

«Ukraine – Terra Incognita»

Opera Myth National Premiere in Ukraine



Photo credit Rostyslav Pavlyk

This October, a newly created Ukrainian opera will be staged LIVE in Lviv Opera House. Produced and performed online last year in a boost of COVID-19 pandemic, the opera will go to public for the first time now. With this project a team of young artists and managers has offered an exquisite combination of the ancient songs with free jazz, modern symphonic music, video art, futurofolk costumes and innovative technologies. In this unusual opera format the traditional Ukrainian singing replaces the opera vocals and builds up the plot. The authors named it the **Opera-Myth "Ukraine - Terra Incognita"**. It is represented in 5 Myths: Ancestry, Home, Love, Steppe and Iron Heart.

The premiere is scheduled for October, 14, on a Day of Ukraine's Defenders. The date is specially chosen due to the opera dedication to Wassyl Slipak, Ukrainian opera baritone and warrior. From 1994 he frequently performed in France at Paris Opera and Opéra Bastille. In 2016, Wassyl volunteered to the Ukrainian army and soon after was killed by a Russian sniper at war in Donbass...

Uliana Horbachevska, a researcher of archaic singing, and Maria Oliynyk, a composer and graduate of the Royal Conservatory of The Hague, composed the music for the opera. The lullabies, Chumak and Cossack songs, wedding and mourning, playing and whisperings from various parts of Ukraine sound in the opera the same as hundreds of years ago.

"Our team intended to bring a traditional Ukrainian singing (polyphony, above all) to the world opera stage. We searched for a proper form to fully represent a beauty and power of Ukrainian traditional singing, and so we created the Opera-Myth "Ukraine - Terra Incognita". Ukrainian polyphony is the most valuable treasure that we need to preserve and pass on to next generations. It should take a worthy place in a world culture," said Oleksandra Sorokopud, the project manager.

A guest opera participant in Lviv is Ryszard Latecki, a famous European multi instrumentalist and vice president of the Polish Society of Contemporary Music.

To provoke an active online watching, the project will use a DynamiCam system (360 degrees recording). It provides for the effect of live presence on the stage. This technology will be used in Ukrainian theatre for the first time. As an innovative mode of broadcast the opera elaborates a special platform «Virtual Opera». It allows a simultaneous streaming from a few set video cameras, and a viewer can switch between the icons (stage with actors and singers, orchestra, video art etc).

Another innovative idea is a started network of Opera Ambassadors connecting people from all over the world. They will promote the opera in their local communities beyond the Ukrainian borders and in the frontline areas of Ukraine, within diaspora environment, art centers, cultural public spaces, patriotic communities etc. On the date of live premiere in Lviv, the Ambassadors will arrange an online broadcast in their locations using a Virtual Opera facility. At the same time, a directed opera version will be broadcast in the opera media (FB and Youtube).

You are welcome to share our news and also to join the network of Ambassadors! We shall create a new Ukrainian myth together with you ☺

The project is implemented by the youth civil organization [YMCA Lviv](#) in a partnership with [Wassyl Slipak Foundation](#) supported by the Ukrainian Culture Foundation. Opera video production was supported by private donations in 2020 (Spilnokosht), UCF and IRF.

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