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## **MODERN MUSIC BANDS IN THE FESTIVAL MOVEMENT OF UKRAINE**

*The article concerns the modern landscape of music festivals in Ukraine. The author examines the creative work of the new bands in the festival movement and traces their impact on the development of national musical culture.*

*Key words: music bands, festival, festival movement, culture, globalization.*

Since Ukraine became an independent country, the research into music festivals from the scientific point of view has only been made by a few domestic researchers such as O. Lytovka «The festival movement of Ukraine during the period of its independence», V. Tolubko «The music festival in the modern socio-cultural context: topical issues of art directing», E. Vdovikova and M. Shved.

Today, the festival movement is experiencing a recovery phase all over the world, creating an international commercial system and becoming the leading form of entertainment and recreation.

Together with the process of globalization and the Ukrainian culture entering the European international space, we can observe the professional growth of domestic music bands of different types; they have already become frequenters at the major European festivals, promoting and spreading contemporary Ukrainian culture and developing friendly relations between the nations that are bitten with real festival fever. Festivals are a non-verbal form of communication between people united by common ideas, music preferences, moral, aesthetic and artistic values.

The word «festival» is a French word (the adjective for ‘unefete’ – a holiday which derives from the Latin ‘festivus’ – cheerful, festive) meaning a mass celebration in the field of music, theatre, stage performance or cinema. The Great Dictionary of Modern Ukrainian Language also defines the word «festival» as «a mass celebration during which the achievements of a certain type of art are displayed; a show or review of achievements of a particular art form». It is known that the first music festivals were held in the United Kingdom (London, 1709) and were connected with church music. Defining the concept of festival, P. Pavi emphasizes its connection with Athenian (Dionysian) feasts, where comedies and tragedies were performed, and dithyrambs were sung, which formed the most interesting moment of entertainment: «The festival derived some solemnity, the nature of exceptionality and punctuality from these annual events». [1]

The difference between a music festival and an ordinary concert is that the festival is a series of events united by a common idea or music style. Unlike concerts, which usually last a few hours, the festival can continue up to several days. According to the witty statement by H. Khroma, «every festival is a powerful catalyst for the creative process». [2]

Ukraine is the venue for modern competitions and festivals in the field of contemporary and classical music. Contests among young pop singers such as «Chervona Ruta» (since 1989, in different cities of Ukraine), «Krok do zirok», «Tavriiski igry» and the music contest «Kiev MusicFest» (since 1989) have already become traditional. Significantly, various competitions are held not only in the capital. So, there is the international music festival «Kharkiv Assemblies» and the contest for young composers «PenIaTOICh» («ПенІаТОІЧ») in Kharkiv, which contributes to the development of talents among creative young people [3].

In Ukraine, music festivals appeared in the early 90s, as a coercive alternative to concert tours for music bands and artists, as after the collapse of the USSR, culture sphere was not sufficiently funded, and the bands did not have regular concerts and revenue. Starving for commercial success, former directors of the organizing committees engaged themselves in show business and began to call themselves «producers», releasing huge amounts of mediocre pop projects, being focused on their own self-enrichment only and depreciating Ukrainian culture with their Russified «pop stars», who contributed to the downslide of aesthetic and moral preferences of the people in the direction of the uncouth media space.

At the same time, there were idealists who established a real Ukrainian festival movement. They allied, received generous support from the Ukrainian Diaspora abroad, and embarked on the difficult way of creating the new Ukrainian musical culture. They found real gems of Ukrainian folk song in its fresh and modern forms, discovered new talents and bands that eventually reached the international level and now represent our music culture abroad, occupying top positions in European music charts and sharing the stage with the most famous world performers. The victorious performance of the Ukrainian singer Ruslana Lyzhychko at the song contest «Eurovision – 2004» popularized Ukrainian music at home and abroad. Thereby, «Eurovision – 2005» was held in Kiev.

The new wave of Ukrainian music covered all the domestic festivals which were closely intertwined with the national musical tradition and folklore. New forms of music appeared (Cossack and Kant song, Doom rock, kolomyika rap, etc.). In 2015, at «SzigetFest», which is one of the largest festivals in Europe and is held in Hungary, our country was worthily represented by 8 best Ukrainian bands. Visitors to the festival could enjoy Cossack rock by «Haidamaky», elegant and atmospheric Folktronic band «Onuca», which embodies the blending of various Ukrainian folk instruments (reed pipe, ocarina, bandura, trembita) with electronic music. Ethno-chaos band «DakhaBrakha», which is recognized not only in Ukraine but all over the world, performed at «Sziget» for the second time, gathering all fans of Ukrainian ethno-music. At the Campfire site there were performances given by two Ukrainian artists, «StasDerkach & BogdanMatviychuk», and «TheGoldenBrown» and «TheSameToy».

The first festival of contemporary Ukrainian art in Paris was inaugurated by a concert of «Okean Elzy» in 2015; the band performed in the largest Parisian concert hall, «Olympia», and proved that high-quality Ukrainian music is perceived by foreign listeners with enthusiasm.

This year has been marked with a lot of Ukrainian festivals and almost all of them were held at the European level, which is a great virtue for the development of culture and tourism in our country. Local authorities try to create favorable conditions for organizing and conducting festivals, and sometimes cover the major share of the expenses from their budgets. All this happens upon the initiative of individuals who understand the importance

of cultural projects and support the future of our music culture. Unfortunately, these programs remain neglected by the Ministry of Culture, whose main responsibility is to form appropriate structures that would resolve the organizational and financial problems connected with the festivals.

This summer festival season has been represented by many traditional musical events of Ukraine. The most remarkable of these festivals were such festivals-giants as «Zakhid» («West»), «Faine Misto» («Beautiful City»), «Kraina Mrij» («Country of Dreams»), «KyivOpenAir», «Koktebel Jazz», «Chernihiv JazzOpen», «Third international O-Fest-2015», «VorsklaRock'n'Ball», «Rock Bulava», and «East-Rock». Similarly to those in Europe, all major Ukrainian festivals took place on different stages (one large stage and several small ones), providing separate rest areas, parking zones, camping areas and all sorts of amusement areas. Significantly, the majority of the festivals refused foreign headliners in favor of our local artists. There fore, the large stage of the «West» festival featured Oleh Skrypka «VV», «Boombox», «the HARDKISS», «TNMK», and perhaps the most prominent band of our country, «Okean Elzy».

There were a lot of interesting surprises on the small stage. A considerable amount of music in Ukrainian language appeared. New names came in full force, and it would be fair to highlight the amazing young band, «Terytoria Prostoru» («Theory of Space»), with their wonderful patriotic music filled with poetic and lyrical texts.

It is also difficult to come by the dance punk in the spirit of «The Strokes» interspersed with carnival craziness on stage, which was demonstrated by the band «GivemetheLight!». This explosive band had already managed to develop a reputation of favorites at youth rock parties in Kyiv with their light and refreshing behavior at concerts, even before they appeared on stage.

Their music should not be left unmentioned: light dynamic compositions intersecting with sophisticated timing and elaborate electronic inserts, which is why the band will always be in the limelight, wheresoever they perform.

The newly appeared Ukrainian music group «BAHROMA» is tireless to surprise the audience with their bright albums. By means of individual intonation and original arrangements, the musicians deliver their coherent sound. «A stenography of feelings and emotions», «a happy blend of epigonism and drive» – this is what they say about the songs of «BAHROMA». The entire concert halls join them in their singing all over Ukraine, and the band's hits can be heard on television. «BAHROMA» have attended almost all major festivals in Ukraine this summer, showing true professionalism. This group has reached new horizons among young artists in our country, and is now on a level with such well-known groups as «the HARDKISS», and «O'torvald».

The most significant festival for Ukrainian culture was this year's «Bandershtat 2015» This year, it is being held under the slogan «Restart».

The first day showed that the audience of the festival was expanding, because the festival was visited by a large number of families with children. It is no surprise, for kids could enjoy a day in a children's playset with lots of different master classes. The youngest visitors of the festival had the opportunity to learn how to make talisman dolls, greeting

cards, bracelets of ribbons, carton wind spinners, painted glass, etc. In addition, there was a photography studio, an amusement site and sports area.

During the two days of the music festival «Bandershtat 2015» (July 31 - August 1, Hippodrome, Lutsk), many groups performed on the main stage. The last day of the festival was especially memorable; it was the final musical blast that knocked all the listeners out.

This time, the openers were the inflammatory «Sertsevyi Napad» («Heart Attack») from Chernivtsi. The musicians immediately began to fill every corner of the fan zone with their punk energy. Despite the boiling heat, the audience were dancing wild.

The next performers were the band from Lutsk, «Fiolet» («Violet»). Serhii Martyniuk, the leader, better known as Colossus, simply rested with his body and soul on the stage. He left the position of the art director of «Bandershtat 2015» for an hour to present his portion of lyrics and drive to the audience.

The next group was a young project from Kyiv, «ONUKA», who had received recognition not only at home but also abroad. The band played on the main stage of «Bandershtat» for the first time. The incredible sound of various wind instruments and electronic music created charming atmosphere at the festival. The power of trembita, sensual pipe, light sound of bandura combined with electronic drums, keyboard and omnichord touched everyone's feelings.

After the sensitive «ONUKA», the stage was taken by the unique and hot «O'Torvald». It is difficult to describe what was happening both on the stage and in the fan zone. The band leader, Zhenia Galych, set such a rousing pace that everyone who had been sleeping in a tent camp woke up. «Satisfied, tired and sweaty» – this was the audience after the performance of «O'Torvald». But was it really an official performance? It was more like a meeting with some long-time friends.

The band closing the main music stage on the third day, as well as the festival itself, was «Brutto». It seems that it was the last surge of strength, energy and craziness. All the guests of the festival gathered on the stage. «Brutto» organized a real show, and, having forgotten about the time, covered the audience with songs as if they were storm waves. Musicians kept jumping across the stage like rubber balls, singing non-stop and warming the crowd up to a maximum pivotal point.

The fan zone was blazing with fireworks, the people were massively floating in «stage-diving» («Stage diving», – the behavior of crowds of fans at a concert, most frequently of a rock group, in which one person climbs up the stage during the performance and jumps back into the crowd trying to hold him/her with their arms up in the air). The Belarusian-Ukrainian group «Brutto» will remain in the memory of the visitors for a long time. Those who wanted to have some more fun went to see the acoustic stage of «Bandershtat» and listen to «PianoExtremist», «Lady Arlette», «Kolor» («Color») and others. We expect a continuation of this favorite tradition of ours next year.

In the meantime, the Ukrainian group «Kozak System» took part in the concert called «SuperPremiery», which took place during the festival «Opole 2015» and was broadcast live to millions of Polish viewers by the live channel «TVP1». The musicians performed the song «Kochaj i Zyj», which had been recorded featuring the Polish band «RedLips». This track was chosen for the «Opole» festival by the listeners from more than 150 songs. According to the results of the SMS-voting, this song entered the top-3 list of the best

songs of Poland as of 2015. Polish media have called «KozakSystem» the most famous band from Ukraine, and the track «Kochaj i Zyj» was claimed an absolute hit.

From the above it can be inferred that in the process of conducting music festivals in Ukraine, the first stage of their greatest activity is dominated by the informational function of popularization of Ukrainian music, that is, advocacy.

At the second stage of developing the music festival movement there is a tendency of shifting the focus towards the communicative function of the «artistic elite». Mass culture intensively exploits folklife culture, taking over a part of its rest upon the archetypes of the collective unconscious in the form of images and symbols, the peculiarities of depicting reality, and the ability for typification and synthesis [4].

All this proves once again that these bands are an important leverage for the development of Ukrainian culture and preservation of national artistic traditions. Taking part in the local and international festivals, these music groups create the real high-quality and distinctive musical culture complying with high international standards.

In our country there are a significant number of festivals of different quality and focus. It is hoped that each local community or professional community will eventually create a festival that will provide communication and self-organization of people, advertising for ideas or tourism across the area, cultural development and simply high spirits.

Despite a significant role that Ukrainian festivals play in shaping musical life of independent Ukraine, their importance in these processes remains undervalued and almost out of the limelight of Ukrainian human sciences. The analysis of scientific papers devoted to the subject of the study shows that there has not been a comprehensive and objective research that would consider the impact of music festivals upon the Ukrainian listener for the sake of development of Ukrainian culture in general [10].

So we will wait for further development of the Ukrainian festival movement and support it at the national level. We look forward to bigger amounts of fresh contemporary Ukrainian music and creative surprises from our professional and original bands.

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