Mykola Lysenko (1842-1912) and poet Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861) memorialized Ukrainian culture in the art songs “The Cherry Orchard,” “Ribbon to Ribbon,” “Dancing Shoes,” “The Cove,” “A Piper’s Tune,” “The Coral Necklace,” and “The Princess.” This article, which is written to accompany a lecture recital of Lysenko’s music, analyzes the Ukrainian symbolism and traditions in the works, credits key project resources, gives an overview of Mykola Lysenko’s biographical information, and discusses the cultural importance of this collaboration with Shevchenko. Shevchenko’s poetry highlights traditions or symbolism specific to Ukrainian culture. Examples include the “vyshyvanka” (Ukrainian embroidery), “cherevikiv” (traditional boots), and “soloveiko” (nightingale, the national bird of Ukraine).

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

Ukraine is a nation that possesses a rich and intricate culture that is deeply rooted in faith and a love for the arts and music. Praying, singing, dancing, writing, performing, and creating are integral activities in daily life that date back centuries in Ukrainian history. Ukrainians are known globally for their expertise in folk art, poetry, and music literature both sacred and secular. Unfortunately, Ukraine has long suffered a history of needing to defend itself as a free and democratic country. Despite enduring relentless attempts for their culture to be appropriated and erased, Ukrainian people proudly continue to celebrate their unique style and ethnicity through their strong religious beliefs, artistic traditions, and musical expression.

As in any nation, Ukraine boasts of champion nationalists that worked tirelessly to preserve and keep the culture alive through their personal talents and contributions. Arguably, one of Ukraine's most talented musicians and important activists was Mykola Vitaliyovych Lysenko. He believed Ukrainian music served as a foundational pillar in the culture. Lysenko dedicated his professional life to preserving Ukrainian culture as an accomplished pianist, composer, teacher, ethnomusicologist, and founder of Ukrainian national professional music (Filenko, 1998, p. ix.). The credentials Mykola Lysenko possessed should sound familiar to music educators as they align with achievements with well-known ethnomusicologist musicians like Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály. Yet, Lysenko is not well known outside of Ukraine and perhaps the Slavic countries. It is theorized that due to the historic pattern of censorship imposed on the Ukrainian culture that there was not the same opportunity for Lysenko's work to be freely exchanged amongst scholars (Filenko, p. 281).

Another champion preserver of Ukrainian culture was Ukraine's beloved national poet, Taras Shevchenko. Mykola Lysenko admired his work so much that most of Lysenko's Ukrainian arts songs were set to the poetry of Taras Shevchenko. It is said that Shevchenko was a poet of the people through and through, in order to [sic] express their admiration for the richness of tone, feeling and the individual motifs of Ukrainian folk-poetry, and to emphasize that Shevchenko in his works has ennobled and given depth to this poetry (Bojko & Swoboda 1955, p. 77).

In 1847, Shevchenko was punished by exile and compulsory military service for writing the poems "The Dream," "The Caucasus," and "The Epistle," which satirized the oppression of Ukraine by Russia and prophesied a revolution (Britannica, retrieved 2023). Despite oppressive rule attempting to silence Lysenko and Shevchenko, they valiantly dedicated their lives to preserving their Ukrainian culture through their writing. Unfortunately, Ukrainian artists face oppression and persecution as history continues to repeat itself.

Problem Statement

As an American Ukrainian vocal student and music educator, I never heard of Mykola Lysenko's work in ethnomusicology or vocal repertoire during my academic music education. At the present time, Ukrainian art song is not well known or performed regularly in United States university level music programs.

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to present a lecture recital and write an accompanying article to increase visibility of Ukrainian culture. The recital, *Ukrainian Symbolism in Mykola Lysenko's Art Song and Taras Shevchenko's Poetry*, occurred December 2nd, 2023, at 6:00pm in William Paterson University's Shea Recital Hall in William Paterson, New Jersey. In the recital, I

identified and explained Ukrainian cultural symbolism found in Mykola Lysenko's art songs and Taras Shevchenko's poetry.

Procedures and Methodology

The methodologies used in this lecture recital and accompanying article include arts based and analytical research methods. I prepared my recital repertoire with Professor Jee Hyun Lim, completed six hours of coaching with Professor Hannah Comia, studied Ukrainian diction lessons with voice teacher, Genya Muzyczka, and crafted the accompanying article for the lecture recital under the weekly advisement of Dr. Carol Frierson-Campbell and Dr. Timothy Newman.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature in review includes information from authors Colin Clarke (2021), Oksana Grabowicz (2011), Olha Kuznetsova (2019), William Noll (1993), Taras Filenko (1998), Georg Predota (2022), A. Rudnitsky (1943), Laurie Ruth Semmes (2002), Gregor Tassie (2022), Melanie Turgeon (2017), authors from The Ukrainian Art Song Project (2004), and John Young (2015). To organize this wide spectrum of sources, the review is divided into three subtopics, *Ukrainian Culture and Musical Traditions*, *Lysenko's Life and Influences*, and *Lysenko's Legacy*.

Ukrainian Culture and Musical Traditions

To understand Mykola Lysenko's music, it is crucial to examine Ukraine's long commitment to the art form. Ukrainian culture prides itself on singing and music making for every holiday, ritual, and event no matter the importance. In the literature presented, the writers reference several accounts which prove Ukrainians performed music for centuries. Historians can trace back Ukraine's musical lineage to thousands of years ago. Filenko (1998) notes that Ukrainian archeologists found Europe's earliest musical instruments, dating back almost 40,000 years.

In addition to the findings of ancient instrumental artifacts, scholars discovered that Ukrainians sang specific songs to memorialize important life rituals. Rudnitsky (1943) writes, "In the first epoch of the State of Kiev, that is, before the introduction of Christianity, ritual songs were known and sung" (p. 825). Rudnitsky (1943) further illustrates the purpose of these ancient ritual songs in the following description:

They either referred to the cult of gods, or connected with the seasons of the year as, for example, the spring songs, so called "*wesnianky*" and "*hahilky*," or the harvest songs, and the "*kupalni pisni*" in the summer. Songs connected with family life, such as wedding and funeral

songs, formed a group. In these last, which took the form of free recital and were executed by professional mourners, we find the first germ of the organic relationship between different epochs of Ukrainian culture. (p. 826, emphasis in original)

From Rudnitsky's description, one observes that Ukrainians commemorated the most sacred life events from birth to death by singing. As time progressed in Ukrainian history, the importance of singing remained prominent, however with changes in religious beliefs came new styles of singing. By 991, Ukraine embraced Christianity which promoted choral tradition (p. 826). According to Rudnitsky, "The Byzantine Patriarch sent a choir to Kiev with the first Bishop of the Christian Church. From this time on, the Byzantine liturgical music became an integral part not only of the Eastern Church ritual but also of the whole culture" (p. 826).

In addition to revering songs in the most sacred rituals, historic accounts reveal that singing and instrumental playing created a vital part in the culture of Ukrainian village life. The following description allows us to view a typical 19th century village ritual. Rudnitsky's study (1943) depicts village children gathering in song:

Anyone knowing the Ukrainian country and its life before the first World War, must, of course, remember a beautiful custom unknown in any other country or nation in Europe. When evening fell, when the youth of the village met together in a known place, not to play or dance, but to sing. This singing lasted long into the night. It was not learnt singing, it was executed without printed music and without a conductor, and it came from the spontaneous desire for choral singing and from love of native songs. (p. 823)

Rudnitsky's narrative not only paints a picturesque view of a quaint village tradition but emphasizes the fact that Ukrainians valued singing as a form of self-expression at an early age.

The adults in Ukrainian villages performed music traditions seriously and viewed musicianship as a second form of income after their primary agricultural work (Noll, 1993).

William Noll (1993) explains that Ukrainian villages in the 19th century traditionally separated musicians into three main categories: blind minstrels, music specialists, and women music specialists. Each group maintained a unique skill set and status as musicians. Noll states, "Considered together, the three groups of music makers carried special and unique performance practices that defined much of the musical life of the village in most regions, including many symbols of historical, regional, religious, and even national consciousness" (p. 46).

Although instrumental specialists and women music specialists were considered "vital village ritual life" (p.49), the *kozbari* and *lirnyki* (blind minstrels) held the highest social status out of the three groups (Noll, 1993). Noll recounts, "Minstrels traveled through villages and small towns, stopping, and performing next to churches, in market squares, near fairs or monasteries, or among village houses" (p. 47). According to Noll (1993), the *kozbari* and *lirnyki* viewed themselves as gifted to not have sight so they could preach through their musical gifts. He states, "The minstrels were viewed, and viewed themselves, as being different from other village musicians, many believing that they had a special purpose in life, one provided by God in the form of their blindness and in the nature of the music they performed" (p. 49).

Blind minstrels served a particularly important purpose to Ukrainian culture because their repertoire kept track of religious and political events of Ukrainian life both past and present. "In general, they consisted of a variety of categories or genres: epic songs (the *dumy*), religious songs (*psalmy*), begging, jesting and satirical songs, as well as songs composed for special occasions such as weddings and funerals" (Grabowicz, 2011, p. 293). "The other important goal for the *kobzari* and *lirnyki*, whether implicit or explicit, was to carry on Ukrainian cultural traditions and

to convey them to the public in a meaningful way in order to be integrated into the cultural fabric of their time” (p. 300).

By examining the intricate details of Ukrainian traditions in relation to its people, scholars gain a small window of access into the experiences that occurred in daily life. As illustrated by Taras Filenko (1998) and others, Mykola Lysenko believed the traditions and songs passed down from each generation in these villages created the fabric for Ukrainian national identity and culture. Taras Filenko (1998) summarizes Lysenko’s philosophy as he states, “The importance of showing how deeply musical culture is embedded in the culture of the people is directly associated with Lysenko’s belief that anyone who would like to be a student of traditional music of any nation must be aware of the musical history of the nation’s people.” (p. 1).

Lysenko’s Life and Influences

According to Taras Filenko (1998), Mykola Lysenko was born on March 10, 1842, in Hryn’ky, a village in the Kremenchuk county of Poltava region in Ukraine. Lysenko enjoyed a happy childhood filled with love and support from his family members. Both of his parents valued and encouraged Lysenko’s piano studies and valued education. Although he grew to be known as the father of national Ukrainian music, his aristocratic upbringing surprisingly focused on Western European perspectives instead. Lysenko’s family chose to teach him the French and Russian language before Ukrainian (p. 13). During his formative years, Lysenko studied at Geduen Boarding school in Kyiv. While at boarding school, Lysenko was deeply inspired by Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko. Lysenko’s son, Ostap Lysenko, once wrote that his father was “Astonished by the poems and ballads, admiring their form, expressive words, and their daring content. Used to Russian and French, he was particularly impressed and enchanted with the

musicality and force vernacular Ukrainian” (Filenko, 1998, p.18). Shevchenko’s poetry left a lasting impression on Lysenko and his music so much so years later, he was asked to serve as the pallbearer when Shevchenko’s body was returned to Ukraine after his death in 1861 (Predota, 2022, para. 4). Filenko (1998) writes that Lysenko continued his studies at Gymnasium No. 2 in Kharkiv Ukraine and completed his higher education at the School of Natural Sciences at the University of Kharkiv, The University of Kyiv, and Leipzig Conservatory. At University, Lysenko honed his Ukrainian Nationalism and fully embraced his heritage. Lysenko preferred to only speak in Ukrainian, created a college chorus that performed Ukrainian folk songs and began the task of collecting and transcribing songs from various parts of Ukraine (Filenko, 1998).

Throughout his expansive education, Mykola Lysenko excelled in his music training as a pianist and composer (Filenko, 1998). Professionally, Lysenko boasts a long list of accomplishments as a pianist, composer, and ethnomusicologist. The Ukrainian Art Song Project Database (The Ukrainian Art Song Project, 2001) provides the following summary of Lysenko’s vast achievements. In his lifetime Mykola Lysenko wrote 133 arts songs (*lirychni pisni* in Ukrainian), a variety of piano and string compositions, operettas, opera’s including his most famous opera, *Taras Bulba*. Regardless of the genre of music created, the folk songs of Ukraine consistently influenced Lysenko’s work.

Rudnitsky (1943) states, “If we search for the influence of the folk song on Ukrainian culture, we shall find that it is part of the cultural structure itself from the earliest stages of this culture and throughout its development” (p. 825). Mykola Lysenko’s music was influenced first and foremost by his love for his Ukrainian nation and the folk music created by its people. Although Lysenko’s initial upbringing did not prioritize Ukrainian language and traditions, Lysenko’s village was “faithful to ancient heritage, language, legend and song” (Filenko, p. 14).

His participation in village festivities and traditions always included folk music and thus the seed for Ukrainian nationalism was planted. Always a faithful patriot to his country, Lysenko dedicated much of his life to collecting and transcribing folk songs from Ukrainian villages. Filenko states, “Folklore specialists not only adopted Lysenko’s method of collecting and arranging folk music. He arrived at his theoretical conclusions about the vocal and instrumental music of Ukraine not through mental exercise but through studies of live performances” (Filenko, 1998, p. 293).

Influenced by the old music traditions of the blind minstrels, Lysenko infused their authentic persona and music in his operas. This point is demonstrated by Noll (1993): “In addition, some Ukrainian intellectuals brought selected minstrels to cities to perform on stage or to live with them for periods of time. For example, the Ukrainian composer Mykola Lysenko brought the kobzari Ostap Veresai, Terentii Parkhomenko, and others” (p.58). Semmes (2002) echoes Noll’s account by stating, “The only folklorist to record the melodies as well as the lyrical content of the songs was Mykola Lysenko, who worked with the kobzar Ostap Veresai (Kononenko, 1998, p. 37, as cited in Semmes, 2002, p. 50). Even when Lysenko wrote for “the big opera stage,” he remained committed to representing the original sounds of the folk tunes in his writing. The influence of Ukrainian song tradition remained prominent in his works.

Lysenko’s Legacy

Several scholarly authors make the same claim: that Lysenko maintained the authentic folk song from the Ukrainian people in all his music. There are other famous composers such as Tchaikovsky that have Ukrainian heritage, but according to the authors in the literature reviewed, Lysenko is considered the one responsible for representing Ukraine. In this section of an interview between Colin Clarke (2018) and pianists Anna and Dimitri Shelest, Clarke asks the artists what

made Lysenko's "voice" different than Tchaikovsky's (pg. 79-80). Dimitri Shelest answers, "Lysenko grounded his compositional style in Ukrainian folk music. This is what gives it such an authentic voice. The music came from the land. Tchaikovsky did not approach his music from the same perspective (p.79-80). Ukrainian performers recognize and honor Lysenko achievement in creating a "Ukrainian voice" by continuing to perform his works even after his death. Considered one of the greatest Galician pianists, Galina Lewicka (1901- 1949) praised Mykola Lysenko as a crucially significant composer and nationalist figure in Ukrainian culture through her journalism and piano performances. Lewicka spent much of her career dedicated to promoting his music (Kuznetsova, 2019, p. 481). Galina Lewicka was a fine concert pianist and received her training at the Vienna Academy of Music. She was also a teacher at the M. Lysenko Higher Music Institute in L'viv and later the dean of the Piano Faculty at the M. Lysenko L'viv National Conservatory (p. 482). Lewicka proves Lysenko's impact on Ukrainian culture as she dedicated many concerts to his work throughout her career and wrote published works about Mykola Lysenko's accomplishments. One particularly momentous concert includes the 25th anniversary of Lysenko's death in L'viv, December 1937. At this concert, Lewicka played one of Lysenko's most challenging pieces, *First Rhapsody*, composed in 1875. In 1938, Lewicka also published a novel entitled, *Mykola Lysenko by the Shevchenko Scientific Society in L'viv* (Kuznetsova, 2019). Kuznetsova states, "This publication demonstrates her attempts to promote the artist's biography among young people. At the same time, Lewicka emphasized Lysenko's achievements for the benefit of Ukrainian culture and praises his patriotism" (p. 485). Galina Lewicka carried out Lysenko's mission to share Ukrainian traditional music in her concerts.

Mykola Lysenko's "authentic voice" is still heard today thanks to musicians and ethnomusicologists who recognize his music keeps Ukrainian culture grounded in its traditional

roots. In 2004 the Ukrainian Art Song Project (UASP) was founded by British Ukrainian bass-baritone Pavlo Hunka. Through the work of Pavlo Hunka and Canada's leading opera stars, 16 CDs of Ukrainian Art Songs have been recorded and released and UASP has recorded 352 Ukrainian art songs. In addition, the UASP created a digital worldwide library database that includes printed music or scores. Scores can be transposed into any key, the text is printed in Cyrillic, transliterated and a pronunciation guide is provided. Scores are public domain and can be printed and shared without copyright infringements (Turgeon, 2017). Turgeon states, "Technology and social media, networking and overall promotion and publicity have made it possible for news about this project to travel to many Ukrainian families who have Ukrainian art songs in their possession. So far, 1,161 Ukrainian art songs have been collected" (p. 91). The UASP hosts a Summer Institute in Toronto that includes an "intensive immersion into Ukrainian art songs—the language, poetic realm, musical style, socio-historical context and performance practice—culminating in a final recital for the public" (Turgeon, p. 91, 2017, as cited in <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca/new-page-2>).

The Ukrainian Art Song Project database has made it possible for artists to internationally share the beauty of Mykola Lysenko's art songs as well as other Ukrainian artists that struggled to express their work freely. Websites such as the UASP, trade journals, blogs, and interviews promote Lysenko's mission to make the world aware of Ukrainian culture. Unlike Lysenko's time, Ukrainian activists in the present era are fortunate to rely on technology for accessible promotion. It is easy to hear what musician's think and feel about Mykola Lysenko's music from a quick online search. In John Bell Young's interview with the famous pianist Arthur Greene, readers can view the depth of emotions Lysenko's music stir within the artist. In Young's interview (2015), pianist Arthur Green shares the depth Lysenko's music reached him emotionally as he states:

Some of the qualities that I value most in life and music—sincerity, warmth, and appreciation of the complexity of emotions—are present in abundance in Lysenko's music. Ethnic influence is present to greater and lesser degrees in different works, which suffuses his music with a unique haunting flavor. It is subtle, and very personal. When I play it, I feel as if I am expressing my own soul (p.71).

Although Mykola Lysenko is no longer living on this earth, Greene's description clearly illustrates his writing continues to move the soul and inspire others to listen to Ukrainian music.

Chapter 3: Ukrainian Art Song Analysis

Prior to each selection sung in the lecture recital, I highlighted key words in the text and explained their significance to Ukrainian culture. This chapter includes the symbolic references and explanations of these Ukrainian words that were featured in the recital. The figures provided are score excerpts from my recital songs. Most figure titles show a featured Ukrainian word written in Ukrainian Cyrillic, then written in the Romanized alphabetic form for the convenience of English readers, and finally the English translation.

Ukrainian Symbolism in, “Садок вишневий коло хати” (The Cherry Orchard)

Mykola Lysenko’s Ukrainian art song, “The Cherry Orchard”, was written as a solo work for voice and piano. The art song is one of several musical works set to the text of Ukraine’s most beloved poet, Taras Shevchenko. The song features Taras Shevchenko’s poetic text, “Sadok Vyshnevji Kolo Khaty”, which translates to, “A house by the Cherry Orchard.” Shevchenko creates a gentle tone as he describes a small cottage next to a cherry orchard. As the beetles hum in the cherry orchard, the plowman is heard planting his seeds in the field. Young women walk back to their homes as a mother and daughter happily prepare the family meal. The evening star appears in the sky as the family enjoys their dinner together. Afterwards, the mother tries to teach her young children, but the nightingale sings loudly, and she cannot compete with the songbird. The poem ends with the mother falling asleep next to her little children as the nightingale continues singing her song through the night.

Taras Shevchenko’s text sweetly describes a tender moment of reprieve from the challenging peasant life in Ukraine. Mykola Lysenko’s musical score reflects Shevchenko’s gentle tone by writing the song in the bright key of G Major and a dance like 6/8 meter. There are two

important symbols to Ukraine highlighted in the text: the cherry tree and the nightingale. The cherry tree is a popular fruit in Ukraine and the nightingale is the national bird. Mykola Lysenko creates the nightingale song in measures 43 and 44 by writing a grouping of high grace notes and a trill. The singer interacts with the nightingale in call and response form. Shevchenko and Lysenko use the nightingale in their textual and musical writing to promote Ukrainian culture since it is a national symbol of Ukraine.

Figure 1

Call and response Example in, “The Cherry Orchard”

5

42 *più rall.* *ppp*

C. За - тих - ло все... все...
Za - tykh - lo vse... vse...

Ф-п

45 *p sostenuto assai* *molto sostenuto*

C. Тіль-ки дів-ча - та та со-ло-вей - ко,
Til'-ky div - cha - ta ta so - lo - vej - ko,

Ф-п *sostenuto* *pp* *p senza tempo* *molto sostenuto* *pp*

Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

In Ukraine, cherries were considered to be a “divine tree”, and Shevchenko’s poem “Cherry Orchard” can be treated as a symbol of whole Ukraine (Repp, 2020).

Figure 2

садок вишневий, sadok vyshnevuj (cherry orchard)

5 *Animato e gioioso*
f
 Са - док виш - не - вий ко - ло ха - ти,
 Sa - dok vysh - ne - vuj ko - lo kha - ty.
sempre f

Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

The “ploughman” represents Ukraine’s agricultural strengths. The blue in the Ukrainian flag stands for sky, Ukraine's mountains and rivers and symbolizes unlimited opportunities. The yellow represents Ukraine's wheat fields and symbolizes prosperity (p. 6, Кротенко Л. Б, 2018)

Figure 3

Плугатарі, pluhatari (ploughman)

10
 плу - га - та - рі з плу - га - ми йдуть,
 plu - ha - ta - ri z plu - ha - my jdut',
f

Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

The nightingale is the national bird of Ukraine and is known as the creator of sweet sounds and a builder of homes. The Ukrainian word, “soloveiko” is a term of endearment. (This article originally appeared in the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, vol. 3, 1993).

Figure 4

соловейко, solovejko (nightingale)



Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

Ukrainian Dance Tradition in, “Ой стрічечка до стрічечки” (Ribbon to Ribbon)

Ukrainian ethnic identity presents itself in traditional dance customs in addition to the art of singing. National dances are ideological and serve to reinforce the concept of permanence to the nation. They symbolize the unitary character of Ukraine and demonstrate its artistic qualities (Pivtorak, 2016, p. 299). Composer Mykola Lysenko and poet Taras Shevchenko honored the Ukrainian dance tradition by referencing the art form in their own compositional work.

In Mykola Lysenko’s art song setting of Taras Shevchenko’s text, “Ribbon to Ribbon”, Lysenko celebrates Ukrainian folk-dance tradition by arranging the music 2/4 meter and a dance-like ternary form. According to the authors of the *Ukrainian Art Song Text Booklet*, Shevchenko would often paraphrase a folk lyric in his poetic texts. Similarly, Lysenko, who was a collector and arranger of Ukrainian folk songs, would paraphrase folk tunes in his music. This art song is

like a folk dance, in three-part, A–B–A form, unlike the composer’s usually through-composed songs (ukrainianartsongproject.art, retrieved 2023, p. 56).

Another reason to suspect Mykola Lysenko pays tribute to Ukrainian dance tradition is his choice of meter. The meter of 2/4 is standard in Ukrainian folk dances, especially the “hopak.” The “hopak” dance is one of the most identifiable dances in Ukrainian culture. Ukrainian folk-dance originating as a male dance among the Zaporozhian Cossacks but later danced by couples, male soloists, and mixed groups of dancers (*Britannica*, (2017)). Although, the composition itself, may not sound directly like the traditional dance music of a “hopak,” the poetic text directly references the originator of the hopak dance, the Zaporozhian Cossacks, in lines seven and eight. “Admire it, lads of handsome poise, My Zaporozhian Cossack boys!” (ukrainianartsong.art, p. 56). Lysenko’s choice of 2/4 meter and decision to set his music to Shevchenko’s reference to Zaporozhian Cossack demonstrates another example of how his music preserves Ukrainian cultural elements. In this case, Lysenko highlights the importance of traditional Ukrainian dance in his art song, “Ribbon to Ribbon”.

One of the most recognizable types of traditional Ukrainian clothing is the vyshyvanka, a white shirt with colorful embroidery. The vyshyvanka is worn by both men and women and is considered a symbol of Ukrainian identity. (Mateta & Povolotska, 2023).

Figure 5

вишиваю, vyshyvaju (embroidering)

11

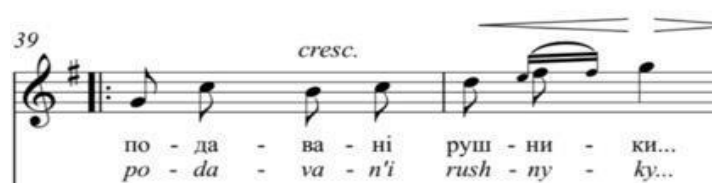
ме - ре - жа - ю, ви - ши - ва - ю, у — не - ді - лю по - гу - ля - ю.
 me - re - zha - ju, vy - shy - va - ju, u — ne - d'i - lju po - hu - lja - ju.

Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

Vyshvanka is not only seen on shirts. The word, “рушники” pronounced, “rushnyky,” in measure 39 of “Ribbon to Ribbon,” references the embroidery in the form of traditional wedding towels.

Figure 6

рушники, rushnyky (embroidered towels)



Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

According to the article, Treasures of Ukrainian Folk Arts, “Embroidered towels used to be draped around arms of brides and grooms at church weddings; embroidered towels were draped over icons in Ukrainian homes; tablecloths were decorated with embroidery – in fact, embroidery, these magic patterns on linen, accompanied Ukrainians at all the major events of their lives” (Сосої, 2014, p. 5).

Ukrainian Clothing Tradition in, Якби мені черевики (Dancing Shoes)

The text translates to “ankle boots” I have none. Ukrainian folk music uses modes and minor keys. Lysenko wrote this piece in a minor key to emphasize the despair of poverty that the

woman in the song endures. She is not even able to buy a pair of shoes and believes her economic status seals her fate in living alone for the rest of her life. “Boots were put on bare feet; girls could have high heels and married women had to do with low heels. As soon as the weather was warm enough, heavy winter boots were stowed away and the female folk walked about mostly barefoot” (Сосої, 2014, p. 38).

Figure 7

черевики, cherevykiv (ankle boots)

13 *p*

Че - ре - ви - ків не - ма - є;
Che - re - vy - kiv ne - ma - je;

Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

Ukrainian Symbolism in, “Над Дніпровою сагою” (The Cove)

The poetry in “The Cove” paints the landscape of Ukraine’s beauty in text reference and in the score. Дніпро берег риє – риє (Dn’ipro bereh ryje – ryje) translates to, “The Dnieper into the shore digs – digs.”

Figure 8

Дніпро, Dnipro (The Dnieper)

25 *p*

Дні-про бе - рег ри - є— ри - є, я - во - ро - ві ко - ринь ми - є.
Dni-pro be - reh ry - je— ry - je, ja - vo - ro - vi ko - rin' my - je.

Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

The Dnieper is the main river that runs through Ukraine. Lysenko was born in a village near the Dnipro River. (“Meet Composer Mykola Lysenko, the Father of Ukrainian Music,” 2022). А калина з ялиною Та гнучкою лозиною, (A kalyna z jalynoju Ta hnuchkoju lozynoju) translates to “And the guelder-rose and the spruce and the pliant willow...”

Figure 9

калина, kalyna (guelder rose)

64 *p* *gioiosamente* 5

А ка-ли - на з я - ли-но - ю та гну-чко - ю ло - зи-но - ю,
 А ka-ly - na z ja - ly-no - ju ta hnu-chko - ju lo - zy-no - ju,

Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

According to Krotenko’s Time for Ukraine article, “kalyna” is the national symbol of Ukraine, which represents beauty, love, motherhood, blood, the immortality of family, fire, national resurgence, womanhood, life, love for the homeland etc. This is an encoding mechanism in Ukrainian ethnic culture, the color of the ‘nation’s soul’, the core of the Kozak spirit and the symbol of national unity (Кротенко, 2018).

Ukrainian Symbolism in, “Утоптала стежечку” (A Piper’s Tune)

Taras Shevchenko uses these poems to again highlight the themes of poverty, marital status, celebration of the Kozak war hero, and the importance of musicians to Ukrainian culture. The text depicts a woman in the market selling bubliky or dough rings to Kozaks when a piper catches her eye and of course as in many art songs, she immediately plots to win him over so he will marry her. *Duda* (дуда; bagpipe) is a folk musical instrument that has been played in Ukraine since the 16th century. It consists of a goatskin bag that holds the air and has wooden sockets (This article originally appeared in the *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, vol. 1 1984). Заграй мені, дуднику, На дуду, Нехай своє лишенько Забуду (Zahraj men’i, dudnyku, na dudu, nekhaj svoje lyshen'ko zabudu) translates to, “Play for me, O Piper, on your pipe, may I forget my misfortune.”

Figure 10

дуднику, *dudnyku* (piper), дуду, *dudu* (bagpipe)

38 *tranquillo*

За-грай ме-ні, дуд-ни-ку, на-ду-ду, не-хай сво-є ли-шень-ко за-бу-ду.
 Za-hraj me-ni, dud-ny-ku, na-du-du, ne-khaj svo-je ly-shen'-ko za-bu-du.

Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

Ukrainian Symbolism in, “Якби мені, мамо, намисто” (The Coral Necklace)

The daughter cries to her mother that she won't be able to attract a suitor because she does not own a coral necklace. According to the article, *Treasures of Ukrainian Folk Art*, “ a coral necklace was an especially highly prized item, but they cost a lot and only relatively few could afford them. As recently as about 70-80 years ago for the price of a coral necklace one could buy a cow” (Cосой, 2014, p. 38).

Figure 11

намисто, namysto (necklace)

Allegro giocoso

p *leggiero e staccato*

7

Як - би ме - ні, ма - мо, на - ми - сто,
 Jak - by me - ni, ma - mo, na - my - sto,

Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

“Troyista muzyka,” is a Ukrainian instrumental folk trio ensemble that plays at village weddings, parties, and funerals. “In regard to instrumental music, it is important to note the formation of the Hutsul trio called troyista muzyka. It is a group of three musicians playing flute, violin, and bandura. These three instruments can be replaced with either drum, or zhaleika, tsymbaly, or any other instrument common and specific to Ukrainian culture.” (Alyeksyeyeva, 2019).

Figure 12*музика троїста, muzyka trojista (musician trio)*

16 *cresc.* *f*

гра - є, ма - мо, му - зи - ка тро - ї - ста.
 hra - je, ma - to, mu - zy - ka tro - ji - sta.

Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

Ukrainian Symbolism in, “Княжна” (The Princess)

Lysenko sets music to only the first part of Taras Shevchenko’s epic poem, “The Princess.” The main character is held captive and converses with the evening star for comfort. The Ukrainian word, “неволі” (nevoli), translates to captivity.

Figure 13*неволі, nevoli (captivity)*

11 *p* *3*

по-го-во - рим ти-хе - сень - ко в не-во - лі з то-бо - ю.
 po-ho-vo - rum ty-khe-sen' - ko v ne-vo - li z to-bo - ju.

Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

This is significant since Taras Shevchenko was captured and forced into exile for his nationalistic poetry. In 1847, Shevchenko was exiled as a private with the military detachment at

Orenburg. Tsar Nicholas I, in a confirming sentence, wrote, “Under the strictest surveillance, with a ban on writing and poetry (Luckyj, 1980).

Shevchenko’s original epic poem that the song text derives from exposes the horrific acts of Ukrainian lords during the 19th century. In *Shevchenko and the Critics 1861-1980* edited by George S. N. Luckyj, Mykailo Drahomanov writes, “Seeking to portray the loathsomeness of the landowners, Shevchenko always selected their most exceptional evil deeds (for example, 'Kniazhna' / The Princess; 'Varnak' / The Convict) and usually resorted to the 'sin of fornication,' neglecting other no less significant sins not so much of individual land-owners as of the land-owners as a group, ordinary sins, all the more serious for being committed by groups, not individuals” (Luckyj, 1980). Born into serfdom, Shevchenko’s writing sympathizes with the plight and injustices the lower class endured.

At the end of the song, the Princess asks the evening star to speak to God on her behalf. Lysenko uses melismatic movement to emphasize the importance of God and faith to Ukrainian people.

Figure 14

Bozovi, Bohovi (God)

The image shows a musical score excerpt for the song 'Bozovi, Bohovi (God)'. It begins at measure 78 with the tempo marking 'Adagio' and a dynamic marking 'p'. The music is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The melody consists of several measures, with the final measure being a melisma. This melisma is marked 'ten.' and features a series of notes with a fermata, indicated by a bracket with the number '5' above it, followed by another bracket with the number '7' above it. Below the staff, the lyrics are written in two lines: 'А ти зав-тра ти - хе - сень-ко Бо - го-ві' and 'А ty zav-tra ty- khe-sen'-ko Bo - ho-vi'.

Note. This score excerpt was provided by the Ukrainian Art Song Project digital song library database. Ukrainian Art Song Project. (2021). Ukrainian Art Song Project. Retrieved August 1, 2022, from <https://www.ukrainianartsong.ca>

Closing Song, “Молитва за Україну” (The Prayer for Ukraine)

Mykola Lysenko wrote the “Prayer for Ukraine” in 1885 and is relevant today. When Russia invaded Ukraine two years ago, this anthem was played and sung all over the world in solidarity with the Ukrainian people. This hymn concluded the program as an ending prayer to protect Ukraine.

Lord, oh the Great and Almighty,

Protect our beloved Ukraine,

Bless her with freedom and light

Of your holy rays.

With learning and knowledge enlighten

Us, your children small,

In love pure and everlasting

Let us, oh Lord, grow.

We pray, oh Lord Almighty,

Protect our beloved Ukraine,

Grant our people and country

All your kindness and grace.

Bless us with freedom, bless us with

wisdom,

Guide into kind world,

Bless us, oh Lord, with good fortune

Forever and ever more.

Chapter 4: The Lecture Recital



Music Department/Vocal Area

Vocal Faculty:

Darian Clonts
 Matthieu Cognet
 Hannah Comia
 Lauren Fowler-Calisto
 Sarah Griffiths
 Christopher Dylan Herbert
 Jee Hyun Lim
 June Marano-Murray
 Tami Petty
 Sarah Wolfson

December 2, 2023
6:00 P.M.

Ukrainian Symbolism in Mykola Lysenko's Art Songs and Taras Shevchenko's Poetry

Master of Music Education Lecture Recital of **Elaina Frissell**, soprano
 with **Hannah Comia**, piano

Садок вишневий коло хати (The Cherry Orchard)	Mykola LYSENKO (1842–1912)
Ой стрічечка до стрічечки (Ribbon to Ribbon)	LYSENKO
Якби мені черевики (Dancing Shoes)	LYSENKO
Над Дніпровою сагою (The Cove)	LYSENKO
Утоптала стежечку (A Piper's Tune)	LYSENKO
Якби мені, мамо, намисто (A Coral Necklace)	LYSENKO
Княжна (The Princess)	LYSENKO
Молитва за Україну (Prayer for Ukraine)	LYSENKO

Soprano **Elaina Frissell** is a candidate in the Master of Music program in Music Education. Elaina teaches K-4 general music, glee club, band, and orchestra in Paramus, New Jersey. She is American of Ukrainian heritage and credits her mother for instilling the love and appreciation for her culture. At William Paterson University, she studies voice with Prof. Jee Hyun Lim. Elaina studies Ukrainian diction with Montclair based voice teacher Genya Muzyczka. Her graduate seminar Professor is Dr. Timothy Newman. Elaina's academic advisor for this project is Dr. Carol Frierson-Campbell. She would like to thank God, the dedicated faculty of William Paterson University, and her encouraging family for making for this event possible!

Texts and Translations

Садок вишневий коло хати

Тарас Шевченко

Садок вишневий коло хати,
Хрущі над вишнями гудуть,
Плугатарі з плугами йдуть,
Співають ідучи дівчата,
А матері вечерять ждуть.
Сім'я вечерея коло хати,
Вечірня зіронька встає.
Дочка вечерять подає,
А мати хоче научати,
Так соловейко не дає.
Поклала мати коло хати
Маленьких діточок своїх,
Сама заснула коло їх.
Затихло все... Тільки дівчата
Та соловейко не затих.

Ой стрічечка до стрічечки

Тарас Шевченко

Ой стрічечка до стрічечки,
Мережаю три ніченьки,
Мережаю, вишиваю,
У неділю погуляю.
Ой плахотка-червчаточка
Дивуйтеся, дівчаточка.
Дивуйтеся, парубки,
Запорозькі козаки.
Ой дивуйтеся, лицайтеся,
А з іншими вінчайтеся,
Подавані рушники...
Отаке-то, козаки!

The Cherry Orchard

Text by Taras Shevchenko (1814–1861)

Translation by Watson Kirkconnell

A cherry grove beside the cottage stands,
The beetles hum above the cherry-trees,
The ploughmen homeward plod in spent unease,
Young women likewise come in singing bands,
And mothers wait them all, with food to please.
The family beside the cottage eats;
The evening star is rising in the sky.
The daughter helps the supper tasks to ply;
Words of advice the mother's mouth repeats
But songs of nightingales her words outvie.
Her little folks beside the cottage small
The mother puts to rest in slumber deep,
And she herself beside them falls asleep.
Peace now prevails.
But the young women all
And the sweet nightingale no silence keep.

Ribbon to Ribbon

Text by Taras Shevchenko

Translation by Watson Kirkconnell

Three nights long now, row on row,
I embroider and I sew.
Lace and brodered threads I serry—
But on Sunday I'll make merry!
Ah, hempen cloth dyed deep with red!
Admire it, maids, in beauty spread!
Admire it, lads of handsome poise,
My Zaporozhian Cossack boys!
Admire our work, invoke love's spells,
And wed perhaps with someone else
Who offers nuptial towels to you...
As Cossack lads are wont to do!

Якби мені черевики

Тарас Шевченко

Якби мені черевики,
 То пішла б я на музики,
 Горенько мое!
 Черевиків немає,
 А музика грає, грає,
 Жалю завдає!
 Ой, піду я боса полем,
 Пошукаю свою долю,
 Доленько моя!
 Глянь на мене, чорнобриву,
 Моя доле неправдива,
 Безталанна я!
 Дівчаточка на музиках
 У червоних черевиках –
 Я свігом нужу.
 Без розкоші, без любові
 Зношу свої чорні брови,
 У наймах зношу!

Над Дніпровою сагою

Тарас Шевченко

Над Дніпровою сагою
 Стоїть явор між лозою,
 Між лозою з ялиною,
 З червоною калиною.
 Дніпро берег рие-рие,
 Яворові корінь мие.
 Стоїть старий, похилився,
 Мов козак той зажурився,
 Що без долі, без родини,
 Та без вірної дружини,
 І дружини, і надії,
 В самотині посивіє!
 Явор каже: Похилося,
 Та в Дніпріві скупаюся.
 Козак каже: Погуляю,
 Та люблю пошукаю.
 А калина з ялиною
 Та гнучкою лозиною,
 Мов дівчаточка із гаю
 Вихожаючи співають;
 Повбирані, заквітчані
 Та з таланом заручені,
 Думки-гадоньки не мають,
 В'ються-гнується та співають...

Dancing Shoes

Text by Taras Shevchenko

Translation by Watson Kirkconnell

Shoes in visions shine entrancing...
 With them I would go a-dancing.
 Bad luck must I borrow!
 For no shoes have I today,
 And the musicians play and play,
 Adding to my sorrow!
 Barefoot by the fields I walk;
 Seeking happiness I stalk.
 Ah me! What a life!
 Look at me, a dark-browed lass!
 But in grief my days must pass,
 Fate with pain is rife!
 All the maids have fine red shoes
 That at parties they may use;
 Griefs my life despoil.
 Without pleasure, without love,
 Only waste my charms will prove,
 Fade in scullery toil.

The Cove

Text by Taras Shevchenko

Translation by Watson Kirkconnell

By Dnieper's bank along the sands
 Amid the reeds a maple stands,
 Amid the reeds beside a fir
 Where cranberry bushes' branches stir.
 The Dnieper with its water-chutes
 Has undermined the maple's roots;
 Over the stream the tree is heaving
 Like some old Cossack who is grieving,
 Who without fortune, without kin,
 Without a wife his heart to win,
 Without the hopes that still elude,
 Grows hoary in his solitude!
 The maple says: "I shall incline
 And bathe me in the Dnieper fine."
 The Cossack says: "I now shall roam
 To seek a sweetheart and a home."
 The cranberry bush, the gracious fir
 And supple reeds are all a-stir;
 Like maidens from a grove they rise
 And raise a carol to the skies.
 Finely attired and flower-bedecked,
 Good luck from heaven they expect;
 No heavy sorrows to them cling
 As in the dance they twist and sing...

Над Дніпровою сагою
Стоїть явор між лозою,
Між лозою з ялиною,
З червоною калиною.

Утоптала стежечку

Тарас Шевченко

Утоптала стежечку
Через яр,
Через гору, серденько,
На базар.
Продавала бублики
Козакам,
Вторгувала, серденько,
П'ятака.
Я два шаги, два шаги
Прошила,
За копійку дудника
Найняла.
Заграй мені, дуднику,
На дуду,
Нехай своє лишенько
Забуду.
Огака я дівчина,
Така я!
Сватай мене, серденько,
Вийду я!

Якби мені, мамо, намисто

Тарас Шевченко

Якби мені, мамо, намисто,
То пішла б я завтра на місто.
А на місті, мамо, на місті
Грає, мамо, музика троїста.
А дівчата з парубками
Лицяються.
Мамо! Мамо!
Безталанна я!
Ой, піду я Богу помолюся,
Та піду я у найми наймуся,
Та куплю я, мамо, черевики,
Та найму я троїсті музики.
Нехай люди не здивують,
Як я, мамо, потанцюю.
Гей! Доленько моя!
Не дай мені вік дівувати,
Коси мої плести-заплітати,
Бровенята дома зносити,
В самотині віку дожити.

By Dnieper's bank along the sands
Amid the reeds a maple stands,
Amid the reeds beside a fir
Where cranberry bushes' branches stir.

A Piper's Tune

Text by Taras Shevchenko

Translation by Watson Kirkconnell

A narrow pathway I have worn
Across the valley deep,
To seek the market square, my love,
Across a hillside steep;
There I sold buns to Cossack troops,
And thus have earned, my love,
Five kopecks by my diligence,
My own delight to prove.
Two of those kopecks, only two,
Have been my liquor's fee,
And one I've to a piper given
To pipe a tune for me:
Play for me then, my piper bold,
Pipe up upon your reed,
Till all my grief has been forgot
And I am glad indeed.
That is the sort of lass I am;
This life I can endure!
Propose to me, my darling lad,—
I'll marry you for sure!

A Coral Necklace

Text by Taras Shevchenko

Translation by Watson Kirkconnell

O mother, if I only had a string
Of corals, I in town would take my fling;
For in the town, my mother, joy's intense—
Three fine musicians play their instruments
And gay young women with their lads make love...
Ah, mother, what misfortunes I must prove!
Oh, I will go and offer up a prayer
To God in Heaven, and then go debonair
To serve as housemaid, and a pair of shoes
Buy for myself and hire for my use
The orchestra with its three instruments—
People will gaze upon my competence
And gape to see me dance so merrily...
Ah, mother, how delighted I shall be!
Let me not pass my life in spinsterhood
And ever braid my hair in lonely mood
And waste my beauty in vain fantasies
And live a lonely life in sad unease!
But even while slow earrings count their tale,

А поки я заробляю —
Чорні брови полиняють.
Безталанна я!

Княжна

Тарас Шевченко

Зоре моя вечірняя,
Зійди над горою,
Поговорим тихесенько
В неволі з тобою.
Розкажи, як за горою
Сонечко сідає,
Як у Дніпра веселочка
Воду позичає.
Як широка сокорина
Віги розпустила:
А над самою водою
Верба похилилась...
Аж по воді розіслала
Зелені віги,
А на вігах гойдаються
Нехрищені діти.
Як у полі на могилі
Вовкулак ночує,
А сич в лісі та на стрісі
Недолю віщує.
Як сон-трава при долині
Вночі розцвітає... А про людей... Та нехай їм.
Я їх, добрих, знаю,
Добре знаю. Зоре мой!
Мій друже єдиний!
І хто знає, що діється
В нас на Україні?
А я знаю. І розкажу
Тобі; й спать не ляжу.
А ти завтра тихесенько
Богові розкажеш.

Молитва за Україну

Олександр Кониський

Боже великий, єдиний,
Нам Україну храни,
Волі і світу промінням
Ти її осіни.
Світлом науки і знання
Нас, дітей, просвіти,
В чистій любові до краю,
Ти нас, Боже, зрости.

My dark-browed beauty grows more wan and pale...
And still no gay young man draws near to love...
Ah, mother, what misfortunes I must prove!

The Princess

Text by Taras Shevchenko

Translation by Watson Kirkconnell

O my beauteous star of evening,
Rise above the hill,
And with you, from prison windows,
I shall parley still.
Tell me how, beyond the mountain,
Now the sun is setting;
How a nymph from out the Dnieper
Water will be getting;
How the broad and gloomy poplar
Spreads its branches grave,
How the willow-tree is bending
Just above the wave,—
Bending low till in the water
Branches dip disguised,
And on them are gaily swinging
Children unbaptized;
How a werewolf on the grave-mound
Tarrys lone and late;
How an owl, from roof or forest,
Foretells evil fate;
How anemones are blooming
In the vale by night;
As for men—a curse upon them!
Well I know their spite!
Well I know, my star of comfort,
Comrade dear and true,
What in our Ukraine these villains
Perpetrate anew!... I shall tell you all my story
Ere to sleep I nod;
Early in the morn you'll tell it,
In your turn, to God.

Prayer for Ukraine

Text by Oleksandr Konyskyi (1836–1900)

Translation from Wikipedia

Lord, oh the Great and Almighty
Protect our beloved Ukraine
Bless her with freedom and light
Of your holy rays
With learning and knowledge enlighten
Us, your children small,
In love pure everlasting
Let us, oh Lord, grow.

Молиось, Боже єдиний,
Нам Україну храни,
Всі свої ласки й щедроти
Ти на люд наш зверни.
Дай йому волю, дай йому долю,
Дай доброго світу, щастя,
Дай, Боже, народу
І многая, многая літа.

We pray, oh Lord Almighty,
Protect our beloved Ukraine,
Grant our people and country
All your kindness and grace.
Bless us with freedom, bless us with wisdom,
Bless us, oh Lord, with good fortune
Forever and ever more.

Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusion

As an American singer and music educator with Ukrainian roots, I discovered that I deeply connected with my culture by performing Mykola Lysenko's art songs and Taras Shevchenko's poetry. Before this arts-based research project, my knowledge of Ukrainian music was limited, especially since I do not speak the language. The Ukrainian Art Song Project websites provided Ukrainian composer biographies, art song scores, transliterations, and recordings. These resources made it possible for me to perform a recital and gain richer understanding of Ukrainian cultural traditions. After examining the song text and music, I learned that Mykola Lysenko and Taras Shevchenko memorialized Ukrainian culture by celebrating tasks of everyday life of the people in their poetry and music. Thus, every performance of this music contributes to the preservation of Ukrainian culture. It is my hope that other university level students take the opportunity to sing Ukrainian art songs to promote Ukrainian culture further in the United States.

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