MODERN CULTURAL COLLABORATIONS OF OPERA HOUSES OF KYIV, LVIV, AND ODESA UNDER MARTIAL LAW: THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

The purpose of the research is to analyse the international cultural collaborations of the opera houses under the martial law on the examples of national operas of Kyiv, Odesa, and Lviv. The research methodology is based on the interdisciplinary approach, which includes the knowledge form cultural studies, media studies, and management of sociocultural activity. Using the comparative one, we try to highlight the main international events of the studied theatres and their role in the representation of Ukrainian culture. The scientific novelty of the research is the analysis of the international cultural collaborations of the opera houses under the martial law on the examples of national operas of Kyiv, Odesa, and Lviv in 2022–2023. Conclusions. Analysing the content, which in open access on the official websites of the studied theatres, we can state that the international collaborations are reflected in the participation of theatres and their artists in charitable events outside the country in online and offline formats, including a number of charity events organised by theatres as part of the “Stand with Ukraine” project.

Keywords: cultural practices, international collaboration, opera houses of Ukraine, ballet, opera, art project.

Relevance of Research. Despite the Russian aggression, the artists of opera houses continued their creative activities at the international level in the form of participation in festivals, tours, and concert programmes. They represented national culture at various international events. The core of their activity was a demonstration of the national cultural resistance and reflection of the Ukrainian music cultural heritage.

Analysis of researches and publications. The creative and cultural practices are characterised in the works of the following Ukrainian scholars—J. Denysiuk, T. Filina, O. Kopiievska [3], S. Dychkovskyi, V. Vovkun [1], T. Senko [7],...
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Main part. The National Opera of Ukraine continued its creative activities at the international level. It represented national culture at the Biennale di Venezia, an international exhibition of contemporary art. The core of this year's programme was a demonstration of the national cultural and artistic space and its opposition to the colonialist narrative of the “Russian world”. The artists performed pieces of Ukrainian musical heritage: D. Bortnyanskyi, M. Berezovskyi, M. Lysenko, O. Bilash, M. Skoryk, Y. Stankovych, and others.

The theatre's artists, led by conductor Bohdan Plish, took part in the project “Le vie dell'Amicizia” in early July 2022 within the Ravenna Festival of Opera and Classical Music, which was founded in 1990 by Maria Cristina Mazzavillani, a wife of popular conductor Riccardo Muti. The artistic directors of the festival are Franco Masotti and Angelo Nicoastro, who are well-known Italian artists. Franco Masotti is known for his graphic works and visual spectacles at festivals and in theatres, and has worked with such well-known art publications as Scena, Alfabeta, CD Classica, Musica Viva, Auditorium, “Giornale della Musica”, manages projects, dedicated to music: “Transcaucasia” (a project, devoted to Armenian and Georgian musical traditions), “Un'Idea del Nord” (a project, dealt with the music of the Scandinavia and Baltic region). Angelo Nicoastro is a popular musician and music critic, art director of the opera and dance seasons of the Alighieri Theatre and the Fondazione Renata Tebaldi [73]. In November 2022, the artist of the choir performed in Kiel. The Nat

The artists gave concerts in France (Lourdes) and Italy (Loretto). In the spring of 2022, Alla Kulbaba, a theatre's conductor, joined the international art project of the Croatian National Theatre of Zagreb as the conductor of Puccini's “Tosca”. It is worth noting that the Croats originally had planned to stage Tchaikovsky's opera in collaboration with Russian artists, but after the full-scale Russian aggression, they cancelled the contract with them and decided to stage a joint work with Italian, Croatian, and Ukrainian artists as a sign of support and solidarity with the Ukrainian people in their struggle for independence. Accordingly, Mario Pantiglio became the director, and Croatian artists K. Kolar, M. Serafin, T. Muzek, and J. Sirian performed the opera roles. In July 2022, the chief conductor of the opera M. Dyadyura performed at the II International Festival “LNOBT Open”, founded by the Lithuanian National Opera and Ballet Theatre. He was honoured to conduct one of the most famous musical symbols of independent Lithuania, A. Ponchielli's opera “I Lituani”, based on the work of Polish poet Adam Mickiewicz “Konrad Walenrod, a historical tale from the Lithuanian and Prussian life”. In June 2023, the theatre presented its own vision of the opera “I Lituani” by A. Ponchielli in Vilnius, which was devoted to the Day of Independence of Lithuania.

The ballet dancers of the theatre, including O. Potemkin, D. Chebotar, and S. Harkavy, were invited to participate in the international choreographic project by Jiri Bubenichok, based on the novel “The Trial” by one of the most prominent absurdist writers Franz Kafka at the Košice State Theatre. At the end of 2022 and in 2023, the theatre had a tour in the largest cities of Slovakia with this performance and presented it at international festivals in Europe. The theatre's actors, together with students from dance schools in Kyiv and Kharkiv, also gave a series of concerts in various cities of Slovakia, including Bratislava, and ended with a large charity concert in Kiel.

A. Pozniak, a soloist, supported by the Embassy of Ukraine in Albania, performed the role of Ulrica in the opera “La bella masquerade” by G. Verdi at the Tirana Opera and Ballet Theatre. In August 2022, the theatre successfully toured Japan, where they presented the best examples of world ballet and opera to the Japanese public.

In 2023, The National Opera of Ukraine continued its communications with the European audience by its art production. In May, the theatre took part in the festival “Nova Opera” in Bilgosch by presenting their performance “Nabucco” by G. Verdi, which was reflected as the manifestation of the liberty and national struggle.

The international activities of the Lviv National Opera in 2022 are characterised by three main vectors: artistic activity, charity, and civic inclusion.
In the spring, the theatre's ballet dancers toured Poland, which was a part of the Freedom Tour project. The artists, headed by Andriy Musoryn, presented the best examples of the theatre's choreographic productions in Gdańsk at the Opera Bałtycka. The main mission of that event was to highlight the cultural heritage of Ukrainian art in the prism of the European art space and to establish socio-cultural links among the countries. At that period, the representatives of the opera and ballet theatre’s groups (D. Lytovchenko, O. Lanovyi, and I. Kravchenko) took part in “Gale Kiepurowska” concert programme in Biała Podlaska. The event, organised with the support of the ORFEO Foundation of Bohuslaw Kaczynski, a famous Polish musician, was aimed at showing Ukraine's musical achievements and underlining the importance of the Polish people support in the tragic events that Ukraine has been experiencing.

In June 2022, the ballet dancers of the theatre took part in a gala evening with a performance of the adagio from the ballet “Closer than Love” by C. Gluck as part of the international dance festival CHOREA GALA, which traditionally took place in Bratislava. Its special location was an open stage on the banks of the Danube, which created an artistic atmosphere and platform. The main goal of the festival was to present the best examples of modern ballet. The level of the festival and its popularity were evidenced by its participants, including the Balletto di Milano, the National Ballet of Portugal, the National Ballet of Canada, the National Ballet of Estonia, the Czech National Ballet, the Victor Ullate Ballet and others [8].

During the same period, the theatre's soloists took part in the XI International Stanisław Moniuszko Vocal Competition of the Polish National Opera, Theatre Wielki. The festival was founded in 1992 by Maria Foltyn, a famous Polish soprano vocalist. It is named after Stanisław Moniuszko, an outstanding composer of XIX century. The festival takes place every three years and brings together the best young opera singers in Europe. In 2022, the following artists of the Lviv National Opera received awards – Y. Zasimova, V. Tyshkov, and M. Mazur.

On 28 May 2022, the Lviv National Opera gave a joint concert of the musical communities of Ukraine and Poland. It was entitled “Solidarity”, which included multidimensional meaning. Firstly, that term was a symbol of empathy and support. Secondly, its axiological context dealt with the European values. Thirdly, it was associated with the symbol of the struggle for the democratic principles of the Polish people, led by Lech Walesa, against the Soviet dictatorship. Vincent Kozłowski, a Polish conductor, performed works of F.-J. Haydn and M. Brucht with the Lviv theatre's musicians.

The ballet company of the Lviv National Opera with its colleagues from Kharkiv and Dnipro and the students of the Serge Lifar Kyiv Municipal Academy of Dance, created a choreographic performance with the main message of calling on the NATO to close the sky of Ukraine. The musical basis of the performance was B. Lyatoshynsky’s Symphony No. 3. S. Kachura was responsible for the choreography.

It is also worth noting that, in solidarity with the Ukrainian art in its struggle to preserve national culture, many well-known European artists, who had had joint projects with the theatre at different times, expressed their support. They are Leszek Mondzik, a Polish scenographer, Lukasz Goik, a head of the Sligo Opera, Paul Gogler, a French tenor, Andreas Weirich, a German director, who last year staged the performance “Alcide and Falcon” by Dmytro Bortnyanskyi [1]. The opera companies of Latvia and Estonia also joined that action.

In August 2022, the Lviv National Opera ballet company took part in the 55th International Festival in Krynica-Zdrój, which was called “Festiwal im. Jana Kiepury”. It was held under the patronage of Andrzej Duda, the President of the Republic of Poland. The artists performed the world classic “Giselle” by A. Adan [66, 6]. In October 2022, the theatre performed this production at the International Opera Festival in Bilgosczyz (Kujawia region).

During a tour in Italy, the presentation of the performance “La bohème” by the Lviv National Opera, became a special event for Ukrainian opera art. On 23 August 2022, the theatre showed its production at one of the most prestigious festivals, the 68th Puccini Torre del Lago Festival, which was held in the seaside town of Vireggio in the Tuscany region. This festival is dedicated to G. Puccini. Its main goal is to create an artistic vision that opens up the future. In 2022, it was combined with the celebration of the European Year of Youth and the anniversary of century of Pier Paolo Pasolini’s birth, who was a famous Italian director, novelist, screenwriter and paid a great attention in his work to the young generation. The festival programme included various types of events such as an art-platform of young composers to the concerts of the symphony orchestra and G. Puccinni’s operas at open air locations [11].

At the beginning of 2023, Lviv National Opera had some creative collaborations with
foreign artists, dealt with the performances, devoted to a year of the Ukrainians fight against Russian aggressors. The first one was the concert of Kerry Lynn Wilson, a Canadian musician and conductor, which was entitled “In Memory of the Unconquered”. The second one was the art projections of Gerry Hofstetter on the façade of the Lviv National Opera, dedicated to the tragic events of February 2022. At the same time, the theatre continued its creative communication with the Opera Europa. V. Vovkun, a general director-creative head, took part in two conferences (Wiesbaden (April), Birmingham (July) 2023) of this organisation as a jury member of the contest of opera directing. The winner – a new vision of “Two widows” by B. Smetana, will be presented on the stage of the Lviv National Opera in 2024.

During the military aggression, the artists of the Odesa National Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre continued their creative work at the international level. Its main purposes were to interest foreign audiences in the Ukrainian art and to manifest the struggle of the Ukrainian people against the Russian revanchist dictatorship.

At the end of July 2022, I. Chernetskyi, a conductor, took part in the VI International Competition of Opera Singers “Bellano Paese degli artisti”, headed by Roberto Gianola. The competition is open to everyone without age restrictions. The signing of a contract with the finalist for an internship at the Odesa National Opera was one of the prizes.

In addition, I. Chernetskyi was a member of the international jury of the competition, which included representatives of such theatres and musical groups as the Istanbul State Opera, the Madrid Cruz-Diez Orchestra (Vittorio Garcia Sierra), the Kita-Kyushu Opera (H. Hasui), the Grand Theatre of Geneva (M. Hollop), and more [12].

The Odesa National Opera has organised several tours of the theatre's musical troupe, namely “Two Steps from Hell” and “Concerts for Peace”.

The first tour “Two Years from Hell” was characterised by large-scale concert venues that could accommodate over a thousand spectators and attracted attention to the problems of Ukraine and the activities of the Odesa National Opera. The concerts in support of Ukraine and the refugees were held in Germany, Austria, Poland, France, Belgium, the Czech Republic, and the Netherlands. During the concert in Amsterdam, the audience was presented with a symbolic piece “Wings for Ukraine” by T. Bergerson. In Germany, the orchestra of the Odesa National Opera also presented the author's concert programme “Disney in Concert. Dreams come True” dedicated to children, affected by military conflicts.

“Concerts for Peace” was a tour of the theatre's string quartet in the European Union, which was organised with the support of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine, as well as the LEGATO Bern-Odessa organisation and the Interlaken Classics festival. There were many tour concerts in Switzerland, Germany, and Italy. Performing works by W.A. Mozart, G. Puccini, and G. Verdi, the artists also popularised Ukrainian music culture. German audiences had the opportunity to hear string quartets by composer Boris Lyatoshynskyi.

On 21 April 2022, V. Chernukho-Volich performed with great success as a guest conductor at a gala concert at the Maria Biesius National Opera and Ballet Theatre (Republic of Moldova) in a sign of solidarity with the Ukrainian people in their fight against the Russian aggressor.

Emphasising the importance of developing and expanding the artistic community, the Odesa National Opera created a video greeting in the form of a concert by Yurii Dykii, a well-known musician, director of the Richterfest and Oistrakh-Assemblée festivals, who performed the best works of Polish composer F. Chopin, in gratitude for the support of Ukraine by the Polish people in this difficult time.

At the beginning of 2023, the theatre ballet group had a tour in Greece with the production “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” by B. Pavlovskyi. In February, the opera “Kateryna” of O. Rodin was presented on the international channel “ARTE” for the Europeans. Its demonstration was dedicated to the year of the beginning of full-scale Russian invasion.

We should add that the artists who have worked at the theatre or have had creative links with Odesa region have supported the Odesa National Opera and Ukrainian art, including Hans Zimmer, a famous German composer, Oscar winner, the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, Gerard Mosterd, a Dutch choreographer, Hirofushi Yoshida, a Japanese artist, and others.

A joint initiative of the members of the Association of Opera Houses of Ukraine and the heads of musical theatres was a letter to NATO, dated 12 March 2022, calling for the closure of the sky over Ukraine and the “introduction of a limited no-fly zone over Ukraine”. All the researched opera houses (the National Opera of Ukraine, Odesa National Opera, and Lviv National Opera) joined that document [4]. In addition, these theatres with the support of the State Agency for Arts and Art Education and
colleagues from the European countries of Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, Portugal, and the Czech Republic, joined an open letter, addressed to Opera Europa to support the Ukrainian culture against the Russian aggression [9]. In October 2022, the representatives of the national operas of Odesa and Lviv took part in the Opera Europa conference on Integration and Inclusion, held on the platform of the Hungarian State Opera in Budapest.

We have to admit that charity under martial law and support for the Ukrainian people have become one of the priority vectors of theatres' work at the international level. They united around the slogan “Stand with Ukraine”, which is a symbol of all the theatres' charity events and have been mentioned in titles and news with the hashtag #StandWithUkraine.

The representatives of the National Opera of Ukraine are actively involved in such type of artistic practices and events. For example, K. Bakhritdinova-Kravchuk, a soloist of the theatre, took part in a number of charity events in support of the Ukrainian people, as well as in joint events dedicated to Ukraine's ties with Lithuania and Kazakhstan, including the following events: a solo concert in the Almaty Philharmonic, a concert for Ukrainian refugees in Lithuania “Vilniushanka”, concerts devoted to the musical heritage of Lithuania and Ukraine in the cities of Žeimarij and Gelošiškis, and others.

Since April 2022, the ballet company of the theatre has been participating in charity events in Italy, concerned Ukrainian culture and its support. The largest events among them were a performance at the Teatro Arcimboldi in Milan and the concert “Concert for Ukraine. Peace” in Rome. The latter was attended by Dario Franceschini, the Minister of Culture of Italy and Roberto Gualtieri, a mayor and broadcast on Italian television. The Teatro dell'Opera di Roma organised that concert in the hall “La Nuvola”. The concert programme consisted of the choreographic performances and music by V. Silvestrov, a Ukrainian composer.

In Germany, a gala concert was held in support of the National Opera of Ukraine, where the theatre’s artists, together with their German colleagues from the Bremen Experimental Theatre “Curious Nature” and the Kiel Opera House, presented choreographic classical works and modern productions. A charity concert was also held at the Hamburg Centre for Contemporary Art in support of refugees from Ukraine. As part of his Hamburg Ballett art project, J. Normer invited the theatre’s soloists, including V. Bosenko, M. Sukhorukov, Y. Moskalenko, and O. Karandeeva to take part in the concert “For the Air We Breathe”, directed by A. Lauder in solidarity and support of Ukrainian culture.

The theatre's artists, including Lyudmila Monastyrska, a famous soprano, often demonstrates her patriotic position on the leading theatrical stages as the Metropolitan Opera. Last year she also took part in a number of concerts in European countries as part of the Ukrainian Freedom Orchestra charity event. The Ukrainian musicians and singers held a series of charity concerts, aimed at helping Ukraine. K. L. Wilson, a famous conductor, was a creative ideologist of those events.

The international charitable activities of the Odesa National Opera was embodied in joining the artistic project of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine and the State Agency of Ukraine for Arts and Art Education “WePlay4Ukraine” together with the campaign “Ukraine Now and Forever”. Its symbol is the hashtag #StandWithUkraine. That campaign was the result of a collaboration of professional musicians who, as a sign of support for Ukraine in its defence of democratic European values, were to upload a video of the national anthem of Ukraine and Beethoven's Symphony No. 9. All the funds were transferred to the Armed Forces of Ukraine. Many various music collectives joined that campaign. They are the Beethoven Orchestra (Bonn), WDR Symphony Orchestra, New Philharmonic Orchestra (Westphalia), SWR Symphony Orchestra, Cologne Conservatory, Detmold College of Music, and others [5].

In the spring of 2022, the Lviv National Opera implemented “Together with Ukraine” charity project together with its partner Kontramarka.ua under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy of Ukraine and the State Agency of Ukraine for Arts and Art Education. The project included a series of online charity events, aimed at raising funds for the purchase of a mobile hospital. All the events were a manifestation of Ukrainian musical culture in the European axiological space; in particular, the works of such Ukrainian composers as Dmytro Bortynsky, Borys Liatsoshynsky, and Yevhen Stankovych were presented. The main events were “Soul of Ukraine: Spiritual Choral Concerts” by Dmytro Bortynskyi, “Symphony No. 3” by Borys Liatsoshynsky, and “When the Fern Blooms” by Yevhen Stankovych. Thanks to the format of online events, the theatre attracted audiences from such countries as the UK, Latvia, Poland, Italy, Lithuania, and others. All three events were prepared as part of the Lviv National Opera's “Stand with Ukraine” campaign. To
Conclusions. Analysing the content, which in open access on the official websites of the studied theatres, we can state that the international collaborations are reflected in the participation of theatres and their artists in charitable events outside the country in online and offline formats, including a number of charity events organised by the theatres as part of the “Stand with Ukraine” project.

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