

OUR MUSICAL HERITAGE – CELEBRATED IN POLYPHONIC PERFORMANCE

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Annotation: The article discusses the fact that folk songs have become a musical heritage, cultural and spiritual wealth, their charm, life and educational significance are growing due to the fact that Uzbek composers have adapted them for the choir and modernized them. The methods and tools used by Uzbek composers in the genre of a capella, comments on the Uzbek national performance.

Keywords: a capella, lad, monody, harmonic, texture, polyphony, antiphon, canon, imitation, conductor, choirmaster, ornamental, mordent, grace note.

Music is a highly influential and powerful tool for education, a nourishment for the soul capable of giving life-affirming energy to the human psyche. Music, with its captivating charm, embraces the human heart. Only those whose hearts yearn for beauty truly love and understand music. The ability to listen to and appreciate music is certainly developed and instilled from childhood. It is impossible to talk about spiritual perfection without first cultivating a sense of beauty. Music is one of the most powerful tools for shaping and nurturing these delicate feelings. Music is an art form that carries both artistic and educational significance.

Folk music, having developed and refined itself over thousands of years, has reached high levels of artistic expression and has become a part of the cultural and spiritual wealth of each nation. Uzbek folk music embodies the lifestyle, morals, and certain aspects of religious beliefs of the people, reflecting their hopes, love for labor and homeland, and fidelity in love. It is impossible to imagine national celebrations, festivals, large gatherings, and weddings without music. Each melody, song, and dance performed at these events has had a positive impact on the participants' mood. The songs created and performed by the people during rituals, festivals, and celebrations arose from their relationship with nature and social realities. Uzbek folk music serves to help people perceive and appreciate the beauty in nature, societal events, and human behavior. All folk songs emerge from specific circumstances, reflecting life itself, and help people absorb the events and occurrences around them as one of the most impactful forms of art. As a result of reforms over the past five years, the necessary political, legal, socio-economic, and educational foundations for building a New Uzbekistan have been established. Based on the principle of "From the Strategy of Action to the Strategy of Development," seven priority directions were developed. The fifth of these, which is particularly relevant to the fields of art and culture, is ensuring spiritual progress and elevating the sector to a new level.

The development strategy of New Uzbekistan is of paramount importance, not only for the country's five-year development path and directions but also for its long-term future growth. The Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026 and the State Program aimed at implementing it during the "Year of Honoring Human Dignity and Active Neighborhood" were approved and announced by a decree from our President. Shortly afterward, on February 2, another important document, the resolution "On additional measures for further development of culture and the arts," was signed. This once again confirms the serious attention our national leadership is giving to the fields of spirituality, culture, and the arts. In the resolution "On

additional measures for the development of culture and the arts,” issued on February 2, 2022, President Shavkat Miromonovich Mirziyoyev specifically emphasized the importance of music education and its role in shaping students’ character. He highlighted a number of key tasks: “To improve the quality of cultural leisure services, especially for citizens living in remote areas, and to establish a systematic approach to organizing theatrical performances, circuses, and other types of mass cultural and concert events across all regions of the republic.

To search for and support talented young creators in the field of culture and the arts, and to create a comprehensive system for providing educational institutions with national instruments, music textbooks, sheet music collections, and educational-methodological literature, in accordance with the State Program for implementing the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022-2026 during the “Year of Honoring Human Dignity and Active Neighborhood.”

1.Starting from the 2022-2023 academic year, measures will be implemented in educational institutions to enhance students’ musical knowledge and skills, instill a love for national culture, identify and support young talents” [3:1].

Indeed, one of the key aspects of the large-scale efforts in our republic to ensure the holistic development of the younger generation, making them well-rounded, knowledgeable, and highly spiritual, is the introduction of new, modern teaching methods in the education and upbringing process that meet the demands of the times. Increasing the effectiveness of teaching based on these methods remains a pressing issue. It is well known that nurturing aesthetic sensitivity, national pride, feelings of patriotism, and respect for national values and traditions—these qualities are instilled in a person from a young age. In this time of rapid change and development in our republic, the comprehensive development of young people is both a requirement and a necessity of the era. Raising a generation that is spiritually strong, knowledgeable, and proud of its homeland is one of the most urgent topics of our time. This presents complex, large-scale challenges for the education and upbringing system, where musical art plays a leading role. Music serves as the fundamental foundation for shaping and strengthening the scientific worldview of young people.

When discussing the educational significance of the folk genre, it is important to focus on the period from preschool age to a certain stage of adolescence. It is worth noting that in shaping a correct attitude towards art, attention must be given to the younger generation, starting from kindergarten age.

In this regard, it is essential to highlight the reflections shared by our President Sh. Mirziyoyev during the First International Bakhshi Art Festival: “We are mobilizing all the strength and resources of our state and society to ensure that our youth grow into independent thinkers, with high intellectual and spiritual potential, and capable of competing on equal terms with their peers around the world in any field, so they can lead happy and successful lives” [1:14].

Each type of folk song plays a unique role in the spiritual development of individuals. Whether sung by children or adult choirs, the communal performance of folk songs fosters a sense of unity, evokes mutual affection, and promotes deeper understanding and emotional growth among people. Musical education is not merely about raising musicians but, above all, about nurturing individuals. The engaging content of folk art, its rich imagination, and vivid artistic imagery captivate children’s attention, bring them joy, and at the same time, exert an educational influence. Introducing children to musical folklore enhances their interest in and attention to the world around them, their appreciation for folk traditions and words, and nurtures their artistic taste, while distancing them from the influence of “mass culture.” Folk songs and music have always attracted creators. Reworking the folklore of any people requires composers to study the material thoroughly. This process is particularly delicate when dealing with folk songs, which are naturally monophonic. The role of folk songs in the formation and development of polyphonic national

music is invaluable. The great and renowned Uzbek composer Mutavakkil Burkhanov was one of the first composers to artistically refine and adapt Uzbek and fraternal folk songs for collective performance. His masterfully reworked versions of Uzbek folk songs such as “Yorlarim” (“Tanovar”), “Go‘zal Qizga” (“Ganji Qorabog’”), the Karakalpak folk song “Bibigul,” the Uyghur folk song “Sayra,” and Tajik folk songs “Zarra Gul” and “Sari Ko‘hi Baland” remain exemplary pieces for composers and choral artists today. These works have become models and benchmarks of Uzbek choral music, retaining their artistic value and still being performed successfully both in Uzbekistan and abroad.

His talented followers, including Sobir Boboyev, Botir Umidjonov, and several choral conductors such as Sh. Yormatov, J. Shukurov, Ye. Nechayev, and N. Sharafiyeva, have achieved remarkable results in adapting folk songs for choirs.

Rearrangement is an interesting and independent field of creativity, offering the opportunity to showcase the unique and distinctive characteristics of each nation’s song culture, revealing its musical essence. The primary task of rearrangement is to convey the unique imagery and national “colors” of a song through various expressive means. Sobir Boboyev’s arrangements of folk songs for choir such as “Chaman Ichra,” “Yali-Yali,” “Galdir,” “Tanovar,” and “Endi Sendek” are still performed today in educational and professional choral programs. In this regard, special mention should be made of the maestro conductor, creative choirmaster, and expert in Uzbek choral art, composer Botir Umidjonov. His contribution is immense in rearranging hundreds of folk songs and creating new, original works that have become beloved in the choral art of our people. He has crafted choral miniatures from Uzbek folk songs like “Ilillayor,” “Qorasoch,” “Chamanda Gul,” “Qilpillama,” “Lapar,” and “Galbari,” as well as various Central Asian folk songs, including “Diliman” (Tajik), “Yapuray” (Kazakh), “O‘ynamdu Yaxshi,” “Dolan Mekti,” “Almixan” (Uyghur), “Qomuzchu,” and “Chaloyna.” Moreover, B. Umidjonov made a significant contribution to adapting traditional classical music, particularly maqom, for polyphonic choir performances. His choral adaptations of pieces like “Segoh” (lyrics by Khurshid), “Chorgoh” (lyrics by Furqat), and “Saraxbori Navo” (lyrics by Hafez) introduced a new tone and resonance to choral performance.

Professor Ye. Nechayev, who has successfully worked with various choirs, arranged several traditional folk songs, including Uzbek folk songs such as “Zar Do‘ppi,” “Namanganning Olmasi,” “Holaylo,” and “Qiyiq”. Additionally, he worked on Uyghur folk songs like “Nazugum”, “Dutarimning Tarliri”, “Chiraylig‘im”, and “Seriq Sebde”, as well as the Turkmen folk song “Bibijan”, Tajik folk songs “Chashmoni Siyoh Tu” and “Mavji Jonon Mezanad”, Kazakh folk songs “Aytim Salem Qalam Qas”, and Karakalpak folk songs “Kizlar Seyili”.

Another renowned professor still active today, N. Sharafiyeva, has worked on a variety of pieces such as “O‘zbekiston Taronalari”, “Ey Nozanin”, “Xorazm Navolari”, “Sayri Bog’”, “Hazil”, “Ey Mehribonim”, “Tasadduq”, “Mustahzod”, “Navro‘z Salomi”, and “Deydi-yo”, as well as Tatar folk songs like “Tan Atganda” and Karakalpak folk songs like “Sonday Kuldim”. Botir Umidjonov, during his work as a choirmaster, successfully integrated the academic style of choir performance with the traditions of Uzbek national singing. His contributions as a People’s Artist of Uzbekistan, a prominent choir conductor, and a composer were unparalleled in developing a unique style and decorative elements for Uzbek national choir singing. Many of the works adapted for choirs by the masters were recorded on magnetic tapes for the golden archive of Uzbekistan’s radio and television, performed by the choir ensemble recognized for its service to the Republic. This choir is distinguished from other groups by its unique national style of performance. It is the only professional choir ensemble in the country that has been actively promoting the national choir art both in Uzbekistan and internationally. The ensemble is known for its distinctive performance style, artistic traditions, and bright national flavor. Several folk

songs, widely included in the choir's repertoire, play a crucial role in the spiritual development of the younger generation, fostering respect for national and universal values. For many years, the talented choirmaster, conductor, and composer Botir Umidjonov maintained a delicate balance between the academic approach to choir performance and the traditions of national singing. He perfected and preserved the unique sound of the Uzbek choir.

His successors, Jo'raqul Shukurov and Dilbar Malikova, upheld this tradition, keeping the choir's artistic direction in line with its original path. Today, the artistic director of the ensemble, Gulnora Malikova, continues to follow this creative tradition. The choir not only maintains the traditional performance practices but also incorporates innovative elements, further refining the artistic style. In addition to presenting various choral works of different genres (a cappella, suites, symphonies, etc.) by Uzbek composers and choirmasters, as well as complex classical and maqom pieces adapted for choir, the ensemble performs these works not only in solo concert settings but also at a high professional level with Uzbek folk and symphony orchestras.



The artistic director of the choir group awarded the title of “Honored ensemble of the Republic” - G. Malikova.

These esteemed teachers applied various choral writing techniques based on the characteristics of the song genre, melody structure, and content. They succeeded in integrating monophonic folk songs into the broader framework of European-style polyphonic choral arrangements and developed their vocal-polyphonic and textured aspects. As we observe the principles of the dynamic development of polyphony during the process of adapting folk songs, specifically monodic songs, for choir performance, we notice the movement of parallel voices in intervals of fourths and fifths, which are relatively simple forms of polyphony. These movements are especially utilized when part of the choir takes on the role of instrumental accompaniment, providing a harmonic background. This style of performance is characteristic of two-voiced compositions in instrumental music, such as the “dutor”.

In the process of reworking folk songs, techniques such as antiphonal (dialogue), canon, and imitation are frequently used, as they vividly highlight the national character of the music and showcase its various forms. These techniques also allow for the Uzbek monody's structure to be revealed within its natural sound framework, enriching it with polyphonic colors. Along with the formation of other polyphonic methods, the use of contrapuntal techniques in folk song

adaptations has become commonplace for professional composers and choir masters involved in reworking folk music.

One of the sources of song adaptation is the rhythmic structure, or “usul.” Indeed, the artistic and expressive characteristics of *usul* in Uzbek music are unparalleled. In adapting the percussive rhythms of *doira*, which is rich in various rhythmic patterns, to polyphony, we can see how our composers skillfully employ diverse and colorful effects. Many other coloristic effects, such as closed vocal sounds, vowel vocalizations, special syllable combinations (e.g., “bum-bak”, “ra-na-na”, “rak-tak-tak”, “yor-yor”, “yoroney”), clapping, finger snapping, and various exclamations, further enrich and intensify the musical development of the songs. Ornamentations like melismas, grace notes, and mordents embellish the melodies, making them more charming, delicate, and beautiful. These creators adapted Uzbek folk songs for choir performance while preserving the melody and main musical direction. Depending on the meaning of the lyrics, the main melody was alternately given to the men’s and women’s groups in succession, enhancing the overall structure of the song. It is important to emphasize that every nation’s musical folklore contains unique characteristics that are specific to that culture alone. A strict and essential condition in reworking folk music is to preserve the national melody (melos) without alteration, meaning the original tune and rhythmic details must remain intact. One of the key responsibilities is to educate children through folk songs. In this regard, it is worth highlighting the work of Uzbekistan’s People’s Artist, conductor, and composer Sh. Yormatov, who adapted many children’s folk songs for children’s choirs. His works, such as spring songs related to the Navruz holiday, children’s songs (“Boychechak”, “Qora Mundi”, “Oq Terakmi – Ko’k Terak”, “Chittigul”, etc.), “Yor-yor” songs, Ramadan songs, and traditional songs like “Ho Zam-Zam”, demonstrate the deep-rooted tradition of collective choral performance in Uzbek culture. Over the years, the composer has adapted many children’s folk songs, including “Boychechak”, “Chittigul”, “Lolacha”, “Bu Gulshan Soz”, and “Jamalagi Tillo”, for children’s choirs, preserving their national essence. The performance of the “Bulbulcha” children’s choir, which maintained the national color, enhanced the educational value and emotional impact of these songs. In his book **Music Pedagogy**, Professor Rauf Qodirov confirms the significance of children’s folk songs: “In children’s songs, there exists the refined cultural heritage and beautiful traditions of music and daily life that have been passed down from generation to generation. The effectiveness of children assimilating invaluable musical materials and the necessity of mastering them are among the most important tasks of music pedagogy” [4: 49]. Young people represent the future, strength, and foundation of any country.

If they grow up to be well-rounded, physically strong, mentally and morally sound, knowledgeable, and intellectually advanced, the nation’s future will be bright, stable, and prosperous. Thus, through folk music, we can make an aesthetic impact on a person’s spirit, nurturing in them the ability to appreciate the true beauty of life, encouraging creativity for the happiness of others, and striving toward becoming a morally and spiritually enriched individual. In the polyphonic performance of folk songs, the essence of human virtues such as respect for noble ideals, compassion, pride in one’s history and culture, a clear conscience, honest labor, goodness, and loyalty are expressed. Choral art is one of the forms of art that can enhance individuals’ moral standards, artistic taste, and unite people while awakening aesthetic pleasure in them. The art of choral performance plays an important role in shaping the spiritual level, artistic, and moral culture of the younger generation. It fosters national pride, patriotism, creativity, and beauty, broadening their worldview and enhancing their sense of independence and initiative. We must carefully preserve the historical, cultural, and intellectual heritage of the Uzbek people and focus on educating the younger generation in the spirit of universal and national traditions and values. In conclusion, the role of the arts in the aesthetic education of youth is more effective

than in other fields, as all forms of art pave the way for goodness and creativity. The collective singing of folk songs fosters a sense of unity in children, awakens their compassion for each other, and encourages deeper understanding and the development of their emotions and feelings.

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