

Press-Release #2

Opera Myth introduces polyphony to the world opera stage

The national premiere of the Opera Myth «Ukraine – Terra Incognita» is scheduled for 14, October 2021. In the next years, the authors plan to bring the opera to other Ukrainian cities and beyond. Since the opera is dedicated to Wassyl Slipak, the authors specially intend to perform in Paris Opera House where Wassyl lived and was singing,

Opera Myth is a new Ukrainian format in which the traditional Ukrainian singing replaces the opera vocals and builds up the plot.



Opera Myth combines the ancient Ukrainian songs with modern art.

Photo credit: Rostyslav Pavlyk

“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.

The performers will live on stage all the variety of songs: from loud Cossack polyphony to lullabies, from wedding songs to lamentations, whispers and orderings that come from the earth itself, from the original rituals.

The director and author of the opera Uliana Horbachevska collected 43 ancient Ukrainian songs from different ethno-regions of Ukraine: from Lemkivshchyna to Kuban. Together with the composer Maria Oliynyk, Uliana Horbachevska gave these folk works the highest form of musical art - opera.

The very structure of the opera is innovative. Opera-Myth "Ukraine - Terra Incognita" is a story in 5 myths based on the main themes of folk songs: "Ancestry", "Home", "Love", "Steppe", and "Iron Heart".

"The Myth of Ancestry includes the oldest ritual patterns associated with the calendar circle. In the Myth of Home we have collected fairy tales and lullabies, among which a child grows up. The Myth of Love is about love, in all its multidimensionality: from boundless peace to explosive power. And Myth of Steppe has an emphasis on the male songs: Chumak and Cossack filled with a sense of freedom. And finally, the Myth of Iron Heart is about dignity and self-affirmation. I want to emphasize the songs that show our beauty and the unbreakable spirit of a warrior," said author and director Uliana Horbachevska.

Ukrainian polyphony should take its place in the world heritage as a unique continuous singing tradition. It has survived to this day in a living form from generation to generation in only few places in Europe - in Sardinia, Corsica, Georgia and Ukraine.

The famous singers of "Tree" group from Kriachkivka village in Poltava region and Dominika Chekun from Polissya will be the honorary viewers at our opera so that the chain of succession of folk songs is continued. After all, the opera will feature songs that they have preserved and transmitted.

Opera Myth brought together artists from different backgrounds, genres and institutions. Singers-actors work in Lviv and Kyiv theaters (Les' Kurbas Theater, Lesia Ukrainka Theater, Dakh Theater), are film actors and members of singing groups ("Pike-Fish", "Chornomorets", "Kurbasy", "Berries", "Miklouho-Maclay"), or have individual performative projects.

More on the opera: ukraine-young-opera.com

Modern and unusual opera "Ukraine - Terra Incognita" intertwines folk polyphony with free jazz, symphonic music, video art and the innovative technologies. The Ukrainian Festival Orchestra performs in the opera conducted by Taras Vergun. Famous Ukrainian jazzmen Ihor Hnydyn (percussion) and Mykhailo Balog (saxophone) and Polish multi-instrumentalist Ryszard Liatecki improvise in the opera. Stage designer: Volodymyr Oleschuk. Video art: VJ group CUBE. Costumes: Martha Wachholz. Choreography: Artem Shoshin. Opera production was supported by hundreds of Ukrainians at crowdfunding platform Spilnokosht. Opera-myth [teaser 2021](#)

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