WINNIPEG PAPERS
ON
UKRAINIAN MUSIC

Compiled by Robert B. Klymasz

for
The Centre of Ukrainian Canadian Studies,
University of Manitoba,
Winnipeg, Manitoba
June 2008
CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION by Robert B. Klymasz, p.3

Bohdana Bashuk

*Reminiscences and Ruminations of a Canadian Ukrainian Radio Program Host*, p.5

Liz Hover

*Alexis Kochan and the Music of Parts to Kyiv*, p. 21

James Kominowski

*The Ukrainian Music Collection at the University of Manitoba Libraries*, p. 29

Melita Mudri-Zubacz

*Ukrainian Catholic Paraliturgical Hymns: A Closer Look*, p.51

Danny Schur

*The Making of an Oratorio: Vlad of Kiev*, p.70

Myron Shatulsky

*Music in My Life*, p. 105

Greg Udod

*So Where Does Going to Ukrainian School and Accordion Lessons Get You?*, p.153
INTRODUCTION

The full story of Ukrainian music in Canada remains unwritten. Exploratory in nature, this workbook collection of largely unedited papers (reproduced here as received) is meant to facilitate such work by focusing on Ukrainian music-making in Winnipeg – the historical hub of Ukrainian culture in Canada. The intention here is to track and document the “now” and to show the range of phenomena that constitute Winnipeg’s version of this rich form of cultural expression. (note 1)

Five papers offer insights from the personal experiences of “hands-on” practitioners – leading figures such as Alexis Kochan, Danny Schur, Myron Shatulsky and Greg Udod, as well as media personality Bohdana Bashuk. A sixth paper takes a more scholarly approach: Melita Mudri-Zubacz uses her academic expertise in the field of congregational singing to assess the ubiquitous parish hymnbook. (For the record, we are missing a seventh paper, Denis Hlynka’s cutting-edge investigation of the musicalization of Chornobyl: his findings show how today’s “global village” used music to underlie the universal repercussions of Ukraine’s nuclear disaster. In 2007 Hlynka reported his findings at two public conferences – once in Winnipeg and once in Saskatoon; we look forward to seeing a published version of his report in the near future.)

Two of Winnipeg’s institutions house important archival collections relating to Ukrainian music culture: the Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre and the University of Manitoba’s Dafoe Library. The latter’s collection is surveyed by James Kominowski, Slavic Librarian and Archivist.

Three general observations: (1) the papers provide a snapshot of a musical landscape that’s productive yet fragmented and not always confined to community-based, ethnic venues; (2) the interaction with other musical cultures is clearly evident in the creation, distribution, recording, performance and study of Ukrainian music in Winnipeg; and (3) tension and accommodation are two of the undercurrents that characterize this configuration.
As mentioned above, all the papers in this compilation have been reproduced here as received with only minimal changes. Nonetheless, they provide new and important information regarding a vibrant aspect of Ukrainian culture that continues to attract large numbers of aficionados both here and abroad.

We wish to acknowledge the indispensable support of the University of Manitoba’s Centre for Ukrainian Canadian Studies which funded this project with monies provided by the Centre’s Zuravetsky fellowship. As for the contributors, all Winnipegers, each has my deepest thanks and sincere gratitude for their collaboration and enthusiasm – together they represent a truly extraordinary pool of talent and dedication.

To acquire additional copies of this work, please contact James Kominowski at the University of Manitoba’s Archives of the Ukrainian Canadian Experience; his telephone no. is 204 / 474-9681.


Robert B.Klymasz,
June 2008
REMINISCENCES AND RUMINATIONS

OF A CANADIAN UKRAINIAN RADIO PROGRAM HOST

Bohdana Bashuk

March, 2008
Radio is a public business. At any moment, and anywhere, music of every kind and spoken word of every type spews out of a radio for everyone and anyone to hear. For that reason being behind the microphone, and choosing what to say, and what music to play is a great responsibility. What is said and the music chosen emanates irrevocably into the airwaves — into the “efir”, air. Being behind the microphone gives you a unique vantage point: a fence from which you can choose to see one side, both sides, or pass judgement on what you see.

Radio is also a very solitary business. You are alone in the studio behind a microphone, and it is left to your imagination to whom you are speaking, and for whom you are playing the songs. You can imagine that it can be to a raving multitude, a polite “liiga”, league tea-set, or an individual. But at all times you respect the fact that there is an ear on the other side.

In North America there aren’t thousands of people who make a living by working behind a radio microphone, and significantly fewer, perhaps 10 to 15, who end up working behind a radio microphone hosting a Ukrainian radio program. Of that 10 or 15 less than five have actually made, or currently are, making a living from it. As a matter of fact, in Canada, there is currently only one individual who gets a paycheque from producing and hosting a Ukrainian radio program.

I observed and experienced a great many things in the 24 years I produced and hosted the Ukrainian program at CKJS in Winnipeg, not the least of which was to observe the changing trends in Ukrainian and Ukrainian North American music. I left radio broadcasting in 2003, and I am grateful for the opportunity to get back on “on the fence” to muse over the experiences, and share some observations.
THE BEGINNINGS

CKJS Radio 810 AM Ltd became Winnipeg, Manitoba’s first, and only, multilingual radio station through the efforts of Casimir G. Stanczykowski, who had operated his first multilingual radio station, CFMB in Montreal, since 1962.

In 1974, with considerable assistance from Winnipeg’s Ukrainian community, including representatives of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee (now “Congress”) Stanczykowski succeeded in convincing the CRTC to grant him a licence for a new commercial multilingual AM station in Winnipeg, operating on 810 kHz, with a power of 10,000 watts – a small power base, relative to other existing AM stations in Winnipeg. CKJS signed on air March 25, 1975, with over 15 ethnic-language programs.

Roman Onufrijchuk and Bohdan Zajcew were the Ukrainian program’s first producers and hosts, trailblazing a format which remains to this day the quintessential Ukrainian radio program format practised in some degree by Ukrainian radio program hosts across the country. From the start, Onufrijchuk and Zajcew shaped the Ukrainian program at CKJS into a polished and professional continuum of music, information, advertising, and public service.

In 1979 I successfully auditioned for the position of producer and host of the Ukrainian radio program at CKJS, knowing that there would be three hurdles I would have to cross, or three crosses I would have to bear – I had Onufrijchuk’s and Zajcew’s shoes to fill, my Ukrainian language wasn’t up to par, and I needed to learn about Ukrainian music – quickly! I knew absolutely nothing about the business of radio.
THE JOB

The job description was simple enough, but overwhelming without the benefit of experience. From the moment I was hired, I had the responsibility of making something Ukrainian happen on air by selecting the music for that day’s program, translating and voicing daily commercial advertising copy, preparing something interesting to say in between the songs, translating and delivering a newscast, augmenting the programming with interviews, and sometimes going on the road to host the program from “on-location”. I had to learn these things without the benefit of study or mentorship. And because the program was not pre-taped, with its forgiving ability to undo mistakes, I had to learn them “live”.

It was a surreal bungee-jump off a bridge, while the band Rushnychok played “Oy shchozh to za shum”. There were mistakes, gaffes, and slip-ups in the beginning, but over time, being live on-air became second nature. I became more comfortable behind the microphone, and with the daily use of the Ukrainian language, became more confident in my delivery. And, as time passed I became very familiar with the music I was selecting and playing, and became aware of a Ukrainian music recording scene.

THE MUSIC – The Canadian Pie

As much as I would like to say that I and all Ukrainian radio program producers had, and have, absolute control over the music they choose to play on-air, that simply isn’t true.
In Canada radio content is regulated by the CRTC (Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission). This includes the spoken word, and in particular, the music. In the early 70’s, in support of Canadian recording artists wanting more access to Canadian radio airwaves, and thus a greater share of royalties, the CRTC imposed a “Canadian content” rule, which meant that a certain percentage of music selected in any given broadcast hour had to be Canadian in content. A great deal of debate occurred over this regulation. But in the end, regardless of complaints on hearing Anne Murray’s Snowbird played ad nauseum, the benefits to Canadian artists, and the Canadian recording industry outweighed any arguments to the contrary. Essentially, this regulation put Canadian music in the ears of the Canadian listening public, and money in the pockets of the artists and the recording industry. It gave rise to a host of Canadian recording artists and a wave of Canadian recordings.

In the early years, Canadian on-air music content was regulated at a whopping 50%, meaning, that half of the songs aired in a broadcast hour had to be Canadian. Over time, this percentage decreased to 30% - 35% in a given hour. To ensure that radio stations were abiding by the Canadian content quotas, the CRTC gathered statistics through random annual or semi-annual reviews of the music logs of every radio station. This information-gathering process is, as far as I know, still in place.

The Canadianess of the content was determined by the Canadianess of the four basic elements of a recorded song – music (that is, composition), artist, production, and lyrics – also known as MAPL, indicated by the “pie” printed on each LP or CD produced in Canada. Any combination of two of these four elements qualified, and still qualify, as Canadian content.

Winnipeg singer Alexis Kocian’s 1994 Parts to Kiev album features original musical compositions, or new arrangements of existing songs. The album was recorded in Canada, so its
production is Canadian, and the artist herself is Canadian. That leads to a three-point Canadian content offering – music, artist, and production (MAP).

Darka and Slavko’s 1995 Povir album includes a number of songs with lyrics written by Canadian (and fellow broadcaster) Roman Brytan of Edmonton. These particular songs have only a one-point Canadian content offering – lyrics (L) and therefore do not qualify as Canadian content.

Some CDs and LPs fall into a gray zone – a zone to be entered into only if the radio producer is very familiar with the artists and the Ukrainian and Ukrainian-North American music industries. This is the zone where some stretch in the content can take place to make it at least that mandatory two-point Canadian content. And herein lies a true “confession”. Lviv artist Victor Morozov’s 2000 Treba vstaty i vyjty album was partly produced in Canada. Morozov himself has spent some months at a time in Canada. Although the MAPL “pie” does not appear on the CD, I have stretched any of the songs as being two-point Canadian content – artist and production – to fulfill the Canadian content quota.

Unlike any other ethnic radio program, Ukrainian radio programs at multilingual radio stations have been able to meet full Canadian content quotas in a given broadcast hour. This is because the Ukrainian Canadian recording industry was, in fact, an industry, a “machine”, if you will, releasing relatively large numbers of independent and label albums since the early 1950s. V-Records, Baba’s Records, and Yevshan, are three of the recording labels that come to mind, who produced Ukrainian Canadian recordings and, in many instances, recordings with original Ukrainian Canadian compositions and lyrics. Admittedly, the largest number of Ukrainian Canadian recording artists produced recordings independently. But this in itself constituted a “label”.
The Italian, German, Pilipino, Portuguese, Chinese, and all other ethnic radio program hosts had to make use of LPs and CDs imported from their countries of origin because they had no equivalent industry in Canada. They were hard-pressed to fill the 30% Canadian quota, often using Canadian produced instrumental music to fit the bill. Over time, and probably to reflect this difficulty, the regulation was changed. The CRTC currently requires a minimum of 7% Canadian content for musical selections in multilingual programs.

But I do recall on several occasions, when we at CKJS were undergoing the regular semi-annual monitoring for Canadian content, purposely filling the one-hour music log with 100% Canadian content — simply because I could!

THE MUSIC — The selection

In 1979 I inherited a very large library of a variety of Ukrainian music on LPs, cassettes, and some reel to reel tapes. There was a very good representation of what I call Western Ukrainian Canadian music — Peter Pichlyk and the Rhythm Aces, Mickey and Bunny, and the D-Drifters. There was a good collection of other Ukrainian North American music — the Lastivka Trio of Toronto, the Ukrainian Bandurist Chorus of Detroit, and all the great early Canadian contemporary bands such as Rushnychok and Syny Stepiv. There was a good representation of music from Ukraine — from the traditional offerings of the Veryovka Choir (also written up on some North American compilation albums as simply “Derzhavnyj Chor”, National Choir) to the more contemporary sounds of such Ukrainian artists as Chervona Ruta, Kobza, and Sophia Rotaru. Amongst these albums were some true gems — a double LP offering of Ukrainian Easter
hymns and songs by the choir of St. Barbara Church of Vienna, under the direction of Andrij Hnatyshyn, and tenor Ivan Kozlovsky’s Ukrainian Christmas carols, to name a few.

All this music, and the music that was added to the collection over time, became the prime focus of the Ukrainian radio program. The weather, news, and public service announcements were fillers for what I viewed as being the essential part of the program – the music.

I knew from the outset that I had to acquaint myself with all the music and the recording artists very quickly. Over time, I came to understand the artistic and technical qualities and merits of any given recorded song, and, admittedly, to sometimes overcome my dislike of some of the music in deference to the tastes of the listener. As the library grew, so did my knowledge of the Ukrainian Canadian recording industry.

In the beginning, there were things musical that I was certain of – any recording from Ukraine, with any reference to the glory of the Communist party and tractors was out. Any recording from outside Ukraine where the performance was excruciatingly off-pitch or the lyrics off-colour, was out. I only twice – accidentally - played “Mala ya muzha piyaka”, never played “Ya slaviyu Partiyu”, and got an earful of heck for playing “Skrypka by ne hrala”. In some ways, the listeners and their sensibilities were a guide.

Selecting music was mostly a subjective undertaking. I played what I liked, keeping in mind, of course, the regulations of Canadian content, and the parameters I set for myself early on. Whether my selections were good ones depended on the listeners. If they didn’t phone and complain, I knew the choices were good. If they called with a complaint, and a good enough reason not to play a particular song, I would remove the song from the playlist. (Listen carefully to “Skrypka by ne hrala”!) Most complaints, however, were about new, contemporary pop and rock music, also
referred to as “durna muzyka”, “dyka muzyka”, and my favourite “ne estetychna muzyka”, non-aesthetic music! These complaints were reminiscent of the kind of fervent attack on early rock and roll music in the 50s – labelled back then as corruptive, wild, exploitative, and bad. This kind of complaint I ignored: I felt that new music had to be given a voice, and had to be heard. As a compromise however, I refrained from too much rock and pop through the week, and introduced a full-bore rock music program on Friday nights.

The early 70s through the mid 80s saw a steady stream of new musical offerings from artists outside Ukraine. Ukraine offered very little new material besides repackaged choral and solo artist compilations, and the rare recording of contemporary music. This is probably so, because all recordings in Ukraine were channelled through the only recording label available to artists in the Soviet Union – Melodiya, headquartered in Moscow, and regulated by politically protracted party regulations of the time. By the time a recording of contemporary/pop music from Ukraine hit a shelf in Canada, the musical styling would be three styles old by North American standards. Artists such as Smerichka, Cherovna Ruta, Sophia Rotaru, and Vatra dominated recordings of contemporary music available from Ukraine. Stylistically they were not keeping up with trends in Ukrainian contemporary music in Canada and the US, which naturally followed closer to the heals of contemporary musical trends in North American pop and rock music.

In North America this was the era that saw the emergence of concept albums (Yevshan’s “Balada Zoriany”), and the emergence of professional recording artists such as New York’s Kvitka Cisyk, Montreal’s Lubomyra Kovalchuk (multiple Juno award winner, Luba), and New York’s Darka and Slavko. New and some established bands emerged with recordings of Ukrainian music that were not solely dance zabava music, but offered contemporary pop and rock music, with mostly successful attempts at original lyrics and compositions – Edmonton’s Dumka, New York’s
Iskra, Montreal’s Veselka, Toronto’s Solovey - whose particular Ukrainian contemporary/pop sound matched that of contemporaries in the North American recording industry.

By the mid 80s I was producing the Ukrainian radio program with a complete acceptance and understanding that there was a very real contemporary Ukrainian North American recording industry, which warranted the full attention of any radio host to rave about, critique, and compare. There was good music, there was really bad music, there were great artists, and mediocre artists, artists who thought they were good artists, and artists that needed to have more exposure. There were great recordings, and terrible ones. There was enough music generated and being generated to think about creating a “top 10 hits” list. (An unsuccessful attempt at a “Top 10 Ukrainian Hits” was made by Bohdan Tymyc of Yevshan for his record catalogue. The problem was in determining criteria for posting a Top 10 hit – would it be determined by album sales, or frequency of air play? And how would either of those things be determined and measured?) There was enough happening in the Ukrainian North American recording industry to take a serious and hard look at taking it to a new level.

FESTIVAL 88

In the summer of 1987 at the instigation of Roman Brytan, producer and host of the Ukrainian radio program at CKER in Edmonton, Bohdan Zajcew, Brytan, and I embarked on a project that culminated in giving support, impetus, and acknowledgement to the very industry from which we made a living from – the first North American Contemporary Music Awards and Hall of Fame.
This event was part of a larger entertainment extravaganza organized in Edmonton in celebration of the Millenium of Ukrainian Christianity – Festival 88, an incredible, multi-venued festival of Ukrainian dance and music held in early July, 1988.

Through the collective organizing efforts of a handful of Ukrainian Canadian radio broadcasters, for the first time ever, Ukrainian North American contemporary singers, songwriters, and record producers were given the opportunity to look at themselves as part of a dynamic and unique recording industry, and to decide amongst themselves through peer voting who warranted favour as best in a given category – favourite female vocalist, favourite dance band, favourite original lyrics, etc. They also had the opportunity to collectively acknowledge ground-breaking and influential contributions in Ukrainian North American contemporary music and recording, namely the Canadian band Rushnycok, and Ukrainian composer Volodymyr Ivasiuk.

It was a golden moment in the history of Ukrainian North American music – one which could, and should have given impetus to a continued celebration and acknowledgement of the industry. Unfortunately, this did not happen. This awards ceremony became the first and last of its kind. It did, however, create a spark among the artists, and for a few years afterwards there appeared a spike in the number of original songs being recorded, and the number of records produced. From the point of view of Ukrainian radio programming, it generated an excitement of purpose, enough to last several years, until the next excitement in music occurred.

THE MUSIC BREAKS FREE – The Chervona Ruta Festival

Shortly before Ukraine declared its independence in August 1991 the first Festival of Ukrainian Contemporary Song and Popular Music “Chervona Ruta” was organized and took place in
Chernivtsi, Ukraine, with a mandate to all participants to perform original compositions, or arrangements of previously existing lyrics in the Ukrainian language, within a framework of celebrating the legacy of songwriter Volodymyr Ivasiuk. Singing songs in Ukrainian was not in itself a radical idea, after all artists such as Vatra, Nazar Yaremchuk, Sophia Rotaru, and others had been performing and recording music in Ukrainian for decades. What was radical, however, was that the participants of the Festival were performing styles of music that would never have been performed in those styles, and would never have met those politically protracted party regulations, which denied existence to musical genres outside the safe and syrupy ones represented by the Yaremchuk, Vatras, and Smerichkas. What was even more radical, was the public celebration of Ivasiuk, an icon, and some would call the soul, of contemporary music in Ukraine, whose death in 1979 is still an unsolved mystery, and is widely believed to be a political assassination committed by police authorities. In every respect this first Chervona Ruta Festival swung open the gates to the light of day for every conceivable pop and rock genre of music, and it gave voice to songs that blasted the current political system, and lyrics that longed for truth. For young Ukrainians, it was a catalyst for political change in the country.

The Chervona Ruta Festival reached out beyond the borders of Ukraine through the distribution of recordings of performances from that Festival. I remember very clearly receiving a package of these cassettes and bringing them home to listen. Once I lifted my jaw, which had dropped to the floor in absolute amazement of what I was hearing, from Vika’s “Han’ba” through to Taras Kurchyku’s “Ne Sudit’”, the message was clear to me. There was no turning back for new music in Ukraine.

As mentioned, many listeners of the Ukrainian radio program disliked “moderna muzyka”, modern music, of any kind. But it was clear to me that they would have to be dragged kicking
and screaming through this new Ukrainian music, because it was important - important in its content, and important because it was the cusp of a new wave of music from Ukraine. The times had, indeed, changed.

The next decade saw a plethora of recordings of new music from Ukraine available on the market. Like any new movement, it had its share of the very bad and very good, after all, it was an industry finding itself, defining itself. At the same time, traditionally established genres - classical and folk - underwent a rebirth, with a rich lode of choral liturgical, classical, and folk music recordings. By the end of the decade, the collection of recorded music from Ukraine at CKJS grew twenty to thirty-fold.

Unfortunately, this musical wave from Ukraine spelled the end Ukrainian Canadian recordings in any significant number. The heady, golden days of the late 80’s with a vibrant Ukrainian North American recording industry was reduced by the beginning of the new millennium to a handful of small, but successful forays into new territory - children’s music (the Barabolya series - Ron Cahute and Ihor Baczyński), zabava dance music with a world twist (Edmonton’s Kubasonics), and the world-music stylings of Winnipeg’s Alexis Kochan. The rest were regurgitations of what had been before, or imitations of choral stylings from Ukraine, and fewer zabava dance records.

A big shift had occurred, favouring recordings from Ukraine. Overall they were more interesting, more professional, and presented a much wider scope of genres. Indeed, at this time, it was more difficult to produce an hour of Ukrainian radio with the 30 – 35% required Canadian content and stay current, because the Canadian choices were smaller, and the music from Ukraine better.

The music from Ukraine through the rest of the 90s and into the new millennium was equal to anything recorded in Europe and North America. And it was a great satisfaction to see Ukraine
represented in 2003 for the first time in the Eurovision Song contest by Oleksandr Ponomaryov (although I did say on air that I thought the song he sang “Hasta la Vista” “sucked the big one” – it rightly didn’t win). It was equally satisfying to see Ukrainian artists collaborating on recording projects with international artists and producers. And probably most satisfying of all was to hear the Ukrainian national anthem performed and recorded “We are the World” fashion, by top pop and rock artists of Ukraine.

MY TOP TEN

Being behind the microphone as the host of a Ukrainian radio program gave me a unique vantage point – the ability to see a full horizon of events and trends as they unfolded and occurred. It also presented unique and outstanding opportunities and experiences, which I best offer as a “Top 10 List” – the ten most interesting things of my Ukrainian program radio career.

1. My very first interview – with Ed Evanko. I arrived at the interview site with my cassette recorder and microphone, and began the interview, only to discover that I had forgotten batteries, and had no other power source. Ever gracious, Ed asked his relative to run up to the closest mall for batteries, and once they arrived, we resumed out interview.

2. My favourite interview – with Nina Matvienko. This soloist of the Veryovka Choir has no equal, and is considered the soul of Ukrainian folk music. I felt I was in the presence of the wisdom of ages.

3. The 1984 Papal Visit to Winnipeg – a surreal moment, as the producer and host of the Polish program and I covered the visit by Pope John Paul to Sts. Vladimir and Olga Cathedral, by broadcasting each in our own language from two closely-placed microphones, and turning to comment to each another – me in Ukrainian, and he in
Polish – about what we were seeing. We didn't understand a word we each spoke, but agreed with everything!

4. Razom – the theme song of Festival 88. It marked the one and only time that diverse Ukrainian Canadian and US artists produced and recorded a song together in two recording sessions – in Toronto and Edmonton, directed by Andrij Czerny (Veselka) of Montreal, and Ron Cahute (Burya) of Toronto. It's a good song.

5. The First Chervona Ruta Festival recordings – I still stand in awe of the music and lyrics performed by the artists who took part in this seminal event – Braty Hadiukiny, Vika, Taras Kurchyk, and VV, to name of few.

6. 1991 Canada’s National Ukrainian Festival in Dauphin, Manitoba – the first time the Festival invited artists from Ukraine to perform at the Grandstand. As producer and director of the shows, I negotiated the performance of Taras Petryinenko and Hrono at the Festival. The Saturday night performance was electric, as Petryinenko and Hrono performed "Ukraino" before an audience of thousands, who all held lit candles. This was mere days before Ukraine declared its independence.

7. 1982 Kobza Tour – the first tour by the extremely popular folk/pop/jazz group from Ukraine. No interview was allowed by their “anely khoronysti” (“guardian angels”, official Party escorts), but I had the opportunity to spend a day with them showing them the sights of Winnipeg. I am still a huge fan.

8. Sviat Vechir (Christmas Eve) – in preparing large blocks of Ukrainian Christmas programming, nothing stopped the seasonal hustle and bustle more, nor made me feel the “holiness” of the moment more, than the first bars of “Boh predvichny” God Eternal (a Christmas carol), as recorded by the Ukrainian Bandurist Chorus of Detroit under the direction of Hryhorij Kytasty.

9. Velykden (Easter) – same as above. “Khrystos Voskres” by the Bandurist Chorus is monumental!
10. Making a modest living from spinning records, and having at least two more people in this country with whom I could discuss the craft of producing and hosting a daily Ukrainian radio program.

END NOTE

Shortly after I left CKJS in 2003 I discovered that a good portion of the library of Ukrainian recordings, the old LPs in particular, were thrown out by management. It was difficult to come to terms with the fact that such a good representation of the Ukrainian recording industry was gone. Among them were the full collection of Mickey and Bunny LPs, the double-LP Easter compilation by the St. Barbara Choir of Vienna, the Ivan Kozlovsky Christmas collection, the Rushnychok collection, the original 45rpm “Razom” recording, and many others.
Alexis Kochan and the music of Paris To Kyiv
By Liz Hover

I was born and raised in England but have lived in Canada since 2003; it’s where my mother is from. At 11 months, she was adopted by a family in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Just before I crossed the ocean to Canada, she made contact with her biological family. The reunion was obviously significant but it also gave us a sense of our family history; it turned out we have Ukrainian ancestry; my mother’s grandparents moved from Ukraine to Canada in the early 1900s and her family settled in Manitoba. Although my mother had grown up in Canada, she eventually immigrated to England to marry my father.

In a bizarre twist of fate, I did the opposite; following my mother’s footsteps back to Winnipeg where I now live.

Our Ukrainian ancestry didn’t mean much at the time other than providing an understanding of my mother’s family roots. Gradually though I noticed more and more Ukrainian influences cropping up in my life. I was meeting Ukrainians. I was living in Winnipeg where the Ukrainian community thrives. I was meeting people like Alexis Kochan.

For over 25 years, singer and music producer Alexis Kochan has taken the path not usually taken. Her reinterpretation of ancient Ukrainian folk music with an ethereal contemporary edge has led to a collection of richly atmospheric and striking recordings. Alexis’ pursuit of new ideas and continual drive to give new voice to traditional song places her music entirely in a genre of its own. She has released five collections of music; one as a solo artist and four under the Paris To Kyiv moniker.

One of the most powerful Ukrainian influences I experienced was the music of Paris To Kyiv created by Alexis. I had been working with Ron Sawchuk, the creative director responsible for the design of Paris To Kyiv’s CDs. He played me Fragment. It was unlike anything else I’d listened to and somehow it resonated deeply with me. Knowing that Alexis based her compositions on ancient Ukrainian song fragments I realized that perhaps a part of my ancestry was also being explored and rediscovered.

Ron introduced me to Alexis and I soon began writing freelance about Paris To Kyiv. What struck me about Alexis was how unique she is. She has a deep-seated desire to reinterpret the ancient music of Ukraine and bring it to new ears. Ukraine is in her soul and she’s made it her goal to unearth as much of that musical history as possible.

Liz Hover: What musical influences were around you as a child?

Alexis Kochan: Music was everywhere. My parents are both fabulous singers, my grandmothers also sang, and sang to me. As a baby I distinctly remember my mother singing me to sleep, not only Ukrainian songs but also Irish. I was born and raised in Winnipeg’s colourful North End where music was in the air - the exotic music of immigrants and refugees from Ukraine. I frankly don’t remember a time when I didn’t sing. Danny Schur of 'Strike!' fame (who also worked on several of Alexis’ earlier recordings) once said that he believed I was meant to sing. It’s an interesting thought...
LH: So, when did you first sing?

AK: I sang in the St Andrew’s Ukrainian Catholic church choir when I was three. My mother was a choir member and I went along with her. In those days it was a substantial choir of young voices with a talented conductor (Vasyl Matview) so it was a good musical experience. I sang my first solo in kindergarten when I was five. My kindergarten teacher recognized my love and talent for music and song and mentioned this to my parents - I think she even wrote this in my report card.

LH: Did someone say to you “wow, you have an amazing voice? You should do something with that?” or did you get into singing of your own accord?

AK: I was always told, mostly by my teachers, that I had a singing talent. I was selected to sing in special choirs - radio choirs, the Winnipeg Girls Choir and then in my later teens I sang with Walter Klymkiw in the Alexander Koshetz Choir. This was the premier Ukrainian Canadian Choir at the time. When I was about eight I began to study piano and completed the Toronto Conservatory of Music program when I was graduating high school. Singing and piano go hand in hand but I didn’t realize that then.

I loved the piano and I also loved to sing. I was never encouraged to study music as a career. Rather, my parents, especially my very intellectual European father, encouraged me to be educated. Music, drama (Alexis studied at the Manitoba Theatre Centre), languages, the humanities and sciences, were all encouraged. My father really wanted me to be a psychologist - there were a number of paths that I considered once I entered the University of Manitoba but I was fascinated with the study of human behaviour and so I pursued that quite early on. Of course, music was always there but on the side and not in the forefront.

LH: Was there a defining moment during which you decided you absolutely must develop your interest in Ukrainian culture?

AK: Yes. I completed my Masters and started my doctorate and, after a brief visit to Ukraine, was invited to intern in what was then Soviet Ukraine with a pretty famous internationally renowned Ukrainian folk music ensemble called Veryovka and the ensemble’s artistic director Anatoli Avdievsky. So I went back to the old country, to Kyiv, to find my roots and hopefully the music of my ancestors. It was a phenomenal year. A year of musical excavation. It changed the direction of my life! This was 1978-1979.

Once I came back to Canada I began to slowly put together a plan over a number of years. Around the same time that Loreena McKennitt began to busk and record her Celtic music I created my first recording Czarnia (Princess). I was still working as a psychologist, lecturing and trying to do my doctorate. Soon after that I turned my complete attention to music-making, basing compositions on old Ukrainian songs and song fragments.
LH: Why did you study psychology?

AK: I love intellectual pursuit and debate and I find the humanities fascinating. So I chose psychology and at the time, when I was in graduate school, music was the furthest thing from my mind.

LH: Do you still practice as a psychologist?

AK: I’m asked this a lot. No, not in the formal sense. But my training and knowledge will always be with me and is useful to me. I work in one of the flakiest industries where my depth of understanding of human behaviour keeps me grounded and optimistic. I think that I’ve helped a few others along the way as well.

LH: Did you fear what your family would think when you decided to give up psychology and pursue music?

AK: I think that it became clearer to me only as I began to spend more and more of my time in the world of psychology that I was not using my ‘gifts’. I think that if I had continued on that path I could still have been satisfied in my work but I don’t think that I would have felt completely fulfilled. At one point I had to decide to move on. I really didn’t know at the time where I was going or where I would end up. It was a difficult time for me; in fact, it felt like a mid-life crisis except I was in my mid 20’s and nowhere near mid life.

My husband and parents were there for me - they walked along side me - but I felt really quite alone, afraid and uncertain. I slowly began to shift my direction but it took some time to really figure it all out. I was searching for a place where I would feel ‘at home’. This led to a few false starts but eventually I gained back my confidence and began to prepare myself for a life that would be quite different from any one else’s that I knew, but closer to my ideas of a life for myself.

LH: You were making a living as a psychologist. Were you worried about the uncertain economic world of the musician?

AK: I’ve never really worried about money. It's just never been very important to me. And I’ve never felt poor or without. I decided very early on that my work would need to generate enough so that it would be sustainable. I didn’t need to get rich by it. I’m a pretty good businesswoman and learned quickly how to play the game. One advantage that I’ve had is a partnership with a great guy, my husband - he’s smart and musically gifted with a passion for numbers, real estate, Ukrainian music (he’s a wonderful accordion player) and in fact, all things Ukrainian. We’ve worked out our roles in our marriage to be mutually beneficial; I bring the joy and excitement into our lives through art making, travel, and unique contacts and he makes sure that we’re comfortable and can afford to take advantage of life’s opportunities and surprises.

LH: In terms of your recordings and collaborations has there been one thing you consider to be particularly significant in putting your career on the map?
**AK:** I don’t think there was one event or moment but numerous things which all worked together over time. This is probably the case because I’m not in the pop market which tends to be more time sensitive. I think that my best work and ideas are yet to come.

My career has been like any other - it peaks and flows. I choose my projects; when and where I’ll tour and how I want my work to be interpreted and marketed. It would be similar in the classical or jazz fields. Having had said that, I do feel that my third recording *Variances* helped to establish the Paris To Kyiv moniker and my name. It sold over 7,500 recordings in Canada which was really unique for its time; it was released in 1996 when CDs were still sold in record stores and not on the Internet.

**LH:** Of all your albums, which has been the most grueling?

**AK:** There have been some grueling moments working in the music business but not during the making or release of my recordings. I’ve loved creating new work and I’ve also loved the recording of it. It’s the most exciting thing that I do and frankly, the reason for my existence as an artist and arts entrepreneur.

Recording my music gives it a voice in the world. It’s one thing to perform live but it’s another to have your music bought by listeners, get radio play, be sold on the Internet and licensed for film or dance.

The rhythm of my work is defined by the recording projects. If I could swing it, I’d be recording all the time but administration and organization gets in the way and this is, in fact, where the grueling moments come in. I think I could make music until I’m an old broad but looking after every last detail, from dealing with musicians’ schedules to booking flights and hotels to writing grants to schlepping musical instruments to balancing books, to sitting on the phones for hours on end… the tasks go on and on. It’s tough, relentless work.

**LH:** Tell me about your first live performance.

**AK:** There have been many firsts. Each performance and recording is a new beginning and a new step in the evolutionary process of my work. A critical first however was when we premiered in Kyiv, Ukraine in 2003. It was like coming full circle. We opened in a very interesting alternative theatre space in an industrial area of Kyiv. The room was packed with young people, artists, culture makers and the concert was really well received. I felt like the music had come home.

Other significant ‘firsts’ would be a concert in Gdansk, Poland; a tiny village where the famous experimental theatre works and creates; a glorious historical stone church in Warsaw, Poland; a tiny, ancient Carpathian Mountain chapel; Concert Hall space in New York City; and the John Anson Ford Amphitheatre in the Hollywood Hills. These all feel like firsts to me.

**LH:** Where do you get your inspiration and ideas?
AK: A huge source of my inspiration and ideas comes from my research; research which has
type me to singers who continue to keep the culture alive. I’ve listened to my mother and
father and my grandmothers sing as well as village women in Ukraine. I'm presently
searching for the last generation of women from Eastern Ukraine who still remember Stalin
and the horrors of the famine/genocide. I’m wondering what songs they remember if any.
I’ve also found incredible songs in wonderful old manuscripts that I’ve acquired through my
travels.

The process that I use to create is very organic. I give myself time to explore the fragments
that I've collected. I play them and sing them over and over and over until it becomes clear
to me that they are the pieces that I want to work with and give new life to. They have to be
stunning and worthy of reinterpretation to make the cut and they must be true to the culture.
My ideas come out of this very intensive work.

I'm not sure that I remember the first time but when I find that almost perfect 'fragment' it
is like no other feeling. It's like finding the missing link. I know that it's 'right', that I will give
it new life and that it will be beautiful, and that it will change the way we think about
'Ukrainian'.

LH: How do you take a fragment of a song and expand it to form a fully finished
piece?

AK: I believe that what distinguishes my music - what gives Paris To Kyiv its distinctiveness
- is the approach to the composition and the ideas themselves.

I would say that my work is about ideas and not about notes. There is a minimalism that
characterizes the sound. It's not over-the-top or over-romanticized. In fact, it breaks the
stereotype of what is Ukrainian by concentrating on the beauty and the simplicity of the
melody and the rhythm.

I can't describe in words what exactly I do to the 'fragment' because it has a lot to do with
intuition - interpretation, breath, phrasing, and understanding of the lyrics. I seem to know
how it needs to be sung or played and I think that that's perhaps my gift. I also seem to
know what other 'layers' of sound will help to bring the 'fragment' to life - perhaps it's
another 'fragment', another culture's sounds or rhythms, an instrument with a particular
colour or texture, or another voice.

My musicians are often co-composers in this process. Every musician that I've had the
honour of working with has been selected because of their ability to be free with their
intelligence and their instruments. Let me give you an example. The piece entitled Vocalise
from Variations began with my discovering a short exquisite melodic line in an old book from
Ukraine. I began by singing the melody over and over and eventually I created an ostinato (a
repetitive melodic pattern) on the piano which worked beautifully with the original melody. I
thought that this ostinato would sound great on the bandura and it did.

When Julian Kytasty (the bandurist Alexis works with) played the ostinato on the bandura
and I sang, there was a simplicity to the sound that I loved. Frankly, we could have left it like
that. But we began to experiment with Julian's voice. He superimposed a very rhythmic
ancient carol onto the composition and it began to really evolve into something a lot richer. We worked out a form for the piece and brought Richard Moody into the process. His very modern viola improvisation layered onto the very old folk elements completed the piece.

**LH:** There must be a vast amount of undiscovered, ancient songs. How do you decide what to pay attention to and what to ignore. How do you make those choices?

**AK:** Making choices is what art making is about. Those choices, some of them being very fine discriminations, are made with experience and intuition. The more that I do this work, the better I get at making these choices. Yes, there are thousands of old songs but there are only a few worthy of attention - at least from my perspective. I just simply know which ones they are.

**LH:** Do you ever get writers block? Have there been times when you feared “the idea” just wasn’t going to come?

**AK:** I’ve discovered that the business of art making has its own rhythm which cannot be forced and so I’ve learned over the years not to worry too much about ideas not coming as quickly as I’d like. I’ve also learned that the truly great ideas come out of quiet moments alone. I love to spend hours at the piano just singing and playing through my repertoire in almost a meditative like way. I find that this often will lead to something new. And of course, my research- my search for the ‘song’, that ‘fragment’ of Ukrainian culture - often inspires me. And finally my work with unique, very specifically selected collaborators has always lead to interesting places. For example, I have regular ‘blue sky’ sessions with my designer/visual artist, Ron Sawchuk, who has an incredible love and respect for the work that I do. These meetings usually take place in coffee shops where for hours we’ll explore the possibilities. I believe that every one of my recording projects has begun this way as well as some of the most creative marketing ideas we’ve come up with, tour posters, website plans, etc. I love the collaborative process and I love being at the centre of it.

**LH:** You collect objects from Ukrainian culture. What kind of things do you own? How do they inspire you?

**AK:** I collect Ukrainian art; I’m surrounded by it on my walls and reflect on it as I work at the piano. Also Ukrainian books, poetry, literature. I also have a collection of ancient choral beads - various strands and chokers - from Ukraine. The choral from the Black Sea is stunning and is part of the dowry a young woman brings to the marriage. Choral, in Ukrainian folk symbolism, is erotic. Sometimes I wear these in performance.

**LH:** How has your Ukrainian ancestry influenced your musical choices?

**AK:** As a child and student I sang all genres. I loved classical music, folk music (Alexis played guitar and sang at folk clubs when she was 13), choral music, and of course pop. I loved the old popular songs of my mother’s era and singers like Elvis, Doris Day, and Frank Sinatra. But when the time came to choose an artistic path I felt that I needed to express that which was deepest in my soul and part of my collective memory - that which was Ukrainian.
LH: Why did you change the spelling of Paris To Kyiv?

The capital of Ukraine is Kyiv but before Ukraine became independent of the Soviet Union, before the wall came down, it was spelt 'Kiev'. The free and independent Ukraine decided to change the spelling to 'Kyiv', closer to the Ukrainian spelling and pronunciation. So I in turn changed the spelling of my project. It's actually great that it happened this way; my project reflecting a critical historical change in Ukraine's history.

LH: Has there ever been serious disagreement between you and any of your musical collaborators?

AK: Nothing serious that I couldn't handle. I find that in the business of the arts - actually in any business - it's very important to learn how to work with people and to help them to realize their potential. I've learned to do this the hard way, by leaping in and getting practice and of course, making mistakes. Sometimes I've needed to compromise or to back off. But I work with certain principles in mind. I believe in being kind and as truthful as I possibly can be. I believe in developing relationships with my collaborators that are based on the principle of mutuality where everyone wins, maybe not all at once but certainly over time. I think for the most part I'm a good communicator; I'm clear about my goals, and I have a lot to offer. I think that it's because of this that I haven't run into too many people-problems.

LH: Have there been any musicians that refused to work with you?

AK: In my early years I worked with a couple of musicians who were very talented but were unable to accept my conditions for working together. And so we didn't. Simple as that.

LH: Have you ever experienced any serious contractual conflicts?

AK: No. I learned early on to negotiate verbally but to finalize everything on paper.

LH: How big a part does religion play in your music?

AK: Religion plays almost no part in my music. Belief plays a huge part.

LH: What drives you to continue Paris to Kyiv?

Paris To Kyiv is me; everything that I am; my deepest thoughts, my ancestors' deepest thoughts. I'm searching for the truth about a people and I feel at the same time I'm redefining Ukrainian and in fact, Canadian.

LH: Looking back over your musical career are there low points and high points?

AK: I have to say that there have been very few low points. It has been a career of many high points. I've loved creating, working intensively with wonderful artists, recording, touring and giving concerts in some great venues, doing business with interesting presenters and impresarios, selling and licensing my work, dealing with funders and government
successfully. It certainly has been a lot work and from time to time I wonder if it's all worth it. But it certainly has been fulfilling and I mostly feel blessed to have had the opportunity.

LH: Do you want to be 'famous'?

AK: No. But I do want my audience to know my music. In the noisy environment created by the music industry it's difficult to be heard, especially if you're playing in the cracks and crevices as I am. But I like where I am.
Ukrainian Music Collection at the University of Manitoba Libraries

By James Kominowski
Slavic Librarian/ Archivist
Elizabeth Dafoe Library
University of Manitoba

For over half a century, the University of Manitoba Libraries has fostered a special relationship with the Ukrainian community in Manitoba, -- housing one of the largest Slavic collections in Canada. In 1949 the Department of Slavic Studies was established at the Fort Garry Campus, with Dr. Jaroslav B. Rudnyckyj appointed as its first department head.¹ In order to support the courses offered by the newly created department, the faculty began the task of collecting and purchasing books. This led to the establishment of the Slavic Collection later that same year. A Ukrainian Studies fund for the purpose of obtaining materials for this new library collection was established under the direction of Mr. Mark Smerchanski, a former member of the University of Manitoba’s Board of Governors, and member of Parliament.² Monies from this fund were used to purchase the Hirniak Family library³, whose books formed the core portion of the newly founded Slavic Collection. Soon, various Ukrainian organizations throughout Canada and the United States began to contribute books, including: the Ukrainian Canadian Congress; the Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre, Oseredok; and the Ukrainian Free Academy of Sciences (UVAN).

³ The core portion of the collection came from the library of Nykyfor Hirniak, whose library contained a rich collection of material related to Ukrainian history, and Ukrainian literary works and criticism.
The Slavic Collection was originally housed within the office of the Department of Slavic Studies, inside the Tier Building. With the construction of the Elizabeth Dafoe Library in 1953, the complete collection was re-located to the new building, -- and along with the Icelandic Collection, became the only two separate language collections within the University of Manitoba Libraries.

The collection policy for the newly created Slavic Collection emphasized collecting material pertaining to Slavic languages and their literatures. With the appointment of Professor Paul Yuzyk (who later became Senator Paul Yuzyk) as the second faculty member of the Department of Slavic Studies, he encouraged the collecting of history related materials in addition to literature. Since then, the collection has broadened its collection policy, by acquiring materials in other disciplines, including: ethnography; folklore; geography; political science; music; and Ukrainian Canadiana. The Collection has grown to nearly 60,000 volumes of books, periodicals, newspapers, electronic resources, and microforms (both microfilm and microfiche formats) – all this from the original 2,000 volumes back in 1949. It comprises material in all fourteen Slavic languages, with the majority in the Ukrainian, Polish and Russian languages. These materials support courses and research not only in the Department of German & Slavic Studies, but also the interdisciplinary Central and East European Studies program, and the Centre for Ukrainian Canadian Studies located in St. Andrew’s College.
From the beginning, Jaroslav Rudnyckyj understood the importance of creating a strong library collection that would support the newly established Slavic Studies' Department. This included obtaining through purchasing or by donations, rare Slavic books and manuscripts that would enhance the reputation not only of the University of Manitoba Libraries, but the University as a whole. A voracious collector of books, Rudnyckyj would visit antiquarian book-dealers, or outdoor markets, looking for that unique or rare monograph, manuscript or serial. This was often accomplished while on his many travels throughout North America and abroad. One of these purchases was the *Horodyshche* Pomianyk which dates back to 1484, and written in Old Church Slavic. The Pomianyk originated in Horodyshche, a village in Volyn', Ukraine, and lists the names of the deceased that are to be remembered at a requiem service. The purchase was made possible through the Ukrainian Studies Fund in the Fall of 1951, and was the first such substantial purchase made on behalf of the University by Rudnyckyj. Its importance was noted in the Winnipeg Tribune in an article entitled, “‘U’ Department Gets 1484 Ukraine Text”:

“A book that was hand-written eight years before Columbus discovered America has just been purchased for the University of Manitoba Slavic Department.

Believed by authorities to be the oldest Ukrainian text on the Continent, the book, dated 1484, is a valuable and original source on the Ukrainian language and paleography of the 15th century.

The book was discovered before the war in a time-worn oak casket in the wooden church structure that is sole remnant of the once-famous Monastery. It will become one of the sources for advanced study in the Slavic field at the Manitoba University.”

---

4 “‘U’ Department Gets 1484 Ukraine Text”, *Winnipeg Tribune*, September 1951.
Besides the Pomianyk, the University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections also houses many rare Ukrainian and other Slavic language books and manuscripts in its Rare Book Room, such as: the Zielnik. Herbarzem z jekyka lacinskiego zowia (1613); the Psalterium Winnipegense Cyrillicum (1735-1745); the Evaggelia: chrez vsiu svatuiu velikuiu strastnuiu sedmitsu na Liturhiakh, strastekh Krystovykh, i na chasiakh tserkikh: Chtomae (1771); and the Slovnik Cesko-nemecky Josefa Jungmanna (1835).\footnote{An annotated list of a sampling of the rare Slavic books and manuscripts held at University of Manitoba’s Archives & Special Collections’s Rare Book Room is available online at following URL: \url{http://umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/archives/collections/subject/ukrainian/rbr-uc.shtml}.}

In April 2003, the University of Manitoba Libraries established the Archives of the Ukrainian Canadian Experience. This new Archives compliments the efforts of sister institutions in Winnipeg, to preserve the collective memory of Ukrainian Canadians. The collecting of textual records such as personal papers and documents, as well as photographs, and audio and visual recordings are part of this archives’ mandate. Since its inception, the Archives of the Ukrainian Canadian Experience has acquired the archives of several notable individuals, among them are: Jaroslav Rudnyckyj, the founder of the U of M’s Department of Slavic Studies, scholar and community activist; Walter Klymkiw, the famous musicologist and conductor of Winnipeg’s Oleander Koshetz Choir\footnote{Throughout this article Oleander Koshetz’s name will be spelled according to the spelling most often used here in Canada (including the name of the Choir that bears his name), rather than the Ukrainian transliterated Library of Congress (L.C.) version of Oleksander (or Oleksandr) Koshyts’.}; Michael Ewanchuk, former Inspector of Schools for the Province of Manitoba, and author of numerous books on Ukrainian Pioneer Settlements in Western Canada; Mary Wawrykow, one of the first female Canadian magistrates of Ukrainian descent; Iraida Tarnawecy, retired, and long-time faculty member of the University of Manitoba’s
Department of Slavic Studies; J. Nicholas Mandziuk, the 4-term member of Parliament for the Constituency of Marquette (Manitoba) during the Diefenbaker era; Robert Klymasz, ethnographer, and a former curator at the Canadian Museum of Civilization; and Alexander Baran, theologian, historian, and faculty member with the University of Manitoba’s Department of History.

**Ukrainian Music Resources Within the Slavic Collection.**

Although the majority of Ukrainian language resources in the collection focus on literature and history, there is a sizeable section related to Ukrainian music. This includes monographs devoted to the history of Ukrainian music, biographies of famous Ukrainian composers and musicologists, and musical scores and arrangements.

Housed within the closed stacks of the Slavic Collection are several hundred musical scores and arrangements of Ukrainian folk, liturgical, classical and contemporary music.7 This unique collection was donated to the Elizabeth Dafoe Library’s Slavic Collection by the Walter Klymkiw Family in 2001 (See also *The Klymkiw Family fonds* under *Ukrainian Music Resources Within the Archives of the Ukrainian Canadian Experience* within this article). This unique collection includes the works and arrangements of such well-known Ukrainian composers, musicologists and conductors as Oleksandr Bilash, Dmytro Bortnians’kyi, Mykhailo Haivorons’kyi, Volodymyr Ivasiuk, Filiaret Kolessa, Olexander Koshetz, Mykola Leontovych, Stanislav Liudkevych, Mykola Lysenko, Platon Maiboroda, Ihor Shamo, Iakiv Stepovyi; Mykhailo Verbyts’kyi, and Hryhorii Ver’ovka.

---

7 A complete listing of the Klymkiw Musical Score Collection that is housed in the closed stacks of the Elizabeth Dafoe Library’s Slavic Collection is available online at the following URL: [http://www.umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/dafoe/subjects/guides/klymkiw.html](http://www.umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/dafoe/subjects/guides/klymkiw.html).
One may also find musical arrangements specifically created for many of the national folk groups and contemporary artists of Ukraine, including the Ver'ovka Choir, the Baiko Sister Trio, and the Ukrainian folk group, Smerichka. There are also musical arrangements by local directors and conductors such as Pavlo Macenko and Ievhen Turula. Within these musical scores, one can find various musical arrangements be it for piano accompaniment; for bandura accompaniment, or for exclusively female or male vocal arrangement.

As the choral director of Winnipeg’s famous Alexander Koshetz Choir for over 50 years, the late Dr. Walter Klymkiw acquired a wealth of material related to Ukrainian music and Ukrainian ethnography. Through his many travels, contacts and friendships he established during his lifetime, Klymkiw was able to purchase and collect hundreds of musical scores, many of which he would utilize in his choir’s countless performances. For example, he fostered a special relationship with Professor Anatolii Avdiev's'kyi (Avdievsky), director of the world renowned Ver'ovka (Veryovka) Ukrainian State Folk Choir and Dance Ensemble, a relationship which led to Ver'ovka's first Canadian tour in 1981. 

The main stacks of the Elizabeth Dafoe’s Slavic Collection and the University of Manitoba’s Eckhardt Gramatté Music Library, contain various monographs related to Ukrainian music, including the works of and about such well-known composers and musciologists as: Dmytro Bortnians’kyi; Mykhailo Haivorons’kyi; Semen Hulak-Artemovs’kyi; Hnat Khotkevych, Filiaret Kolessa, Viktor Kosenko; Alexander Koshetz;

---

8 All spelling of names of Ukrainian composers, musicians, conductor etc. (except for Alexander Koshetz), will be spelled using the L.C. transliteration system. For example Hryhorij Veryovka (Veriovka) will be Hryhorii Ver'ovka; and Dmytro Bortniansky will be Dmytro Bortnians’kyi.
Mykola Leontovych; Borys Liatoshyns’kyi; Stanislav Liudkevych; Mykola Lysenko, Platon Maiboroda, Levko Revuts’kyi, Kyrylo Stetsenko; and Hryhorii Ver’ovka. The majority of these books were published in Ukraine (mostly during the Soviet era), however, other works in the holdings were published following Ukrainian independence in 1991. Additional music related titles found in the Slavic Collection were published in the West, most notably in Canada and in the United States.

The following is a breakdown of titles found in the main stacks of either the Elizabeth Dafoe Library’s Slavic Collection, or the Eckhardt Gramatté Music Library, according to major Ukrainian composers and musicologists:

Books by or related to the life and works of Dmytro Bortnians’kyi include: Alkid: opera na try dii (Kyiv, 1985); Dmytro Bortinans’kyi (Kyiv, 1980); Kontsertna symfonii dla semy instrumentiv: partytura ta holosy (Kyiv, 1978); 35 konsertiv (Toronto, 1974); and Dmyto Stepanovych Bortnians’kyi (Winnipeg, 1951).

The collection’s holdings devoted to Mykhailo Haivorons’kyi include: Mykhailo Haivorons’kyi: zhyttia i tvorchist’ (L’viv, 2001); Spivanyk dla ditei doshkil’noho ta shkil’noho viku (Kyiv, 1993); Mykhailo Haivorons’kyi (s.l., 1954); and Zbirnyk ukrains’kykh pisem’ dla molodi (Saskatoon, SK, 1946).

Books related to Semen Hulak-Artemovs’kyi include: Prayer: aria Andria (Winnipeg, 1988); Zaporozhets’ za Dunaiem: opera na try dii (Kyiv, 1985); Tvory (Kyiv, 1978); Zaporozhets za Dunaiem: komichna opera na 3 dii (Kyiv, 1965); Vydatnyi ukrains’kyi kompozytor i spivak (Kyiv, 1963); S.S. Hulak-Artemovs’kyi (Kyiv, 1962); Cossacks
beyond the Danube = Zaporogetz za Dunayem: a comic opera in four acts (New York, 1937); and Zaporozhets’ za Dunaim: chudova operetka v trokh diakh z khoramy i tantsiamy (Edmonton, 1918).

Books related to Hnat Khotkevych include: Hutsul’shchyna u tvorchosti Hnata
Khotkevycha: do 90-richchia vid dnia stvorennia H. Khotkevychem samodiial’noho Hutsul’skoho teatru (Ivano-Frankivs’k, 2000); Hnat Khotkevych: spohady, statti, svitlyn (Kyiv, 1994); Hnat Khotkevych: budytel’ pamiaty narodu : 1877-1942 (s.l., 1978); and Pratsi H. Khotkevycha v diliantsi bandurnoho mystetstva (1957).

For Viktor Kosenko, the holdings include: V.S. Kosenko u spohadakh suchasnykiv (Kyiv, 1967); Fortepianna tvorchist’ V.S. Kosenka (Kyiv, 1965); and V.S. Kosenko : narys (Kyiv, 1949).

Material by or related to Filiaret Kolessa’s life and works include: Shkilnyi spivanyk: z pedahohichnoi spadshchyny kompozitora (Kyiv, 1991); Muzychni tvory (s.l.,1972); Muzykoznavchi prats (s.l., 1970); Melodii ukrains’kykh narodnykh dum (Kyiv, 1969); Uliublenni pisni Ivana Franka (Kyiv, 1966); and Ukrains’ki narodni dumy (L’viv, 1920).

For Olexander Koshetz, the Libraries’ holdings include: Lysty do druha, 1904-1931 (Kyiv, 1998); Spohady (Kyiv, 1995); Sviatkovyi kontsert tворив O.A. Koshyt'sia, 1875-1944: Teatr “Pleihavz”, nedilia 25-ho lystopada 1984 (Winnipeg, 1984); Koshyt’s Oleksander Antonovych: kompozitor tserkovnoi muzyky i dyrygent (Winnipeg, 1975); Relihini tvory (New York, 1970); Pro ukrains’ku pisni i muzyku (New York, 1970); Ukrains’ki narodni pisni dlia mishanoho khoru (Kyiv, 1968); Zhytija i diial’nist’

Works by or related to Mykola Leontovych include: Mykola Leontovych: zbirnyk na poshanu velykoho ukrains’koho kompozytora (New York, 1982); Mykola Leontovych: spohady, lysty, materialy (Kyiv, 1982); Leontovych i ukrains’ka narodna pisnia (Kyiv, 1981); Na rusalchyn Velykden’: opera na odnu diiu: klavir (Kyiv, 1980); Khorovi tvory (Kyiv, 1970); Khorovi tvory (Kyiv, 1961); M.D. Leontovych: narys pro zhyttia i tvorchist’ (Kyiv, 1956); and Povnyi zbirnyk narodnykh pisen’ M. Leontovycha (Saskatoon, SK, 1957).

For Borys Liatoshyns’kyi, the holdings include: Vospominaniiia, pis’ma, materialy v 2-kh chastakh (Kyiv, 1985-1986); Borys Liatoshyns’kyi (s.l., 1974); Zolotyi obruch: opera na try diii, visim kartyn: klavir (Kyiv, 1973); Ukrains’ki narodni pisni v obrobsi B. Liatoshyns’koho: dlia holosu v suprovodi fortepiano (Kyiv, 1973); and Khory bez suprovodu (Kyiv, 1971).

Works by or related to Stanislav Liudkevych include: Kavkaz. Cantata-symphony (Winnipeg, 1988); Natsional’no-derzhavna motyvatsiia tvorchosti S. Liudkevycha (London, 1984); Tvorchist S. Liudkevycha: zbirnyk statei (Kyiv, 1979); Zbirnyk pisen’ dlia ridnykh i tsioldennykh shkil i kursiv ukrainoznavstva za “prohramoiu” 1977 roku: u 100-richchha kompozytora Stanislava Liudkevycha (Toronto, 1979); Kantaty na slova T.
Shevchenka: dlia mishanoho khoru ta symfonichnoho orkestru: klavir (Kyiv, 1978); Doslidzhennia i statti (Kyiv, 1976); Prykarpats’ka symfoniia: partytura (Kyiv, 1969); Kameniari: symfonichna poema za odnoimennym tvorom I. Franka: partytura (Kyiv, 1965); S. P. Liudkevych: narys pro zhyttia i tvorchist’ (Kyiv, 1957); Zahal’ni osnovy muzyky: teoriia muzyky (Kolomyia, 1921); and Dva hymny pryshiacheni Amerykans’kym Ukrainsiam (L’viv, 1913)

The collection’s holdings devoted to Mykola Lysenko include: The world of Mykola Lysenko: ethnic identity, music, and politics in nineteenth and early twentieth century Ukraine (Edmonton, 2001); Mykola Lysenko in Western sources: bibliographic essay (Cranfird, N.J., 1992); Taras Bul’ba: istorichna opera na piat’ dii, sim kartyn (Kyiv, 1987); Khorovi tvory ta vokal’ni ansambli na virshi T. Shevchenka (Kyiv, 1983); Romany na virshi T. Shevchenka (Kyiv, 1982); Natahka Poltavka: opera na 2 dii, 3 vidmiv: klavir (Kyiv, 1955); and Zibrania tvoriv: v dvadtsiaty tomakh (Kyiv, 1953-1956)

Works by or related to Platon Maiboroda include: Platon Maiboroda: slovo pro kompozitora (Kyiv, 1988); Topolya barkerola (Kyiv: 1970); and Platon Ilarionovych Maiboroda: narys pro zhyttia i tvorchist’ (Kyiv, 1964).

Material by or related to Levko Revuts’kyi’s life and works include: Povne zibrania tvoriv u odynadtsiaty tomakh (Kyiv, 1981-1988); L. Revuts’kyi: rysy tvorchosti (Kyiv, 1973); L. Revuts’kyi-kompozitor-pianist (Kyiv, 1972); Kozats’ki pisni; narodni pisni dlia holosu v suprovodi fortepiano (Kyiv, 1969); Symfonizm L. M. Revuts’koho (Kyiv, 1965); and L.M. Revuts’kyi: narys pro zhyttia i tvorchist’ (Kyiv, 1958).
For Kyrylo Stetsenko, the holdings include: *Kantaty ta khory* (Kyiv, 1982); *Kyrylo Stetsenko: spohady, lysty, materialy* (Kyiv, 1981); *Kyrylo Hryhorovych Stetsenko-pedahoh* (Buenos Aries, 1970); *Zibrannia tvoriv u piat’ tomakh* (Kyiv: 1963-1966); and *Kyrylo Hryhorovych Stetsenko* (s.l., 1963).

The holdings devoted to Hryhorii Ver’ovka include: *Vybrani khorovi tvory* (Kyiv, 1986); *Narodni pisni v zapysakh Hryhorii Ver’ovky* (Kyiv, 1974); *Narodni ta revoliutsiini pisni v obrobsi diia khoru* (Kyiv, 1973); *Khory i pisni* (Kyiv, 1972); *Spohady* (Kyiv, 1972); *Khory* (Kyiv, 1971); and *Hryhorii Huriiovych Ver’ovka: narys pro zhyttia i tvorchist’* (Kyiv, 1963).

In addition to monographs devoted to specific individuals, the collection contains music books devoted to specific types of Ukrainian music. There is a wealth of material devoted to Ukrainian folk (including ritual songs) and national music. Included in this area are the major multi-volume works such as: the 10 volume set of *Ukrains’ki narodni melodii* published by the Ukrainian Free Academy of the United States[Ukrains’ka vil’na akademiia nauk u SSHA] (New York, 1964); the 2 volume set of *Ukrains’ki narodni pisni* published by the Mystetstvo Publishing House (Kyiv, 1954); and the 2 volume set of *Vesil’ni pisni* published by Naukova dumka (Kyiv, 1982). As well as individual volumes dedicated to Ukrainian folk music and song, such as: *Ukrains’ka duma i pisnia v sviti* (L’viv, 1997-1998); *Naikrashchi pisni Ukrainy* (Kyiv, 1995); *Perlynky ukraïns’kyi narodnoi pisni: pisennyk* (Kyiv, 1991); *Chy ta v luzi ne kalyna bula: ukrains’ki narodni alehorychni pisni* (Kyiv, 1991); *V charakh kokhannia: ukrains’ki narodni pisni pro kokhannia* (Kyiv, 1989); *Ukrains’ki narodni zhartivlyvi pisni: pisennyk* (Kyiv, 1987); *Oi
verbo, verbo: ukrains'ki narodni pisni : pisennyk (Kyiv, 1981); Narodni pisni v zapysakh Lesi Ukrainky ta z ii spivu (Kyiv, 1971); Pisni pro matir (Kyiv, 1970); Kolomyicky v zapysakh Ivana Franka (Kyiv, 1970); Kozats'ki pisni; narodni pisni dla holosu v suprovodi fortepiano (Kyiv, 1969); Chumats'ki pisni (1969); My songs; a selection of Ukrainian folk-songs in English translation (Winnipeg, 1958); Shkola hry na banduri (Kyiv, 1958); Ukrajina v pisnich (Prague, 1954); Ukrains'ki dumi ta istorychni pisni (Kyiv, 1954); and Zvuky Ukrainy: ukrains'ki pisni pid notamy na odyn holos i z povnym tekstom (New York, 1919).

The collection also holds song books with music from specific regions of Ukraine, or in other countries where Ukrainians live or have settled, examples include: Pisni Cherkashchyny (Kyiv, 2004); Pisni sela Mizhhiria Bohorodechars'ko raionu na Ivano-Frankivshchyni (Kolomyia, 1994); Ukrains'ki narodni pisni pro emihratsiiu (Kyiv, 1991)
Stoit' lypka v poli: zbirnyk lemkivs'kykh narodnykh pisen' Nykyfora Leshchyshaka z rukopysnoi spadshchyny Ivana Franka (Edmonton, 1992); Pisni Bukovyny: pisennyk (Kyiv, 1990); Pisni Sumshchyny: ukrains'ki narodni pisni: pisennyk (Kyiv, 1989); Pisni Ternopol'shchyny: kalendarno-obriadova ta rodymno-pobutova liryka: pisennyk (Kyiv, 1989); Pisni z L'vivshchyny: pisennyk (Kyiv, 1989); Pisni Podillia: zapysy Nasti Pryisazhniuk v seli Pohrebyshche, 1920-1970 rr.(Kyiv, 1976); Ukraїns'ki narodni pisni z Lemkivshchyny (Kyiv, 1972); Bukovyn's'kyi rozmai: tvory z repertuaru zasluzhenoho Bukovyn's'ko ansambliu (Kyiv, 1971); Zakarpats'ki pisni ta kolomyiky (Uzhhorod, 1965); Zakarpats'ki narodni pisni (Kyiv, 1962) and Nasha pysnia: zbornik narodnykh y popularnykh pysn'okh iuhoslavianskykh rysynokh: zoz notnym ukladom, tekstamy i muzychno-etnografichnu naukovu dokumentatsiyu (Vojvodina Serbia, 1953-1954)
Within the collection one will also find song books for various holidays such as
Christmas, Easter, other calendar holidays (e.g. Feast of Ivana Kupala), or for specific
rites or occasions such as weddings, for example: Ukrain's'ki koliadky ta shchedrivky
(Saskatoon SK, 2005) Ukrains 'ke vesillia (Kyiv, 1992); Koliadky ta shchedrivky
(Kyiv, 1990); Kupal's'ki pisni: ukrains'ki narodni pisni: pisennyk (Kyiv, 1989);
Ukrains 'ki narodni kalendarni pisni z notamy ta khoreohrafieiui (Winnipeg, 1987);
Shchedrivky, vesnianky-haivky: na mishanyi khor (Philadelphia, 1985); Vesnianky:
ukrains'ki narodni pisni (Kyiv, 1984); Koliady, abo, Pisni z notamy na Rizdvo Khristove
(Toronto, 1983); Koliady i shchedrivky dlaia mishanoho khoru (Winnipeg, 1967) and 51
ukrains 'kykh narodnykh pisen' i zabav na Velykden' z rozvidkoiu pro genezu iahilok i ikh

Other rare or important titles included in the Slavic Collection's holdings are: Mykhailo
Drahomaniv's Novi ukrajins 'ki pisni pro hromads 'ki spravy 1764-1880, published in
Geneva in 1881, it is an analytical study of Ukrainian political songs from 1764-18809;
Volodymyr Okhrymovych's Znachenie malorusskikh svadebnikh obriadov i piesen v
istorii evoliutsii sem 'i (originally written in Ukrainian, but translated into Russian) --
published in Moscow in 1891 in Etnograficheskoie obozrenie, it illustrates Ukrainian
wedding rituals and customs, as well as wedding songs that accompany the celebration;
Klyment Polishchuk's Zbirnychok naikrashchikh ukrains 'kich pisen' z notamy, published
in Kyiv in 1913, it is notable for the musical arrangements done by Olexander Koshetz;
and Ukrain's 'ki natsional'ni tanky: korotkyi narys pro ukrains 'kyi tanok ta opys

---

9 Drahomaniv is known for creating a reformed Ukrainian alphabet, commonly referred to as the
Drahomaniva. One of the features of this alphabet is the letter "j", which is used throughout this
publication.
desiat’ekh naik rashchikh narodnikh tankiv vlasnogo ukladu, written by the renowned Ukrainian choreographer Vasyl’ Avramenko, and published in Winnipeg in 1928.

**Ukrainian Music Resources Within the Archives of the Ukrainian Canadian Experience**

The Klymkiw Family fonds, an archival collection constituting part of the *Archives of the Ukrainian Canadian Experience*, is an important resource for researchers interested in Winnipeg’s Olexander Koshetz Choir and its longtime director, Dr. Walter Klymkiw, or in Ukrainian musical history in general, be it local or international. The collection contains 10.5 m of textual records, 195 photographs, 70 video recordings, and 206 audio recordings, whose materials cover the years 1917-2000. Included in the collection are hundreds of sheet music, many with vocal and instrumental arrangements; correspondence between Walter Klymkiw and national and international musicologists; photographs; and audio and video recordings of concerts and practices by the Olexander Koshetz Choir.

A collector of material related to Ukrainian and Ukrainian Canadian music, Klymkiw would purchase or acquire various sheet music, books, handwritten and original musical compositions, and musical recordings. An example of a collection acquired by Klymkiw containing original handwritten Ukrainian Canadian musical compositions is the Emilian Wolkowych archives from Kenora, Ontario. Wolkowych, an educator from Kenora, either composed many of the scores himself, or acquired them during his lifetime. The

---

10 The finding aid for the Klymkiw Family fonds is available online at the following URL: http://umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/archives/collections/complete_holdings/rd/mss/klymkiw_family.shtml.

11 The Emilian Wolkowych archives is contained within the Klymkiw Family fonds.
Klymkiw Family fonds also contains hundreds of sheet music covering musical arrangements by various Ukrainian composers, and spanning different forms of Ukrainian music (i.e., liturgical, classical, folk, and contemporary) including: Dmytro Bortnirians’kyi; Anatolii Avdievs’kyi; Filiaret Kolessa; Anatolii Kos-Anatol’skyi; Oleksander Bilash; Hryhorii Kytasty; Mykola Leontovych; Borys Liatoshyns’kyi; Stanislav Liudkevych; Mykola Lysenko; Platon Maiboroda; Ihor Shamo; Ievhen Stankovych; Iakiv Stepovyi; Kyrylo Stetsenko; Artem Vedel’, Mykhailo Verbyts’kyi; Hryhorii Ver’ovka; and Sydir Vorobkevych.

The Klymkiw Family fonds holds a significant number of textual records pertaining to Olexander Koshetz and his original choir from Ukraine, known as the Ukrainian Republican Cappella (Ukrains’ka Respublikans’ka Kapela), that was formed in 1918. Symon Petliura, the head of the Ukrainian Directorate of the independent Ukrainian National Republic, had asked Koshetz to travel with his newly formed choir around the world as cultural ambassadors to help garnish support for the newly established republic. The collection contains reproduced photos of the original choir, including photographs taken in New York, where they later performed at the internally famous Carnegie Hall. Additional information and insight into the choir’s travels are available from the correspondence of one of its original members, Platonida Shchurovs’ka Rossinevych who later immigrated to Czechoslovakia during the interwar period. The

---

12 From a copy of a manuscript prepared by Olexander Koshetz (found within the Klymkiw Family fonds, University of Manitoba Archives), entitled Ukrains’ka Respublikans’ka Kapela. Koshetz, recounts his meeting with Petliura which took place on January 2, 1919, at the Tsentral’na Rada’s Directorate in Kyiv. At the meeting, Petliura requested from Koshetz, that, “Within a week I would like you to organize a choir that will travel from Ukraine to other lands”. The choir was to begin a world tour that would last 3-4 months, and it was to return to Ukraine. Within a couple of weeks Koshetz and his choir left Kyiv after hearing that the Red Army was poised to invade the city. From Kyiv the choir regrouped in Kamianets’-Podils’kyi, where Koshetz and his choir prepared to map out their tour.
Klymkiw family fonds holds the textual records of 2 other important players in Koshetz’s life: his wife Tetiana Koshetz, a well-respected cultural and community activist in her own right; and Pavlo Macenko, a longtime associate, and respected musicologist, who played an important role in sustaining and developing Ukrainian cultural life in Winnipeg for several decades. In addition, information regarding the Koshetz’s annual Winnipeg music summer classes of the 1930s and 1940s are found within the photographs and textual records of this collection. As a result of Koshetz’s summer classes, Walter Klymkiw’s interest began to grow in Ukrainian choral music. These classes became a catalyst that would later lead him to serve as the Oleksander Koshetz Choir director for over half a century.

A significant portion of the Klymkiw Family fonds focuses on the Oleksander Koshetz Choir. There are textual records that include personal notes and musical arrangements by Klymkiw of pieces that were sung by the choir for various performances. The fonds contains nearly 70 video-recordings of concerts and performances of the choir, including those given in Ukraine, France, Belgium, the Czech Republic and other countries. Several video-recordings contain concert rehearsals with both the Oleksander Koshetz Choir, and Ukraine’s Ver’ovka State Choir and Dance Ensemble performing individually or together. Many of the concerts were video-taped in Winnipeg, including: a 1990 concert honouring the 40th anniversary of the creation of the Ukrainian National Federation; and the Oleksander Koshetz Choir’s appearance on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation’s (CBC) television program Hymn Sing (ca. 1990). The collection also contains the

---

In 1951 Klymkiw became the choir director of the Ukrainian National Federation Choir. In 1967 the choir was renamed the Oleksander Koshetz Choir to honour the man who left an indelible mark on Ukrainian music not only in Winnipeg, but throughout North America.
commercial LP recordings of the choir spanning the 1970s and the 1980s. Nearly 100 audio-cassette recordings cover practice rehearsals and concert recordings of the Olexander Koshetz Choir, including: rehearsals with the visiting director of the Ver’ovka Choir, Professor Anatolii Avdievs’kyi; a concert with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and the Olexander Koshetz Choir; a CBC Radio special commemorating the 45th anniversary of the founding of the Olexander Koshetz Choir; and a 1988 concert held in Winnipeg that included one of Ukraine’s most well-known soloists, Nina Matvienko, (a concert commemorating the 1,000th anniversary of Christianity in Ukraine). There are some very rare and important recorded interviews, including: one where Tetiana Koshetz is interviewed by Dr. Robert Klymasz, back in 1961 in Sandy Hook, Manitoba; and another taken in 1987 with Walter Klymkiw interviewing Pavlo Macenko. Besides audio-recordings of the Olexander Koshetz Choir, one will find a Ver’ovka concert that took place in Kyiv back in 1980; a concert featuring the Czech-based instrumental group, Byzantion, playing classical and liturgical music; the Pechers’ka Lavra (Monastery of the Caves) Choir performing in Kyiv; and the Winnipeg-based Hoosli Men’s Choir performing with the Cook’s Creek Liturgical Male Choir.

Throughout the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s Walter Klymkiw and his wife Marusia were instrumental in attracting and bringing in many talented musical artists from Ukraine. This began with their business venture known as DK Attractions, which brought in artists from Ukraine to Canada, such as Dmytro Hnatiuk of the Kyiv State Opera, and the Trio Bandurystiv from Kyiv. Later the Klymkiws were partners in another venture company called Canimplex, which brought a whole new generation of Ukrainian musical talent from Ukraine to tour Canadian cities, including the singing groups Smerichka, Svitlytsia,
and Vatra. The Klymkiw Family fonds contains material on many of the artists that performed concerts in Winnipeg thanks to the couple’s efforts. One other important segment of the Klymkiw archives are the dozens of concert programs collected by the couple throughout the years, spanning from 1942-2000. Some of the unique items within this collection include foreign concerts, for example: a 1964 program brochure/concert guide for Ukrainian Day at the New York World’s Fair; a 1967 program brochure of the Ver’ovka State Folk Choir and Dance Ensemble performing at Expo 67 in Montreal; a 1969 program brochure of the Ukrainian Bandurist Ensemble from Detroit, performing at the Ford Auditorium; a ca.1969 concert brochure of the Pavlo Virsky Ukrainian State Dance Ensemble; a 1973 concert program of Ukrainian soprano Ievheniia Miroshnychenko in Kyiv; a 1974 concert program featuring the Kyiv Philharmonic performing in Kyiv; a special concert in Kyiv in 1977 celebrating the music of composer Mykola Leontovych.; a brochure from 1980 advertising the Baiko Sisters Trio; a 1984 brochure advertising the Ukrainian State Bandurist Ensemble; and a 1994 brochure promoting the Kyiv Chamber Choir. In terms of local and national concerts, one will find dozens of concert program, including for example: the 1943 concert at the Winnipeg Auditorium on the occasion of the first Ukrainian Canadian Congress; a 1953 concert program for the 14th Ukrainian Summer School, presented by the University of Manitoba Summer School Students’ Council (with conductor Walter Klymkiw); a program souvenir for the 1956 Dominion Convention of the Ukrainian National Youth Federation of Canada; a 1963 concert program honouring the 120th anniversary of the birth of composer Mykola Lysenko by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress; a 1964 concert brochure and program for Winnipeg’s Ukrainian Theatre’s presentation of the operetta
Natalka Poltavka: a 1966 concert program commemorating the 50th anniversary of the death of the great Ukrainian writer, Ivan Franko, sponsored by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress; a 1968 program for the Ukrainian Canadian Congress’s concert at the Winnipeg Auditorium, featuring television and recording stars Juliette, Ed Ivanko and Joan Karasevich; a 1972 concert brochure honouring the 10th anniversary of the creation of the renowned Winnipeg-based Rusalka Dance Ensemble; a 1985 brochure for the Sacred Music of Dmytro Bortniansky concert held in Toronto; and the 1988 Millennium Tour concert program featuring the student performers of St. Vladimir’s College from Roblin, Manitoba, commemorating the 1,000th anniversary of Christianity in Ukraine.

Another collection within the Archives of the Ukrainian Canadian Experience that contains material related to Ukrainian music is the Robert Klymasz fonds. The collection contains some sheet music as well as various articles related to Ukrainian Canadian musicians and performers. The strength of the collection is in its holdings of commercial and non-commercial audio-recordings of mostly Ukrainian Canadian artists. These include: a recording of Ukrainian carols sung by various choirs from Dauphin, Manitoba; a commercial recording of Winnipeg-born Luba Bilash; a choral tribute to Blessed Martyr Bishop Vasyl Velychkovsky; a commercial recording of the musical group the Kubasonics; and a commercial recording entitled, The Last Kobzari - Songs and dumi of the blind bards of Ukraine. Also part of the fonds is a manuscript completed by Dr. Klymasz, titled, “Playing Around With Choir”, which includes a compilation of correspondence and other papers of Walter Klymkiw, -- covering his more than fifty years as the choral conductor of the Olexander Koshetz Choir. As an ethnographer and as

---

14 The finding aid for the Robert Klymasz fonds is available online at the following URL: http://umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/archives/collections/complete_holders/ead/mss/klymasz.shtml
one who has researched Ukrainian Canadian folklore and music, Klymasz has compiled a wealth of material pertaining to this area of study. His archives is indicative of this, containing photographs of various musical ensembles and native Ukrainian musical instruments. In addition, the Robert Klymasz fonds contains several reports and articles written by him as part of his field studies he completed while employed as curator with the National Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec. Klymasz was appointed its first program director for Slavic and East European Studies.¹⁵ As part of his 2006 accrual, he donated his recently completed, Prolegomena for the study of Winnipeg's Legacy of Ukrainian Music: a Tentative Guide to Selected Sources of Information. This guide is an excellent resource for anyone researching local Ukrainian music history, -- providing information on those institutions in Winnipeg that will assist individuals in their quest. Also, the Robert Klymasz fonds contains a selection of posters advertising Ukrainian concerts and exhibitions in Canada, for example: a 2002 concert of Ukrainian and Jewish music entitled, "Paris to Kyiv" and "Brave old World" -- Jewish and Ukrainian Music breaking borders; and the 1991-1993 exhibit at the Canadian Museum of Civilization entitled, Art and Ethnicity: The Ukrainian Tradition in Canada.

The University of Manitoba Libraries holds a significant Ukrainian music collection of monographs, musical scores, and archival material. The Elizabeth Dafoe’s Slavic Collection has been collecting material in this area for over 50 years. With the creation of the Archives of the Ukrainian Canadian Experience in 2004, the Libraries’ collection

¹⁵ Dr. Klymasz has published several important works on Ukrainian folksongs in Canada that are held at the Elizabeth Dafoe Library, including: Ukrainian folksongs published by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies (Edmonton, 1992); The Ukrainian folk ballad in Canada published by AMS Press (New York, 1989); An introduction to the Ukrainian-Canadian immigrant folksong cycle, published by the National Museum of Canada (Ottawa, 1970); and The Ukrainian winter folksong cycle in Canada, published by the National Museum of Canada (Ottawa, 1970).
of resources devoted to Ukrainian music has grown substantially, in particular with the acquisition of the Klymkiw Family fonds. This latter collection chronicles over 80 years of local and international Ukrainian music history, and provides an insight into the important musical talent that exists in Canada and in Ukraine. Overall the University of Manitoba Libraries’ holdings provide faculty, students, researchers, musicians, and the public, with important and unique resources devoted to the study of Ukrainian music.
Bibliography

Koshetz, Olexander. *Ukrains'ka Respublikans'ka Kapela* (manuscript, Klymkiw Family fonds, University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections). Not dated.


“‘U’ Department Gets 1484 Ukraine Text”, *Winnipeg Tribune*, September 1951.
Ukrainian Catholic Paraliturgical Hymns: A Closer Look

By Melita Mudri-Zubacz

Winnipeg, February 2008
Be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5:18-20

Throughout the centuries, musically-inclined Christians composed sacred songs in order to express their experience of and relationship with God. Some of this repertoire crystallized as ordinary parts of liturgies. Other parts of this repertoire ended up comprising a large corpus of paraliturgical hymns sung at specific points of the services as well as other liturgical occasions, namely processions, pilgrimages and various commemorations. When visiting different Ukrainian catholic parishes in North America one is overcome by the sense of continuity – although every parish is unique (some more traditional, others more eclectic), each is branded by familiar features detectable to every Ukrainian Catholic particularly with respect to what they see, smell and hear in the church. One may notice the standard text of the Divine Liturgy in almost all of our parishes. However, there does not seem to be anything standard about the hymnbooks used in our churches. Every parish appears to have their own publication proudly displayed in the pews. Why would our parishes invest so much time and money into a project that seems to be re-invented in almost every community? After all, most of them are singing a lot of the same repertoire. Furthermore, if they are following the same prescriptions regarding the sacred space, liturgical structure and paraphernalia, surely they would rely on the same hymnbooks. Are they publishing their own paraliturgical compilations so that the name of a certain pastor along with the members of that committee may be recorded in the parish’s archives for their achievement? Or is there perhaps a more significant reason for this apparent redundancy?
A Few Introductory Remarks: Why Are Our Hymnbooks the Way They Are?

Before we delve into an exploration of several parish hymnbooks, it would be useful first to consider the purpose and significance of such compilations in general. Paraliturgical hymnography is comprised of pious compositions reacting to the themes, events and persons commemorated in the liturgical calendar. Perhaps the greatest reward of a tradition of liturgical music is in its power to express the spirituality of the liturgical year and thereby come much closer to the liturgical needs of the faithful. Put differently, the liturgical year marks the spiritual progress of the church, unfolding the whole mystery of Christ within the cycle of a year. As such it also marks the cycle of spiritual needs for the individual, for rejoicing and renewal, for penance, for awe, for the sense of expectation. Just as there are natural and cultural signs to mark each natural season, there are hymns in our churches to express the spiritual periods. Because certain hymns are sung at specific points in the year, they serve as signs of the liturgical calendar in which Pascha and the twelve Great Feasts\(^1\) occupy a prominent role. These hymns, then, can be viewed as symbols of sound that have an immense power because they demand congregational participation and a liturgical celebration in order to come alive. Congregational singing demands not mere observance but a unified community action.

It is important to note that there is no ecclesiastical legislation governing hymn collections. Hence, it is reasonable to suggest that one of the reasons for numerous publications of parish hymnbooks may have been due to the desire to provide a more

---

\(^1\) There are 8 Great Feasts in honour of the Lord and 4 in honour of the Mother of God. The 12 Great Feasts are as follows: The Nativity of the Mother of God (September 8), the Universal Exaltation of the Precious Cross (September 14), The Entrance of the Mother of God into the Temple (November 21), the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ (December 25), Theophany (January 6), the Encounter of the Lord in the Temple (February 2), The Annunciation to Mary (March 25), Palm Sunday, the Ascension of the Lord, Pentecost, the Transfiguration of Our Lord (August 6), and the Dormition of the Mother of God (August 15).
comprehensive collection with more accurate or better music arrangements, and, more importantly, with better English translations of Ukrainian texts. Moreover, the absence of any ecclesiastical guidelines with respect to the contents of parish hymnbooks means that one can sing *appropriate* liturgical and paraliturgical hymns whenever an occasion permits. This, one may argue, is the key to the prolific paraliturgical anthologies of our Church. A community will deem a hymn appropriate or worthy based on their demographic and spiritual needs – the people will gradually eliminate that which is alien to them, replacing it with that which they perceive as their own. Hence, some will print a traditional Ukrainian repertoire of paraliturgical hymns, other will incorporate transliterated texts and English translations of those hymns, some may integrate newer Ukrainian compositions, yet others will tend to either borrow English repertoire from foreign liturgical traditions or compose their own. Hence, parish hymnbooks seem to provide a glance into the dynamics of a particular congregation, even though they must not be used as definitive evidence of the spiritual life of such a community (perhaps the publishing committee failed to take into consideration the actual needs of their community, or the publication has become outdated and as such no longer suits the needs of the congregation). It is reasonable to suggest that one of the reasons for numerous publications of parish hymnbooks may be due to the desire to provide a more comprehensive collection with more accurate or better music arrangements, and, more importantly, with better English translation of Ukrainian texts.

The pioneers of Ukrainian paraliturgical compositions were primarily priests, some of the most prolific of whom were Frs. V. Stekh, Y. Kyshakevych, I. Duts’ko, V. Matiuk and M. Lonchyna. The hymns that these fathers forged for their Church express
theology (notable particularly in Christmas carols), which they incorporated quite simply and without any elaborate doctrinal or biblical expositions. These hymns were based on their theological knowledge, faith understanding and cultural experience. One may go as far as to suggest, then, that a paraliturgical hymn is only partially a thing of beauty or an affirmation of faith. To a much greater extent it is a way of defining one’s cultural heritage and ethnic origins. Hence, when people sing a hymn, they, in effect, become assimilated into the culture that this music represents. As a result, collections of paraliturgical hymns will contain not only the repertoire familiar to the faithful, but repertoire which they can identify with – hymns that “speak” to them and allow them to express their faith and piety.

An Overview of Several Ukrainian Catholic Hymnbooks

The following section will outline ten Ukrainian Catholic collections of paraliturgical hymns from different time periods. These collections are texts that were published and/or used in Zhovkva (Ukraine), Yorkton, Saskatoon, Stamford (USA), and Winnipeg/Manitoba. It is important to stress that these hymnbooks were simply readily available to us, and do not represent an exhaustive study of the paraliturgical hymnography of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Ukraine or diaspora. Nonetheless, each of these hymnbooks is a spiritual road map which will give us some insight into the spiritual personality of those communities.

Tserkovni Pisni [Church Hymns]. Zhovkva, Ukr.: The Basilian Press, 1926

This exhaustive hymnbook contains 301 Ukrainian hymns, most of which became staples of traditional Ukrainian paraliturgical repertoire. This edition offers both music notes and lyrics, and is meticulously organized according to the cycle of the liturgical
year under numerous headings clearly noted in the table of contents. The three main categories of hymns that emerge from this list are in devotion of the Lord Jesus Christ, of the Mother of God, and in commemoration of specific Saints, however, there are many subcategories that offer varied repertoire for specific feasts and liturgical seasons. Interestingly enough, this collection does not include Christmas carols. The last two headings seem to reflect a peculiar development in the spirituality and liturgical practices of the Church in that region, the historical evaluation of which we cannot delve into at this point. Suffice it to say that the first heading contains hymns that are to be sung “at a recited Divine Liturgy” (pp. 336-346), that is, these hymns are to replace the ordinary parts of the Divine Liturgy, including the Trisagion, the Cherubicon, Sanctus, Our Father, the Koinonikon, and the response at the post-communion blessing with the chalice. Hymns that can be sung during the distribution of the Holy Communion are also provided in this section. The second heading contains all “other hymns,” which appear to be a miscellaneous collection of funeral hymns, hymns titled “A Prayer,” and “A Hymn to Christ the King.” However, the most intriguing are three “hymns,” still noted as pisni, which actually reproduce the text of brief rites that are, apparently, to be chanted by the people (in the case of “A Hymn of Thanksgiving of St. Ambrose”) or by alternating between the priest and the people (this is specified for “A Hymn at the Exposition of the Most Holy Sacrament” and “A Hymn of Supplication”). Hence, while this vast resource of Ukrainian paraliturgical hymnography contains the entire “traditional” repertoire, it nonetheless includes also some contemporary compositions which reflect necessary adaptations for the assimilated liturgical rites. It is important to underscore that while “modern” paraliturgical hymns indicate a specific trend in the spiritual growth of the
people of that day, based on the thorough list of the headings reviewing the feasts and fasts of the liturgical year, it is clear that the publishers were very much engrossed in the full tradition of the Church. Thus, the novel compositions seemed to be offered not by way of supplanting, but rather in addition to the repertoire used for the traditional liturgical needs.

_Tserkovni Pisni [Church Hymns]. Yorkton: The Redeemer's Voice, 1955._

This hymnbook seems to have been readily available and disseminated among the prairie Ukrainian Catholic parishes, or at least in certain parts of North America. The stamp of this particular copy reads “Property of Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Parish – Fort Rouge, Manitoba.” This collection is a shorter version of the 1926 Zhovka edition – out of 180 Ukrainian hymns incorporated in this hymnbook 145 are identical to those found in the Zhovkva anthology. Starting with the New Year, this anthology offers a comprehensive list of hymns for numerous liturgical feast, fasts and commemorations arranged systematically in accord with the liturgical calendar. It too contains a heading with 4 hymns prescribed for a “recited Divine Liturgy,” but does not elaborate on how they ought to be performed, unlike its Zhovkva precursor. The fact that no music notes were included in this edition insinuates that people, or at least the cantor, were sufficiently familiar with these hymns and would use the hymnbook merely as a textual aid. Furthermore, although this hymnbook does not contain any credentials identifying the authors of the hymns, the 35 hymns that are different in this collection seem to have been incorporated under the influence of Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate. One indication of this is that most of these additional hymns are dedicated to the Mother of God, one of which is entitled “_Slaven sester služebnyts_” [“Glory of Sisters Servants”].

57
Interestingly enough, this volume, although largely grounded in the repertoire of its predecessor, includes a couple of liturgical chants (namely the Magnificat and the *troparion* to the Mother of God). More importantly, it contains new compositions which highlight devotional tendency of this community.


This compilation of paraliturgical hymns seems to have a quite different character than that of Zhovkva. This collection of 113 Ukrainian hymns and Christmas carols printed with music notes is first divided into the categories for each of the three persons of the Godhead and the Mother of God, and then follows the events of the liturgical calendar beginning with the Great Fast and ending with Christmas. The “appendix” of this compilation also contains hymns titled as funeral hymns and “A Prayer for Ukraine.” However, within the funeral hymns only one of the four is paraliturgical, while the other three (one version of Trisagion and two versions of “Everlasting Memory”) are liturgical chants sang as part of the funeral rites. An interesting development noted in this hymnbook is that some of the well-known foreign sacred repertoire has started being translated into Ukrainian. There is only one example of such practice in this hymnbook, and it refers to “Silent Night” by Gruber. Still, perhaps the most interesting embellishment of this hymnbook is the inclusion of numerous simplified choral arrangements of prominent Ukrainian composers (particularly of Christmas carols and *shchedrivky*), such as “Khrystos rodyvsia, Boh voplotyvsia” by Liudkevych, as well as “Dnes’ poyusheche,” “Po vs’omu svitu” and “V poli, poli pluzhek ore” by Stetsenko. The fact that the editors have prepared arrangements of Ukrainian choral works for congregational use suggests that, at this stage, the community was well familiar with
choral repertoire and was able to expand their collection of congregational hymns with simplified choral arrangements. Moreover, although the repertoire reproduced in this compilation is still quite conservative, it points to a change in the usage of liturgical music which now incorporates choral works.


Using a somewhat eccentric layout, this carol collection consists of 13 traditional English carols (such as “Good King Wenceslas,” “Joy to the World,” and “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing”) printed with music notes and lyrics on the same size paper as the cover. On the back side of the cover page is printed the text of the propers of the Feast, that is Christmas *troparion* and *kontakion* both in Ukrainian and English. In the middle of the booklet, however, there is an insert with 28 traditional Ukrainian Christmas carols printed on a much smaller size paper, including only the lyric of the carols. The booklet contains no table of contents which makes it difficult to navigate through it. Also, given that the accent of this collection is on the English carols, it appears that this parish experienced a growing need for English repertoire. There did not appear to be any English compositions in the character of the Ukrainian Christmas carols or in the spirit of the liturgical services of the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lord available at the time. Hence, the community chose to rely on the borrowed material from other liturgical traditions that they were familiar with. However, the fact that the Ukrainian carols were inserted into the carol-book apparently as an afterthought thus providing the people only with a “quick” textual aid seems to indicate that Ukrainian repertoire was still well known by the congregation.
The hymnbook used at St. Andrew’s in Winnipeg is clearly an adapted version of the one published by St. Joseph’s parish in 1970. Here are the three most notable differences observed in St. Andrew’s collection: it includes 36 hymns more than St. Joseph’s which is reflected in a few additional headings, specifically, “Hymns for Meatfare Sunday” and “Hymns to St. Joseph;” it does not contain the “appendix” of hymns like St. Joseph’s did; and finally, for every hymn it notes chord symbols that correspond to the chordal progression of the piece, a provision which was perhaps intended to simplify guitar or keyboard accompaniment. Noteworthy is also that St. Andrew’s hymnbook contains even more of the simplified choral arrangements, presumably indicating the popularity that such pieces enjoyed in the community. Hence, it appears that the demographic make-up of this parish involved primarily Ukrainian-speakers fond of traditional paraliturgical repertoire, who have at some point become immersed in choral tradition.


Similar to the collection of Christmas carols, this slim booklet offers a modest collection of 23 Easter hymns. Almost all hymns are notated with musical scores. There are 12 hymns in Ukrainian which also contain transliterated text and 11 hymns in English which are direct translations of the Ukrainian Easter hymns (with various degrees of success). Additionally, 5 of these selections are actual liturgical hymns sang mostly at the Divine Liturgy of the Resurrection and/or during Eastertide, as well as other liturgical

---

Note that the identical hymnbook is also used at Sts. Vladimir and Olga Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral Parish in Winnipeg.
services. These hymns include the *troparion* of the Resurrection in Ukrainian, an Easter “Alleluia” in English, “All Who Have Been Baptized” in English, and “The Angel Cried Out” both in English and in Ukrainian. This little compilation of Easter hymns illustrates an exciting development in the liturgical life of that community. The stress appears to have been put on the preservation of the wholesome liturgical tradition, faithful to its roots. First of all, the editors deemed it important to include proper liturgical chants in their compilation of paraliturgical hymns, presumably as a didactic tool. And secondly, the editors chose to offer English translations of Ukrainian Easter hymns rather than to borrow English hymns from foreign sources in order to incorporate the faithful who do not know Ukrainian language.


This short assortment of 42 Christmas carols presents a reverse image of that of St. Michael’s collection of carols in Winnipeg. All carols are, first of all, clearly listed in the table of contents. The first 33 selections consist of traditional Ukrainian carols printed with notes, Ukrainian lyrics, and the transliterated text. The remaining 9 selections are carols in English. The first two are loose translations of “Boh predvichny” and “Veselysia Vyfleyeme” and include notes as well as the lyrics, while the final 7 are traditional English carols, such as “The First Noel,” “O Little Town of Bethlehem,” and “O Holy Night.” Only the lyrics of these carols have been reproduced in the collection. Clearly, this parish seems to have had greater needs in Ukrainian than in English, given the disproportionately small number of English carols reproduced in this collection. Also, it may have been due to the lack of interest or due to the lack of proper resources, but while Ukrainian carols obviously entailed a lot of time and effort in preparation for publication,
the English carols were offered in a very simple format. Moreover, English translation of the Ukrainian carols was not particularly poetic or true to the original text, and has, as a result, lost the rich theological and spiritual meaning. Nonetheless, the fact that an attempt has been made at translating Ukrainian Christmas carols seems to indicate that this community wanted to preserve its heritage and national roots while making the text of the carols understandable to those who do not know the language.

*Tserkovni Ukrains'ki Pisni – Hymns of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. Winnipeg: Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church, 19??*

Although no date is indicated on this booklet, based on the fonts as well as the style and layout of the publication, it appears that it was made available at some point during the 80’s. This collection of 34 hymns provides no table of contents or headings. The hymnbook simply begins with the text of 20 Ukrainian hymns without any music notation, which, perhaps, are the favourites of that congregation. Thematically speaking, the hymns begin with those dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ, then to the Mother of God, followed by a number of miscellaneous hymns for various occasions printed in no apparent order. The following 14 hymns are English translations of Ukrainian hymns and contain music notation. They begin with hymns sung during the distribution of the Holy Communion, hymns to the Mother of God, hymns for the end of the Divine Liturgy, and then a miscellaneous collection which appears to be a loosely organized grouping to additional Communion and Marian hymns, as well as a hymn to the Lord Jesus Christ and one to the Holy Spirit. This booklet clearly did not receive nearly as much attention as some of the more comprehensive sources noted above. Nonetheless, it did reflect the needs of this particular community with respect to the paraliturgical repertoire. It appears that the faithful were well familiar with Ukrainian hymns since Ukrainian selections
printed in this booklet contained no music notation. Furthermore, they demonstrated sensitivity towards the English-speaking parishioners by providing an almost proportionate number of solely Ukrainian hymns and English translations of various traditional Ukrainian hymns. Once again, this community appears quite conservative in their paraliturgical repertoire and adamant to preserve its national liturgical heritage by exclusively relying on the translations of Ukrainian hymns into English and not by tapping into “foreign” English paraliturgical sources.


While based on the 1926 Zhovkva edition of Tserkovni Pinsi, Joseph Roll has arranged this excellent anthology primarily according to the outline of the Divine Liturgy. This edition includes music notes for 86 hymns divided into entrance hymns, hymns to the Saviour, Communion hymns, hymns to the Holy Spirit and Trinity, religious national hymns, hymns to the Mother of God, hymns to the saints, hymns for Great Lent, Resurrectional (Easter) hymns, and finally Christmas carols. Only 17 hymns reproduced in this compilation are solely in Ukrainian, whereas the rest of the hymns contain both Ukrainian and English lyrics (no transliterated texts). Roll’s hymnbook, for the most part, is very traditional, including conservative repertoire interspersed by several proper liturgical chants, such as “Tsariu nebesnyi,” “O vsekhval’na maty,” “Blhoobraznyi Yosyf,” the troparion of the Nativity of Our Lord, and the kontakion of the Theophany. The last 4 hymns of this compilation, however, are traditional English carols, namely “O Come All Ye Faithful,” “Joy to the World,” “Angels We Have Heard on High” and “The First Noel.” These carols were reprinted simply in textual form almost as an addendum. Clearly, the main goal of Roll’s compilation of paraliturgical hymns was to provide
people with a good quality edition of the traditional hymns sang in the Ukrainian Catholic Churches with a sensible and meaningful translation of these texts into English. The fact that he also incorporated 4 Christmas carols borrowed from the Western tradition may simply reflect the fact that these carols were commonly sung by the faithful in the community, and were therefore included as merely as textual aids.

_Tserkovni Pīsnī – Church Hymns._ Winnipeg: St. Anne Ukrainian Catholic Parish, 19??.

Although no date was indicated on this publication, it is clearly a newer edition, published most likely within the past ten years. St. Anne’s sizable hymnbook was unlike any other reviewed thus far. It seems to reflect a very dynamic community willing to accommodate and incorporate the needs of its obviously quite diverse members. The collection includes 279 hymns divided into 7 sections as follows: “Ukrainian Hymns,” “Hymns to the Mother of God,” “Lenten Hymns,” “Easter/Resurrection Hymns,” “English Language Hymns,” “Children’s Hymns” and “Christmas Hymns.” The section entitled “Ukrainian Hymns” contains the usual repertoire of Ukrainian paraliturgical hymns for various occasions, stemming primarily from congregational usage, as well as from simplified choral arrangements. Interestingly enough, almost all hymns in this section include music notes, Ukrainian lyrics, transliterated texts, as well as English translation of the hymns. The section includes a few liturgical chants as well, namely “Tsariu nebesnyi,” “Z namy Boh,” “Vy shcho v Khrysta khrystyllysya,” “Mnohaya lita,” and “Vichnaya pam’yat.” The hymns found in the sections dedicated to the Mother of God, Great Lent, Easter, and Christmas are arranged in like fashion, including same features as those found in the “Ukrainian Hymns,” including a few liturgical chants. However, these sections seem to exhibit a movement toward freer incorporation of
English repertoire, an example of which is “Immaculate Mary” and “Hail Mary: Gentle Woman” in the Marian section, “Prodigal Son” in the Lenten section, and “I Am the Resurrection” in the Easter section and 6 traditional English carols in the Christmas section. Arguably, the most fascinating parts of this hymnbook are “English Language Hymns” and “Children’s Hymns.” The section dedicated to the “English Language Hymns” contains 98 hymns reproduced with no music notes (with the exception of only 2 hymns), most of which are hymns borrowed from Western liturgical traditions. A few hymns contained in this section are translations of Ukrainian repertoire (for example, “Come and Rejoice” is a translation of “Tilo Khrystove”) while the text of a Psalm of the Typica, that is, the text of Psalm 102 (103) is an actual liturgical chant. It is commendable, however, that this hymnbook contains a section dedicated to children’s sacred repertoire. Out of 40 hymns intended for various liturgical needs found in this section, a large number were borrowed from Western sources and even translated into Ukrainian. However, there are also traditional Ukrainian hymns in this section with English translations (such as “Hen do neba nashi ochi;,” “Poklaniayusia miy Khryste,” and “Khrystos voskres”), as well as hymns taken from “We Are the Children of Light” catechetical workbook. The fact that editors of this compilation felt the need to include a segment dedicated to children’s sacred repertoire points not only to a young and vibrant membership, but also to a level of sensitivity and responsiveness to the needs of that community. Furthermore, since this hymnbook incorporates traditional Ukrainian repertoire, a great majority of which was translated into English, as well as an influx of Western sacred repertoire, it underscores the demographic needs of this community which is evidently mostly English speaking. Thus, on the one hand, this collection
satisfies the need for the established Ukrainian sacred repertoire, and on the other, it clearly testifies to the infiltration of the Western paraliturgical influence. Based on the number of Western hymns reproduced in this compilation, one may argue that a sizable portion of St. Anne’s parish knows and identifies with this repertoire, using it to express their spirituality. Notwithstanding, this volume contains a number of proper liturgical chants in both languages which suggests that editors of this hymnbook also took care to enable their congregation to participate in the wholesome liturgical life of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

A Few Concluding Remarks

Based on the aforementioned findings of our overview, it appears that each parish developed its own particular type of paraliturgical repertoire, the result presumably, of a slow but continual development of liturgico-musical forms most suitable to reflect the personality of an individual community. Inevitably, familiar music infiltrated liturgical practice, allowing people to become emotionally attached to their sacred repertoire. Although this process, which happens almost imperceptibly, has been part of Church’s history throughout the centuries, it was intriguing to be able to trace it in the attitude towards paraliturgical hymns of the various parishes. The general trend seems to have been to keep a corpus of the traditional Ukrainian repertoire (with or without English translation) and then to add more contemporary selections. For English hymns this meant borrowing from the Western sacred sources as well as translating Ukrainian paraliturgical hymns, and for Ukrainian hymns it involved simplifying choral arrangements for easy congregational usage. Lastly, even though there were only seldom instances, some of the well-liked Western sacred repertoire was translated into Ukrainian. Thus, paraliturgical
hymnbooks gradually became witnesses to the spiritual character of a faith community, influenced by their musical aptitude, degree of progressiveness, language preference and even their national and cultural make-up.

Popular styles of paraliturgical repertoire, however, can expect to play only a small role in a mature tradition. A repertoire that completely replaces itself every decade cannot possibly be the foundation for a liturgical *tradition*. An attempt to establish a community on this principle would be analogous to the proverbial house built on shifting sand. Nonetheless, a healthy tradition should always be open to new compositions – this has been the norm from the very inception of Christianity. Only compositions of the highest quality should hope to gain a permanent place in the paraliturgical repertoire. Maintaining a certain stability of paraliturgical repertoire is essential for parish life. This will ensure that the hymns are known and sung by the members, thus, on the one hand evoking an almost historical memory of past events connected with the feast, and on the other linking the faithful to the past generations as well as the future members, thus endowing them with a sense of historical continuity.

Finally, the tradition of congregational singing in general and singing of the paraliturgical hymns in particular is not some distant and venerable peak of achievement of our Church. Rather, it is a vital part of our liturgical heritage that can be metaphorically likened to a tree. It is living and growing. It has a dependable and solid central trunk that time barely touches, but it also grows new branches from time to time and allows the dead ones to fall off. The community can look to it as its own, and it can last from generation to generation.
A Few Suggestions for Consideration: Where Do We Go From Here?

Our sources of paraliturgical hymns should promote music of the highest quality. These hymns need to be able to inspire not only our present congregations, but those of the next century when musical tastes and preferences will be undoubtedly very different. Emulating the chants and theology that comprise our liturgical practice, our paraliturgical hymnography needs to possess those elusive universal qualities to which every generation will be able to respond. The search for the best music and text implies a trained leadership qualified to select it, leadership that understands the intricate theological and structural make-up of our liturgical tradition, leadership that is familiar with the rich history of our congregational music, as well as leadership that is well versed in contemporary music experimentation.
Born in Vojvodina, the northern part of Serbia, Melita Mudri-Zubacz moved to Canada where she completed her high school in Saskatchewan and later pursued Eastern Christian Studies at the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky Institute at Saint Paul University in Ottawa. There she graduated with a B. Th. (Eastern Christian Studies) and an M.A. (Th.). Her thesis was entitled “Congregational Singing in Rus’ Liturgical Traditions: An Evaluation of Its History.” As part of her masters research, Melita went to the Hilandar Research Library (Columbus, Ohio) and examined over sixty microfilmed manuscripts ranging from the 13th to 19th centuries. Her academic excellence and extracurricular activities have earned her a number of prestigious scholarships and awards, including two Governor General’s medals and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Master’s Scholarship. Her work has been published in Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies. Melita was also one of the editorial assistants for the publication The Divine Liturgy: An Anthology for Worship.

While studying in Ottawa, Melita has found a way to combine her passion for music with her intellectual curiosity as an instructor of liturgical singing at Holy Spirit Seminary. In collaboration with the seminarians, Melita was able to produce a Christmas CD featuring liturgical and traditional Christmas pieces both in Ukrainian and English. She also compiled and arranged text and music for the Liturgy of the Pre-Sanctified Gifts for use by the seminarians. Currently, Melita is working as the Director of Religious Education Centre for the Archeparchy of Winnipeg, and is pursuing studies in choral music at the University of Manitoba. She was also recently appointed assisting conductor of the O. Koshetz choir in Winnipeg.

She and her husband Fr. Gregory Zubacz are proud parents of two beautiful daughters, Sofia and Helenka aged five and two who are already remarkable assistants in their ministry.
The Making of an Oratorio: Vlad of Kiev

"Vlad of Kiev" - an original oratorio by Winnipeg composer, Danny Schur, premiered on June 25th, 1989, performed by the Olexander Koshetz Choir, with electronic accompaniment arranged by the composer, at St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church in Winnipeg. Historian and archivist, Robert Klymenko, spoke to Danny Schur in February, 2008 about what is one of the only oratorios based on an event in Ukrainian history.

RK: What gave you the idea to write an oratorio and how did you come to choose St. Vlad (or Volodymyr) as your subject?

DS: 1988-89 was the Millennium of Ukrainian Christianity. I was born in 1966 and raised in Ethelbert, Manitoba - a veritable bastion of Ukrainian, and specifically Ukrainian Catholic culture. Some of my earliest memories are of the very wonderful church choir at Ethelbert's Sts. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church. "Veechniya Pamyet" - the traditional funeral dirge of the Ukrainian church - can loose uncontrollable sobbing in me, just by playing it over in my mind. So deeply embedded is the church in the lives of the region, that the Ukrainian Catholic clergy has acknowledged Ethelbert as a well-spring of vocations. While I might have toyed with the thought of becoming a priest for a whole five minutes in my teenage years, I was, nonetheless,
profoundly influenced as a composer by Byzantine harmonic language, and similarly influenced by the spirituality and deep historical nature of my Ukrainian Catholic faith.

By 1987, some of the advance literature about the upcoming celebration of the Millennium of Ukrainian Christianity started to crop up in the community. I do not remember where I saw the particular piece but, in retrospect, it was very much like the Uncle Sam recruitment posters: "1988-89 is the Millennium of Ukrainian Christianity - What Are You Going To Do?" I had studied composition at the University of Manitoba School of Music from 1984-86 and so, by 1987, I was eager to dive into a major work, but not entirely sure what form that work might take. That poster very much stuck in my mind and I found myself intrigued with the prospect of creating a major work that would adequately honour so auspicious an occasion.

What followed next can accurately be described as a moment of "divine inspiration." My sister was living in East Kildonan at the time and attended Holy Eucharist Church on Watt Street. I remember the exact instance of my inspiration as if it was yesterday. I had lived in Winnipeg for two years then and my parents were visiting my sister and I. We attended mass together at Holy Eucharist, and I was kneeling, having just received communion. I concluded my post-communion prayer and looked
up to the ceiling of the church and was completely stunned by the very exquisite mural: the Baptizing of the Kievans by King Volodymyr in 988.

I had seen the mural many times before, of course, but something about that viewing, at the very moment that I was seeking inspiration, was the clincher. It was laid out to me plain as day: the work would be about the life of Volodymyr and how he came to bring Christianity to Ukraine in the first place.

RK: But why an "oratorio?" How did you come to choose that rare form of music, interspersed with a dramatic text?

DS: I had just come off of two years of the study of music at the University of Manitoba School of Music. It was there that I learned about the genesis and specific nature of the "oratorio." In the Middle Ages and the Baroque Period, the performance of operas was not permitted during Lent. Oratorios arose as a means of doing what was essentially an opera, without staging, dancing or movement. The form was dramatic, in that a story was told by a narrator, and that story was interspersed by music and/or singing, usually by a choir. Because Lent was a time for spiritual reflection, the form made much use of Biblical and religious stories. Bach's "Easter Oratorio" is probably the most performed of the Baroque oratorios and Benjamin Britten's "War Oratorio" is an example from the 20th
Century.

Because I was going to be telling the story of Christianity in Ukraine, it was almost dictated that the form should be an oratorio. The form has the gravitas of high opera, but a degree of simplicity (in terms of a lack of staging) that is most appealing. The narrative nature of the form allows the composer a free reign on musical styles and settings. I was able to dip into church Slavonic styles, solo peasant styles, modern pop, and even Victorian hymn-style, and unify them under the banner of the story and arrangements. And I was quite sure that the premiere would be in a church, so it only made sense to use a form that was conducive, and fitting, for the setting.

RK: I have to ask. Why did you do it? Why did you go to all that work? Were you that inspired by the celebration of the Millennium?

DS: The truth is, as much as I was hooked and drawn in by the prospect of denoting the Millennium, there was a deeper motivating force, and one that I recognize still motivates me in my recent work like the musical "Strike!"

Remember that the Berlin Wall came down in 1989. Most of the 1980's, and certainly the early 1980's that were the era of my coming of age, were
notable for a heightening of the Cold War. One of the most memorable songs from this era was Sting's "Russians" which borrowed liberally from Tchaikovsky and very much turned my Slavic crank. The song was a plea for the end of the Cold War with an appeal to the U.S. and Russia to avoid a nuclear conflict for the sake of each other's common humanity. The very famous lyric in "Russians" opined that the most compelling reason that the Russians would not start a nuclear war was "because the Russians love their children too."

Not having grown up during the activist era of songwriting in the 1960's, "Russians" moved me on two levels. The first was the very overt use of Slavic music in a pop song. It was liberating to me that the music I heard in church was being used in a popular medium. It was not that I considered the use sacrilegious or offensive, but more that it gave me license to do so as well. I just wouldn't have thought of that! Or perhaps it was that my culture's music just was not cool enough for the masses.

The second, more important influence, however, was that music was being used to advance a pacifist political agenda. The song "Russians" went on to win a Grammy Award and was hugely popular at the time. I believe that the song had much to do with the eventual thawing, and end, of the Cold War. Even if the song had nothing to do with the melting of the Cold War rhetoric, it inspired me to social activism through composition.
Which brings me back to the underlying reason for composing the oratorio, "Vlad of Kiev." I became aware, during the 1980's of the very real repression of the Church, both Catholic and Orthodox, in Ukraine. I was particularly horrified about the brutal murders of clergy in Ukraine over the course of the Communist regime, some as late as the 1980's. It became very clear to me: I would write the Oratorio in solidarity with the then not-yet-free Ukrainian Church, and nation, as a Canadian of Ukrainian descent, freely practicing the faith that Volodymyr had brought to my kinsmen one thousand years before. Even if my action would not have one wit of influence on events in Ukraine (and they didn't!), the composition and performance were a form of personal sacrifice to those that had come before. This notion of the creation of one's art as an ode to one's predecessors, be they ethnic, political or social, is a theme I have revisited in virtually every work thereafter.

RK: You wrote the music, lyrics and text. It is one thing to desire to create a one-hour long major work, but quite another to fund, write and produce it. Tell me about the process of the composition of the music, lyrics and text.

DS: Once I had a rough idea of the form and content of the work, I applied to several grant programs and was delighted to garner funding from all of
them. One program was the Canada Council's "Explorations" Program, which was tailor-made for experimental works from artists in early career. Program Officer Richard Holden was extremely supportive of my vision, and, as a measure of the interconnectedness of the Canadian Arts Community, I am still in contact with Richard in our subsequent careers.

The second grant was from an organization that I can accurately say has been the most supportive of my career as a composer in the Ukrainian and mainstream communities: The Shevchenko Foundation. The grant that I received for the composition of "Vlad of Kiev" was the first Shevchenko grant I received in my career, and the beginning of a now twenty year relationship with the organization.

Several smaller grants were received from the Ukrainian Catholic Women's League, Carpathia Credit Union, the Ukrainian Fraternal Society and the Ukrainian Professional and Business Men's Club. With the combined $6,500.00 I received from the grants, I was able to devote myself to the work for a period of approximately six months - not executive-level salary to say the least - but, to a farm-boy from Ethelbert, and an aspiring independent artist, nothing less than a gift from God! It became apparent to me that, if I chose, I just might be able to have a career as a composer living in Winnipeg, composing works that would use my culture and my particular view of the world, as a means of speaking to
a larger audience. I can not over-emphasize how incredibly inspiring the prospect was to me.

I began work on the oratorio in 1987. I was living the artist's life in Winnipeg's Osborne Village, sharing a large apartment with no less than five room-mates, all of which were very much not in what we might term the "artistic" phases of their lives. The phase might be more aptly called the "beer and women" era. I mention this because I have very clear memories of setting up my electronic keyboard in various locations throughout the sprawling apartment, and working on the music and lyrics, only to attract my roommates and various hangers-on no matter where I attempted to seclude myself. The scene will someday make for a comic scene in one of my scripts, but the truth is that this most spiritual work was composed in an sitcom environment of vulgar male bodily expulsions. If only St. Volodymyr knew!

RK: Given that environment, was it not difficult to compose music, lyrics and text?

DS: The wonderful thing about a narrative form like an oratorio, or a musical or opera, is that the lyrics and music are dictated by the story. I had done a great deal of research about the life of Volodymyr, and the story was so rich, so dramatic, so controversial, that, once I settled on a
dramatic arc of the revelation of the story, the music, lyrics and text practically wrote themselves. Composers and authors in every media speak with religious fervor of that moment when research/knowledge/self-awareness overflow into the realization of the work of art. When a story is as captivating as this one was, I could literally tune out the world and burst forth with music, lyrics and text in prolific amounts. The process of the composition of the work was complete within a month, while the arrangements and rehearsals occupied several more.

RK: You refer to the controversial nature of the story. The oratorio makes the incredible claim that St. Vlad killed his brother to ascend the throne. Have you proof of this claim? And why incorporate such a claim into the story?

DS: Whether 100% true or not, the prospect of Volodymyr finding religion because he was so incredibly filled with guilt over a nefarious deed, was the over-arching hook that drove the story. Creative writers refer to this "hook" or the "gap": the divide between expectation and reality that drives the drama. That someone whom we now consider a saint could have been, at one point in his life, quite dastardly and un-saintlike, is profoundly interesting, dramatic and, well, human. Vlad, the pure saint and doer of only good deeds is substantially less interesting dramatically than Vlad the once-evil-doer turned Saint through guilt. That is a story!
And the truth is, Vlad did not start out a Saint. The primary source about the life of Vlad is the writings of Nestor the Chronicler, in his "Primary Chronicles." In the Chronicle, Nestor recounts that Vlad killed his half-brother, Yarapolk, "by treacherous means" to ascend the throne. The Chronicles, in fact, are the source of most of the story within "Vlad of Kiev" - that Vlad was raised by his Christian grandmother, Olga, that he killed Yarapolk, that he sent a delegation to study the various religions in their country of origin, that he chose Byzantine Christianity and married Princess Anna. The only story point the Chronicle does not elaborate on is whether Vlad was motivated to become an exemplary Christian out of guilt over the murder of his half-brother. On this story point, I will admit to potentially engaging in historical fiction, but from a human story perspective, I do not think I am very far from the truth. How could one murder one's close relative and not be guilty in the extreme for the rest of one's life? Such guilt would be completely in keeping with human nature and, I believe, more than enough motivation for Vlad to right his wrongs in his later life.

From a religious and moral perspective, I believe it important to expose the fallibility of human existence. I do not believe that it is sacrilegious to expose a Saint as fallible; indeed, I believe it elevates the achievement of
Sainthood.

But I have to admit that the youthful radical in me derived some pleasure from the controversial nature of it all. I was, and am, all too aware of the various hypocrisies of the clergy, and of the practice of the faith. That bugged, and still bugs me. That I could be a radical composer in that fashion was fairly appealing to the twenty-something that I was. I am not a hard-core radical by any stretch of the imagination but I do believe that like religion, good art can "afflict the comfortable." And to that extent, my recent work "Strike!" continues that aim.

BK: As far as Ukrainian music tradition is concerned, a radical departure in "Vlad" is that the lyrics and text are all in English. Did you consider this a drawback or did you encounter any objections?

DS: The simple truth of the matter was, at that point in my life, my Ukrainian was rudimentary at best. It would simply not have been possible to compose lyrics or text in Ukrainian without the assistance of a collaborator. And given the highly personal nature of the work, I would not have been welcoming of a collaborator. Further, my independent streak was so strong that the idea of composing with a partner was akin to painting a picture with two people. I have since welcomed collaborators into my creative process but at that time, collaboration was
outside the realm of possibilities.

And that brings up the essential question: What constitutes a work as "Ukrainian"? While the text and lyrics were not Ukrainian, the story was based on Ukrainian history, the creation was timed for a major anniversary of a that event, and I consider myself as Ukrainian as a Canadian can be. My world view is so based on my ancestors' Ukrainian-Canadian immigrant experience that there is an argument that I may be more Ukrainian than many domiciles of Ukraine today. But that is a mute point.

The choice of English as the language of "Vlad" and all of my works is a direct attempt to bring the work to the largest possible audience. My compositional style, and my particular artistic sensibilities, are of the mainstream. While today I could probably compose lyrics in Ukrainian, I choose to write in English to bring the stories of the Ukrainian-Canadian experience to the world.

Where I thought I might encounter the most resistance to English as the language of the work, I discovered, much to my surprise, absolutely none.

Once I had begun work on the composition of Vlad, I approached what was then the only choir of note in the Ukrainian community in Winnipeg: the
Alexander Koshetz Choir under the artistic direction of Walter Klymkiw.

I do not remember the exact circumstances of Walter's and my first meeting in regards to the choir performing the work. I had known Walter for some years by that point because my sister Carolyn was an active member of the choir. While Walter knew me, I do not believe he knew me to be a composer.

I do recall being somewhat ashamed, however, that I should be approaching Walter and Koshetz, about doing a piece in English. In my mind, Walter was the passionate, fiery conductor who had studied in Ukraine under the tutelage of some of that country's greats. Koshetz performed only in Ukrainian, as far as I was aware, and my petition was outside the norm, to be sure.

But it is a measure of the warm and welcoming nature of Walter Klymkiw, that English as the language of the work was not the least bit of an issue. In fact, when I pitched him the idea, I don't believe I even showed him any music! His nurturing spirit saw to it that I would be supported. As an up-and-coming composer in the Ukrainian community, why wouldn't the Koshetz Choir support me, he said. It was that simple. And with that, he committed the choir to months of rehearsals for a piece from an unknown, unproven composer, who, for all he knew, could mortally embarrass an
institution of Canadian Ukrainian culture. In retrospect, his agreement to perform the work was either the height of foolhardiness, or I must have impressed him with my passion. I count the experience as my first real work as a composer, and Walter as my first, and one of my most ardent supporters thereafter.

RK: Tell me about the rehearsal process.

DS: In the spring of 1989, the Koshetz Choir began rehearsing "Vlad." Computer technology in 1989 was becoming advanced but still a pale comparison to the power we enjoy today. The process of creating and outputting the scores that I had created in my Atari computer (yes, Atari made a laptop music computer called the STACY - I still have it!) was tedious in the extreme. The scores looked lovely but I would have been two times ahead of the game had I just printed them out by hand. But I was determined to have the scores look as professional as possible, and, as an electronic composer of the new era, I was bound and determined that I would have the computer as my primary tool.

With beautiful choral scores in hand, all labouriously photocopied at Henry Armstrong Printing, I brought the boxes of scores (there were over 60 in the choir) to The UNF (Ukrainian National Federation) Club on Main Street in Winnipeg, where Koshetz rehearsed in the basement.
While I had composed works for small groups in my composition studies at the University of Manitoba School of Music, nothing quite prepared me for the grandeur and sense of awe one experiences when one hears one's work performed by a large choir. While not a professional choir, the Koshetz Choir was capable of some very fine musical interpretation and the sheer size of the choir was beautifully overwhelming. I shed tears more than once hearing the work that I had slaved so passionately over, come to life.

To be sure, there were moments of less than stellar performance. If there was one drawback to the eventual performance, it was that there are limitations to the ability of an amateur community choir. There are instances, when listening to the CD of the premiere performance, where the writing is beyond the technical ability of the choir. But I can not fault the choir, nor the conductor, about the shortcomings of the choir. Indeed, the experience was my first lesson in the all-important dictum of the composer: compose for the performer. I learned a gentle but valuable lesson for the future in that I needed to compose, and especially for choirs, arrange keys to the particular ability and range of the group. To this day, whether in solo or choir settings, I make it a habit to ensure that the key brings comfort to the performer. An early, and essential, lesson was learned.
I watched Walter Klymkiw work through every note and every phrase of the work with the choir. He chose soloists, moved people around the sections, cajoled, argued, scolded, encouraged and generally field-marshalled the group into readiness. In observing him, I learned that his and my artistic temperament was quite similar. Neither he nor I could countenance lazy or sloppy performances, and I found him losing his temper at exactly the same point at which mine was at an ebb.

But I will say that Walter afforded me a level of respect that, I believe, was beyond what I was due as an upstart twenty-three-year-old composer. The grace and respect that was shown to me by Walter rubbed off on the choir to such an extent that choir members were coming up to me and commenting, "What did you do to Walter? He must really like you." And I was further pleasantly surprised when choir members came up to me, exclaiming how proud they were to be part of the work, and how excited they were to be part of the premiere. After every one of the several months worth of weekly rehearsals, I left the UNF Club on Main Street Winnipeg feeling every inch the composer!

RK: The accompaniment to the oratorio was provided by electronic instruments. Why did you choose to do this and how did you rehearse with the choir?
DS: This part of the saga severely tested my fortitude with electronics and computers, and, indeed, the industry of electronic music. Add to the saga a very, very poorly timed fire (Is there ever a good time for a fire?), and the premiere almost did not take place.

The truth here again, is that I could not afford an orchestra, even a small one, to accompany the performance. And given my independent streak and belief that an electronic instrument could effectively accompany the work, I was predisposed for a major stumbling block. I will explain.

In 1989, the state of the electronic music industry was such that the promise of the 1970's and 1980's was almost coming to fruition. I say "almost" because the industry had been promising a most revolutionary instrument for a few years at that point and by May, 1989, not only had I identified said instrument, but very much needed it for the premiere of the work. I had put all of my eggs into the electronic accompaniment basket!

In the early years of synthesizers, the instruments were "monophonic" - they could only play one note at a time. By the mid-1980's, polyphonic instruments crept into the market, but they were of low sound quality. Shortly thereafter, polyphonic samplers - instruments that played digital recordings of real instruments - came onto the market with a vengeance.
These instruments were all equipped with MIDI, the Musical Instrument Digital Interface, such that they could be controlled from, and played, remotely by computer software. It became possible for composers to compose and play back music that would have been impossible to perform by one person.

And then, the electronic instrument manufacturer Emu promised the until-then unattainable "Proteus": a 128-note polyphonic sample-based instrument in a box that was "multi-timbral." Not only could it play a high number of notes at one time, it could play different instrument sounds at one time - the nirvana of electronic composers such as I! The orchestra in a box had arrived. Or so I thought.

It was at this point that I learned about the practice in the electronic music industry to seed the market with expectation (and hence pre-orders) for a product, while not actually being able to deliver it for some time. I dutifully put my money down for an Emu Proteus somewhere in the vicinity of Christmas, 1988. Little did I know that there would not be an actual unit delivered to Canada until June, 1989.

So, there we were, unable to rehearse through the spring with the actual accompaniment that the choir would need to navigate the oratorio. The whole of our rehearsal process was completed "a cappella" - with voice
only. I could not complete the arrangements of the music without that actual instrument in hand either.

After many phone calls pleading for the manufacturer to deliver one, just one, of the instruments to Canada, and one very expensive overnight courier and customs bill, I was ecstatic to receive the very first Emu Proteus delivered to Canada. It was everything the advance hype promised and I set about completing the arrangements with but two weeks, and very few rehearsals prior to the premiere.

It was a pleasant Saturday in early June, 1989, when I had the whole of my electronic instrument and computer rig set up in the living room of the apartment I shared with my five friends. All of a sudden, my roommate John pointed to the floor - there was smoke piping up through the spaces between the wooden floor. The apartment beneath ours was on fire.

The ensuing 24 hours were some of the worst of my life. We stood helplessly on the street watching thick black smoke bellow menacingly out of the windows of our third-floor apartment, as my precious Proteus endured the fire, evacuation of the building, and destruction of much of the building. But miraculously, when we were allowed back in the building to retrieve our valuables that evening, my electronic rig was covered in a sticky black soot, but the electricity was still on and the system played the
piece I was working on without skipping a beat. I took it as a sure sign from God!

We were forced to vacate the apartment and I relocated to my sister's home in Garden City. The catch about my sister's home was that it was already sold, her having recently married and departed for Saskatoon. The house was bare save for the fridge and stove. But on a steady diet of Chinese take-out, I became the Phantom of the Vacant House and proceeded to complete the arrangements days before the premiere. I have to say that the solitude of my sister's empty house was exactly what I needed to complete the task. And the four-day downpour that coincided with my time there made for a cozy environment inside.

RK: Tell me about the premiere. Why did you choose St. Nicholas Church in Winnipeg? How was the work received?

DS: St. Nicholas Church was chosen for two reasons. My boyhood friend, Joseph Pidskalny was the parish priest there and he speeded the way for me to use the church. I was also very taken with the mosaic that had been installed at the front of the church, especially for the Millennium. With that mosaic, and Joey, there, it seemed as if the stars had aligned.

I do not remember publicizing the premiere, which took place on a Sunday
evening. But somehow, the whole of the Ukrainian community was there, because the church was virtually packed. I estimate the attendance was in excess of 300.

The role of the narrator was played by the now-deceased Cecil Symchyschen, a pillar of the Ukrainian community, and a wonderfully talented man who possessed the most sonorous voice. The choir was conducted by assistant conductor Bill Solomon.

There was truly a sense of the theatrical in the performance. Oratorios are not that common and the nature of the story, the interest of the audience, and the quality of the performance were all quite magical. Although there were opening-night jitters in the performers, and the acoustics of the church were very tinny, the lengthy and very generous standing ovation that greeted the conclusion of the performance was absolutely overwhelming. The length of the ovation was so great, I literally had to edit it shorter for the cassette and CD release of the performance.

Indeed, it was on that night that my career as a composer began. Person after person came up to me with the most sincere and heartwarming congratulations that I was vindicated in my desire to be a composer. The

0
very touching response of my parents, who are not the most
demonstrative in their affections, moved me to tears. For the first time, I
believe they knew that this was my calling. I can, in fact, trace the rest of
my career's progression to that very night.

One of the distinguished members of the Ukrainian community that was
at the premiere, Zorianna Hyworon, came up to me and said, "You should
be composing musicals and I'm going to help you." It was as if she had
read my mind.

Since my youth, my desire to compose music was due primarily with my
love affair with musicals. I was hooked when I saw my sister perform in a
community theatre production of "Brigadoon" in Dauphin. Somehow,
somewhere, I wanted to get into writing musicals and that Zorianna
should so blatantly come up to me and say so, was again a sign from God.

She informed me that she was on the committee of the Centennial of
Ukrainian Immigration to Canada and that some funds were available to
create a work of music. Well, to make a long story short, with the support
of the Centennial Committee, and the Shevchenko Foundation, my first
musical "The Bridge" was written by 1991. It took until 2000 before it
premiered at the Walker Theatre in Winnipeg (that is a whole other
story!) but it lead to my career as a writer of musicals. My musical
"Strike!" which tells the story of the Ukrainian Canadian everyman, Mike Sokolowski, who was killed during the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike, stems directly from "Vlad of Kiev" in June, 1989.

RK: Was "Vlad" performed again and do you have further plans for it?

DS: "Vlad" was performed by the University Singers in Dauphin at the Allied Arts Centre as part of the Ukrainian Festival in August, 1990. It was an absolutely stellar performance which I very much regret not having recorded.

A cassette of the St. Nicholas version of "Vlad" sold more than 1500 copies in the few years after the show. I have recently re-mastered the original St. Nicholas recording to CD and will make it available to whomever may be interested. I welcome further interest in the performance of "Vlad" but have been too busy with the promotion of my career as a writer of musicals to actively pursue further productions of "Vlad." I will say that, even after all these years, the work still "holds up" and I am very proud and honoured to have begun my career with my "Ukrainian Oratorio."

attached: program from 1989 Winnipeg premiere, which includes lyrics & bio of Danny Schur; spoken text with hand-written notes from Cecil Symchyzhen; cover page from 1990 Dauphin program
“VLAD OF KIEV”
AN ORATORIO

Composed by
Danny Schur

Featuring the
O. Koshetz Choir

Sunday, June 25th, 1989
8:00 p.m.
St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church
Winnipeg, Manitoba
VLAD OF KIEV: AN ORATORIO

Music, Lyrics & Text by Danny Schur

Featuring Andrew Misiak and The University of Manitoba Singers Chorus

Thursday, August 2nd, 1990 8:00 P.M.
Dr. Vernon L. Watson Arts Centre Dauphin, Manitoba
Program
Musical Director — Walter Klymkiw
Conductor — William Solomon
Narrator — Cecil Semchyshyn
1. His Feet Knew This Earth
2. Which Master Shall I Serve? (Oleh Shawarsky, Tenor)
3. We Seek Thee God (Genevieve Armstrong, Alto, Nestor Harach, Tenor)
4. We Have Tasted in the Sweetness
5. Kings Will Be Humbled
6. As Did Mary, So Do I (Marijka Jaszczuk, Contralto)
7. I Have Now Perceived the One True God
8. Take Perun From His Place
9. The Waters of the Dnieper
10. Arise All Ye Peoples

“Please refrain from applause until the conclusion of the program”

Lyrics

1. His Feet Knew This Earth

   He walked in the desert 'mid serpents and stones.
   Alone in the desert I see him.
   Temptation and hunger: he knew them as well.
   Alone in the desert they greet him.
   He’s walking...he's walking alone.
   He’s walking...he’s walking alone in the desert.
   I've walked in the desert 'mid serpents and stones.
   Alone in the desert I’ve seen them.
   Temptation and hunger: I’ve known them as well.
   Alone in the desert they greet me.
   I'm walking...I'm walking alone.
   I'm walking...I'm walking alone in the desert.
   His thoughts were as mine and he did as I do.
   Alone in the desert oh Blessed Saint Andrew...
   His feet knew this earth...his eyes this sky
   And so shall it be forever.
   His soles knew such pain but his eyes knew such might.
   (All the power and might of the Lord?)
   And so shall it be forever.
   His tongue knew of thirst...his heart of song.
   With him we are one forever
   In glory and pain
   But never in vain
   And so shall it be forevermore!

2. Which Master Shall I Serve?

   Which master shall I serve?
   Do I deserve to serve that I should see such misery?
   Which master shall I serve?
   Which master shall I serve when joys of flesh I’ve grown to yearn?
   And my desires so often served?
   Yet all my heart and all my soul are mired deep in doubt.
   Which master shall I serve when pain and torture I’ve observed?
   Yet warm compassion I’ve been shown I’ve never once returned.
   Which master shall I serve when spoils and riches I’ve now earned
   And crowns of gold and jewels so rare?
   Yet all my days and all my nights are filled with grief untold.
   Which master shall I serve? ‘Twas God and man I’ve now discerned.
   I’ve searched this earth and found in turn my place no longer first.
   “Which master shall I serve?” I’ve asked myself in grave concern
   And tossed and turned and finally learned
   With all my heart and all my soul which master I must serve!

3. We Seek Thee God

   We seek thee God in all we do.
   Our every wish we beg you.
   We seek thee God in all we do: Our hope in toil and confusion.
   Our hope...our light...our Savior...
   Our beacon on this sea of dangers...
   Your love endures...our hope secures
   We cry out in the night oh Savior!

4. We Have Tasted in the Sweetness

   We have tasted in the sweetness, Oh Lord!
   All our days we will recall
   The beauty and grace of that holiest place where
   You in your blessed spirit dwell, Lord!
   We have tasted in the sweetness, Oh Lord!
   Grant us privilege to bear
   The splendor and might at the site of your altar
   Where you in Trinity appear, Lord!
   And grant that when sin or temptation arise
   That you may observe with merciful eyes
   And sanctify, yes sanctify our spirit Oh Lord!
   We have tasted in the sweetness, Oh Lord!
   Now we gather here in awe
   The wonders untold, yes the whole of creation
   Bore’s your divinity in full, Lord!
   And grant that one day when our time here is done
   That we may be fit to join you as one.
   Yes grant that we may join you at your banquet, Oh Lord!
Kings Will Be Humbled

Volodymyr was humbled by God.  
Volodymyr was humbled by the Lord.  
By the Lord Volodymyr was humbled.  
Volodymyr: the mighty pagan...  
Volodymyr: the mighty mighty Volodymyr...  
Mighty Volodymyr humbled down by the Lord our God.  

All the mightiest kings shall kneel.  
They shall stoop to the ground...  
Bow their heads to the Lord:  
King and Ruler of all!  

Volodymyr was humbled by God.  
There he lay as the beggars do in poverty.  
Yes in poverty, Volodymyr as the beggar.  

Lay ye down your spoils and riches.  
Lay ye down your wealth, your self, your vanity.  
All our vanity lay we down for the Lord our God.

As Did Mary So Do I

As did Mary so do I.  
(Blessed Mother of God, Holy Nurse for the Child)  
And as did Mary so do I:  
My life resigned to the will of the Lord!  
Yes as did Mary so do I.  

As did Mary so do I:  
Willingly for the Father set aside my desires.  
And as did Mary so do I:  
Selflessly (for all others) every day to endeavor.  
Yes as did Mary so do I.  

Everyday I beg the Lord, my God, King and Savior  
That I may bear his cross without fail.  
For when moulded by his hands a vessel so frail  
In time shall prove his holiest grail.  
Yes as did Mary so do I.

Take Peru From His Place

Take him away, Peru, Peru, Peru...  
Take him from his place on high and cast him in the deepest water,  
Cast away this fallen idol. Wash away his memory.  
Cast away this false god. Welcome here the One True Lord!  

Take him away, Peru, Peru, Peru...  
Burn away his pagan image; stir the flames that burn him down.  
Bask we now this false Messiah - heathen embers fly away!  
Spread we now the True Flame that lights the hearts of men forever!  

Take him away! Take him away, far away...far away! Yes!  
Away from the people who fear of a powerful God!  

Perun, Perun, Perun...  
Rid the land of fear and hatred; lay to rest these aging lies.  
Throw away our false impressions- tyranny has paralyzed!  
Recognize the Savior for only then can men be free!

I Have Now Perceived the One True God

I have now perceived the One True God!  
Bountiful is justice and plentiful is love.  
Paramount is mercy to God the Holy Judge.  
Battles of the spirit no evil ever wins.  
God in all his mercy has cleansed me of my sins!  

I have now perceived the One True God!  
Selfish is the nature that rules the hearts of men.  
Terrible the perils and consequences of sin.  
Noisier to the darkness my soul'll no longer be.  
God Almighty Father has shown his truth on me!  

I have now perceived the One True God!  
Merciful and mighty are you our Lord above.  
Rich in all the virtues that men too often shun.  
Pity all the nations where peace and love are spurned.  
Help us God Our Father where mercy's never learned!

The Waters of the Dnieper

To the waters of the Dnieper let us go.  
We'll take the shortest passage that we know.  
Yes to the waters of the Dnieper let us go  
And then we'll bathe in our Jordan River's flow.

Yes to the waters of the Dnieper let us go.  
We'll join with all our brothers and we'll show...  
And then we'll show the world a world without foe.  
Yes to the waters of the Dnieper let us go.

To the waters of the Dnieper let us go  
We'll tread the seed that God himself has sown.  
Oh yes we'll tread the seed and hold it as our own  
And then we'll watch the Holy Spirit in us grow.

Yes to the waters of the Dnieper let us go.  
And nevermore as pagans will we roam  
And if the world can be brotherhood of hope  
Then to the waters of the Dnieper let us go.

But we must guard against the weakness of the spirit  
And guard against the forces of destruction  
And guard against the forces that are brought about by man  
And guard against some forces we may never understand  
But guard we must, yes guard we must and faithfully forever!  
God! Forever united must we stand!!!

So to the waters of the Dnieper let us go.  
A nation under God as he foretold.  
Oh yes we'll satisfy the prophecies of old  
Yes to the waters of the Dnieper let us go!

To the waters of the Dnieper let us go.  
We'll take the shortest passage that we know  
And then we'll bathe in our Jordan River's flow.  
Yes to the waters of the Dnieper let us go.

Arise All Ye Peoples

Arise, arise all ye peoples of the Earth  
And carry forth the torch that was passed to you at birth!  
Arise, arise all ye peoples of the Earth.  
In sorrow and misfortune be mindful of your worth!  
Arise, arise all ye peoples of the Earth  
And never will you falter, your message will be heard!  
Arise, arise all ye peoples of the Earth  
But hasten now to action, for soon He will return!

Music & Text (c) 1989 Danny Schur
Danny Schur: A Biography

Danny Schur comes to prominence in the Canadian music industry with a broad background in musical composition and performance.

Born and raised in Ethelbert, Manitoba, Danny showed an inquisitive interest in music as early as the age of three. The solitude of his native rural area was responsible for his subsequent immersion in the study of the piano and the synthesizer. He remains a gifted pianist and a respected authority in regards to computers and electronic music.

It was in his early teens that Danny's interest turned completely to composition - this as a direct result of his experimentation with his already-growing arsenal of electronic instruments and recording gear. By his sixteenth year, Danny had produced jingles for local merchants and lead numerous bands devoted to the performance of his original music. It was his original music that brought him much acclaim at the provincial, national, and indeed, international level culminating in his being chosen the Most Promising Musician at the International Music Camp in Bottineau, North Dakota.

Danny's education continued with his enrollment in the Bachelor's Degree Program in Composition at the School of Music at the University of Manitoba. It was there that he studied piano with Professor Charles Horton and composition with Doctor Robert Turner and Doctor Michael Matthews.

As the founding head of the musical production firm, "Boomtalk", Danny divides his time between commercial/record production and serious composition. His composition of "Vlad of Kiev" is in response to what he terms "the ultimate irony"; the Millenium of Ukrainian Christianity could not be officially celebrated in Ukraine because the Ukrainian churches are outlawed under the Soviet regime.

Acknowledgements:

— O. Koshetz Choir
— Explorations Program of the Canada Council
— Tiras Shevchenko Foundation
— Carpathia Credit Union
— Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Manitoba
— Ukrainian Fraternal Society
— Ukrainian Professional and Business Men's Club of Winnipeg
— Mike Daher
Vlad of Kiev: The Spoken Text

[The narration should be measured and purposeful. Imagine a great scholar having to explain something that only his mind can comprehend, to a group of students. Despite the weighty tone, however, there should be a sense of good humour and inner peace.]

[The Master of Ceremonies will declare the performance begun and the Narrator will then take the platform, survey the audience studiously and after a long pause of between twenty and thirty seconds, begin.]

I'm going to tell you a story. It's not a particularly happy story. At least it wasn't for me. But I'm going to tell you anyway.

It's a story about a king - not a wise, old king but a young impetuous, miserable excuse for a king. Don't get me wrong! I liked him! It's just that, well, we never really got along.

His name was Volodymyr. Sometimes he's called "Vladimir" now, or just plain "Vlad," but I called him "Volodymyr." It has a much better ring to it, doesn't it?

You know it doesn't even seem like a thousand years ago. You know the way five, ten years has a way of just slipping away and then you're left saying, "That wasn't ten years ago, was it? Gee, it seems like just yesterday!" Well, that's the way it is for me too! A thousand years and it seems like just yesterday.

Volodymyr and I were from the land of the 'Rus. [pronounced "roos"] The Kievan 'Rus to be exact. Our city was Kiev but we roamed the land from the Black Sea to the Baltic. These days they call it "Ukraine," but I think the city's still called "Kiev." KIY.

Ahh but we were the 'Rus even before there was a Russia. Everybody knows that the Russians stole that name from us. Well maybe "stole" is a harsh word. "Misappropriate" is a good one! Again, don't get me wrong. Nothing against the Russians, it's just that they have this way of imposing their will on everyone! Okay I'm rambling.

You know I knew Volodymyr better than anyone, especially after he became king. He had everything a king could ask for: all the tribes of his domain paid him homage, he had more mistresses than he knew what to do with and he had henchmen that would obey his every beck and call. Of course Volodymyr's grandmother, Olga, who raised him, simply deplored his lifestyle and she told him so! But that didn't stop him. He was as bullheaded and self-concerned as ever. But only I knew how deeply troubled he was.

It started with the dream.
When Volodymyr had been a child, his grandmother had told him the legend of Saint Andrew. Apparently, the apostle had traveled to where Kiev was later built and had predicted that the site would be a holy one. Now, as an adult, Volodymyr was haunted by this image of Saint Andrew walking from the Holy Land to Kiev.

Every night when he'd go to sleep, it would be the same dream. Over and over. He kept seeing St. Andrew, cross in hand, walking, walking... It wasn't that distressing at first; in fact it was somewhat pleasant. [growing more quiet as if falling asleep] Every night the same dream...over and over...every night...walking...over...and...over

[Song #1: His Feet Knew This Earth]

It was when Volodymyr told his grandmother Olga about the dream that things took a turn for the worse.

I remember it well. Volodymyr casually mentioned the fact that he had been dreaming of Saint Andrew's journey to the site of Kiev. Olga, upon hearing this, simply scoffed, "Kiev, a Holy City? Bah! More a city drenched in blood!"

I thought it quite a regular statement for the usually-indignant Olga, but the second she uttered it, I knew it cut right to Volodymyr's heart! I saw his face turn white and his knees weaken and he couldn't even muster one of his trademark venom replies. Olga had said what others dared not. And Volodymyr knew it was all too true.

From then on, Volodymyr's dreams turned into nightmares. After that he dreamed of Saint Andrew carrying a cross dipped in blood. The great king could no longer sleep, eat or drink. His conscience consumed him and he paced like a caged animal. For you see, he had at the centre of his being a deep dark secret; Volodymyr had murdered his brother to ascend the throne.

[Song #2: Which Master Shall I Serve?]

After some time, it became obvious to Volodymyr that a wrong as great as murder could only be forgiven by a being greater than Volodymyr himself. But which being and how would he go about forgiving Volodymyr? And what would Volodymyr have to do to be forgiven?

You have to remember that at this time Volodymyr was a pagan. I mean he was worshiping a wooden carving thinking it could bring him consolation! He knew, though, that there had to be something deeper - something, I don't know, permanent, maybe. But he just couldn't put his finger on it.

By this time, he was really acting strange. Some of the elders were wondering if he was fit to continue as king. And then when Volodymyr came up with his plan, the elders really started to
wonder!

Volodymyr assembled a group of elders one day and told them he was sending them on a mission. Oh it was a great mission, he told them. A noble mission. One that they should be proud to do for their king. He was sending them to Constantinople to investigate the sacraments and rituals of the Christian worshipers.

Now you have to give Volodymyr some credit. I mean shouldn't a wise king consult with the elders and even delegate authority to them? Well, yeah, but again you have to remember that in those days a trip from Kiev to Constantinople was a great, great distance. It wouldn't be so bad for someone younger, but the elders? They would be subject to the weather, the terrain and especially hostile tribes who were known to harass, steal or murder if they felt like it. I noticed that there was more than one elder who had this look on his face as if to say, "Well Volodymyr, if you're so interested in this religion why don't you go yourself?" But no one dared say that. They knew if they didn't go it would be their heads on the block.

And so the delegation of elders left, each one praying he would return alive.

[Song# 3: We Seek Thee God]

The delegation of elders was gone a great length of time. It must have been three or four months at least. And during that whole time not one message of any sort was relayed back to Volodymyr. I think he finally gave them up for dead, but he didn't want to say so because he'd be thought a fool. And he didn't want to send a search party or a second delegation, because that would be an admission of his foolishness. And so he grew more and more embittered and lonely.

But then one day, they returned. I remember there was a great clamor as they entered the city. It was like they were triumphant warriors returning from battle. And not only were they completely unscathed, they had extended their stay because they were so impressed with the Christian ritual. They said they didn't send word to Volodymyr because no written words could describe their experience!

This completely infuriated Volodymyr. It was obvious he didn't care what they had to say, he was just furious that they hadn't informed him during their absence.

But for anyone who bothered to listen to what the elders said, it was obvious that they were deeply moved. They went on and on about the beauty of the worship and the deep peace they felt and the prospect of eternal life. I think it was the prospect of eternal life that really appealed to them. I mean here was a bunch of old pagans who were sure that when they died
they'd become part of Mother Earth and that was it. But now they had something to hope for. And their message was taken to heart by many people on that day.

[Song #4: We Have Tasted in the Sweetness]

Now you'd think that Volodymyr would have been the one to take the elders report to heart. But that wasn't the case. Their message of peace and forgiveness was completely lost on him. In fact as a way of escaping from his self-imposed torment, he decided that he and his army would go off on a military campaign.

To say that this military campaign was unnecessary was an understatement. The borders were all secure and there was no foreign threat to Volodymyr's rule. But still, he decided to harass the neighboring state's border town, Kherson.

It was only when the Volodymyr's soldiers had seized Kherson and cut off all supplies to the town, that they realized what Volodymyr's true motive was. [Of course I knew along, but that's another story... give me a clue.

You see Kherson belonged to Constantinople's emperor, Constantine. And I knew that Volodymyr secretly lusted for Constantine's sister, Anna, whom he'd met a few times. So what Volodymyr did was seize Kherson, hold it hostage and demand that Princess Anna marry him. See this way he could get back at Constantinople for the humiliation he had felt when the elders had returned from there.

Well, I'll tell you. I don't purport to know the mind of God or anything, but if I was God I sure would have done what happened next. I don't think God punishes us for our acts directly. Maybe he does. Maybe he doesn't. But it sure seemed like what happened next was an unbelievable coincidence!

Volodymyr was struck with a certain fever that came about as a result of his travelling through swampy lands. The fever was characterized by a puss that was emitted from the eyes. As the fever grew worse, the puss gradually covered his eyes until he could no longer see. And the pain from the fever was excruciating. I'd heard stories of people with the same fever who'd demand that they be killed to ease their pain.

So there he was, writhing in pain, screaming uncontrollably and tearing at his eyes. Nobody knew what to do. Their great leader had fallen and now there was talk amongst the soldiers of leaving Volodymyr to die, before Constantinople sent an army to punish them.

[Song #5: Kings Will Be Humbled]

Now in Constantinople, they didn't know that Volodymyr was sick. As far as they were concerned, if they didn't send Anna to
marry Volodymyr, Kherson would be destroyed. So it was up to Constantine to convince his sister that she should in fact marry Volodymyr.

Anna was no ordinary woman, though. She was extremely intelligent, assertive and independent. The thought of an arranged marriage infuriated her. And in this case especially, she felt like a pawn in a stupid game.

But, overshadowing all of this, was Anna's deep, deep faith. She had been raised Christian, and like the truest Christians, was able to completely renounce herself. When Constantine explained the situation to Anna, she knew that if she didn’t give her life to Volodymyr, he would take away the lives of thousands in Kherson. So as she left Constantinople, at least that could console her.

(Song #6: As Did Mary, So Do I)

Well somehow Volodymyr made it through the worst part of the fever. But after the retreat of the fever and the covering on his eyes, he was left permanently blind. Now, there seemed nothing to live for. Even the prospect of marrying Anna was no consolation. He had been vanquished—his power drained by a force greater than his own.

He was nursed by his generals, who were only too glad to show him kindness, because they knew that one of them could be king in a short matter of time. And Volodymyr knew this as well. And he grew more and more miserable.

Anna was rushed to Kherson, but when she arrived, she found Volodymyr a mere shadow of his former self. I heard her remark something to the effect: "This is the mighty Volodymyr who demands my hand! I could have single-handedly defeated his force!"

Despite the fact that she could have gone right back to Constantinople, I could see that she genuinely took pity on him. She could see him for exactly what he was: a bitter young man whose misguided energy had got the best of him. After what happened next, I knew that this Anna was no ordinary woman!

Of course, she demanded that Volodymyr be baptized into Christianity! I mean there was no way she was going to marry a pagan! It was that simple! And while he resisted at first, on the grounds that it was a affront to his dignity, he slowly came to believe! And I must say Anna was an excellent teacher! It was because of her that the elders message finally made sense to Volodymyr: surely peace and forgiveness were better than war and hatred.

I was present that fateful day when Volodymyr himself was baptized. Anna had brought with her her own priests, and she and Volodymyr and numerous soldiers were present. I remember it quite
clearly. The priest was administering the sacrament of baptism to Volodymyr and a few soldiers began to snicker at the sight of Volodymyr immersed in water. You could tell he felt foolish as well, though. And then it happened.

At the very moment the priest laid his hand on Volodymyr’s head, a great beam of light blinded everyone present and a sound louder than the loudest thunder shook the whole of the earth. And when those who dared lift their heads did, they could see Volodymyr with tears streaming down his face shouting, “Anna! Anna! I can see!!! I can see!!!”

[Song #7: I Have Now Perceived the One True God!]

I guess you could say that was the big turning point for Volodymyr. He was now convinced that there was a being greater than he, and that scared him deeply. After he and Anna were married in Kherson, they returned to Kiev where Volodymyr was determined to right his wrongs.

He was now completely convinced of the emptiness of pagan worship and saw to it that all of the pagan idols were destroyed. So emphatically did he want to show his people the error of his ways, that he had the largest idol Perun dragged through the streets, whipped, chopped and thrown into the river. And for those people who wept at the loss of their idols, he took the time to explain what had happened to him in Kherson and how firmly he believed in his new faith.

Now, Volodymyr had a mission.

[Song #8: Take Perun From His Place]

Through the heart of Kiev and indeed through the heart of Rus, there flows a wide, peaceful river known as the Dnieper. [pronounced “nee per”] Volodymyr determined that if all he did for the rest of his days was to have his people baptized in the faith that Anna had brought to him, that would be enough. Because then Saint Andrew’s journey up the lonely Dnieper would not have been in vain: Kiev would indeed be a holy city! [short pause]

It was really something to see! The whole city of Kiev was abuzz with the news of a proclamation issued by Volodymyr: everyone was to assemble at the river for a mass baptism into the faith of their king. People ran here and there shouting "To the river! Everyone to the river! By the King's order! Everyone to the river!" Fathers ran with children in arms, mothers with children in tow and what started as a trickle grew into a deluge gathered at the bank of the Dnieper. By now word had spread amongst the people about Volodymyr’s miraculous healing, and it was agreed that his faith was a very good thing.
[Song #9: The Waters of the Dnieper]

Of course, Volodymyr did much more than just baptize the Kievans. He built churches, schools, monasteries and was reknowned for his great acts of charity. And, throughout, he remained completely devoted to Anna. When he finally died, his people considered him a saint, and, of course, now he is.

[pause]

When I first saw Volodymyr after he died, he didn’t quite recognize me. But when he did, he burst into tears and fell to my feet sobbing.

You see my name is Yarapolk. I am the brother Volodymyr murdered to ascend the throne of Kiev so many years ago. When I died, I was assigned to watch over him. Kind of ironic when you think about it!

So, anyway, there he was balling at my feet and you know what I did? I picked him up, wiped the tears from his face, looked him right in the eye and said,

"Volodymyr, I FORGIVE YOU.

And all he could say as I held him in my arms was,

"I COULD NEVER DO ENOUGH! I COULD NEVER DO ENOUGH!!"

[Song #10: Arise All Ye Peoples]

[The End]
Music in My Life
by Myron Shatulsky

Preface

What will follow is based primarily on the copious notes, partial diaries, and other miscellaneous material I have managed to keep over the years. I have also delved into the recesses of my memory for many of the fond remembrances I decided to share. There should be no doubt that my personal opinions will be to some extent subjective. I also have to admit that this is my first attempt at outlining any aspects of my life, even those that may seem to have nothing more than some peripheral meaning. Although I was involved in music as a full-time conductor and cultural director in the Winnipeg Branch of the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians (AUUC) between 1953 and 1967, my work as a draughtsman, machine designer, graphic and technical illustrator would favourably compare with those things I achieved as a “professional” musician. It is nigh near impossible, here in Canada, to make a living as a conductor of Ukrainian choirs or orchestras, unless, of course, you assume positions, and their associated responsibilities, for two or more groups.

I did, however, manage to become involved (again) in the “business” of Ukrainian music (choral and instrumental), conducting, performing, arranging and composing, on a fairly volunteer basis from 1983 to 2008. This latter period would probably qualify as my most productive, in a general creative way. At least, I was prepared to take chances. My birth place and date: Winnipeg, April 22, 1930.

Part I

Both my mother and my father were music lovers. My father, Matthew Shatulsky conducted a church choir for a short time in his village of Bazaliya, in the Volyn’ guberniya of Tsarist Russia. Settling in the Edmonton area prior to World War I, he organized a vocal trio named The Shatulsky Brothers. Although not in the least related, the group performed Ukrainian songs at concerts sponsored by the Taras Shevchenko Self-Educational Society (Товариство самообразовання ім. Т. Г. Шевченка). He soon became the conductor of the Society’s newly organized choir.
I distinctly remember my first foray into the practical aspects of music production. I should first mention that my parents, who moved to Winnipeg in 1920, had accumulated a fair amount of gramophone records while living at 891 Pritchard Avenue. Thus, I was exposed to many types of music, both vocal and instrumental, classical and folk, Ukrainian and other – particularly operatic.

I was six or seven, when my parents suggested that I should learn to play a musical instrument. I agreed, not really knowing whether I had a choice or not. In any case, I told them that I would like to learn to play the saxophone. My choice probably went over like a lead balloon, but my father calmly suggested that I begin with a violin, and then after I learn how to read music, the saxophone would be considered. Needless to say, I was not all that excited about the violin, but began taking lessons. I don’t recall my first teacher’s name, but I do remember going to the Bornoff School of Music, opposite Ashdownes on McDermot Avenue. However, because I was not a diligent student, my teacher later refused to accept me into her class.

My parents, particularly my father, never gave up on me. I was already attending Ukrainian School at the Ukrainian Labour Temple, when it was suggested that I play the violin and accompany a girl (one of the pupils in my class) while she sang a song—at a concert—on a stage—in front of an audience! The song she sang was the Ukrainian folk song “Oy u poli nyvka” (Ой, у полі нивка). Everybody, including the sparrows, knew that song. But it had too many verses—way too many. I lost count of them after the fourth or fifth one, and then continued to ask the girl if that was the last verse. To cut the story short, the audience began to snicker, and I, more than mortified, felt like running off the stage. I vowed never to perform on a stage again, and the second half of that duo refused to talk to me ever again.

Everything seems to be a blur regarding my musical education after that episode until, at the age of thirteen, I was accepted into the String Orchestra, as it was then called, at the Ukrainian Labour Temple. By then, World War II was well under way, my father had recently been released from internment camp after a two-year incarceration, and we now lived at 637 Machray Avenue. Many of the orchestra’s male players had joined the armed forces and the orchestra was on the verge of being the first Ukrainian Canadian group in Winnipeg to volunteer its services of entertaining the troops. During this period, the orchestra was still conducted by the legendary Nicholas Hoculak. He left shortly after the first few concerts and his place was taken by the novice-conductor Anna Vynohradova, or as she was affectionately called, “Anne Grapes”.

This performing arts group, known as the Canadian Ukrainian Youth Victory Troupe, began to visit the various camps in June, 1942. It entertained the troops at Fort Garry, Fort Osborne,
Stevenson’s Field, Tuxedo barracks, and the Orpheum Theatre in Winnipeg, and in the province at Camp Shilo, Brandon, Carberry and Macdonald’s Air Training. The group consisted not only of the orchestra, but had its own vocal, and instrumental soloists, and Ukrainian dancers. In a certain respect, participating in this group proved to be a bit of turning point for me as a violinist. Sitting among musicians, particularly among those who had been in the orchestra for a decade or more, convinced me to consider resuming my lessons. Nicholas Hoculak, who had opened a small studio on Selkirk Avenue just east of Arlington, agreed to take me as a student. I stayed with him for the next few years until he left teaching.

By that time, I was also a member of the Isaac Newton High School student orchestra. It was a good period. Most of the school orchestra consisted of Ukrainian Canadians. I remember, years later, going through the year books and counting the people with Ukrainian names—over half of the entire student body was of Ukrainian descent. Belonging to both orchestras was an education in itself. One featured Ukrainian music while the other—light classics and other popular works. We always looked forward to performing Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. It seems strange today to look at a high school’s music curriculum which includes brass bands but no string-woodwind-brass-type orchestras. In the war and post-war period, even Junior High Schools had basic music and music appreciation classes. Pupils and students were encouraged to participate in the various choirs, which competed in the annual Manitoba Music Festival held in the huge Civic Auditorium (now home to the Manitoba Archives).

Musical education didn’t stop in the class rooms. On a number of occasions, Winnipeg High School students were provided with the opportunity to go, free of charge, to an afternoon concert in the Civic Auditorium. That is how I got to hear the great Australian composer-pianist Percy Grainger perform. He literally brought the house down by playing the piano keys with an orange in each hand. We also got to hear the future conductor of the New York Philharmonic, Dmitri Mitropoulos, conduct his Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. He was outstanding. We, teenage musicians, couldn’t get over the fact that he conducted the entire concert by memory! On the other hand, I managed to save up enough money to buy a ticket to a concert given by Fritz Kreisler, the world renowned violinist, in the Civic Auditorium. I sorely missed the opportunity to hear one of the world’s foremost composers, Sergei Rachmaninoff when he came to Winnipeg. During this time, my father took me to hear my first opera, Verdi’s Aida, presented by the San Carlo Opera also of Minneapolis (if I’m not mistaken). It seems to me that Winnipeg has, for some time now, been shunted back into the cultural hinterlands (backwater, if you prefer) by Canadian, and/or American impresarios.
By 1945, I was not only playing in the AUUC’s orchestra in the Ukrainian Labour Temple, but had also joined the mixed choir. Whatever is said about voices changing – it is true. For the first two years I sang bass, actually, baritone. And then, I became a tenor, and a lyric tenor at that. Joining the choir introduced another facet—language—whose importance I wasn’t capable of understanding at the time. Fortunately, having had a few good years prior to and during World War II, learning Ukrainian (reading and writing) as well as having to use Ukrainian at home, I didn’t have any problems with the songs.

In 1946, the AUUC held the second of its National Festivals of Ukrainian Song, Music and Dance on July 27 & 28, in Edmonton. The very first such Festival was held in Toronto’s Arena Gardens on July 15 & 16, 1939. Although I was too young to attend the first, I did participate in the Edmonton Festival playing violin in the huge orchestra of nearly 300 musicians. The choir was even larger with close to 600 singers. As in the early Toronto festival, the program consisted of Ukrainian folk, classical and contemporary choral and instrumental selections. For example, the orchestra, conducted by John Moscow, who was on the violin faculty of the Toronto Conservatory of Music, performed excerpts from the opera “Natalka Poltavka” (Наталка Полтавка), a fantasy on themes from the opera “Запорожці за Дунайем” (Запорожці за Дунайем), and “Українська думка” (Українська думка), as well as accompanying the choir and dancers. The highlight of the Festival was the appearance of the first delegation from Ukraine to come to Canada. The group consisted of Zoya Haidai (Зоя Гайдай) and Ivan Patorzhynsky (Іван Паторжинський), both singers of the Kyiv (Kiev) Opera Theatre, poet Andriy Malysko (Andriй Малишко), Professor Semen Stefanyk (Семен Стефаник), and Luka Palamarchuk (Лука Паламарчук), journalist. Fortunately, the CBC decided to record portions of the Festival which were issued in a set of 78 rpm records. I still have two copies in my possession.

There is something about performing before an audience, particularly when you are part of a large group. This sort of combined effort, whether the participants realize it or not, actually accomplishes a lot more then just transmitting to the listeners the selection at hand. I think that especially for non-professional musicians (musicians who do not get paid for performing, that is) who do this constantly, the creative process takes on a completely different meaning. Quite a few members of the Winnipeg orchestras of the Ukrainian Labour-Farmer Temple Association (ULFTA), prior to World War II, and of the AUUC, were later hired by various Canadian and American symphony orchestras. Morris Biniowsky (Winnipeg SO & Toronto SO), Nick Gelniche (Atlanta Symphony), Ray Kuchta (Wpg SO), and two very good friends of mine, Victor Pomer
(WpgSO & National Arts Center) and Leslie Malowany (Vancouver SO and Principal Violist in the Montreal SO, under Charles Dutoit). All received their initial orchestral training and experience as members of the ULFTA and AUUC orchestras. And that is also how I was introduced to the rudiments of the making of music.

**Part II**

A major role in my musical development was played by the conductors of both the orchestra and the mixed choir. Although I was exposed to Nicholas Hoculak’s extremely rigid discipline for only a very brief time, his professional attitude towards the utilization of rehearsal time definitely left an imprint on my own future approach to rehearsals. What he was able to achieve within a span of two hours (with a 15 minute break half way through) was remarkable. Then came Fred Petruja, who only led the orchestra for two seasons. Petruja excelled in arranging and orchestration, something most of us never thought about. We were used to playing from well-printed music sheets, and now Fred would place his latest arrangement, hand-written, before us. When we inquired, how come, he would simply state that this was his work. He not only tailored his arrangements to suit our capabilities (and then some), but slowly enlarged the group’s repertoire with contemporary selections. One of his best, was the arrangement of the popular song *In the Still of the Night*. In the summer of 1947, with Petruja as conductor, the orchestra, two gymnasts, one accordionist-soloist, two dancers and six drivers, a total of 36 people all squeezed into six automobiles, and proceeded to put on concerts in Kenora, Fort William, Port Arthur, Geraldton, Beardmore, Nipigon and Fort Francis. Among the orchestra musicians were the aforementioned Leslie Malowany, Victor Pomer and Ray Kuchta.

It was not a very stable time in the orchestra’s life. Before Petruja took over, Nellie Kalenowich, who had been the orchestra’s concertmaster since the war years, conducted the group for a few months. After Fred’s departure, Mary Tyrochek, who had been a long-time member of the group and had recently assumed the position of concertmaster (replacing Nellie), became the conductor. A few months later, Eugene Dolny, of Montreal, settled in Winnipeg and was hired on November 9, 1947, to be the Winnipeg AUUC’s Cultural Director, which included conducting both the orchestra and the mixed choir. For me, this was the beginning of a life-long friendship which, unfortunately, came to an abrupt end with his death in 1983.

Eugene Dolny was a first-class musician, theoretically and artistically. He knew the Ukrainian language, played the violin, mandolin and guitar, and something we didn’t know at the time, he had perfect pitch. Even though he was only 19 years old when he took on these
responsibilities, it didn’t take him long to establish his credentials, so to speak, to the consternation of a few of the old-time (Ukraine-born), former conductors, a couple of whom his coming “displaced”. On the other hand, those instrumentalists and singers of my Canadian-born generation and of the preceding one, greeted him with open arms. There was no doubt—he was one of us.

More than anything, Eugene continually encouraged us to sing and to play better. He first organized a male octet in which he sang baritone. And from that, together with my father’s assistance, a full-fledged male chorus, quickly named “Bandurist”, was formed. Within a year, on “May Day” 1949, the choir presented its first concert in our Ukrainian Labour Temple. It was a triumph, at least in our eyes. We presented 15 songs, including one with a dance, a number of songs with solos, and one separate dance—Arkan. Our theme song was the Ukrainian folk song “Bandura” (Бандура) in which I sang the first phrase solo, then was joined by Jerry Szach, and finally the entire choir entered for the next couple of verses.

We were being gradually introduced to Ukrainian (musical) drama. Eugene conducted the stagings of Verkhovntsii, Oy, ne khody Hrytsiu ta y na vechornytsi, and the incidental music to Taras Shevchenko’s play Nazar Stodolya. He also brought in a host of new selections to the orchestra: “Ukrainian Concertino” by Dmytro Klebanov, “Scherzo” by Oleksandr Znosko-Borovsky, and an adapted version of the overture to Mykola Lysenko’s opera, Taras Bulba. At a huge Festival Concert held in the Civic Auditorium on July 30, 1949, with the orchestras of Fort William-Port Arthur and Regina augmenting the Winnipeg orchestra, and before a capacity audience, the huge orchestra performed contemporary Ukrainian composer Boris Lyatoshynsky’s Halytskiy tanets from his opera Zolotyi obruch, and Rheingold Gliere’s popular “Russian Sailor’s Dance” from his ballet the Red Poppy. All this work certainly had an impact on me. I enjoyed these events immensely.

I have never understood why the question of performing the works, be they choral, instrumental or choreographic, of non-Ukrainian origin by our Ukrainian-Canadian groups as being some kind of a problem—musically speaking; content-wise—probably.

One event, in particular, had an important and lasting affect on my becoming interested in Ukrainian music. In late 1946, my father attended the International Slav Congress in Yugoslavia, and then visited Ukraine. Upon his return in 1947, he went on a tour across Western Canada appearing before the members of the various branches of the AUUC. He asked me to accompany him. Great stuff! I thought. Then, he explained his intentions. He had brought back a host of recordings of various Ukrainian singers, choirs, folk groups, etc., and wanted me to play these records at certain moments during his presentation. We started in Vancouver, went on to Calgary,
and then Edmonton. Instead of getting bored from listening to my father, or from playing the records, I began to look forward to these “lectures”. Actually, they were more than lectures. My father had a knack of speaking to people, and Edmonton was his “home ground”. The more I listened to my father, and the more I listened to the Dumka Choir, the Cappella Bandurist Ensemble, and the Ukrainian Folk Choir (conducted by Hryhorii Veryovka), the more I enjoyed it. It is difficult to put into words, but something came over me, not all at once, but I began to feel a distinct and imposing affinity towards Ukrainian music. There was no doubt about it. At home, I would play the same record, usually the Cappella Bandurist Ensemble’s version of *Vid Kiyeva do Luben’* over and over again, until my father finally told me to stop. Obviously, he was getting too much of a good thing, even though I thought it was great—I had never heard anything like it.

Hearing this exciting music led me into another field, which until then I hadn’t really considered—Ukrainian folk dance. A year earlier, during a stay for a short while in Winnipeg, Tony Kay (Kobyliansky), originally from Winnipeg, was asked by Eugene to teach a dance. The dance, Tony claimed, was Romanian, although it was performed to the music from the opera *Zaporozhets za Dunayem*. We certainly didn’t know the difference. In any case, the dance consisted of two boys and four girls. Eugene, after much goading, convinced me to try the dance. Here I was, 18 years old, and was going to learn a Romanian-cum-Ukrainian dance, whose steps I had never tried before. Mind you, I only agreed if Eugene would be the other boy. I don’t remember all the details, nor the names of the four girls, but we did perform it a couple of times, including once at the Playhouse Theatre (I think). Having now accumulated all this dance “experience and knowledge”, I unhesitatingly agreed to make up a dance for Bud Korchak and myself to perform to the Bandurist Male Chorus’ version of *Vid Kiyeva do Luben’*. We “wowed” the crowd (oh, so I hope) at the choir’s first concert on May 1, 1949. I have a photo from that concert of Bud doing a split leap over me as I was doing *shchupak* (which today is called *povzunets*). Our orchestra in Winnipeg, even under the tutelage of various conductors, was gradually enlarging its repertoire. And as a result, we, the members, were also enlarging our knowledge of instrumental music, both Ukrainian and otherwise. The main source of orchestral material came from two volumes prepared by Toronto musician Phillip Podoliak, and published by the AUUC. These volumes were respectively known (according to the colour of their covers) as the “Blue” (1946-47) and “Green” (1948) books. Podoliak, a very talented arranger, orchestrator and conductor, in addition to his musical endeavours, had developed an economical way of reproducing and printing music. Both books included Ukrainian selections: such as Davydovsky’s *Kobza*, Matiuk’s *Vesnivka*, Taranov’s *March*, and Liudkevych’s *Ukrainian Barcarolle*. Some were transcribed from choral selections, others from piano scores. But we also got //
to play Schubert’s *Moment Musicale*, Gabriel-Marie’s *La Cinquantine*, Strauss’ *Pizzicato Polka*, and Boccherini’s *Minuet*. 

I was already working for Kipp-Kelly Engineers on Higgins Avenue as a draughtsman when I began seriously thinking of going into the music teaching business in the AUUC. What helped initiate such thinking was that the AUUC was planning to hold a 4-month teachers’ preparatory course in 1950, to be held at its newly acquired national camp at Palermo, Ontario. Both my parents asked if I would be interested in attending such a school, and, after its completion, to teach music and dance in the AUUC (I believe they thought that I would become a bum—I liked to shoot pool in my spare time). I knew Eugene would be going, so I decided to go. Alongside Eugene and myself, two other young, inspiring teacher-conductors were also going from Winnipeg: Helen (Kowalewich) Chackowsky, and Olga Mateychuk, whom I married a couple of years after my return from Kyiv.

Our teacher of music and conducting at the school was Macedonian-born Chris Dafeff. Dafeff was not new to the Ukrainian community in Toronto. He had conducted the ULFTA orchestra in West Toronto during the mid-1920s. In addition, he taught violin in the Toronto Conservatory of Music and produced a host of fine musicians. At the school, in addition to the regular lectures on music theory, some of which was quite new to me, Dafeff had organized an orchestra and a choir out of the 24 students. We all had a go at conducting both groups. Except for Eugene, the rest of us were basically “learning how to swim”. And learn we did, because at the end of the school, we conducted at the special “closing of the school” concert in Toronto’s Ukrainian Labour Temple before a full house.

Besides music, we all had to participate in the obligatory dance classes—no matter what. Our instructor was the multi-talented and gifted Walter Balay. He was strict and yelled a lot. While many of the students already danced in groups, and others had even taught a bit, these were my very first dance lessons (at the age of twenty!). In any case, I progressed quite readily, and, as a response to one of Walter’s assignments, I managed to develop a fairly logical and understandable method of dance notation.

At the conclusion of the school, with the reading of our “grades”, Eugene and I were found to have topped the list—fortunately. I say, fortunately, because when the rest of the students were being told of their assigned cities and responsibilities (we had all agreed, prior to attending the school, to go to whatever locality we would be later be assigned), it was announced that Eugene and I were recipients of scholarships and would be going to Kyiv to further our studies: Eugene, music, and I,
music and dance. Eugene and I, accompanied by Walter Balay, who was to study dance, and Nick Hrynychshyn who was take up journalism, left at the beginning of October, 1950, for Kyiv.

Part III

There is absolutely no doubt that my three years in Kyiv were the major turning point in my life, as you shall gradually see. We certainly had no idea what to expect. Yes, through photographs, we knew that the city, as well as the countryside, had suffered massive destruction during the war. And here we were, five years after the war’s end, in the historic capital of Ukraine. The former Conservatory of Music, and the entire music complex had been totally destroyed. There were still a few bombed-out buildings on Khreshchatyk (Хрещатик) to be seen, but all rubble had been cleared from the streets. The Conservatory was temporarily housed in a building situated near the end of Voroshilov Street (Ворошилов), today renamed Yaroslaviv Val (Ярославів Вал), which fortunately had a fairly reasonable auditorium and stage. Numerous class rooms were set alongside the two main hallways on the main floor, and on the second floor. There also was a small concert hall towards the rear of the building. This, then, was to be our “home” for the next few years.

I don’t believe the Conservatory’s administration knew quite what to do with us. They certainly didn’t know much if anything of our background, musical or otherwise, and we had not gone through the customary entrance process required of most students. We found out later that the normal entrance examinations, or tests had been altered to accommodate many of the young people whose education had been so brutally interrupted by the war. A number of recently demobilized young men walking along the corridors were recognizable because some still wore portions of their uniforms. It was a serious time, we felt, for those intent on catching up with their lives.

Eugene and I did, however, have a meeting with the main administrators, namely: Oleksandr Klimov (Олександр Клімов), Rector and symphonic conductor; Konstantine Mykhailov (Константин Михайлов), Vice-Rector, head of the piano faculty; Boris Liatoshynsky (Борис Лятошинський), composer and head of the faculty of composition; Ivan Patorzhynsky (Іван Паторжинський), singer, leading artist of the Kyiv Opera and professor of vocal studies, and a couple of others whose names I have long forgotten. Even today, I get the shivers when I reminisce about that gathering. We were asked about our general educational background and, of course, our musical training. I should add that the entire discussion was carried out in Ukrainian. Everything went smoothly until they began to show a decided interest in the extent of our musical abilities: what instruments did we play, did we sing, etc.? It was then that I got quite nervous, because my musical
training was limited to what I had learned at that 4-month school. In any case, Eugene, sensing my apprehension, answered quite readily, and took me by surprise as well as the rest, when asked about his hearing stated that he had perfect pitch. I don’t remember which one of the group went to the piano and first struck one note, and then two, then three, and Eugene named the notes correctly every time. Finally a random group of four or five keys were struck simultaneously, and Eugene named them all. Everyone was greatly impressed, and at that point the “interrogation” literally came to an end. Needless to say, I was greatly relieved.

About a week later, we were called to the Conservatory (which today is named the National Academy of Music, etc.) to get our schedule and the names of the teachers. One good example of the administration’s uncertainty was the inclusion of geography in our curriculum. Not being too sure as to what this entailed, Eugene and I went along with the first few classes, which were led by an older woman who, as it turned out, had visited the many areas of the Soviet Union in her younger years. As interesting as her stories were, we decided that we would be better off taking a class more to our needs. In this manner, together with the administration—actually one, very nice, knowledgeable and accommodating woman—we were able to arrange a curriculum, which, to some extent, was more to our liking. I should mention that we did not sit in classes with the other students. This may seem odd, but the fact was that we did not expect to stay more than two years. Therefore, it was determined that we should be exposed to as much as possible during that time. As it turned out, Eugene stayed for the two years and I for three, but more on this later.

Eugene’s teacher of conducting was Mykhailo Kanersthein (Михайло Канерштейн), and mine was Ivan Razumnyi (Іван Разумний). History of Ukrainian Classical Music was taught to us by Mykola Hordychuk (Микола Гордічук), who had been demobilized from the army a couple of years earlier, and was doing post-graduate studies (he was one of our favourites). Classes in the History of Russian Classical Music, and History of European Classical Music were lectured by the incomparable, and improbable Mykola Mykhailov (Микола Михайлов), who steadfastly held on to the opinion that the last great “English” composer was George Fredric Handel (1685-1759). He continually brushed aside our counter-list of English composers, which included Edward Elgar, Ralph Vaughn Williams, Frederick Delius and Benjamin Britten. He was a slave to the hyperbole, and he didn’t mind arguing with us. Theoretical subjects, including harmony, counterpoint were taught by a woman by the name of Kulevska (Кулеевська), whose first name, for the life of me, I can’t remember. We were initially somewhat frightened of her, but that soon changed. She was a disciplined person, and very business-like. She really gave us a workout during the classes devoted
to ear-training. Even though Eugene had perfect pitch, she pointed out the many pitfalls that he might encounter. As for me, by the end of the second year I was able to write down a four-part, four-bar musical phrase played on the piano after hearing it twice.

Our classes in orchestration of folk instruments were held with Tarnopolsky (Тарнопольський), a calm and unassuming person, and for symphony orchestra, with the composer Anatoliy Sviechnykov (Анатолій Свечников). His newly-composed ballet “Marius Bohuslavka” (Маруся Богуславка) was staged in the Kyiv Opera Theatre in 1951. Eugene and I were fortunate to have had the opportunity to attend the premiere. The theoretical background for working with choirs was taught by Oleksandr Ravvinov (Олександр Раввінов), whose fine book on choral work was published in 1957. Classes dealing with musical forms were taught by composer Mykola Dremliuha (Микола Дремлиуha). While his classes were extremely interesting, his attitude to contemporary music was characteristic of that period. He couldn’t stand Stravinsky and thought that Gershwin was “ordinary and repetitious”. Because of our prime interest in choral work, we took vocal lessons. I forget who worked with Eugene, but my teacher was the widow of composer Mykhailo Skorul’sky (Михайло Скорульський), who composed the music to the ballet Lisova pisnya (Лисова пісня), based on Lesya Ukrainka’s poem. I really looked forward to her classes. Her daughter was not only an extraordinary character dancer with the Kyiv Theatre of Opera and Ballet, but one of the upcoming choreographers. During my third year, I attended, together with other students, classes on Ukrainian folk music. Our teacher was Onysia Shreyer-Tkachenko (Онисія Шрееер-Ткаченко). Her approach to this subject was of the “hands-on” type. When she lectured on folk instruments, for example, she managed to bring in an authentic lira player who nearly put on a whole concert for us. All her lectures were first class.

There is one class that all students must take, no matter what your specialty is: piano—well, except if your specialty is piano. Eugene and I were fortunate to have another post-graduate student work with us, whose named floored us: Oleksandr Oleksandrovych Oleksandrov (Олександр Олександрович Олександро). At our first meeting, we couldn’t help but smile when he introduced himself. He sat rather stunned until we told him about the sound of his name, which was unusual for us foreigners. He caught on immediately and quickly replied: “Call me Sasha.” And that’s what we did. After that, it was smooth sailing, except for our piano playing. Until then, my only interest in the piano was knowing four notes: E, A, D and G, which I needed to tune my violin. I have to admit that taking piano lessons was the best thing that happened. Since then, I’ve always used the piano when teaching parts to a choir. I would have been lost without that ability. I’m
jumping ahead, but the same is required of all pupils in the Choreographic Institute. All future ballet dancers must take piano lessons as one of their prerequisite subjects. And this is not a new concept. It was practiced in the top ballet schools of St. Petersburg and Moscow before the revolution.

After bringing in the New Year, our first one in Kyiv, which also turned out to be the beginning of the second half of the 20th Century, I began attending classes in the Choreographic Institute. I will deal with dance separately—later.

Upon hearing the Bandurist Cappella in person, I decided to take up the bandura during the second year of my studies. Up until then I barely had enough time to learn the piano, never mind take on another instrument. I was given a bandura, without any type of case, or cover, which nobody seemed to notice, or mind, when I walked from the hotel to the Conservatory, and back. Now that I’ve said it—yes, we lived in a hotel.

It was the Intourist Hotel, situated on Lenin Street (вулиця Леніна), now named Bohdan Khmel'nytskyi (Богдан Хмельницького), one number down from the corner of Volodymyrska Street (Володимирська вулиця), and the T.H. Shevchenko Theatre of Opera and Ballet, now called The T.H. Shevchenko National Opera of Ukraine. For Eugene and me, staying in the hotel was ideal. The Conservatory’s dormitories, whatever remained of them after the war, were filled to capacity. Many students, with the additional help of stipends, were able to “rent” a small room, or sometimes just a bed in someone’s apartment. But we were foreigners, and on top of all that, from the West. For sure we were the only students from Canada in Kyiv at that time, and I cannot deny that we were afforded some special treatment. But one thing is certain, neither Eugene, nor I, ever took advantage of our position either in the conservatory or anywhere else. We each received a monthly stipend of 100 rubles/month, the equivalent of $10 Cdn, at that time.

Getting back to the bandura, I was fortunate to have one of the Ukraine’s foremost bandurists as a teacher: Andriy Bobyr (Андрій Бобир). As early as 1936, Bobyr was leading an ensemble of bandurists in the country. From 1946 to 1965 he was the Artistic Director of the Kyiv Radio Bandurist Ensemble, and from 1949 to 1979 taught in the Conservatory. We also took classes in Dialectical and Historical Materialism. During my third year I also sat in with students during classes on aesthetics.

We were keenly interested in many of the events that were taking place in the musical-cultural life of Ukraine. We arrived shortly after Zhdanov’s denunciation of a number of composers and their works, including Shostakovich and Prokofiev, and, therefore, felt it would be to our benefit to try and understand the underpinnings of all those accusations.
We had the rare opportunity of being invited to the proceedings of the 1951, 6th Plenum of the Union of Composers of Ukraine (Спілки композиторів України), the agenda of which I still have a copy. In spite of some of the harsh critical comments made by some composers regarding their colleague’s works (whose compositions Eugene and I had yet to hear), it was truly interesting. It wasn’t difficult to see who was following the “line”, particularly among the older composers. But seeing and listening to some of Ukraine’s outstanding composers was something I’ve never forgotten: Lev Revutsky (Лев Ревутський 1889-1977), Boris Liatsoshynsky (Борис Літосинський 1896-1968), Pylyp Kozitsky (Пилип Козицький 1893-1960), Andriy Shchokarenko (Андрій Штокаренко 1902-?), Hryhoriy Veryovka (Григорій Верювка 1895-1964), Mykhailo Verykivsky (Михайло Вериківський 1896-1962), Yuliy Meytus (Юлій Мейтус 1903-?), and the oldest of them all, at 85 years of age, Hryhoriy Davydovsky (Григорій Давидовський 1866-1952), the composer of such Ukrainian choral classics as Bandura and Kobza. Eugene and I did come up to Davydovsky and introduced ourselves. We were standing near the exit, and his only response was „Позвіть мені кучера“ (“Call the coachman for me”). But we did get to shake his hand. I’ve provided the birth dates for the composers so as to better visualize their status within Ukraine’s musical hierarchy, not that it played much of role when the fur began to fly during the critique of someone’s creation.

Liatricsynsky’s 3rd Symphony got a pretty good going over. We finally got to hear it at one of the Plenum’s concerts held on October 25. We liked it very much and applauded vigorously to the astonishment of a fair portion of the audience. It wasn’t until the following year, that we were asked by one of our teachers what was it about Liatsoshynsky’s symphony that we liked. As I remember, our answers were quite nebulous. Although we were becoming increasingly aware of certain attitudes, we never did acquire the manner of the “ultra-deep” analytical process, which ultimately resulted in quasi-political assessments and statements. To be truthful, no one ever required that of us during our stay in Ukraine. It was, however, an unscheduled part of our learning process—to be sure!

But, about a month prior to the composers’ Plenum, during the last week of January, 1951, we were given passes to Ukraine’s amateur performing arts “Olympiad”. Actually, it’s a “competition” between the best of the choirs, (folk and classical), orchestras (folk instrument ensembles and regular type string and brass), dance (folk, staged and theatrical), soloists (vocal and instrumental) and acrobatics, from all the provinces, oblasti (области) of the country. This was really worth seeing. The performances were held from morning till night (it was like a week-long
concert). It seems that competitions were held in each “province” the year previously and the best were selected to go to Kyiv for the finals. All the performances were held in the Ivan Franko Drama Theatre.

It was a real education for us, musically as well as culturally. We never realized how choirs from the various areas sang so differently, particularly the women’s ensembles from Zhytomyr province, with their open, non-vibrato-type vocals, as compared to the choirs from around L'viv, for example, which sounded just like our Ukrainian choirs in Canada. I keep referring to this Olympiad as competitions, because a jury was present during all the performances. Two middle rows of chairs were removed from the centre of theatre for the judges. The head of the jury was Hryhoriy Veryovka, although other notable musicians sat there also. I remember him particularly because of one incident that virtually brought one of the evening performances to a stop. That was the evening at which the Stanislavska province (the name was later changed to Ivan-Frankivsk) was featured.

Kyivites, as well as the majority of the participants from the other provinces were witnessing the songs, dances and music of the Carpathian Mountains for the first time—and so were we. In any case, the finale of the evening began with a huge mixed choir, and seated in front of the choir was a row of about 8-10 tsymbaly players, and in front of them, about the same amount of fiddlers and one drummer. All were in their best Hutsul, festive clothes. After a non-stop series of kolomiykas performed by the huge choir, the audience just let out one huge gasp as a wild yell from back stage brought the dancers out, young men and women, stamping their feet as they entered the stage like a whirlwind. It was simply unbelievable. It just seemed to go on and on. But when the end did come, the audience jumped up onto their feet, yelling and clapping their hands. Finally, Veryovka got up and, above all the applause, attempted to get everyone to stop and to sit down. No one could hear him. And those that could, simply paid no attention to him. Veryovka, just kept on calling to all: “This is not a concert! This is not a concert!” To tell the truth, I really don’t remember how it all ended. Eugene and I talked about that evening many times. No one dances like that in Canada. And I don’t know why we even try? Even so, the important thing for us to remember is that we Ukrainians, or Canadians of Ukrainian descent are as diverse in our heritage as are our cousins in Ukraine.

Although all the classes were important, two really stand out: Mykola Hordiychuk’s lectures on the history of Ukrainian classical music, and Ivan Razumnyi’s classes, during which he taught and guided me through the complexities of becoming a conductor. As I had mentioned earlier, Hordiychuk was doing post-graduate work, which centred on the research and writing of his “diploma” subject. In effect, he was telling us about things and events that he had researched on his
own and, in a number of instances, could not be found in any other publications. After concluding his studies, he wrote numerous books and brochures on all the major aspects of Ukrainian classical music. He eventually became the Vice-Director of the M. Rylsky Institute of Art Studies, Folklore and Ethnology (Інститут мистецтвознавства, фольклористики та етнології ім. М. Т. Рильського).

Ivan Razumnyi (I never did ask him why he wrote his name with an ‘a’ in place of the usual ‘o’) always gave his all during my classes with him. My classes included two “concertmeisters”, both women, who played either on one piano, or two, depending on the transcription of whatever I was learning to conduct at the time. All three had a great sense of humour, which meant we got on famously. After I began taking classes at the Choreographic Institute, they began referring to me as their “balleroon”. Razumnyi was relentless when it came to my conducting, and at the very end of my third and final year, he had me conduct the Conservatorry’s opera orchestra (all professionals). After only two rehearsals with the orchestra, I conducted Franz List’s symphonic poem Les Preludes on the stage of the main hall, in front of a whole group of students and teachers. I did well. I had worked from a small pocket score, which I had a difficult time reading, and as Razumnyi always demanded, I managed to conduct the work mainly from memory. It is a practice that I have continually tried to follow, particularly with choirs. As Leonid Kogan, the great Russian violinist, remarked after attending a rehearsal of the Winnipeg CBC orchestra, conducted by Eric Wild, back in the late 1950s, “A conductor’s head should not be in the music, but the music should be in his head.” Ah, we Slavs have a way of saying things.

Sometime in February, 1951, I began attending classes at the Kyiv School of Choreography (Київське хореографічне училище). The school did not have its own premises, but shared space with the M. Lysenko School of Music situated on Vorovsky Street (вулиця Воровського). Part way through the following year, the school obtained a two-story building on Pushkin Street (вулиця Пушкіна), much closer to the centre of the city. On my first visit to the school I was introduced to the school’s Director, Halyna Oleksiyivna Beryozova (Галина Олексіївна Березова). Little did I know that she was not only considered to be one of the top teachers of classical ballet in Ukraine, but, before the war as head ballet master and choreographer of the Kyiv Theatre of Opera and Ballet, had staged numerous classics from the ballet repertoire. She was also the creator of the original choreography to the ballet “Lileya” (Лілея). She didn’t hesitate to admit me to the school, even though my experience in dance was virtually nil. From that day on, she was my main teacher of the Ukrainian folk dance.
The normal practice, which has been implemented since the mid-1880s, was to admit those children: 1) whose bodies fit required physical structure, 2) who responded readily to various musical rhythms and characteristics, and 3) who were at least 8 years old. The war had substantially brought the implementation of such criteria to a halt. The school, and primarily because of Beryozova’s insistence, had instituted special classes for young teenagers. Some came from amateur dance groups, others, like myself, were new to the dance.

After explaining to me that the classes she had in mind for me would require a lot of physical effort, and that some of it might result in pain, I agreed with her plan. My primary class would be learning the rudiments of the Ukrainian folk dance (both male and female parts), and progressing technique-wise as far as I would be able to go. The next class of importance consisted solely of learning the basics of the classical ballet training program (and that’s were the pain came in, as I was soon to experience). The next class dealt with what was known at that time as the character dance. This was another name for a dance that choreographers of the 1880s and early 1900s thought, or envisioned as ordinary folk dancing, such as the Polish and Spanish dances in the ballet Sleeping Beauty, or the Trepak, in The Nutcracker. The final class scheduled for me was Ballroom dancing—no not that kind of ballroom dancing. The true name was Istoryko-pobutovi (Історико-побутовий): historical dances such as the Minuet, Pavane, etc.; dances that were required to portray the life, in this case, of the aristocracy in various operas and dramatic presentations. In case anyone is wondering, there were books written about all these forms.

Seeing that I was taking classes at the conservatory, “When,” I asked, “would these classes be held?” “In the evening”, was the reply. The initial schedule had me dancing three times a week, an hour and a half per class: Ukrainian, Ballet and Character, with Ballroom squeezed in with Character. As in the Conservatory, I would be the only pupil. In any case, I did it.

All my dance classes included a ‘concertmeister’, usually a woman, who accompanied, on the piano, all the movements you were performing, whether they be part of a dance, or an specific exercise. Obviously, I had never personally experienced this kind of musical involvement. It was new, and it was different. These accompanists were a special breed. They not only had to be technically proficient, but had to have, at instant recall, a repertoire of musical selections that would precisely fit the physical movements of the dancers, and the dance’s or exercise’s characteristics as well. (I have a number of books that have been especially prepared to such accompanists.) However, for me, it soon became clear that music was not just an accompanying factor, but an integral part of dance. And as such, I could now understand why the children of the school had to take piano
lessons. Obviously, they had to go beyond the listening phase, and become part of the whole, know as much as possible of the music that inspired the choreographers, teachers and the dancers themselves. But there was one more aspect to this concept. The music selected must be the right music. Whether the dance be a *pas de deux*, a *pavanne*, or a *kozachok*, the music must be correct. Without that, we can very easily end up perverting a beautiful item of creativity. I see this happen quite frequently in Canada, both on the professional and amateur stages. And we the audience absorb this like indiscriminant sponges. I don’t remember how many times I have spoken to our dance instructors of the importance of knowing the rudiments of music. I even gave a lecture on the relationship of Ukrainian music and dance to quite a large group of instructors as part of a project organized by the Manitoba Ukrainian Arts Council. For some instructors, it all boils down to listening to a tape or CD and if the music fits – use it. What a crock!

I should give the names of my dance instructors. I’ve already mentioned Halyna Beryozova, who taught me the Ukrainian dance and, who brought in Oleksandr Dmytrenko (Олександр Дмитренко) for a couple of months to teach me some of the more intricate male steps (who, by the way, was the first dance instructor and choreographer with the Ukrainian Folk Choir, which was formed and conducted by Hryhoriy Veryovka in 1943). Classical ballet was taught by Petro Baklan (Петро Баклан), while character and ballroom dancing was taught by Alisya Nikiforova (Аліся Нікіфорова).

I particularly enjoyed character dance classes. I went through rigorous exercises for Polish, Russian, and Gypsy steps and etudes. Besides enhancing my technique with many new dance movements, steps and arm positions, these various styles of dance also extended my realization of the various differences between them and Ukrainian dance. In fact, they helped me to understand the basic character and emotional palette of Ukrainian dance even more.

During the summer of 1952, I had the opportunity to visit the republic of Georgia for two or three weeks. I became intrigued with the Georgian people’s culture: song, music, dance, costumes, history, etc. I visited many of the old towns including the ancient Mtsirskiy monastery. A very unusual, but extremely pleasant event occurred during my brief visit to Georgia’s main museum. While looking at various artifacts, one of the curators came up and we engaged in an interesting discussion about various items of the Georgian man’s costume, which included the wearing of the *kindzhal*—a long-bladed knife usually sheathed in an elaborately decorated scabbard. Upon finding out that I was from Canada, he opened one of the display cases, pulled out a *kindzhal* and handed it to me. After taking a good look at it, I handed it back to him. He said: “No, that is a gift to you, so
that you never forget about your stay in my country.” He then sized me up, and said that upon my return to Kyiv, there will also be a complete costume waiting for me. That’s not the end of the story.

During the early part of 1953, the Georgian Folk Dance Ensemble presented a number of concerts in Kyiv which, of course, I went to see. However, Beryozova had made arrangements with the two artistic directors of the ensemble, Illiko Sukhishvili and Nino Ramishvili, to remain an extra two weeks and hold classes in Georgian folk dancing with the senior students. Happily, I was included. We (the boys) all had special boots made so that we could learn how get up on the knuckles of our toes—one of the man’s characteristic steps—not an easy thing to do.

My classes were not all of the practical variety. Beryozova made certain that I was taught some of the theoretical (traditional) aspects of staging dances. It was something she would later try to institute in the school’s post-graduate studies’ program. Up until then, the only other ballet school that had such a program was the one in Moscow, set up by Rostyslav Zakharov. Some evenings, we would sit, the two of us, in her office as she would relate to me the intricacies and traditions of choreography, folk and classic. For example, she had first staged the ballet “Lileya”, music by Konstantin Dan’kevych (Константин Данькевич), in 1940, shortly after the 125th anniversary of the birth of Taras Shevchenko. She had the piano score as well as the entire choreography for the first act copied out for me (which I still have). With both the music and the notated choreography before me, she went on to explain why and how she had created the ballet. The majority of the first scene is based on Ukrainian folk dance, but through the classical stylized setting of the ballet medium.

However, towards the end of these impromptu “get-togethers”, some lasting two hours, Beryozova had me choreographic a series of dance etudes consisting of Ukrainian folk dance steps to music she had selected. After a week, or so, I would show her my work and she would then proceed to evaluate it. It may be a tough way to learn, but it certainly is an effective way. No, she was not rough, in fact the very opposite, but she was principled. There is no doubt, that of all the teachers that I had in the Conservatory and the school, she was the best. That is why I dedicated my book “The Ukrainian Folk Dance” to her.

What I have outlined in this section are just the most important features of my musical and choreographic education. There is another aspect to our, Eugene’s and my musical education in Kyiv, which, at least in my opinion, also played a very important part.
Part IV

Kyiv was, and still is an extremely musical city. In the first years of the 1950s there were many venues that catered, so to speak, to the musical public. There was the T. H. Shevchenko Theatre of Opera and Ballet (be aware, I’m going to use the old names); Kolonniy Zal (Колонний зал), with its Symphony Orchestra, the Ukrainian Folk Choir conducted by Hryhoriy Veryovka, the Cappella Banduristiv conducted by Oleksandr Min’kivsky (Олександр Міньківський), and the Ukrainian Dance Ensemble, just being reborn at the hands of Lydiya Cherneshova (Лідія Чернішова). Not far from the centre was, and still is the Ivan Franko Ukrainian Drama Theatre. Then a few blocks along Khreshchatyk there was, and still is the Lesya Ukrainka Russian Drama Theatre. Finally, there was the Theatre of Musical Comedy, somewhere around the Chervonoarmiysk Street. And I shouldn’t leave out the Conservatory, which, from time to time, presented operas by the students, and concerts by students and non-students.

Fortunately, I kept a list of all, if not all then of the overwhelming majority of performances I had the opportunity to see during my three years in Kyiv, and, including visits to Lviv, Kharkiv, Zaporizhy, Dnipropetrovsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Uzhhorod Chernivtsi, Odessa, Moscow and Leningrad (now renamed St. Petersburg). I’ve totaled them up and believe it or not, I saw 47 operas, 34 ballets, 42 plays, 77 concerts. The figures should not be interpreted as, for example, 47 different operas, or 34 different ballets, etc. Some I saw more than once. In Moscow I saw the Dance Ensemble led by Igor Moiseyev on three different occasions. In Kyiv, I went to five concerts of the pianist Sviatoslav Richter, including two which he put on in the conservatory.

Nonetheless, there were performances never to be seen again, by anyone, never mind me. On April 24, 1952, I watched Rheingold Gliere, conduct the Kyiv Symphony Orchestra in a program of his own compositions, including excerpts from his famous ballet “The Red Poppy”. He died four years later. A month later, on May 24, I attended a concert given by a trio consisting of Dmitri Shostakovich (piano), David Oistrakh (violin), and Sviatoslav Knushevitsky (violoncello) in the Kolonniy zal. The first part of their program featured trios by Shostakovich. The second part of the concert was devoted entirely to Shostakovich playing his recently composed 24 Preludes and Fugues.

Then there was the unforgettable night of March 12, 1951, when Kyiv honoured the 90th anniversary of the death of T. H. Shevchenko in the Ivan Franko Drama Theatre. The poet Andriy Malysko (Андрий Малишко) opened the evening, and was followed by Volodymyr Sosiura (Володимир Сосюра), Platon Voron’ko (Платон Воронько), and Oleksandr Pidsukha.
(Олександр Підсуха). After the intermission, the audience was treated to a concert given by the Cappella Banduristiv (conducted by Olekdandr Min’kivsky); readings by actress Nataliya Uzhviy (Наталія Ужвій) and songs by baritone, Mykhailo Hryshko (Михайло Гришка). After the second intermission, Shevchenko’s play, “Nazar Stodolya”, in its entirety—including Nishchynsky’s “Vechornytsi”, with the Ukrainian Folk Choir, conducted by Hryhoriy Veryovka—was presented. We didn’t get back to our rooms until early morning. You don’t miss an evening like this!

Another moment that will always remain in my memory is Ivan Patorzhynsky’s last performance in the opera “Zaporozhets za Dunayem” (Запорожець за Дунайем). It took place on April 6, 1952, in Kyiv’s T. H. Shevchenko Theatre of Opera and Ballet. The opening orchestral introduction is followed by Oksana’s two songs and a choral interlude. Then the orchestra begins to play a series of slow, but majestic-type chords, announcing the arrival of Karas’, who has finally come home after an all-night visit with some friends. (No one personified Karas’ more pleasurably, and was more loved by Kyivites, than Patorzhynsky. The audience adored him, and no more so than this night). As soon as the chords were struck, the audience burst into tremendous applause, and Patorzhynsky-Karas’ hadn’t even entered the stage. You couldn’t hear the orchestra for the applause. The conductor stopped the orchestra, and then started once more from the beginning. The applause began instantly, this time even louder. Once again, the orchestra stopped. Now for the third time the orchestra began the introduction. The applause, this time accompanied by shouts from the audience, brought Patorzhynsky out onto the stage to acknowledge the ovation. The entire audience, as one stood up and gave him such a reception, such an ovation, which must have lasted, I don’t know how long, that it only began to subside much later after Patorzhynsky had left the stage. Now, for the fourth time, the orchestra started those famous chords, but now accompanied Karas’-Patorzhynsky’s entrance onto the stage.

Eugene left for Canada in the spring of 1952. Towards the end of the year, I managed to come down with a case of yellow jaundice. While in the hospital, in which I spent the better part of a month, I found out that Patorzhynsky had also arrived for a checkup. (Back in 1946, when he had been part of the delegation which had come to Canada, he had become close friends with my father.) In any case, we spent some time together talking about all kinds of things. Later, he came back and gave me the complete set (14 books) of M. Lysenko’s choral arrangements of Ukrainian folk songs, which had been published in 1931-32. A rare publication, I might add. And I still have it.

I didn’t hesitate to walk around the city, nor did I have reason to. The Cappella Banduristiv had already been moved from the Hall of Columns to new and larger quarters. For some reason a
few large rooms were made available in the newly constructed circus. One afternoon, unannounced, I walked into their new place and asked to see Oleksandr Zakharovych Min’kivsky, the group’s conductor. I introduced myself, gave him a brief resume of my stay in Kyiv and then asked if he would allow me to copy some of the songs from the cappella’s repertoire, seeing that none had ever appeared in print, and that our male chorus in Winnipeg would just love to sing these songs. I should mention that Min’kivsky was already giving classes in the conservatory and had, without doubt, known about Eugene and myself. In any case, he agreed to my request, and after that I was able to come and copy music while listening to their rehearsal in the next room. That’s how our Bandurist Male Chorus got to sing Min’kivsky’s beautiful arrangement of Shevchenko’s “Dumy, moyi, dumy moyi” (Думи мої, думи мої).

Before I left for Canada, during the month of June, 1953, while in L’viv, I had the opportunity to meet with the ensemble “Chornohora” (Чорногора), later to be renamed “Halychyna” (Галичина). For over a week, working with them on a daily-evening basis, I managed to notate a number of dances from the group’s repertoire, including “Resheto” (Решето), “Hutusulka” (Гутусулка), “Arkan” (Аркан), and quite a few songs. The group, which was originally organized by Yaroslav Chuperchuk (Ярослав Чуперчук) and was now led by Pylyp Syekh (Пилип Сейх), in a most authentic and traditional manner, which included singing during some of the dances. Upon my return to Canada, I taught these dances to a number of groups, and included all three in my 1985 “Hutsul Wedding”, which I staged in Edmonton and Calgary, but more on this later.

Both Eugene and I were fortunate that we had no problems with language. Even though we had taken Russian language classes at the Conservatory, at our request I should add, we had no problems speaking Ukrainian—even in Kyiv. We took Ukrainian languages classes for two years with Mariya Fedirivna Boyko (Марія Федорівна Бойко), although, in a few instances, we were thought to have come from Western Ukraine. Which was O.K., I guess. Knowing the language, and to some extent Russian, we became book hounds. Whatever we could save from our stipends went into buying books. On top of that, when we first visited Moscow, at the beginning of 1951, the Slav Committee not only greeted us, but gave each a huge selection of music scores, etc. Some of the older music-book stores in Kyiv were getting rid of many old books, including pre-revolutionary editions. Another of our sources were the book stores which featured antiquarian collections and, what we today call, collectibles. That’s how I picked up my copy of Vasyl’ Verkhovynets’ (Василь Верховинець) 1920 edition of “Teoriya narodnoho Ukrainskoho tanka” (Теорія народнього Українського танка). And I still buy books today and, of course, I read them.
We were fortunate to have seen some of the great classics of Ukrainian opera: Hulak-Artemovsky’s “Zaporozhets za Dunayem” (Запорожець за Дунайем), Lysenko’s “Natalka Poltavka” (Наталка Полтавка), “Utoplena” (Утоплена), and “Taras Bul’ba” (Тарас Бульба). We also saw a number of Ukrainian ballets: Skorul’sky’s “Lisova pisnya” (Лісов а пісня), Dan’kevych’s “Lileya” (Лілея), and Svechnikov’s “Marusya Bohuslavka” (Маруся Богуславка). In Moscow, at the Bolshoi Theatre of Opera and Ballet we saw Galina Ulanova in Sergei Prokofiev’s ballet “Romeo and Juliette”, and Boris Asifiev’s “Bakhchysaraisky fontan”. We also saw Glinka’s “Ruslan and Liudmila”, Borodin’s “Prince Igor”, Mussorgsky’s “Boris Godunov”, Tchaikovsky’s “Eugene Onegin” and other choice operas and ballets. Mind you, the last three operas were also staged in the Kyiv theatre.

As I said at the beginning of Part III, the three years spent in Kyiv turned out to be a time of change and a time of maturing both in brain and body. To this day, I still maintain that my studies in Kyiv in the Conservatory and the choreographic school really opened the door for my future development in music and dance. As I’ve also told others, my studies continued after I returned home to Canada. What I received in Kyiv was the key that unlocked all the possibilities that were available for me, if I wanted to pursue them. Basically, everything would depend on my use, and implementation, of that which I received.

Part V

Upon returning to Canada in the early fall of 1953, I was assigned the position of cultural director of the Winnipeg Branch of the AUUC. At that time, the branch had a Mixed Choir, the Bandurist Male Chorus, the String Orchestra, a dance group, School of Ukrainian Language (the school had a small orchestra, and a dance group), and the Ivan Franko Drama Group. My direct responsibility was to conduct the two choirs and the String Orchestra, prepare their repertoire, meet with the cultural committee and assist in arranging a schedule of performances for the year, as well as organizing the actual concerts. I also inherited the huge Slav Youth Choir comprised of young singers, many of my generation, from Winnipeg’s Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Hungarian and Czechoslovak left wing organizations. There were also choirs in Point Douglas, East Kildonan and Transcona. Point Douglas also had an orchestra.

During those 14 years, from 1953 to 1967, I tried to accomplish a lot, though not always successfully. Together with my future wife, Olga Mateychuk, we organized the School of Folk Dancing, beginning with over 100 children, which is still in existence today. There were groups,
small and large, also in Point Douglas, East Kildonan and Transcona. We gradually built up the teaching personnel with dancers from the senior dance group.

The instrumental composition of the orchestra had also changed. The piano was gradually replaced by the accordion, with the double bass and mandocellos playing a greater role. I was thus required to prepare new, complete orchestrations for such classics of our Ukrainian stage as “Verkhovyntsi” (Верховинці), “Nazar Stodolya” (Назар Стодоля), and “Oy, ne khody, Hrytsiu, ta y na vechornytsi” (Ой, не ходи, Грицю, та й на вечорниці). When the Winnipeg drama group proposed the staging of Ol’ha Kobylianska’s “Zemlya” (Земля), and we already had Eugene Dolny’s orchestration of the wedding scene from the play, I not only was compelled to orchestrate the remaining portion of the play’s incidental music, but to also re-orchestrate Eugene’s work to fit our orchestra which had no flutes or clarinets.

After participating in the World Youth Festival, held in Moscow in 1957, my wife and I visited Kyiv. I had heard that the Ivan Franko Drama Theatre had staged Ol’ha Kobylianska’s “Unediliu rano zillya kopala” (У неділю рано зилия копала), and asked if I could get a copy of the staging, and the incidental music, which was composed by Igor Shamo. Before we left for home, I had a copy of both the piano score and the stage adaptation. Three years later—after the Winnipeg drama group had prepared its part, and I had orchestrated the entire score—the play was presented on November 2, 1960, on our stage complete with the music, songs and dances as staged in Kyiv.

I would like to mention one more significant (at least in my opinion) event. As long as I can remember, we always retained the tradition of beginning the annual Shevchenko Concert with the singing of his “Zapovit” (Заповіт), during which the audience would stand in honour of the Great Bard’s memory. Well, I thought it would be a good idea to prepare a new arrangement of the well-known melody. Boris Liatoshynsky had prepared a complete new setting of that famous melody back in 1939 for mixed choir and symphony orchestra. I knew that this work had elicited a bit of criticism, but I never thought that this criticism had reached these shores. In any case, I simplified parts of the orchestral score, but left the choral part intact. On the stage of Winnipeg’s Playhouse (Pantages) Theatre, the mixed choirs of Winnipeg, Point Douglas, East Kildonan and Transcona, accompanied by the Winnipeg and Point Douglas orchestras presented the once only version of Liatoshynky’s monumental work (not conducted by me). The following day, I was surprised to hear that not everyone liked the idea of our groups performing Liatoshynsky’s composition, which, I was told, had been “severely” criticized by “leading authorities” in Ukraine. Somewhere, on one of my tapes, I have a recording of that performance.
A large portion of my time was devoted to preparing material for, and working with, the Bandurist Male Chorus. The tough part, initially, was in trying to establish my “authority”, so to speak, with a choir of which I was co-founder-singer-buddy. It did, in time, work out. With a choir, such as this one, which at times reached to over 50 singers, I was able to implement many of the things I had learned, such as breath control and chain-breathing. However, it was the interpretation of songs that was always of prime importance. This was not always easy to attain, especially with the songs that had already been learned. Breaking bad habits has always been the most difficult process, and rarely completely successful. That’s why I always preferred teaching new songs to reviving old, assimilated ones taught by other conductors.

I also stressed the importance of putting the songs to memory. Fortunately, this was nothing new for the choir, as Eugene Dolny had insisted on this when the choir was initially formed. I have always found it distressing to face a choir of which you see the tops of the singers’ heads instead of their faces. In fact, the men in choir took pride in the manner they stood on stage, and faced the audience squarely and with confidence.

Picking songs that suited the choirs’ temperament and capabilities was not an easy task. A number of times I would choose a selection that I would later sense did not really “fit”. Fortunately, this did not happen often. Though, I often adapted parts of songs in order to enhance the choir’s performance. This practice will, no doubt, be questioned by purists, but I always felt that a slight change in the internal arrangement was better than not taking the song at all. In any case, I tried to always retain the song’s integrity as well as the arranger’s or composer’s intent. By the way, these kind of things have been going on for a long, long time. I truly enjoyed teaching and working on some of the larger compositions, such as M. Lysenko’s “Ivan Hus” (Іван Гусь). Unfortunately, it is rarely, if ever, performed by Ukrainian male choirs in Canada, probably because, in my opinion, of its anti-Catholic sentiment, something that Shevchenko never hid. I have a recording of our choir singing it at a Shevchenko Concert at the Playhouse Theatre. Our favourite, without the slightest doubt was Nishchynsky’s (Нішчунський) “Zakuvala ta syva zozulya” (Закувала та сива зозуля). Another of Lysenko’s larger compositions which the choir and I both loved, was “Hamaliya” (Гамалія). We always performed it with the included recitation of the poem’s non-singing portions. Our favourite narrator was long-time actor Fedir Gordienko. He even looked like Hamaliya.

The lifeblood of any performing arts group is the desire to perform. Rehearsing is just the prelude to the main event. The choir’s annual concert at Ukrainian Labour Temple, appearing at the
Playhouse Theatre, short day trips to Fisher Branch and Yorkton, tours to Regina and Moose Jaw, tours to Fort William and Port Arthur, and its tour out west to Saskatoon, Edmonton and Vancouver were memorable.

The year 1959 turned out to be important for the choir. Anthony Bilecki, President of the Workers Benevolent Association and an aficionado of drama, had adapted Oleksandr Korniychuk’s play, “Bohdan Khmel’nytsky”, and had brought forward a proposal to the choir and the drama group to perform it. The choir accepted the proposal whole-heartedly. The group had increased in size substantially, particularly with the addition of young, Canadian-born singers. Many of the older singers had acted in plays before, and the younger ones were eager to try something new. In consultation with Bilecki, I was able to insert, in a few scenes, a number of folk songs. I had the piano score for Dan’kevych’s opera “Bohdan Khmel’nytsky”, in which the composer had utilized quite a number of folk songs, especially of Cossack origin. I picked out four or five, including “Kryshtaleva chara” (Кришталева чара), “Rozlylysia kruti berezhechky” (Розлилися круті бережечки), and “Homin, homin, homin po dibrovi” (Гомин, гомин, гомин по діброві), to be used in our production. The performance, presented on the stage of the Ukrainian Labour Temple, was a hit both with the choir and the audience.

One feature that was new to our choir was the inclusion of four banduras. It was a welcome addition, for the choir’s theme song was the folk song “Vziav by ya banduru” (Взяв би я бандуру). The group slowly enlarged as more instruments were received, until I was able to organize, I would like to believe, the first Ukrainian Canadian Bandura ensemble. Consisting of 18 teenagers, the ensemble readily performed separately and as accompaniment to both the male choir and the newly formed women’s “Barvinok” Choir. The ensemble lasted up to the end of the 1960s.

With the formation of the “Barvinok” Women’s Choir, I was forced to develop a completely new type of repertoire. Like for the Male Chorus, I had to seek out and choose selections that would suit this type of choral group. Initially, I divided the group into two sections: sopranos and altos. With the gradual growth of the group, and specifically with the influx of younger women and girls, whose voices were far more “melodious”, I was able to further divide the group into the classical arrangement of four sections: first and second sopranos, and first and second altos. This enabled me to take selections of a more classical nature, as for example the women’s chorus “Chorniy kruk u poli kryache” (Чорний крук у полі кряще) from Konstantin Dan’kevych’s opera “Bohdan Khmel’nytskiy” (Богдан Хмельницький); Schubert’s “Serenade”, in a Ukrainian translation, which I adapted for soprano solo and women’s choir; “Vesnyanka” (Веснянка) from Mykola Lysenko’s
opera “Eneyida” (Енейда); Stanislav Liudkevych’s “Hahilka” (Гаїлка), and Bohdan Vakhnyany’s setting of Taras Shevchenko’s “Sadok vyshneviy kolo khaty” (Садок вишневий коло хати). I also took quite a number of contemporary Ukrainian songs. I particularly liked Ihor Shamo’s “Ne shumy kalynon’ko” (Не шуми калионько), and Platon Maiboroda’s “Ridna maty moya” (Рідна мати моя).

During the early and mid 1960s, I began arranging songs for both the male and women’s choirs. At first I limited my selection to a few Ukrainian folk songs, but then branched out and tried my hand at Canadian folk songs. I arranged “Jam on Jerry’s Rock”, and the “Greenland Fisheries” for the men, and “Frank Slide” and “She’s Like a Swallow” for the women. In fact, I redid “She’s Like a Swallow” a number of times including a variation for mixed choir in 2007, which was performed on December 2, 2007.

The “Bandurist” Male Chorus entered the prestigious Manitoba Music Festival Competitions a number of times, and went on to win the coveted Lord Tweedsmuir Memorial Trophy, as the top adult choir in 1963. It was quite an accomplishment seeing that the competitors in our class were the Koshetz Choir, a Mennonite choir, and the Varsity Bards from the University of North Dakota. Our final competitors were winners from the rest of the adult choir classes. Our winning two songs were: Mykola Lysenko’s arrangement of the Ukrainian folk song “Ta zabilyli snihi” (Та забили снiги), and the humorous Ukrainian folk song “I khlib pekty” (І хліб пекти).

It was also around that time that Mrs. Tetyana Koschetz, Oleksandr Kohets’ widow, approached me regarding a project that Olekdandr Min’kivsky, Artistic Director and Head Conductor of the Kyiv-based Cappella Bandurystiv was working on. This was the same Min’kivsky who had allowed me to attend the rehearsals of his group and to copy songs from the repertoire. He was now preparing to publish either a book about Koschetz, or a collection of his songs. I wasn’t sure which. In any case, Mrs. Koschetz was wondering how to pass on certain material to him. Although she was only prepared to send photo copies, and not the originals, she, nonetheless, did not trust sending the material via the postal route. I knew that our association did send, from time to time, individuals or delegations to Ukraine and suggested to her that when such an occasion arose, I could ask someone trustworthy to take the material. She agreed to my proposal, and for the next couple of years this was the manner through which Mrs. Koschetz passed on, through me, a host of material to Min’kivsky. Unfortunately, she did not see the result of her and Min’kivsky’s endeavours. The publication of Koschetz’s arrangements of Ukrainian folk songs was received just days before her death, and Dr. Macenko held a copy during his eulogy at her memorial service. I later received a
copy from Min’kivsky with an inscription on the flyleaf thanking me for my assistance in the project.

I would like to mention three large events in which I participated both as a musician and as a dance director-choreographer. The first was the National Festival of Ukrainian Music, Song and Dance honouring the 100th anniversary of Ivan Franko’s birth, held in the Winnipeg Arena, in the summer of 1956. The second was a similar National Festival, but this time honouring the 100th anniversary of Taras Shevchenko’s death, and was held in Toronto’sVarsity Arena in 1961. I was the dance director for both festivals, and Eugene Dolny was the music director for both. In each case, Eugene and I worked closely together not only preparing all the material: orchestral, choral and choreographic two years in advance of each event, but also visiting all the major localities, assisting and making certain the various groups were preparing the material properly. Strange as it may sound today, but Eugene and I were faced with having to put everything together—including 600 choristers, 150-piece orchestra and over 100 dancers—and rehearse the entire program the morning and afternoon of the performance.

For the Franko Festival, it was decided to present the entire wedding scene from Ol’ha Kobylianska’s “Zemlya” (Земля), complete with choir, orchestra and dancers. A good half hour long, it turned out to be one of the highlights of the evening. I also staged a “Velykiy Hopak”, which more or less helped round out the program, and restaged Walter Balay’s beautiful dance setting to song “Golden Wheat” (Пшениця золота).

That festival was a first for both of us, and we vowed not to be confronted with a similar situation again. It turned out to be just so much wishful thinking, because five years later, we again found ourselves in charge of the Shevchenko Festival, and, our objections notwithstanding, to be faced with a one-day rehearsal-staging-preparation-performance schedule.

As I had mentioned earlier, during my Kyiv dance classes with Halyna Beryozova, she had given me her choreography for the first act of the ballet “Lileya” (Лілея). Eugene and I decided to put on the Midsummer Night scene from the ballet, known in Ukrainian as “Nich pid Ivana Kupala” (Ніч під Івана Купала), which turned out to be a hit with the audience as well as with the dancers. However, our tour de force (you might say) was the “Canadian Dance Suite”.

The idea of putting on a dance suite reflecting some of Canada’s various ethnic groups (might seem hokey today, although I’m not of that opinion), had been in both our minds for a while. Actually, we had had discussions for quite a few years regarding our Canadian cultural heritage and
our Ukrainian Canadian cultural heritage, whatever we knew of it, and of our own roles within both. In any case, I will leave my philosophical ramblings on this theme.

Eugene and I began working on the “Suite”, which later was called that “damn Suite”, in 1958. I’m not going to go through the entire “thing”, but the beginning and the ending were a revelation to us both. The “Suite” opens with a solo: a male Aboriginal dancer slowly, but energetically moving down the centre of the arena to the sound of one drum. Sounds great—but what steps was he expected to perform? I bought books, watched films, finally Eugene and I made arrangements to visit the Six Nations not far from Brantford, Ontario. In the end, I showed our Ukrainian Canadian soloist, Stan Kucharchuk, what to do, and it worked.

The ending presented us with a different problem. We wanted to conclude (with the 125, or more expected dancers) with a rousing Canadian square dance. And as best we can, with an authentic Canadian square dance. None of this clogging stuff! We finally found, by looking through the Toronto phone book (our last resort), a company which advertised square dance material. Situated on the second floor of a building on Front Street, just a half a block west of Younge, was this small office, with an older woman sitting at an ancient roll-top desk. As soon as we entered an older man, quite short with grey hair stepped forward and asked what we wanted. Eugene explained our dilemma and as soon as he finished, the older man put on a huge smile and said: “Boys, you’ve come to right place.” To cut the story even shorter, this man had been collecting and publishing Canadian square dance material since way before World War II. He went to the huge book case that stood against one wall and pulled out a bunch of books and booklets containing calls, figures, steps and music of Canadian square dances. He was so happy with our request, that he just gave us the stuff, and wouldn’t take any payment for it. He said that he couldn’t even remember the last time anyone asked for that particular material. Eugene and I were so overjoyed with our “find” that we went to a pub just down the street and had a beer. I still have that material. Mind you, finding authentic Ukrainian folk dance material, steps, figures and music, is a little more difficult—and more costly.

The third event, which turned out to be the most enjoyable for me, was the participation of the “Bandurist” Male Chorus (26 singers), together with the (14) Poltava Dancers of Regina, in the official program of Expo 67. Happy to have been accepted, we made the trip to Montreal, in the middle of summer, with high expectations. We were not disappointed. The choir’s and dancers’ only accompaniment was provided by an accordionist from Calgary, Sandra Wusyk (Sandra’s father played for the Calgary Stampeaders’ football team at one time), and mandocello player, Jeanne
Gnus of Regina. In any case, Sandra came to Winnipeg a week prior to the group leaving for Montreal, during which we squeezed in a rehearsal just about every evening. Needless, to say, both she and Jeanne proved to be a tremendous asset. As it turned out, we managed to stop off first to perform in the open-air amphitheatre in the AUUC’s Palermo Camp. Upon arriving in Montreal, we were surprised to learn that our first performance would take place on Ukrainian Day at Expo. We were naturally elated, and the group’s one-hour performance consisting entirely of Ukrainian songs and dances was extremely successful. We performed the following day on the stage of the Canadian Pavilion—again receiving high praise for our singing and dancing.

During the 1960s our groups were afforded the opportunity to perform on the local television program Canadians All. I don’t remember exactly how it came about, but I do remember the producer-director Cam Rourke coming down to the “Hall” (Ukrainian Labour Temple) to audition our choirs and dancers. He liked what he heard and saw and, as a result, we performed on six complete half-hour shows. We taped a seventh, but it was never broadcast. The telecasts went quite well, I would think, otherwise we would not have been asked to perform that many times. Our programs were all based on Ukrainian folk, classical and contemporary music, and the groups always appeared in appropriate Ukrainian costumes. Two highlights were a Christmas program, actually more of New Year’s one because most of the action, complete with a snow-covered village house, and winter clothing, and action reflected a more folksy than a religious approach. In fact, we concluded that show with parts of Nishchynsky’s “Vechornytsi”. We also put on excerpts from Kryzhansivsky’s wedding scene from the play “Zemlya”, including a beautifully built exterior and interior village house scene, which really came off well.

I had a very good, professional relationship with both Cam Rourke and music director Richard Seaborn. I always had the music arranged in piano score ready and timed, and on a number of occasions I was asked by Seaborn to come to his home to go over the music. Even the actually tapings went by without any unnecessary repeats. The audio of the complete program was taped first, and then after an hour or so, with everyone in costume, the program was video taped with the choir mouthing the words to the earlier taped audio. (These were the “good old days”). Rourke made sure that I got an audio tape of all the programs.

However, after one of the tapings, I was told that two fairly high-profile people from the “Ukrainian community” had complained to the station’s hierarchy of our appearances on Canadians All. Although, I was not told what their beef was (after hearing who the two reps were, I assumed they were red-baiting us), but both Rourke and Seaborn stated to the their bosses and the reps that
they were very satisfied with our work and professionalism, and in fact they said that of all the 
groups appearing on the program, we were always the best prepared and gave them the least amount 
of problems, if any. They also said that they were willing to audition any other group from the 
Ukrainian community and would have them appear on the program. Needless to say, no other 
Ukrainian group appeared on the program—so much for the usual red-baiting.

By the end of the 1965-66 season, I had enlarged the male choir’s repertoire to about 60-70 
songs, and the women’s choir’s to about 60 songs. At least once a year I combined both choirs, 
particularly for the annual Shevchenko concert. I continued to take substantial choral selections for 
this concert. One of the last that I conducted was the finale from Lysenko’s cantata “Raduisya, nyvo, 
nepolytaya” (Радуйся, ивов, неполитая).

In 1965, I had already given notice that, as of the 1966-67 season, I would no longer work for 
the local AUUC branch as cultural director and conductor. Although, I did agree to conduct the Male 
Chorus up to the end of our Expo 67 trip. In fact, I had already began working for Winnipeg’s Motor 
Coach Industries as design draughtsman. I should have mentioned from the outset, that drafting and 
machine design was my initial profession. Beginning in 1948, I had worked close to two years for 
Kipp-Kelly Engineers, on Higgins Avenue, before going to the four-month teachers school in 
Palermo.

In the fall of 1967, my wife Olga and I decided to move to Vancouver. Within a month or so, 
I was able to get a job as a machine-design draftsman with Morgan Power Apparatus, a company 
manufacturing high-power line stringing equipment, and was just beginning to manufacture 
undercarriages, based on war-surplus tanks, for the logging industry. Alongside the design aspect of 
my responsibilities I also managed to develop my skills in the field of technical illustration. This was 
many years before the creation and availability of computer-based design programs. After contacting 
the Vancouver AUUC branch, I was asked to assist with the women’s choir. I ended up staging, with 
both the male and women’s choirs, orchestra and dancers, Nishchynsky’s “Vechornytsi”. Later, in 
the new year, I received a letter from Eugene Dolny, who was, since his return to Canada in 1952, 
the conductor of the Shevchenko Male Chorus, Hahilka Women’s Choir (which he had organized) 
and the Toronto Mandolin Orchestra (which he had revitalized), all of the Toronto AUUC branch. 
He had already initiated negotiations with Ukraine about the possibility of a concert tour by the 
Shevchenko Musical Ensemble (soon to become an organizational entity consisting of the Male 
choir, mandolin orchestra and dance group). He proposed that I come to Toronto and accept the 
position of associate conductor of this envisioned ensemble. Well, my wife and I were living in an
apartment, and weren’t completely unpacked, you might say, and after some thought, we agreed. We arrived in Toronto at the beginning of the 1968-69 season (actually, the fall of 1968).

**Part V**

After settling down, and finding a job designing crests for Stanley A. Grant Co., I began attending rehearsals of both the Shevchenko Male Chorus and the Toronto Mandolin Orchestra. I didn’t conduct anything immediately, having had to learn the groups’ repertoire, which was quite different from what I had in Winnipeg. The composition of the groups was also different. In Winnipeg the male choir had quite a few older Ukraine-born singers, while the Toronto choir consisted mainly of Canadian-born. Eugene had already substantially enlarged the orchestra with three accordions, a clarinet and an English horn. He also incorporated six tenor mandolins, which a luthier in Regina had specially made for the orchestra. It was not a new type of instrument, but with its mellower tone, helped fill that small gap between the mandolas and mandocellos. His other major change was to completely eliminate violins. The orchestra maintained its strong sound with 27 mandolins, 6 mandolas, 6 tenors, 7 mandocellos, 7 basses, 3 accordions, one flute, one English horn, one clarinet, and four percussionists.

Eugene truly liked the Moscow-based Osipov Folk Orchestra. Whenever he visited the USSR, he always contacted that group and managed to bring back a number of orchestral scores. Unfortunately, at that time, no similar professional orchestra of Ukrainian folk instruments existed. It would only come into existence in 1969—more on this later. Nonetheless, Eugene did enhance the ensemble’s repertoire with quite a number of Ukrainian selections, particularly by contemporary composers such as Kos-Anatol’sky, Kolodub, Kozak, Shamo, Homolyaka, Maiboroda, and others. Eugene was also fond of operatic choral pieces, and he had the voices with which to interpret that music as well, particularly the tenors who could reach the high notes. He had the choir sing the “Anvil Chorus” from Verdi’s *Il Trovatore*, and the “Pilgrims’ Chorus” from Wagner’s opera *Tannhäuser*. I was expected to learn and know these selections including much of the earlier repertoire.

The idea of carrying out a concert tour of Ukraine in 1970 didn’t leave us much time to select and prepare a suitable program. Eugene’s idea of bringing something contemporary and Canadian to perform before a completely new kind of audience, created another kind of problem. Eugene had become good friends with the Canadian composer Morris Surdin. Surdin had composed music for films, and was known for his music to various CBC programs including *Jake and the Kid*, written by W. O. Mitchell. The ensemble commissioned Surdin to compose something special for the tour. In
close consultation with Eugene, he produced a unique six-part choral-orchestral setting to the words of four Canadian poets, which culminated with an excerpt from one of Shevchenko’s lesser known poems. It was suitably named “Suite Candienne”, and the six parts were: “Song Battle”, words by L. Peterson; “Man Walked This Trail” - W. O. Mitchell; “Everybody’s Going to the Barn Dance” - R. Darby; “O Pale...O Pale...Lie You Most Lovely” - R. S. James; “Lac des Neiges” (orchestral); and T. Shevchenko’s “Orysia zh ty, moyu nyvo” (Оріся ж ти, моя ниво). All in all, it was a beautifully crafted composition, and was received well by the audiences.

Although, Eugene saw this suite as the highlight of the “Canadian” portion of the program, he made certain that other sections also reflected our Canadian character. A year earlier, the two of us had travelled to Montreal to meet with Michel Cartier, the founder and Artistic Director of the popular Les Feux Follies’ ensemble. Cartier came to Toronto on a number of occasions and taught our dance group an Inuit dance, an Aboriginal prairie “Chicken Dance”, and a “Western Dance”. Cartier also prepared the dancers for the finale, which closed off the concert with a rousing French Canadian song and dance. I should mention, that Morris Surdin accompanied the ensemble to Ukraine, and had the opportunity to meet a number of composers. For most of his meetings, I acted as his interpreter.

The first half of the program featured songs, orchestral selections, and dances from the ensemble’s Ukrainian repertoire. Of all the Ukrainian songs in the program, the one which created some unexpected excitement was “Yak davno” (Як давно), words by Oleksandr Pidsukha (Олександр Підсуха) and music by Hryhoriy Kytastyi (Григорій Китастий). As we had practiced in Canada, Eugene and I took turns conducting various segments of the program. We put on concerts in Kyiv twice, at the beginning of the tour in the main hall of the Conservatory, and at the conclusion in the Opera Theatre. We also performed in Poltava, Kharkiv, Lviv (two concerts, one in the Phiharmonia and one in the Opera Theatre), Uzhhorod, Ternopil and Chernivtsi. Our final concert was presented in Moscow for the residents of the Ukrainian community.

Prior to leaving for the tour, the ensemble put on the entire program in Massey Hall in Toronto, and in Ottawa’s National Arts Centre.

I was directly involved in one more project that Eugene had arranged. He commissioned Morris Surdin to write a “Choral Oration”, to a text written by George Ryga. Both Eugene and I had known George from earlier projects, so we were overjoyed when he agreed to come to Toronto to discuss the work with Surdin. The work, entitled “A Feast of Thunder” was scored in four segments for male chorus, mandolin orchestra, five main vocal soloists, three secondary vocal soloists and a
narrator. The premiere was held on June 9, 1973, in Massey Hall, Toronto. Although I wasn’t present at the premiere, I did assist in teaching the choral parts to the choir. My wife and I had returned to the Vancouver area, where we would live for the next 12 years. Before leaving, Surdin gave me a copy of the score as a going away gift.

I was elected to the Board of Directors when the Shevchenko Musical Ensemble Guild was formed in 1972, and have continuously been a member of the Board since then.

Part VI

I again began working for Morgan Power Apparatus, in Burnaby, my previous employer. My activity in the Vancouver branch of the AUUC was minimal, for various reasons, which left me with quite a bit of leisure time. I decided to make the best of it, and finally got around to writing the book on Ukrainian dance that I had thought about for quite a few years. I initially wanted to have the Shevchenko Ensemble publish it, and I had Eugene’s enthusiastic support as well, but the idea was turned down. I ended up offering it to the AUUC Head Office, which agreed to print and sell it. The book, “The Ukrainian Folk Dance”, was first published in 1980, and then, under what I consider to be questionable assumptions, it was again published in 1991. Whatever the case, I’m happy with the result.

Shortly after the book was published, I received a request from the Edmonton AUUC branch to consider enlarging upon a manuscript of a Hutsul wedding scene. I was sent a copy of the “manuscript” of the music, which contained about three songs, hand copied, on the same amount of pages. By the looks of it, someone had started orchestrating it, for there was three or four bars sketched out on a separate page. Although there was really very little to begin with, except for the three songs, I decided to try my hand at it. I had a few books in my library describing Hutsul life, traditions, vocal and instrumental music, costumes, etc., and believed that I could, at the very least, come up with something more than what had been sent to me. In a couple of months, I had a rough sketch prepared of the wedding ritual, including additional songs and music. I went to Edmonton with my proposals, and was given the “go ahead” with the project. At home, in Port Coquitlam, I finalized the content, and structure, and began arranging and orchestrating the “Wedding” on July 10, 1983. I completed scoring the music, all 93 pages, on August 3, 1983. The entire scene consisted of 14 choral selections, and 8 dances, all accompanied by the orchestra. I also made sketches of the costumes for both the men and the women, and laid out the stage movements and other assorted stage directions for the director.
The majority of the music was authentic, except for one or two songs, to which I had the words but not the music. So I allowed my creative juices to flow freely through the words, and today, looking back at the music, and listening/watching the video, I honestly can’t tell which selections are mine.

And then everything came crashing down. Interest rates had reached 19%, the economy was going nowhere fast, and the logging industry was in big trouble. In 1982, I was not just laid off, but was “terminated”. And the worst of all, Eugene Dolny passed away in 1983. My best friend was gone. My wife and I managed to hold on with a one year severance pay packet, and the second year on my unemployment insurance, and then we decided to sell our house and property, and move back to Winnipeg. And so, our ideal lifestyle along the lower slopes of Burke Mountain, with a mountain stream, appropriately named Smiling Creek, cutting through our acre, came to an end. In the summer of 1984 we left Port Coquitlam.

Part VII

And that’s when I retired, but not for long. I did some orchestrations and choral arrangements for the Shevchenko Ensemble, and also renewed my friendship Walter Klymkiw.

Walter and I had been friends for a long time, actually ever since my return to Canada from studies in Ukraine. That was a long time ago. I remember sitting in Walter’s kitchen together with his star boarder, Bohdan (Robert) Klymasz, talking about all kinds of things, but mainly about things Ukrainian. We shared many common ideals, and some not that common. I remember Walter getting hammered by the so-called nationalist press for associating with me, which claimed it was not really me, but a Soviet look-alike. Walter had an open mind, but like myself, I think it was open about 99.9%, but certainly more than enough to be able to sit at the table together and exchange ideas and opinions without any forms of antagonism, or finger pointing.

It was Walter and his wonderful wife, Mary, who gradually ushered me into the realm of the Manitoba Ukrainian Arts Council (MUAC). For me this was something completely new and unexpected. Nonetheless, I was accepted, and made friends with a number of the board members, particularly with Lionel Dietz and Zenon Hluszok.

The “Hutsul Wedding” was performed by the choirs, orchestras and dancers of the Edmonton and Calgary AUUC branches in December, 1985, in Edmonton’s Northern Jubilee Concert hall and then repeated, within a few months, in April, 1986, in Calgary’s newly opened Jack Singer Hall. Prior to the first performance, I had spent 3 months in Edmonton teaching and preparing the groups,
and also teaching the orchestra and the male choir some new material, which both groups performed that same evening. I also had the pleasure conducting the Edmonton and Calgary productions of the “Wedding”. Both concerts were videotaped.

In between this coming and going, I did participate in the Manitoba Ukrainian Art Council’s activities, holding a workshop for dancers on the difference between Central and Western (actually Hutsul) dances and dancing. In 1989, I prepared a 67-page book “Games and Songs”, excerpts from Vasyl’ Verkhovynets’ (Василь Верховинець) book “Vesnyanochka” (Весняночка) for children 5-8 years of age, which was printed and issued by the MUAC. This resulted in a workshop sponsored by the Ukrainian-English Bilingual School program in Manitoba, at the Ralph Brown School, during which time I was able to go through a number of the games and songs from the book with the teachers. In addition to the book, I had also prepared a cassette tape, with the music of my synthesizer accompanying my singing of all the songs in the book. I led a workshop for dance instructors, again in Ralph Brown School, on the topic of music and Ukrainian dance with practical demonstration by musicians playing the bandura, tsymbaly and sopilka. This workshop was later repeated in Dauphin. I also presented a couple of papers on Ukrainian dance during the annual membership meetings of the MUAC. It was at one of these meetings that I met Andriy Nahachewsky, of Edmonton, who had also presented a paper on Ukrainian dance. We later, collaborated on a very interesting project, but more on this later. With the rapidly approaching 100th anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada, I had to leave the MUAC, although I didn’t give up the intention to return after the celebrations.

I was approached by the National Executive Committee of the AUUC to become the National Organizer of the association’s centenary activities, primarily to look after all the preparations for a national festival, which would take place in the summer of 1991. Once all the decks had been cleared, including accepting the participation of the Shevchenko Musical Ensemble, I called a conference of all the AUUC cultural directors and/or their representatives from across the country. We, more or less, hammered out a general approach to this anniversary. The idea of one festival was discounted in favour of three regional, though not less important, festivals: Western - in Edmonton; Central – in Winnipeg, and Eastern – in Toronto. We were primarily concerned about reaching out to a much larger, and more varied audience. Another very important item was agreed upon. All programs should be identical so that festival performers could travel, were possible, to two or more of the festivals.
At the following conference, in the fall of 1988, I came with a proposed program—choral and instrumental selections and dances—but most important of all: theme and content. I suggested that the program be divided into three sections: 1) *This is who we are*; 2) *This is our past*, and 3) *This is our future*. Except for a few selections, I had also come with a list of numbers for each of the sections. In fact, I prepared and recorded part one, using my music program, computer, and synthesizer. It began with a fairly elaborate orchestral introduction based on my own original theme, followed by the song “Verkhovyno” (Верховина), then changing into “Rozprygaite khloptsi koni” (Розпряйте хлопці коні), sung by the men, then, “Za horodom kachky p'lyvut” (За городом качки пливеять), changing into “Golden Wheat” (Пшениця золота), sung by the women and accompanying Walter Balay’s choreographic girls’ dance, followed by two Hutsul dances, a Kolomiya (Коломиїка), and a “Hutsulka” (Гутця), then a quick transition into the song “Oy lornuv obruch” (Ой лопнув обруч), accompanying the entrance of a new group of dancers who quickly begin a “Kozachok” (Козачок), followed by “Pleskach” (Плескач), then changing into the original introduction theme-march bringing the rest of the dancers on to the stage, and building to the final song “Reve ta stohne Dniper shyrokiy” (Реве та стоєне Дніпро широкий), during which, as the intensity of the song increases towards a climax ending, a young girl and boy (of the dancers) come forward offering the traditional bread and salt to the audience. I began arranging and scoring this *Festive Medley* on August 21, 1989, and 67 pages later, completed it on September 11, 1989. I also prepared the majority of orchestrations for the rest of the program. The conference also finalized the conducting responsibilities for all three festivals. I conducted part one at all three, and also part two in Toronto.

It was a tough grind, and I swore that I would not undertake anything like this again (famous last words, to be sure). The AUUC decided to present another “huge” festival as part of the millennium celebrations. Again I was approached to participate, but this time, with only one performance to worry about, and I would also be part of a trio of artistic directors—I and two young women. The women had already come up with a theme, something in the order of *Ukrainians during the past 1000 years*. In any case, I agreed to assemble the music, and arrange it, but would not orchestrate it. In the process of building the musical structure for what would turn out to be the entire first half of the Festival program, I selected the various episodes which I hoped would in some way bring forth some of Ukraine’s historical highlights as well as our Ukrainian Canadian relevance. The two women went along with my ideas—up to a point. Then, I remembered that my dear friend Professor Andriy Nahachewsky had researched the dances and traditions of Ukrainians in parts of
Alberta and Saskatchewan. I, therefore, approached him with the idea of finishing off this entire section with his material, and that he would also undertake the staging of it. I also promised that I would take whatever musical material he had, and would arrange it for the orchestra. Happily, he agreed.

After preparing all the music, including transitions, etc., etc., I handed it over to the two women (one was the cultural director in the Edmonton AUUC, and the other had just returned from one year of studies in Ivano-Frankivsk) to pass it on to the person selected to prepare the orchestration. After these two women finished toying with the staging, I asked that my name not be included in the program as one of the “creators” of the basic idea for that entire section. And that was really the last time I became involved in one of the “festivals”—until 2005, when all I did was sing in the choir.

However, those were not the only large works that I happened to create during that period. Nine years after my return to Winnipeg from Port Coquitlam, I was asked to take over the conducting chores of the String orchestra, as it was then called. Nikki Sciak, the orchestra’s conductor had been ill and was unable to continue to the end of the 1992-93 season. Earlier that year, I had watched the orchestra perform at the West End Cultural Centre and I thought that with only two violins in the group, and a much larger contingent of mandolinists, why not organize a concert featuring the mandolins. This was not an entirely original idea, because Eugene Dolny had already transformed the Toronto orchestra into a mandolin group, which turned out to be very successful. In any case, when I took over from Nikki, I made that suggestion to the orchestra members, and they liked the idea. In addition, I raised the idea with Nikki, who was convalescing at home, and Kosty Kostaniuk, the associate conductor, about forming a quintet, with two mandolins, a mandola, mandocello and mandobass, thereby creating a group consisting of the complete family of mandolin instruments. They agreed, and thus the Winnipeg Mandolin Quintet was born, with Jeanne Romanoski (mandolin I), Olga Shatulsky (mandolin II), myself (mandola), Helen Chackowsky (mandocello), and Kosty Kostaniuk (mandobass). After two or three years, Olga took over the first desk, Jeanne the second, and Brent Stearns replaced Kosty on the mandobass. On April 24, 1993, the first Festival of Mandolins was held at the Ukrainian Labour Temple, and featured not only the String Orchestra, and the first appearance of the Winnipeg Mandolin Quintet, but also some of Winnipeg’s top mandolin players. In 1995, the orchestra had decided to change its name to the Winnipeg Mandolin Orchestra.
1996 turned out to be a big year for the orchestra, because the orchestra would be celebrating its 75th anniversary. It was the oldest, continuous performing orchestra in Manitoba, the oldest mandolin orchestra in Canada, and the second oldest mandolin orchestra in North America. Not bad for us Ukrainians. The group decided to do it up big. We decided to record a cassette tape, and I decided to write a biographical sketch of the orchestra’s 75 years, plus we were intent on holding an anniversary banquet and inviting former members to attend.

The tape 1921-1996 Winnipeg Mandolin Orchestra was made (engineered by Danny Schur), and the book, 75 Years Performing For Canadian Audiences, was written and published, and the banquet was held. The initial 500 copies of the tape, and the book, available at the banquet, were sold out within eleven months. A couple of years ago, the orchestra decided to reissue the recording on CD, and that was sold out. For the banquet, which featured a somewhat brief appearance by the orchestra, I had prepared the 75th Anniversary Medley. Digging deep into the orchestra’s history, I managed to come up with some of the most characteristic selections from its huge repertoire. I even got the orchestra to sing one of the Ukrainian folk songs and accompany themselves at the same time, just like the earlier groups did. With a narrator joining all the various segments together, the entire selection came in just under 30 minutes. At that time, the orchestra consisted of 13 mandolins, 4 mandolas, 3 mandocellos, 1 mandobass, 2 violins, 2 violas, 1 violoncello, 1 double bass, 2 flutes, 1 clarinet, 1 recorder, and I accordion, for a total of 32 great musicians. My conducting responsibilities with the Winnipeg Mandolin Orchestra came to an end in the spring of 1998, with the 6th Annual Festival of Mandolins. I am quite proud of the orchestra’s achievements which include: the recording (of course), performing in Kenora at the Lake of the Woods series, an hour concert at the University of Winnipeg, the broadcast of the second Festival of Mandolins on CBC Radio, and a concert program dedicated to Three Poet-Bards: Walt Whitman, Robert Burns and Taras Shevchenko.

During my six years with the orchestra, I managed to prepare about 80 selections. Among some of the selections were: Lysenko’s Chant Triste, Khivrych’s Chabarashka, Dashak’s Ukrainian Suite, of which we only played parts II, III & IV, Verykivsky’s Zeleniy Shum, my Ivan Kupalo and Hutsul Fantasy, Vemyr’s Transcarpathian Dance, Vasilyev-Buglay’s Two Ukrainian Folk Songs, and many other Ukrainian numbers. I also didn’t hesitate to orchestrate the works of non-Ukrainian composers, such as Greig’s Solveig’s Song for recorder and orchestra, Debussy’s The Girl With the Flaxen Hair for flute and orchestra, Moody’s Toredo for accordion and orchestra, my arrangement of Moldavian Fantasy for mandolin and orchestra, the Hungarian An Evening With the Spinners, Tarrega’s Recuerdos de la Alhambra, Mussorgsky’s Hopak and Shostakovich’s A Future Stroll from
the cantata *Song of the Forest*. At the second Festival of Mandolins, we surprised the audience with my unique *North End Breakdown*, featuring three of our mandolinists: Fred Redekop, Don Metz and Brian Duplak, aided by our own two Blues Brothers, flautist Gordon Gilbey and double bass player Alan Popowich, and all backed up by the orchestra. Needless to say, the audience loved it.

Another feature of the Festivals was that we were able to bring other guest groups into the programs, especially if they also had a mandolin or two. They included: “Simpson’s Folly”, “Whiskey Before Breakfast”, “Keystone Bluegrass Quartet”, “Uptown Grass”, and “The Ain’t No Mountain Boys”.

My most ambitious undertaking, and the least understood by a number of orchestra members, was the presentation of the poetry of three of the world’s greatest Bards: America’s Walt Whitman, Scotland’s Robert Burns and Ukraine’s Taras Shevchenko. The readings of their works were not only accompanied by suitable background music, but enhanced by the performance, of their words set to music, by invited vocal soloists. Each segment included introductory and concluding relevant orchestral selections by the orchestra. Eleven of the orchestra’s musicians, decided to take their winter holidays just weeks before the performance. Although they all made it back in time, it did affect, though not very noticeably, the orchestra’s playing. As the musicians got older, these winter breaks during the most active part of the season, became more pronounced, and began to “bother me”, so I decided to resign.

In any case, I was still working with the Quintet. I have to admit, I never expected the group to get as far as it eventually did. Even though we only lasted 10 years, the group’s achievements were more than any of us ever anticipated. I truly believe that we came out at the right time with the right choice of instruments and from the right country.

It wasn’t just the interest in bluegrass music that helped, but also the recordings of such first class groups as the U.S.-based Modern Mandolin Quartet, David Grisman and his groups, individuals such as Mike Marshall and Evan Marshall (no relation). Of course, there was the one and only Peter Ostroushko. Back in the mid 1990s, even in Winnipeg you could go into one of the more prominent record shops and find CDs by the above mentioned musicians—not any more. More than any other stations, CBC hosts, like Jurgen Gothe in Vancouver and then Peter Togni in Halifax, and others, were constantly featuring mandolin music, other than bluegrass. Imagine the Modern Mandolin Quartet (two mandolins, a mandola and a mandocello) playing the entire “Nutcracker Suite” and other classics. I couldn’t get enough of their CDs. They were all the best mandolinists that I had ever heard. We were not in their class, but we were not all that bad either.
Selections from our two successful CDs, were played first on July 17, 1998, by Jurgen Gothe on his program _Disc Drive_, and finally (as far as I can tell) on November 6, 2007, on the request program _Here’s to You_, were played on 45 separate occasions on CBC Radio Two programs and a few times on CBC Radio One. I managed to download copies of these programs from the CBC web sites, and also was able to record a few of them with Gothe’s and Togni’s comments—indispensable for our archives. What is truly interesting is that of the total 36 selections on both CDs (19 Ukrainian & 17 non-Ukrainian) the overwhelming majority of the selections played were Ukrainian. Topping the list were _Hahilka_ (Liudkevych), _Lullaby & Dance_ (Kolodub) and _Les Marche d’Ukraine_ (Poklad-Shatulsky).

The main problem facing the quintet from the very outset was the complete lack of material. I wasn’t able to find anything arranged and orchestrated for a mandolin quintet. Therefore, I had to select, arrange-adapt-transcribe-orchestrate-compose the group’s entire repertoire. By the end of our ten years, we had accumulated 86 various musical selections encompassing just about every type of genre except bluegrass. For example, I transcribed Part I of Mozart’s _Eine Kleine Nachtmusik_ for accordion and quintet; adapted Gershwin’s _Prelude II_; Beethoven’s _Fur Elise_; one of Brahms’s _Waltz’s_; Bach’s _Chorale_ from his Cantata #147, and three _Galops_ by Shostakovskyich. However, the major portion of our repertoire consisted of works by Ukrainian composers—of the past and the present: Liudkevych, Lysenko, Stetsenko, Davydovskiy, Kolessa (father and son), Miaskov, Ivashchenko, Shamo, Vymer, Antonovsky, to name a few. I even tried my hand at composing for the group. I wrote a “Toccata” based on the Ukrainian folk song “Divka v sinyakh stoyala” (Дівка в синьох стояла), and then followed up with a set of variations on the theme of “Greensleaves” for two recorders and mandolin quintet. I also wrote a few original arrangements: “Canadian Sketches”, based on three folk songs: “Land of the Silver Birch”, “The Squid Jiggin’ Ground”, and “Les Raftsmen”, and later wrote “Three [Ukrainian] Waltzes”, based on the folk songs: “Chorni krovy, kari ochi” (Чорні брови, карі очі), “Bandura” (Бандура), and “Balamuty” (Баламути). All the selections already mentioned can be found on either of the quintet’s two CDs.

Similarly as the Winnipeg Mandolin Orchestra before us, we also belonged to the Winnipeg Folk Arts Council, and became part of its F.A.C.E.S. enterprise, and worked through its prime mover, Christian Hidalgo-Mazzei. The other major supporter was Professor Harry Strub, the organizer of the University of Winnipeg’s and the Centennial Library’s _Skywalk Series_ and _Music ‘n Mavens_. More than anyone else, these two gentlemen and their Winnipeg organizations brought our quintet unto Winnipeg’s cultural scene.
We were particularly fortunate to have been asked to perform at the Skywalk Series. Set in the intimate setting of the Centennial Library's 80, or so, seat auditorium, we always felt comfortable sitting on the same level as the audience, and not more than 10 feet from the first row. We appeared there five times and always before a capacity audience. We then appeared twice in the Music 'n Mavens Series.

The F.A.C.E.S. series was based on entirely different premise. Clients would request performers for conferences, conventions, etc., and the agency would propose certain groups. In this manner our quintet was able to perform at various events. We performed, way back in 1993, at the Forks as part of the Canada Day celebrations; then a marathon session at a fund-raising Gala at the Museum of Man and Nature (as it was then called), and few years later, again at the Museum, we provided the dinner music (one hour) for its Gala Fundraising, Voyages Dinner – UKRAINE; three times at the Winnipeg Art Gallery – Holiday Music Series, and twice for the exhibition, The Phenomenon of the Ukrainian Avant-garde 1910-1935 (the exhibit was doubly beneficial for us, as the CBC decided to record our performance, which resulted in a one-hour program with us and the curator speaking about the paintings); performed at the Manitoba Interfaith Immigration Council conference; and selected dinner music for the prestigious Manitoba Night at the Fort Garry Hotel, hosted by the Manitoba Provincial Government for the Governor of the State of Jalisco, Mexico.

The group also received many requests directly from individuals and organizations. We performed at the Winnipeg Symphony's Musical Guts; for the Christmas Cheer Board; at the Leo Mol Gardens Series in Assiniboine Park; Gardenton Ukrainian Festival, and Project Peacemakers at the Bethel Mennonite Church.

In 1996, the year of the Winnipeg Mandolin Orchestra’s 75th anniversary, the AUUC decided to view that event as the Year of the Orchestra, thereby underlining the activities of the other orchestras in the association. Fortuitously, three localities agreed to invite the quintet to participate in their celebratory events: Edmonton, Vancouver and Toronto. We not only appeared at their concerts, but also performed separately at special social gatherings.

In 2001, we were completely taken by surprise when we received an invitation to participate in the 16th Annual Convention of the Classical Mandolin Society of America, which would take place in Toronto in October 9-13, 2002, and would be hosted by the Toronto Mandolin Orchestra. Not only would we be featured performers, but I was also asked to lead a couple of workshops. What a wonderful experience that turned out to be. Though, we did run into a problem, which threatened our participation. Our mandocello player’s husband had died, and she would not be able to attend.
Fortunately, a very dear friend, formerly from Winnipeg now living in Toronto, who also happened to be a first class mandocello player, Boris Basiuk, happily agreed to fill in. I mailed him the music, about ten selections. We practiced for about two hours every morning in the hotel, until our confidence was restored. Was it worth it? Absolutely—and we even got an encore at the convention from all those mandolinists. The quintet had also accepted an invitation to perform in Welland with the Welland Ukrainian Mandolin Orchestra following the convention.

Right from the outset, I was interested in not only establishing a strong Ukrainian repertoire, but also expanding it to include selections which could, if needed, reflect other interests. We therefore, had no trouble presenting an hour, or an hour and a half of Ukrainian music (past, contemporary, lyrical, upbeat) as we did at the Museum and the Art Gallery, or even a mixed program. Going through our archives, I couldn’t find a program which didn’t include Ukrainian selections.

As I mentioned earlier, we came in at the right time, with the right choice of instruments, and from the right country. While you might have heard individuals playing the mandolin, nobody played recordings by a mandolin quintet, especially a group that had someone playing a mandobass. Unless you played in one of our orchestras, practically nobody had ever heard of a mandobass—even Jurgen Gothe and Peter Togni openly admitted to being highly interested in its existence. On top of all this, here was group from, of all places, Winnipeg, Canada. And they sounded not half bad (my appraisal). It all started with me sending our first CD, with a brief accompanying letter, to all these CBC Radio Two program hosts. The response was immediate and surprising: Olga Milosovich phoned, and Maragarot Isaacs wrote from Halifax, and Sheila Rogers phoned from Toronto, Peter Togni and Jurgen Gothe e-mailed responses. Unbelievable. Much later, when Jurgen Gothe came to Winnipeg for the Winnipeg Symphony’s annual New Music Festival in January, 2003, after the usual overture, the second selection he played was the quintet’s recording of Pachabel’s “Kanon”. I went to see him the following day, he was broadcasting from The Forks (this was the first and only time I met him), and he concluded our conversation with: “Send me you next CD, and we’ll premiere it,” You can’t do better than that, I thought. Unfortunately, after 86 selections and 98 performances, this was to become our quintet’s final year. Fortunately, for me, it did not signal the last of my endeavours.

I’ve always dabbled at composing, and finally decided to take a more serious approach to this aspect of music. I renewed my knowledge of counterpoint, and polyphonic music, and set about implementing my ideas. It wasn’t easy, but I persevered. Three years ago, I joined the newly formed
choir in the Ukrainian Labour Temple which would be participating in the 2005 Festival in Regina, commemorating the Centennials of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The Winnipeg branch had engaged a young woman, a graduate conductor from a musical school in L’viv, to work with the choir and teach us the Festival’s choral repertoire, whatever there was of it. After the Festival, it was agreed to continue with the choir, and I was asked to assist. The young lady was not prepared to build a repertoire, so I took the initiative, and prepared a number of selections for the choir in addition to the few left over from the Festival. Although she played the piano, and taught music at one of the city’s schools, I began to sense a definite hesitancy in both her conducting and musicianship. Nevertheless, I was prepared to work with her, with the intention of proposing her to be the conductor, and I would quickly fade out of the choir completely. She abruptly quit after one of our concert appearances, and I became the de facto conductor. I have, due to other reasons, tendered my resignation which will come into effect after Folklorama, in 2008.

In the meantime, I continued my compositional efforts by arranging a number of choral selections: I redid the Canadian folk song “She’s Like a Swallow”, this time for three choral voices — sopranos, altos and men (we were short of tenors and basses at the time), and I liked that sound so much that that I returned to that structure for two of Robert Burns’ songs, “Ae Fond Kiss” and “Ye Banks and Braes”. I redid an earlier male chorus arrangement of the Ukrainian folk song “Pyrohy” (Пироги), for baritone solo and mixed choir (four parts), and accordion accompaniment. I also arranged Kos-Anatol’sky’s song set to Ivan Franko’s words “Oy ty divchynо z horikha zernya” (Oй, ти дівчина з горіха зерня), for tenor solo and mixed choir, utilizing Kos-Anatol’sky’s original piano accompaniment. For the Festival Choir’s (as it was now called) first all choral concert, held on December 2, 2007, and held at the Ukrainian Labour Temple, I prepared an arrangement of Wade Hemsworth popular “The Wild Goose”, for mixed choir and piano. And as a final touch for the concert, I put together a unique arrangement of the French Canadian song “Un canadien errant”, for two sopranos, tenor and bass soloists, mixed choir, with accordion accompaniment.

An unexpected, for the audience, feature of the concert was the performance of a mandolin ensemble comprised completely of singers from the choir. There were five mandolin, two mandolas, two mandocellos and a mandobass, including me on mandola. This was truly unique, as all the singers-musicians (except me) were also members of the Winnipeg Mandolin Orchestra. In just three short rehearsals, the group learned three selections which I had readapted from the repertoire of the quintet: “O, hylia, hylia” (Oй, гіля, гіля), “Huron Carol” and “Cossack siyav hrechu” (Козак сіяє гречку).
In the meantime, I continue composing, using my computer and various sound modules. I am presently exploring the attributes of the string quartet (two violins, viola and violoncello), and have recently completed a Theme and [7] Variations piece. As hard as I try, I just can’t get my head around contemporary sounds, so everything sounds pretty tame—as yet. I did write a Playful Interlude which the mandolin orchestra has performed a couple of times. There are few other things lying peacefully in my hard drive waiting for me to complete.

I’ve been writing columns for the Ukrainian Canadian Herald since 1999, and, from time to time, write about music. The February and March, 2008, issues will feature articles on the emergence and evolvement of mandolin orchestras in the AUUC from 1920 onward. As already mentioned, I’ve written a book on the Ukrainian folk dance, which includes music material as well, and a book about the Winnipeg Mandolin Orchestra. There’s the book on Ukrainian “Games and Songs”, and an unpublished compilation of classical Ukrainian choral selections, Choral Art of Ukrainian Canadians which I prepared in 1994. I also put together a compilation of “16 Full Scores...From the Repertoire of the Winnipeg Mandolin Quintet” which the quintet published in 2002, and was completely sold out at the convention of the Classical Mandolin Society of America in Toronto.

The end is not yet in sight.

Myron Shatulsky

Wednesday, February 20, 2008, Winnipeg, Canada
ADDENDUM

I had spent three months in Ukraine, in 1987, researching material for two projects. One, was to write, or at least compile information about the dances of the western regions of Ukraine, and two, to unearth songs and other assorted material regarding the labour-radical movements of late 1880s and early 1900s, in the same geographic area.

The idea had come about earlier when I found out that Society *Ukrayina* was directly assisting various qualified people who wanted to carry out research on specific Ukrainian projects. I applied to the Society in early 1986 and was accepted into its program within a couple of months.

My stay began on August 31, 1987 and concluded three months later on December 3. I should mention that, as part of my application, I had submitted a list of cities I intended to spend time in, as well as a list of institutions, ensembles which I wanted to work with, and a list of people whom I wanted to meet. The other aspect of the Society’s project included a monthly stipend, and living accommodations. I, on the other hand, would be solely responsible for all other expenses, including air travel, to and from Ukraine. Because I had personally applied for this “post-graduate” type of project, I did not receive, nor did I ask for financial or any other assistance from the AUUC. This arrangement precluded any obligations to the Association.

The three months were well spent in Kyiv, L’viv, Uzhhorod, Ivano-Frankivsk and Chernivtsi, with a few side trips to Kryvorivnya, Krasnyk, Zhab’ye, Kolomiya, Myshyn, Utoropy, Kosiv, Storozhynets and Kitsman.

In L’viv, I worked out of the Conservatory of Music and the Museum of Ethnography and Utilitarian (Craft) Art (Музей етнографії та художнього промислу). My evenings were spent with two amateur ensembles and their instructors: “Yunist” - Mykhailo Vanivsky and Taras Baran (Михайло Ванівський і Тарас Баран), and “Halychyna” - Oleksey Bobkiv and Petro Hryhynsky (Олекса Бобків і Петро Гришинський). I also spent an enjoyable afternoon with Yaroslav Chuperchuk (Ярослав Чуперчук), without doubt the most knowledgeable person of Hutsul folk dancing, and founder-instructor of the L’viv-based “Chornohora” Ensemble (later renamed “Halychyna”). I managed to tape our conversation in his apartment, and video taped an impromptu performance of him singing some of his kolomiyky on “Halychyna’s” rehearsal stage. My first meeting with Chuperchuk was in 1965, and then I met him again in 1970.

The Director of the Conservatory was Zenon Dashak (Зенон Дашак) whom Eugene and I had first met during our studies in Kyiv. Zenon was then in post-graduate studies and playing the viola. I
met him when he came to Canada leading a group of artists to our L'viv Pavilion during Folklorama. A few years earlier I had met, although very briefly, Yuri Hoshko (Юрій Гошко), Director of the Museum of Ethnography and Utilitarian (Craft) Art. He allowed me to virtually make the museum my home.

Working in the Conservatory I had the opportunity to speak to a number of professors. I had a very enlightening conversation with Mykola Kolessa, teacher of composition. His father was Filaret Kolessa, renowned ethnographer, historian and composer. The choir, orchestra and the quintet of the AUUC in Winnipeg performed works by both of them.

My stay in Uzhhorod was just as interesting. I worked closely with the Transcarpathian Choir whose Artistic Director was Clara Balogh (Клара Балог). In addition to this responsibility, she was also the head choreographer. I attended quite few of the ensemble’s rehearsals and a couple of their concerts. Clara was extremely helpful. She never hesitated to answer my questions (no matter how primitive they may have been), and even had a couple of the dancers change into various regional costumes for me to photograph. She was openly critical of the work of other choreographers who she felt were incorrectly staging Transcarpathian dances.

My other place of work was the Museum of Natural History. The museum had a separate ethnographic section with a most dedicated assemblage of workers-historians—five to be exact, led by Viktor Shostak (Віктор Шостак). They had created a small folkloric instrumental ensemble, and by recreating and performing the music of various areas of Transcarpathia, were able to develop a renewed interest among other historians and audiences to that aspect of their musical culture.

My next stop, and most productive, was Ivano-Frankivsk. I have a thing about mountains and water (rivers, creeks, etc.), and anxiously awaited my travel to that beautiful country. As in L'viv and Uzhhorod, I was assisted by Society України’s local representative. In Ivano-Frankivsk it was Oleksandra Senytsia (Олександра Сениця). My main work place was the local concert hall which also housed the offices and rehearsal rooms of the Hutsul Folk Song and Dance Ensemble. The person designated to help me in my endeavors was the ensemble’s choreographer, Volodymyr Petryk (Володимир Петрик). The ensemble’s Artistic Director and Conductor, Ivan Lehkiy (Іван Лехкій), was not about to be left out. The three of us went just about everywhere together. In addition to working with Petryk, and watching him rehearse his group, I managed a trip to Kolomiya where I visited the world-famous Hutsul Museum, and then in the evening watched an impromptu concert by Bohdana Demkiw’s (Богдана Демків) group “Pokutynka” (Покутнянка). The group was leaving by
train for Kyiv in an hour or so, but performed four dances for me and Petryk. Demkiw later came to Chernivtsi and we had an extremely interesting meeting.

I visited two school ensembles—one in the village of Myshyn (Мишин) and the other in the village of Utoropy (Уторопи). Both villages were on the road to Kosiv where I visited the V.Kasian Art Institute. (I should have mentioned that I had taken a tape recorder and a video camera with me, and was, therefore, able to record many of my conversations and interviews, as well as video taping a total of 10, two-hour cassettes of rehearsals and concerts—dance and music).

The high point of my stay in Ivano-Frankivsk were the trips I made first to Kryvorivnya where I taped a folkloric group consisting of five brothers, a sister and their spouses (six couples) of the Vandzhuruk (Ванджурук) family, from the village of Vipche (Випче), and accompanied by an instrumental group led by Roman Kumlyk (Роман Кумлиш). They performed two dances for me: Hutsulka and Resheto. During the second trip, I travelled with the Hutsul Folk Song and Dance Ensemble to the village of Krasnyk, where the ensemble put on a complete concert. The village is situated alongside the Chorniy Cheremosh (Чорний Черемош) river and in the very depths of the Carpathian Mountains (I ceremoniously washed my face with the water from that historic river). I managed to video tape both performances. Great stuff! The third trip was to the town of Tysmenytsia (Тисменниця). In the local club, I witnessed the staging of an old-time wedding, including singing and dancing, from the region of Pokutta (Покуття). It was presented on the main floor with the audience sitting against all four walls. I stood on the stage and video taped the entire event. The group, “Tysmenychanka”, dancers and choir, were led by Yaremа Halyha (Ярема Галига). There’s a lot more I could relate—but must continue.

My stay in Chernivtsi was a disappointment, if compared with the other three cities. First of all, the Society Ukrayina representative didn’t have a clue as to my purpose. She treated me mostly as some kind of delegate or, at times, as a tourist. My only relief from her was my companionship with Andriy Kushnirenko (Andreiy Kusnirenchko), Artistic Director of the Bukovynian Folk Song and Dance Ensemble, whom I had met went he was in Winnipeg, and Dariy Lastivka (Дарій Ластівка), choreographer of the group. Our conversations and my interviews with them, as well as attending the rehearsals of the ensemble, was not only enjoyable but very informative. However, I, quite unexpectedly, stumbled upon the university’s dance group. I say “stumbled” because I was living in one of the more furnished suites the university had set aside for visiting academics, etc. (I was the etc.).
Attending the university group’s rehearsals was relaxing, and entertaining. Many of the students came from nearby villages and towns, and were well versed in their own traditions and customs, which they didn’t hesitate to relate to me. The leader of the group, which was called “Vodohrai” (Водограй), was Yuriy Sirous (Юрій Сіроус). Fortunately, he didn’t hesitate to show me a number of Bukovynian folk dances, including one from the town of Toporivtsi (Топоривці), which I really liked.

I met Mykhailo Ivasiuk (Михайло Івасюк), father of Volodymyr Ivasiuk, poet and composer who died tragically in 1979. We had a very interesting conversation, as I had known Mykhailo’s brother, who had lived in Toronto, and later moved back to Ukraine. I also spoke with Pomoryansky (Поморянський), who had published a small booklet of Bukovynian dances. He also allowed me to copy some of his unpublished material. Historians Avksentiy Yakivchuk (Авксентій Яківчук) and Kuz’ma Demochko (Кузьма Демочко) assisted me in my search of labour and radical songs.

Back in Kyiv, with the assistance of Society Ukrayina, I established contacts with various people in the M. Ryl’skiy Institute of Art Studies, Folklore and Ethnology (Інститут мистецтвознавства, фольклористики та етнології ім. М. Т. Рильського), as it is named today. Two people from the Institute who really helped me were Mykhailo Paziak (Михайло Пазяк) and Mykola Hordiychuk (Микола Гордійчук), my “old” teacher of Ukrainian Classical Music at the Conservatory of Music. Both made my access to numerous unpublished papers and theses much easier. I also obtained a “pass” to Kyiv’s main library. All this added up to a heck of a lot of writing, seeing that copy machines were not all that prevalent then.

That’s not everything—but enough, I would think. I came home with over 100 books (some given, the majority bought by me), 10 two-hour video tapes, 10 two-hour audio tapes, and seven note books filled with copies of material not available in print (copied in Ukrainian and Russian).

Thursday, March 27, 2008.

\[\text{Signature}\]
So Where Does Going To Ukrainian School and Accordion Lessons Get You?

Imagine having to give up almost every Saturday morning of your natural, innocent youth to go to Ukrainian School while your non-Ukrainian friends got to stay at home watching cartoons. Or how about lugging your accordion around year after year to lessons and practices through blizzards or heat waves? Where does all this get you? Well if you are born with, or acquired a love of Ukrainian music, and “get in with the right bunch of fellows”, it can take you many wonderful places!

I would never refer to myself as an expert in Ukrainian music, but I offer to you, the reader, the following thoughts as one who as a very young person fell deeply, madly, and I think forever in love with Ukrainian music.

Today the Winnipeg “Ukrainian music scene” is alive and well in regards to the genre of music referred to as Zabava music. But what is this music and where did it come from? To answer these questions we must explore the interesting and ever-evolving history of Ukrainian “dancing” music in Canada. You will notice I refer to Zabava music as dancing music; music that is meant to be danced to and enjoyed at social functions where dancing would be an integral part. This is somewhat different from Ukrainian “dance” music, which for this discussion I will refer to as the music Ukrainian dance groups use for dance recitals and performances. The two genres seem to intertwine often, as you can hear either genre being played at both social settings and at Ukrainian dance recitals.
But what exactly is Zabava music? The definition I like to use of Ukrainian zabava style music is music which is played at functions predominantly attended by people of Ukrainian background, mostly (but not always) sung in Ukrainian, and is mostly set to Ukrainian melodies (but may encompass many various musical styles). It is music generated with the intent that people will be dancing various styles of dance including: polkas, waltzes, tangos, rumbas, and rock. This music is intended to be fun when listened to, but may also carry various significant and/or patriotic messages with the lyrics of its songs.

Bands which play and/or produce Ukrainian zabava music usually employ the use of the following instruments: accordion (usually electric), electric/acoustic guitar, electric bass-guitar, keyboards, fiddle, cymbaly (dulcimer), and drums. They also often employ the use of a host of various other instruments (albeit on a smaller scale).

Singing is an important component of zabava style music. The language most used is Ukrainian, but many songs have been either written in, or translated into, the English language. The use of vocal harmonies is an important component to this style of music and helps relate this genre of music to the rich choral tradition of the Ukrainian people.

**A Brief Look at the Development of Ukrainian Zabava Music**

In his doctoral study *Polkas on the Prairies: Ukrainian Music and the Construction of Identity*, Dr. Brian Cherewick explains in detail the development of the early forms of Ukrainian dancing music. His study illustrates the integral role music has played in various aspects of Ukrainian culture, and in particular
during wedding traditions where groups of musicians would play, in various combinations, music which was known as "troisti muzyka". This would most often be something like a pair of fiddles and a cymbal player, or various other combinations. This style of music came to Canada upon the arrival of the first wave of Ukrainian immigration, and continued on with the second wave as well.

As time went on the wedding traditions, along with many other aspects of Ukrainian traditions, began to change and evolve. Weddings in Canada, for example, became larger in scale and, in regards to the music, a greater emphasis was placed on the actual wedding dance. Musicians rarely remained present for three continual days, as they had in the past. This was due in part to the developing economy. After all, it would be quite difficult to take three days off work every weekend to play weddings!

With the appearance of community halls in many locations across the prairies, and with the influences of other Canadian musical genres, Ukrainian dancing music began to change. The expanding size of community halls, coupled with ever advancing technology, introduced amplifiers to the Ukrainian music scene. Over a relatively short span of time the use of electronics, especially the electronic accordion, seemed to transform, for many, the sound of the Ukrainian music which was being played.

One of the very earliest groups playing Ukrainian music to pioneer a new electronic sound in North America was a group of then very young musicians based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, known as the D-Drifters 5. This band was started in 1959 by the Romanysyn brothers, Dave and Tony, of Fraserwood, Manitoba.
Dave recalls their first exposure to live bands being none other than the likes of local legends of Ukrainian dancing music Tommy Buick, Jim Gregorash, and The Fraser River Valley Boys who used to play dances in Fraserwood on a regular basis. These, along with the 78rpm recordings of Petro Humeniuk were Dave's early and very significant influences. The timing was just right for Dave to become, at that time, an early pioneer in the use of electronic accordions. He also became a very proficient player, having studied accordion from Winnipeg accordion master Ted Komar.

Tony played the electric guitar, an instrument which was just being introduced to the Ukrainian music scene. In 1964 they, along with the other members of the band, met up with a singing duo known as Mickey and Bunny. This coincided with the era known as the "British Invasion". As a direct result of Mickey's influence, encouragement, vision, and knowledge of Ukrainian language, the band forged a new direction in Ukrainian music, one which had never been explored up to this time, namely Ukrainian "Rock and Roll". According to the Canadian Encyclopaedia of Music, the D-Drifters are said to be known by the as the "creators of Ukrainian Rock and Roll".

The teaming up of the D-Drifters with Mickey and Bunny presented the D-Drifters with an opportunity to go on a national tour across Canada. The D-Drifters, although billed as the warm up act as well as the back-up band for Mickey and Bunny, had created a completely unique persona all to themselves. Their success lay in their ability to translate into Ukrainian (with Mickey's help) and execute convincingly, the chart topping hits of the Beatles, as well as other
well-known rock and roll groups of the time. Hence, the D-Drifters became known to many as the "Ukrainian Beatles".

The D-Drifters already had produced fine Ukrainian dancing albums by this time with and without singing, which gave them credibility in the eyes of the Ukrainian community. They are credited by Dr. Cherwick as modernising the sound of traditional Ukrainian melodies. Their fourth album sales are estimated to have surpassed sales of over 100,000 copies - a great mark of success for any modern band!

Dave recalls Mickey and Bunny being enormously popular throughout western Canada. But in some other areas Dave further recalls "the people weren't perhaps totally ready for our modern stuff".

In Winnipeg however, as a young girl at the time, Bohdana Bashuk reflects:

"...it was very big to listen to the Beatles done in Ukrainian. I was proud to have music to call my own. Because it was Ukrainian, it was even better!"

When their cross-Canada tour brought Mickey and Bunny and the D-Drifters to Montreal in the winter of 1965, the Ukrainian community there (mostly from the third wave of immigration) reportedly fell in love with the concept brought forward by the band. Dave recalls vividly the young people, especially the girls, screaming and carrying on as if they really were The Beatles.

Oles Cap, a young Ukrainian student in Montreal at the time, and later a founding member of the Montreal-based Ukrainian band Samotsvit, reflects that:

"Their concert was held at the UNO Fairmont, a hall the Ukrainians would rent for concerts ...my parents dragged me to this thing, it
seemed all the Ukrainians were going to see Mickey and Bunny 'cause they were like Sonny and Cher. We were dragged along because they thought it would be a good influence. The D-Drifters started the show and it was Sonny and Cher quality. With Mickey and Bunny it was country and it didn’t really go, but it did more with the older folks. But here came the D-Drifters. When they played the Beatles that stunned everyone. Nobody thought they would do something like that. These guys from the west coming - you’re expecting rinky-dink music and here they come out with that. I think they had to play something current for Ukrainian people. The easiest was to take English pop music and put it into Ukrainian. Man, that changed everything."

Dave Roman (as he has been known since the Romanysyn boys shortened their names on their first recording) describes that tour through Eastern Canada as "simply amazing - something that was on a scale that hadn’t been seen nor has been seen since".

Dr. Orest Cap, older brother of Oles, who also witnessed the 1965 Montreal performance and the reaction of the crowd, surprised me with his vivid reflections of that concert which illustrate to me the impact the D-Drifters must have had at the time:

“What the D-Drifters did was to introduce a modern sound to Ukrainian music. Their music was on the edge. It changed the face of Ukrainian music … I still remember them singing ‘Holky ee Shpiisky’ (Needles and Pins).”

The Montreal Ukrainian band known as Rushnychok has also long been referred to by many as "The Beatles of Ukrainian Music". This band however started in December 1969, well after the tour which brought the D-Drifters to Montreal. According to Oles Cap, a personal friend of Andrij Harasymowych, lead singer of Rushnychok, it was directly as a result of the D-Drifters/Mickey and
Bunny tour that the group Rushnychok received their inspiration to form a band. This was later independently confirmed by the drummer Stephan Andrusiak in 1995’s Dauphin Festival when he met up with and spoke to Dave Roman personally.

Once Rushnychok released their first album, Ukrainian dancing music again changed and would never be the same. Rushnychok took what they had seen in the D-Drifters performance and added to that the more refined and sophisticated Ukrainian elements dominant in Montreal at the time. They selected a Ukrainian name for their band which was not a common occurrence at the time. The name and song Rushnychok immediately identified them as Ukrainian and therefore provided for their listeners a strong connection with Ukraine. They also decided to wear Ukrainian embroidered shirts and Ukrainian pants, boots, and sashes. According to Oles Cap:

"Taras Hukalo, a guy in the Ukrainian community at the time, and a friend of theirs kept telling them to do something different, that they were to set an example, to set the tone for the rest of the Ukrainian bands, he suggested wearing full Ukrainian costumes. That’s when overnight they became big - especially playing for Senator Yuzyk. They were reluctant at first - they were embarrassed - it was seen as better to be in tuxedos."

Rushnychok also then decided to tie a rushnyk (embroidered Ukrainian towel) to their microphone stands. This powerful Ukrainian symbol, along with the costuming came at a time when Ukrainians were entering a new age in the Canadian experience. By the early 1970's many Ukrainians began to truly celebrate their heritage rather than shy away from it as had been the case with preceding generations.

159
For these reasons, plus the selection and execution of their songs, Rushnychok was widely accepted by the Ukrainian community in Canada and throughout the United States as well. Perhaps due to the influence they had on other Ukrainian bands that were to follow, they deservedly became known as "The Ukrainian Beatles", albeit for a different reason than the D-Drifters. Their presentation and ideas were copied by many groups who followed afterwards. For many youth born after the third wave of immigration, Rushnychok's music had a great impact. They sang patriotic songs in new ways that greatly impressed many people of that generation, young and old alike.

Starting in the mid to late 1960's and moving into the 1970's the Ukrainian community in Canada and in the United States began to form festivals. This was further evidence of the fact that Ukrainians were becoming further accepted and recognised in the Canadian and American societies. These festivals, however, had an interesting effect on the Ukrainian music scene. As festivals such as Soyuzivka in New York State, Canada's National Ukrainian Festival in Dauphin, Vesna Festival in Saskatoon, and Vegreville's Pysanka Festivals began to grow, they became instrumental in creating Ukrainian "stars". Never before had Ukrainian people been given the opportunity to hear some of their favourite Ukrainian bands at such large venues. With larger venues to perform, a demand for recordings by the public helped to bring about great activity in the "Ukrainian recording industry".

Dave Roman fondly recalls selling out 2200 albums in a matter of hours at Vegreville's Pysanka Festival in 1977:
"Man, they bought everything we had brought with us. Everything! We had nothing to take home when we were done that weekend."

Meanwhile, the Ukrainian dancing music scene in eastern Canada and in some areas of the United States was exploding with numerous groups forming, recording albums, and performing at various festivals and social functions. One such group from Toronto named Burya was to play a vital role in encapsulating both eastern and western Canadian Ukrainian influences into a style of music which by then began to be called "zabava music".

Burya’s leader, Ron Chahute, was to be the “perfect storm” in respect to his musical influences. Part of Ron’s family’s roots is in western Canada (Manitoba) while Ron himself grew up in Toronto. This enabled Burya to have a sound which encompassed both a refined Ukrainian singing element as well as strong influences of western Canadian Ukrainian music including the use of the fiddle.

Another great influence on the Ukrainian music scene in North America in the 1960s and 1970s was the music from Ukraine which was being secretly recorded and smuggled from Ukraine. Among the most influential groups to record and succeed in having their music heard outside of Ukraine were the groups Kobza, Smerichka, and Vatra. These groups brought forth the message that although Ukraine was under the heavy cloak of the Soviet Union, the desire for an independent Ukraine was stronger than ever. The brilliant young Ukrainian composer at the time, Volodymyr Ivasiuk, was to pen the biggest songs of that generation. His songs Vodohray (Waterfall) and Chervona Ruta (The Red Ruta Flower) seemed to be recorded by nearly every Ukrainian band of that era.
Following the murder of Ivasiuk in 1979, Chervona Ruta became a varitable anthem for the young generation of Ukrainians both in Ukraine and in the diaspora. Today Chervona Ruta remains a huge song all over the world wherever Ukrainians live.

It is interesting to note that the groups in Ukraine, which were able to record music in the 1960s and '70s, had begun to employ the use of electronic instruments in their recordings very similar to that which was being done in North American Ukrainian music. This seemed to develop simultaneously and yet independently inside and outside of Ukraine.

In Winnipeg, the D-Drifters continued to be the name in Ukrainian dancing music and continued to develop a tremendous following throughout the 1970s and into the 1980s. Perhaps they could be also be referred to as "The Rolling Stones of Ukrainian music" for at this present time (2008) they continue to perform on occasion and attract a crowd every time.

In regards to zabava music, Winnipeg experienced a unique development. With a tremendous heritage of accordion players such as Ted Komar and Dave Roman in Winnipeg, bands with Ukrainian names who also incorporated a lot of Ukrainian singing into their repertoire, were rare if at all existent in Manitoba. There were and still are, of course, many bands that play Ukrainian music and foster the traditional western Canadian Ukrainian sound which heavily relies on the fiddle. Bands such as the Interlake Polka Kings, The Canadian Rhythm Masters, and Female Beat are but a few examples of successful bands who fulfilled the dancing needs of Manitobans for generations.
As the zabava genre of Ukrainian music was developing in other areas of Canada, a group of young men in Winnipeg decided to get together, learn some of the songs they were hearing from albums (and by this time on Ukrainian radio programs) and started to perform as the band Volya. This Winnipeg band performed at many weddings, dances, and special occasions during its time on the Winnipeg scene (1980s). Besides Volya, there were virtually no other Ukrainian bands playing zabava-style music. In the early 1990s a band called Lviv was formed and performed in the Winnipeg area for approximately 4 years before disbanding. This again left a void in the Winnipeg Ukrainian music scene.

The time was right for another group of young men to come together and form a band which could supply Winnipeg with zabava music. As you may have guessed or may know, I happened to be one of those young men who was fortunate to be in the right place at the right time. The band that was to form, beginning in 1994, was Shoom. The foregoing is not intended to provide you with a history of Shoom per se, but rather to provide you with a look at how a Ukrainian zabava band comes together.

**Elements of a Ukrainian Zabava Band**

What are the elements that go into forming a Ukrainian zabava band? I will perhaps best explain this by giving you a short musical biography of each Shoom member.

**Greg Udod**

For myself, I can say that I come by my love of Ukrainian music, of course, from my family and honestly. My late mother was taught to play various
instruments by a kind and talented pioneer priest, Father Wasyl Kudryk. She would eventually become a musician in the Cando, Saskatchewan area playing for all sorts of occasions. She said she was "raking in the cash" making four dollars per dance in the 1940's. Her idol was Don Messer. She also loved and played Ukrainian music, eventually learning to play not only the fiddle, but the accordion, guitar, piano, mandolin, and banjo as well. It was through her efforts that I became interested in music.

Knowing what our grandparents lived through by immigrating to Canada, having learnt of the misery of life in Ukraine for our family there, plus coming from the home that I did developed in me a strong Ukrainian consciousness. I often say: "Playing and singing Ukrainian music is not just something I do - it is who I am".

I also consider myself extremely fortunate to have grown up in Saskatoon during the 1970s where I was one of many influenced by bands visiting Vesna Festival every spring. Having seen bands such as Rushnychok, Syny Stepiv, Samotsvit, Veselka, and others, I was greatly impressed by the eastern Canadian Ukrainian sound. I started playing in a band when I was 14 years old. When my family moved to Winnipeg in 1980 I found myself not only longing to play but to at least hear the music of these types of bands.

Terry Kraynyk

Terry was born into the family of Fred and Florence Kraynyk. Fred's parents had moved to Canada in 1914. They settled in the Vita, Manitoba area called Chipywnyk's Church. This was just down the road from Peter Picklyk's
place. Because Terry's grandfather was a musician, this seems to have influenced his father and brothers who all became musicians, and Terry's two aunts married musicians as well!

Terry recalls family gatherings in which music was always a central element. Terry's first exposure to Ukrainian music was that of Peter Picklyk, Tommy Buick, and generally what is referred to as "western Canadian Ukrainian music". Terry's father would often play with his brother-in-law's band at Mateychuk's barn, a location in the Stuartburn area renown for its old time dances.

Fred encouraged Terry to pursue the accordion as this was becoming a very popular instrument at the time (1970's). Between the ages of seven and sixteen Terry studied under the classically trained German musician, Carl Muller. Terry then began to perform at family gatherings and by the age of thirteen started to play in an old-time band called the Melody Mates.

Terry recalls that through the experiences with Ukrainian dancing he would have the opportunity of watching and listening to Ted Komar: "I would sit and be in awe". Terry's father, being a school teacher, also taught Terry and his siblings the Ukrainian language throughout Terry's formative years.

Fred Kraynyk had purchased D-Drifters albums which Terry remembers being played a lot during his youth. Again, through Ukrainian dancing, Terry met Tom Koroluk, another of Winnipeg's great accordionists. Tom in turn introduced Terry to Nathan Mandziuk.
Nathan Mandziuk

Nathan also comes from a musical family. His Baba and Dido Mandziuk came over to Canada in 1929 and settled in the Rosa, Manitoba area on a homestead. On his mother's side his Baba Ambrosichuk was born in Canada but Dido was born in Ukraine. Nathan grew up speaking Ukrainian to his grandparents. Nathan's father Bill remembers, as a youth, hearing his father play the fiddle. Bill later played for many years in a band called The Wild Cats. Nathan grew up listening to all sorts of music but especially lots of Ukrainian music.

Nathan received his first guitar at the age of five. At eight years old, Nathan started Ukrainian dancing in Sarto, Manitoba. That year Nathan started also taking accordion lessons from Winnipeg accordionist Len Hanchuk. It was around this time that Nathan recalls hearing the D-Drifters recordings. From these albums and eight track tapes Nathan says he started "really getting the itch to play". By age eleven Nathan had started the band Low Profile. Nathan recalls their first gig being out in Witmore, Manitoba when he was thirteen and a half years old. They had to play about 40 - 45% Ukrainian music at that time. Among the many functions at which the band performed, the most prestigious would have been Saskatoon's Vesna Festival in 1984. By 1985, however, the members parted ways.

While spending weekends in Rosa, Nathan would often hear a band that played out there on occasion headed by Tom Koroluk. Nathan befriended Tom and soon Nathan was part of the band's line-up as a guitarist. During this time
Nathan also did some freelance work with the Hoosli Male Chorus as a bass guitarist.

From 1990 to 1994 Nathan performed with Tom Koroluk in a band called After Midnight. Of interest is the fact that Nathan knew practically every song recorded by his idol band The D-Drifters, yet he never heard them live until they performed at his wedding in 1992. Nathan and his wife Donna recall that as being an absolute thrill for them, but especially so for Nathan.

Terry McGurk

How does a Scotsman fit in to a Ukrainian band? Terry was born in Winnipeg in 1947 and has a very interesting musical history. His father came from Scotland, and his mother was born in Manitoba. His father played the trumpet in The Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders Armed Forces Band. He passed away when Terry was only fourteen years old. Terry had started, however, playing the drums by the age of nine. Between the ages of eleven and seventeen Terry was playing in the Sprague - Pinney area. He recalls playing Mateychuk's barn in 1964 for old-time barn dances. With his first band called Torquay, he remembers having to play Ukrainian melodies at these dances: "It was just expected - you had to play Ukrainian music or you were dead!".

Terry studied drumming from "one of the best drummers in Winnipeg", Del Wagner. In 1968, Terry played four times with famous Winnipegger Neil Young who at that time was still relatively unknown. Terry recalls thinking that "this guy was not going to make it - he just wasn't very good. He sure couldn't sing".
was surprised by Young's later success. Terry also filled in four or five times with another famous Winnipeger, Chad Allan.

Terry performed mostly rock music, at that time, with his band Wishbone. They were the house band on the River Rouge for four years, six months a year, seven days a week. By 1976-77, they had played all the top bars in Winnipeg and were in a well-established venue rotation. Through his band mates Terry met Tom Koroluk. Tom would, years later, introduce Terry M. to Terry K. and Nathan when they were looking for a drummer.

Ray Bach

Ray's family name until 1970 was Bachynski. Coming from a musical family where Ray, his two brothers, and their father performed as a group, Ray's dad thought The Bach Four was a much catchier name than the Bachynski Four. Ray was performing with his family by the age of eleven. Ray reflects that he has always played Ukrainian music but that he was unaware of the ethnicity of the music he was playing until he was older. Over the next five years The Bach Four performed from Chicago to Prince Albert, and many places in between.

Ray went on to play in the band Beginnings for about five years. John Lewisky, the accordionist of this band, eventually introduced Ray to Tom Koroluk. Ray later played with a well known weekend band called Justice for ten years and during this time began to perform in Ukrainian dance recital orchestras under the direction of Tom. He has done so now for many years. You will also see his name in the credits for albums with Luba Bilash and the Maryna Duet of Winnipeg. Again, through Tom Koroluk, the band was introduced to Ray in 1998.
It is most interesting to note how one individual, in this case Tom Koroluk, played a huge part in the formation of our band though no one knew it at the time. Today Tom remains very active in Ukrainian music playing accordion in the band the Canadian Rhythm Masters. He also plays and produces Ukrainian “dance” music for groups across North America. We are fortunate to have Tom help out our band with sound production and on-going recording projects.

**So Where Does All This Get You?**

With the appearance of our debut recording in August of 1997 Shoom began performing at various festivals and functions near and far. Shoom has performed at Canada’s National Ukrainian Festival in Dauphin, Saskatoon’s Vesna Festival, San Diego’s Ukrainian Festival, as well as many other venues in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. The band has also been asked several times to play throughout the United States. As evidence of the further acceptance into the main stream of Canadian society, Shoom has performed regularly at the Casino’s of Winnipeg’s where we perform a variety of music including Ukrainian zabava music, old time, country, and rock and roll.

**What is our sound?**

I believe every band needs to develop its own unique sound. Our sound could be perhaps best be described as a hybrid of the D-Drifters, Rushnychok, Samotsvit, and Burya bands all mixed together with a "punchy edge" to round things off. A large emphasis is placed on clearly understood and grammatical Ukrainian language in all Ukrainian vocal work. A fostering of pride in who we are.
as Ukrainians is also an important theme in our recordings, incorporating with it the glorious and proud elements of the Ukrainian Kozaks.

**Key elements for success for a zabava band**

There are considerable changes to the repertoire of venues from gigs in Winnipeg, to those in rural areas, to those in the eastern United States, for example. For this a band relies on its versatility to play various styles of music. For example; when playing in Tuelon Manitoba, Nathan's ability to play the fiddle is absolutely crucial to our band's success. In Winnipeg and in other large urban areas the role of the fiddle is often greatly diminished and the saxophone/clarinet playing is featured prominently. We have seen that in this type of work, song selection plays a very significant role in the success of any given venue.

Another important factor for the success of any band is its management. Although large issues are dealt with on a group level, the daily operation of the band is left to Terry Kraynyk. Terry has the large responsibility of taking all the bookings, negotiating all terms with customers, arranging all details (including travel and accommodations for out of town venues), and informing group members of gig details.

The selection of Ukrainian material for our recordings is mostly my responsibility. When it comes to arrangement of these various songs, however, it becomes a group effort. Nathan has a very highly developed ability to dissect songs and produce just the right sound, chord, or solo needed to make the song sound the way we would like it to sound on our recording. As mentioned earlier, Terry McGurk provides a solid foundation with his drumming.
What has playing in a zabava band meant to its members?

When asked this question Terry Kraynyk responded:

"I didn't really know the difference in styles from east to west. I've learned that Ukrainian people, for the most part, are the same in Minneapolis, New York, Saskatchewan, San Diego, as they are in Swan River and in Winnipeg."

Nathan Mandziuk:

"I used to be very secretive about playing accordion or about playing in a band at all when I was younger. I was sort of embarrassed. I didn't want people to make fun of me. Today I am very proud to be Ukrainian. My children are in the Ukrainian Program and I truly celebrate being Ukrainian!"

Terry McGurk:

"It has exposed me to a new type of music I never heard before. I've learned about a culture I never knew much about."

Ray:

"Playing in Shoom has exposed me to the real Ukrainian culture instead of just playing notes. I appreciate the culture now - it's important for me to have my kids involved. I now realise what I missed as a kid."

For myself, playing in Shoom has meant a dream come true in many ways. I am able to perform the music I love. This includes not only Ukrainian music, but rock and roll which I grew up with as well. I feel that to allow me to sing in Ukrainian is to allow me to breathe. It really seems to be a necessary part of who I am. To be privileged to perform at the level we do, at the venues we play is part of the dream. The other part is recording this sound, this unique era in Ukrainian musical history, for all generations of Ukrainians, young and old alike, as well as those yet to come. I truly feel blessed.
Winnipeg's Zabava Music Scene Today

Since Shoom formed, and I'm not suggesting that we had anything to do with it, there have now appeared several bands with Ukrainian names playing Zabava music in Winnipeg. Names such as Kalyna, Zvook, Taran, and Sloohai have appeared on the Winnipeg scene. Other bands also have begun to include a lot more zabava-style music into their repertoire over the past decade. The local Ukrainian radio program on CKJS (810 AM) presently has a program called The Zabava Program which airs 3 times per week featuring Ukrainian bands.

By the virtue of the fact that these bands are busy playing various venues suggests that Ukrainian zabava music definitely plays a role in the life of Ukrainian Canadians. The fact that this music is sold across the country and listened to by countless people provides these bands an opportunity to share their expressions of the Ukrainian song in a uniquely Ukrainian-Canadian way. After all, who else can tell what Ukrainian-Canadian people may want to hear but for another group of Ukrainian-Canadians? Yes, we Canadians of Ukrainian decent have developed our own unique style of music!

I believe that being, for the most part culturally separated from Ukraine until quite recently, has made Ukrainian music in Canada somewhat akin to that of space travel; in some ways our music has been light years ahead of that in Ukraine, and in other ways perhaps stuck in a time warp. I believe that as ties continue to strengthen between Ukraine and Canada we will see more and more interchange between influences in Ukrainian music from one country to another and vice versa.
The late conductor of Winnipeg's Olexander Koshetz Choir, Walter Klymkiw once said (and I've never forgotten):

"all the young people want to do today is Ukrainian dance...dance, dance, dance. What about singing? You know Koshetz said that 'not just once, but many times, the Ukrainian song has saved the Ukrainian nation'.”

(Koshetz Choir rehearsal 1984)

I do not believe that zabava music will "save the Ukrainian nation", but I do believe that it can have a significant impact on the people who hear its music. Music is a very powerful tool. I also believe that Ukrainian Canadian bands can play an important role in shaping a future sense of pride in one's heritage and a sense of who they are among younger generations of Ukrainian Canadians as well as for the youth of Ukraine as well. After all, it's not just about notes. Long live the Ukrainian Song!