

EUROPAMUSICALE

European Music Festival on 1-31 October, 1993 Munich

Speech by Larisa I. Choloretz, Ukraine
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Dear Mrs. von Schierstädt,
Dear Dr. von Freyberg,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Heartfelt greetings from Ukraine and the Ukrainian people! The representatives of Ukraine, my colleagues, my compatriots and I, are very grateful to you for your kind invitation to participate in the Music Festival and appear in the frames of a creative program.

We hope that in the multi-coloured polyphony of musical Europe the voice of our picturesque musical Ukraine will sound in its own way, be recognized and be reflected in the memory.

Unfortunately Ukraine is little known to the world, although it is a great European country and its people can draw on a great cultural heritage deeply rooted in ancient times.

Due to their tragedy, the Ukrainian people have suffered a unique fate of bringing a sea of tears, sufferings and innocent blood on the altar of independence. For centuries, the Ukrainian country has been ravaged by devastating conquest wars. We cannot prove now how many millions of our ancestors were captured and enslaved, how many of them died in liberation struggles.

But not only in the grey prehistory... In the 20th century, millions of daughters and sons of Ukraine were killed. Our country has been mercilessly decossacked, dekulakised, deintellectualized by mass starvation and total terror. Many of our compatriots were shot in Babyn Yar and killed in gas chambers during World War II. And how many of our fellow citizens were destroyed in the Stalin-Brezhnev period!

Another painful wound for Ukraine is Chernobyl. People are dying. But the culture of this particular part of Ukraine is also in danger of death.

And yet, despite of its tragic fate, Ukraine has given the world geniuses. The great people of Ukraine are known worldwide, such as Taras Shevchenko, Ivan Franko, Lessya Ukainka. But unfortunately, the world is not aware of their entire work.

Let us at least remember Yuri Kondratyuk, the theorist of cosmonautics, after whose idea the American astronauts landed on the moon, or the constructor of space systems, Serhij

Korolev, or the inventor of the world's first turbojet, Archip Lulka. What about our famous mathematicians: Mykhajlo Ostrohradskyj, Mykhajlo Kravchuk or Georgiy Voronyj, who worked at Warsaw University. Let us also remember Yuri Drohobysch, the Ukrainian doctor of medicine and philosophy in the 15th century.

Maxym Berezovsky and Dytro Bortnyanskyj, who were known more in Italy than in Ukraine, are from the cossack town of Gulchiv. Our famous singer Solmia Kruschelnizkaja has been applauded in France, Italy, Austria, Poland, Argentina, Portugal, Spain and Brazil.

We have gone without subjugation through vast deserts of contempt, humiliation, prohibition, incitement, outrageous physical destruction and psychological terror, because the heavens of a great culture, that unique temple of the existence of our people bulged over us, where within the centuries the most precious spiritual values, including the most sacred value, freedom, were created and passed on from generation to generation.

There are five hundred thousand only collected songs, thousands of fairy tales, myths, legends, enchantingly beautiful customs regarding Easter, St. John's Baptism, Christmas, and the Transfiguration and the feasts of St. Peter. It is hardly possible to enumerate all the immortal wealth of that treasure which has borne the spirit of Cossack freedom on its wings. Another example is the Ukrainian Wedding - a true opera! The wealth and fame of our people is reflected in the song. In the time of historical experimentation, the song becomes the faith of the people. The entire history of Ukraine is reflected in songs.

It is said that a nation exists as long as its soul sounds in traditions and songs. The connoisseurs consider the Ukrainian song to have an honourable place in the music of the people.

Beethoven had Ukrainian melodies in many of his works. He added the melody of our "Cossachok" to the "Appassionato Finale" and fragments from Kolomyika songs to his Symphony No. 6.

Bach, Haydn, Brahms, Schubert, Chopin, Bartok and Tchaikovsky dealt with Ukrainian songs and melodies.

Among the composers of Ukrainian classical music are Wedel, Bortnyasky, Berezovsky, Lyssenko... Modern Ukrainian composers such as Valentin Sylwestrow, Myroslav Skryk, Levko Kolodub are played at the music festival "Europe Musicale".

We are now building our own state, resurrecting our culture. It is time to tell the truth about our people and we are entrusted with this historic mission. The Ukrainian people, as creators of national and co-creators of international culture, have accumulated a huge heritage over the centuries of their history.

We recognize the need to consider both the lessons of the past and the prospects for the future, so that our state does not lose its historical rhythm. However, the experience of other countries should also be taken into account in your projection towards Ukraine.

Ukraine is developing international cultural relations. Culture is called to play the role of the intellectual catalyst of our state. This should also help Ukraine to become, within a relatively short period of time, an independent, highly intellectual part of the European family of nations, a reliable partner in European cooperation.

For our nation music and songs are a whole world, which is endless at both extends, far into the universe, as well as inward - into inexhaustible depths of the inner world of the Ukrainians.

Music and songs reveal the essence of our people, its national soul, the psychological structure of the Ukrainian spirit, peculiarities of the Ukrainian imagination. They reveal heart, mind, unmistakable humour, laughter...

Music and songs are inextricably linked to the "Ukrainian House" that I run. And I have the honour to represent it at the Music Festival. This young, multifunctional state house has several specialties and deals with high art and has chosen it to be either intellectual environment of its existence, or the most important instrument and means of its activity.

Musical Ukraine has always been characteristic, and it will undoubtedly continue to be characterized by an open-hearted, friendly reverberation to every appearance - and even to every creative movement of musical Europe and the entire musical world that is still searching. The "Ukrainian House" is also distinguished by this. That is a conviction!

Also, in a practical sense, it is not difficult to understand what I mean. The centuries-old and lively music and song culture of my people, its spiritual openness, the will of the independent state and the public to sovereignty, our penchant for penetrating cultures and traditions, in short, there are plenty of reasons for organizing the next festival of musical Europe in Ukraine and for doing so choosing the "Ukrainian House" as the centre. That is our wish and our aspiration! Perhaps our wish is expressed too late; perhaps someone has already anticipated us. But we can also work together and collaborate fruitfully, not only during the festival, but also in a creative working atmosphere of everyday life. The "Ukrainian House" invites the musical Europe for it.

Of course, music knows no boundaries.

I call on you to discuss with us in an informed manner, to make contacts, to reach agreements and to work together, for the benefit of all!

Thank you for your attention.