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**FROM THE HISTORY OF ACTIVITY OF “THE UNION  
OF THE UKRAINIAN PROFESSIONAL MUSICIANS IN LVIV”  
AND CONCERT LIFE OF LVIV IN 1934–1939**

Creation and activity in of the “Union of the Ukrainian Professional Musicians in Lviv” during 1934–1939 is a bright page in the history of Ukrainian musical culture, where the fact of musical professionalism formation in Galicia is declared. This stage became the completion of the way of formation and concentration of the professional musical powers: for the extremely short time – from the end of XIX century – having gone through the period of formation, Ukrainian music demonstrated its readiness for any form of professional activity.

Owing to a new generation of the highly professional musicians, which started forming in the end of the 1920’s, Lviv artistic life was enriched in quantity and quality. Talented and professional music specialists returned to Lviv after University studies in great world culture centers, in particular, Vienna, Berlin, Krakow and Prague. From the beginning of the 1930’s many professional musicians were united, and their knowledge, experience, energy and worldview helped strive for founding new basis of musical life of Galicia, affirming the principles of high artistic and professional level in all spheres of musical life. It was exactly their “breadth of worldviews that helped create such a powerful composing and performing school which did not yield to other Slavonic schools in its achievements, it was moving in step with the aesthetic tendencies of its time” [7, p. 112].

An important condition, which prompted to the active organizational actions in the musical movement was the desire of a new generation of musicians to not only organize their professional expert activity within one union, but also to initiate a certain turning point in the cultural consciousness of the Galicia's society. This turning point, to a considerable extent, had to be also reflected in the task of organizing concert and performing life – mainly in the change of the amateur not professional positions of social character into the higher stage of the development of the artistically-professional level. However, mentioning the considerable growth of the professionalism of the new generation's musicians, it is also necessary to state the considerable unfavorable, and, partly, unsatisfactory conditions for the work of a new artistic generation. As it was opportunely noticed by the researcher of Ukrainian music d. Stefaniya Pavlyshyn, the "history of the western Ukrainian musical culture in the 1920's and 1930's is the image of constant and persistent work for creation of the centres of music life and education" [12, p. 24]. Thus, the very creation of "the Union of the Ukrainian Professional Musicians in Lviv" was a sign of the beginning of absolutely new, professional stage in the development of the composing activity, performance, musicology, musical criticism and education. It is necessary to note that during those several years of existence of "the Union of the Ukrainian Professional Musicians in Lviv" its activity was also passing in rather complicated and contradicting historical conditions of the political and economic confrontation that had formed in the period of twenty years between the wars. The organization of the Ukrainian community's cultural and artistic life at that time did not have any clearly stated guidelines or criteria and was often of rather a contradictory nature. Therefore, rare occasions of artistic events were rather situational or done on demand as, for instance, concerts dedicated to T. Shevchenko or concerts of the Societies "Prosvita", "Ridna Shkola", jubilees of various public institutions, choral reports of amateur choirs, school concerts etc.

The very organization of those concerts often depended on exclusively private initiative which could eventually not be realized. Not without reason, as it was neatly pointed out by an outstanding musical figure and publicist Stanislav Lyudkevych in this situation that, "the balance of our musical life in Lviv – not taking into consideration its activity – is still not very certain, a lot of appearances are left under a question and chaos mark... however, everyone has definitely made sure that it's enough to wait for better times, that we need to organize music life for the further purpose, realize everything what's possible..." [17].

After all, constant organizational problems, absence of proper state financing and even negative influences of the economic crisis in the Western Europe were considerably slowing down the development of Polish performing art in Lviv, in particular – both in the opera ensemble and in the symphony orchestra of Lviv philharmonic [11, p. 117-119].

Returning to the history of creation of “the Union of the Ukrainian Professional Musicians in Lviv” it is worth pointing out that this first professional union of Ukrainian musicians was formed in April 1934 and it was headed in rotation by the composers Nestor Nyzhankivskyi and Vasyl Barvinskyi. As it was mentioned above, the main aim of the Union’s activity, according to the approved charter, was the confirmation of high professional principles of the national art which would always remind the world, first and foremost, about the existence of the Ukrainian national character and its rich culture. Separate sections were created during the regular Union Session that took place on April 27<sup>th</sup> 1934 – pedagogical, performing, composing, and later also musicological [3].

Starting from the first days of its existence the “Union of the Ukrainian professional musicians in Lviv” highlighted the main directions of its activity, in particular – the regulation of music life in Galicia, making it interesting to the public; cooperation with The Shevchenko Scientific Society in Lviv, “Prosvita”, communication and joining “Lwowskie Stowarzyszenia Kompozytorów, Odtwórców i Muzykologów” and other organizations with the aim of national culture popularization, organization of musical evenings, publication of the topical music literature, creation of their own publishing house and the organ of Ukrainian music; collection and ordering of the monuments of Ukrainian musical culture, their scientific processing and publication. It was an active life and cultural position of the organization’s members that induced to the active polemics which often moved beyond the limits of the very organization in questions concerning the development and confirmation of professionalism principles in musical culture. At this point is worth mentioning the sharp topical appearances of the organization’s active figure Vasyl Vytvytskyi, recorded in his articles “For Ukrainian Musical Culture” and “On the New Roads of Our Music Life” [1, p. 249-253].

The performing section, according to the Union Session, was headed by a professor Roman Savytskyi and from the first months of organization’s existence its members were the brilliant chamber musicians in Lviv: pianists Galya Levytska, Roman Savytskyi, Taras Shukhevych, Volodymyra Bozheiko, Dariya Karanovych; singers Irena

Negrebetska, Odarka Bandrivska, Mykhailo Golynskiy, Mariya Sabat-Svirska, Teodor Yuskiv, Vasyl Tysyak; conductors Lev Turkevych, Mykola Kolessa, Bogdan Pyurko and also later – Dariya Kolessa (who was chosen as a secretary of a section), Yevgen Perfetskiy, Petro Pshenychka, Olena Pyasetska and others. On the initiative of R. Savytskyi the following Board sessions agreed upon the measures concerning the systematization and introduction of a regular concert life, organization of Ukrainian music concerts abroad, creation of programmes consisting of the works of Ukrainian composers, getting these works ready for publication etc. The main criteria of the performing section activity were determined –first of all, conducting the concerts on high professional level with the aim of supporting the great reputation of Ukrainian composing and performing school.

Among other important aspects of section's activity was the organization of performing contests which aimed at discovering young, talented artists and popularization of the young composers' new music as well as providing young talents with the financial support. The preparation of programs and auditions on Lviv radio was not less important part of work of the performing section. It was at the initiative of the Union and with the aim of popularizing chamber music on Lviv radio that the piano trio was formed (R. Savytskyi, R. Kryshchak, P. Pshenychka) and later – a constant string quartet. With the direct participation of the head of the Union's Board Vasyl Barvinskyi, the agreement about the organization of Ukrainian auditions on Warsaw radio was reached and not only separate soloists were supposed to be included but also choral ensembles such as "Boyan", "Surma", "Banduryst", "Drohobyskiy Boyan", "Stanyslavskaya Dumka". However, this initiative did not have any continuation or realization in the future.

As the Union Board's reports claim, only during the first years of performing section existence it was joined by more than 30 active members, among whom were 16 pianists, 8 violinists and violoncellists, 9 singers and 4 conductors who took part in 35 concerts in Lviv, other regions and abroad. The most important among them were the concerts in the National Museum, where we can emphasize the evening of Ukrainian music, organized by V. Barvinskyi, where such works as "Trio" by N. Nyzhnakiivskiy, "Three preludes" and "Lemko songs" by M. Kolessa, instrumental works by Z. Lysko and F. Nadenenko were played [4]. The concerts of Ukrainian song were organized by a singer Mariya Sokil together with her husband composer Anton Rudnytskyi and the Ukrainian

piano music performance – with the participation of Galya Levytska [8, p. 89-90].

In the following years the work of the performing section, which number increased to 45 people, distinguished in its activity the continuation of search of musical auditions on radio which, starting from 1936, were gaining a systematic character [2, p. 85-86]. In particular, the singers Mariya Sokil (with the piano accompaniment of A. Rudnytskyi), Odarka Bandrivska (with the accompaniment of R. Simovych) and Mariya Sabat-Svirska (the piano accompaniment of N. Nyzhankivskyi) were constant participants of these programs. The performances of a baritone Teodor Yuskiv, tenors Mykola Golynskyi, Volodymyr Baltarovych and Vasyl Tysyak as well as the performances of “Studio-Choir” under the supervision of M. Kolessa were also notable among other radio concerts with vocal and choral music.

With the same consistency and quite successfully the programmes of Ukrainian music were organized on Lviv radio with the participation of the leading soloists-instrumentalists and chamber ensembles. In particular, there took place the performances of such pianists, as Galya Levytska, Dariya Gordynska-Karanovych, Severyn Saprun and Roman Savytskyi, a composer and a pianist Stefaniya Turkevych-Lisovska. The piano trio consisting of R. Savytskyi (the piano), R. Kryshchalskyi (the violin) and P. Pshenychka (the violoncello) was a frequent guest of the studio. With the participation of the Trio, in particular, the music programme, dedicated to the jubilee of V. Barvinskyi was held in 1938, where his trio performed in A minor [20, p. 73]. Thus, it is necessary to point out that it was the Union Board and its performing section that became the organizing institution which “not only collects information about the prepared performances and favours their fastest broadcasting on the air but also encourages performing Ukrainian music” [6, p. 62].

One of the central events in the Ukrainian music life of Lviv that took place at the direct initiative and participation of the Union’s Board and, in particular, its performing section, was the celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mykola Lysenko commemoration in 1937. There took place a number of public social events to commemorate the outstanding Ukrainian composer, for example, the Memorial Service in the Church of St. Transfiguration in Lviv, the conference of Musicological committee of the Shevchenko Scientific society, there was the edition of a separate issue of the journal “Ukrainian Music” where the meaning of M. Lysenko’s work for Ukrainian musical culture field was pictured.

The musical and performing part of the conducted events was very important. Thus, on April 4th on the stage of a Great city theatre there was the performance of Lysenko's opera "Nocturne" conducted by Mykola Kolessa. On December 19<sup>th</sup> 1937, there was the great festive of Academy under the supervision of the Union's Board in the hall of the Municipal theatre, where the introductory speech was delivered by V. Barvynskyi. The best Lviv choirs such as "Banduryst", "Surma", "Lvivskyi Boyan" took part in the concert program, which included the Master's creations; O. Bandrivska and M. Golyn-skyi sang, G. Levytska performed the piano works [14, p. 11]. And immediately on December 20<sup>th</sup> the similar "Lysenko Dedicated" concert with the performance of many of his little known chamber works took place in the hall of M. Lysenko Higher Music Institute, where the young artists – institute's students – became the performers [2, p. 10-11].

According to the intended plan of the performing section in the future, separate thematic and jubilee concerts, organized by the efforts of the "Union of the Ukrainian Professional Musicians in Lviv" took place. First of all it is necessary to distinguish, for instance, the organization of the ceremonial academy and symphony concert dedicated to Symon Petlyura [8, p. 94-99], the preparation of the concert dedicated to the 20-years anniversary of the proclamation of the Ukrainian State, the preparation of the musical academy to the jubilee of "Prosvita" [8, p. 111] and the concert of a pianist Lyubka Kolessa who gave performance on March 15<sup>th</sup> 1938 with the accompaniment of Lviv philharmonic orchestra [15, p. 72-73]. According to the decision of the Union's Board, on the occasion of his visit in Lviv, Lyubko Kolessa's received the Diploma of the honorary membership in the "Union of the Ukrainian Professional Musicians in Lviv" from V. Barvynskyi, which was artistically decorated by the famous Ukrainian graphic artist Pavlo Kovzhun [8, p. 130].

Another key artistic event which was organized by the Union's Board and its Head V. Barvynskyi was a visit of his talented pupil from Austria – an outstanding pianist Dariya Gordynska-Karanovych who had prepared for the concert performance a monographic programme of new Ukrainian piano music: four "Preludes" of L. Revutskyi, "Ukrainian Suite" by V. Barvynskyi, Poem № 1 by V. Kosenko, "Variations on the topic of Tchoomak song" by T. Mykysha, "Small Suite" by N. Nyzhankivskyi, "Pictures of Hutsulshchyna" by M. Kolessa and "The Song for sunrise" by S. Lyudkevych. These creations of the contemporary Ukrainian composers sounded in the concert performance on February 4<sup>th</sup> 1938. Let us note that most of these works were played

in Lviv for the first time, in particular, there were the premieres of the creations by V. Barvynskyi and T. Mykysha, which were accepted by the audience with an extremely favourable attitude [18].

During 1937-1938, the organization of separate concerts continued regularly, however, it was not always successful which was connected, on the one hand, with the financial factor – since according to the chartered activity of the Union the performances of its members should have been remunerated in the form of a fixed reward (fee), however, in practice this condition was not always followed because of money limit, and on the other hand – with the passivity of the section's members whose performances were becoming a rare phenomenon and mostly on the occasion of some holidays or jubilees [8, p. 115].

The key artistic event which practically became a sign of ending the 5-years activity of “the Union of the Ukrainian Professional Musicians in Lviv” was the preparation and conducting of a cycle of jubilee concerts dedicated to the 50<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary and 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of creative work of one of the Union's founders and its Head – the brilliant composer, pedagogue, public figure Vasyl Barvynskyi [8, p. 127-129]. The first concert from this cycle took place on March 4<sup>th</sup> 1938 in the Great hall of the M. Lysenko Music society and was dedicated to the chamber and instrumental activity of his anniversary. There sounded such creations as Trio es-moll and Trio a-moll as well as the variations on the personal topic (Sextet c-moll) for the piano and a string quintet. The performers of these works – R. Savytskyi (the piano), R. Kryshchalskyi (the violin), Ye. Kozulkevych (the violin), B. Zadorozhnyi (the viola), P. Pshenychka (the violoncello) and N. Gornyskyi (the contrabass) – formed a highly professional performing ensemble which allowed the adherents of V. Barvynskyi's activity to experience the real spiritual feelings and deep emotions [9, p. 71-72].

The second concert of the Union, dedicated to V. Barvynskyi, which passed with not smaller performing success and enthusiasm, took place on May 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Small hall of M. Lysenko Music society. There sounded the solo song, masterly performed by Mariya Sabat-Svirska (with the piano accompaniment of N. Nyzhankivskyi) and his famous “Song of the songs” for the trio (the violin part was played by R. Kryshchalskyi). The works for the piano, which prevailing in the creativity of V. Barvynskyi, were presented at the third concert on December 10<sup>th</sup>. The soloist of the concert the pianist Roman Savytskyi managed to completely reproduce the complicated palette of Barvynskyi's images and demonstrate a qualified performing master work (especially during the perfor-

mance of the complicated “Suite”) and with the help of this he received a warm gratitude from the listeners and the reviewer [19].

The remarkable event in the context of continuation of celebrations dedicated to V. Barvynskyi may be considered one unforgettable premiere in spring 1939 – the first performance of the composer’s piano concert at the evening dedicated to T. Shevchenko with the participation of the symphony orchestra (the conductor was Mykola Kolessa) and an unchangeable soloist of Barvynskyi’s works – a pianist Roman Savvitskyi who repeated this significant creation during one concert season over ten times in different cities of Ukraine [10, p. 26-27].

The final concert-academy on the occasion of V. Barvynskyi’s jubilee was held by the Union on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 1939 in the Great hall of M. Lysenko Music society. At this concert, apart from the congratulation by Vasyl Vytvytskyi, the complementary telegrams received from various Ukrainian institutions from Lviv and other cities, were read. In the programme of the concert, the choral works by V. Barvynskyi sounded in the performance of the choir “Banduryst”; the Sonata for the violoncello and the piano was also performed, where the soloists were his son (Ivan Sebastiyanyan, the violoncello) and his wife (Nataliya Barvynska, the piano). At the end of the festive academy a new work “Our Sorrow, Our Song” sounded for the first time and it was masterly performed with the piano accompaniment of R. Savvitskyi by the famous “Studio-Choir” conducted by M. Kolessa [5].

In new social and political condition, in which the leading Lviv musicians found themselves starting from the autumn 1939, they always remained active workers in field of building-up the Ukrainian musical culture – whether it was within the newly created Lviv Society of the Soviet Composers or, for example, in the organization of Lviv composers and performers entitled “Work Union of Ukrainian Composers” which was created in November 1941; and from the first days of its existence took active part in renewing Lviv concert life (organizing concerts of Ukrainian music, symphony concerts, conducting of music radio programmes etc) [16].

To certain extend it may be considered that the best traditions of “the Union of the Ukrainian Professional Musicians in Lviv” concerning the organization of the professional music life are nowadays continued by Lviv organization of the National Society of Composers of Ukraine, which were declared as far back as 1994, when there took place the official celebration of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of “the Union of the Ukrainian Professional Musicians in Lviv” formation. We can trace this succession



in the continuation of the best traditions nowadays, when owing to the efforts of the modern Union of the composers the cycle of the concerts dedicated to the 170<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of the classic of Ukrainian music Mykola Lysenko was organized (during 2012), or when the commemorative concerts are being organized and conducted to celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of its founder Vasyl Barvinskyi – already in 2013. Thus, the best historical traditions continue!

**Keywords:** *creative union, professional level performance, concerts, musical life.*

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