ONLINE JOURNAL
E-ISSN:3060-5490

INSTITUTE OF UZBEK NATIONAL
MUSICAL ART NAMED AFTER YUNUS RAJABI

Milliy Madaniyat Jurnali - Журнал Национальной Культуры

Journal of national CULTURE

Received: 02.01.2025 · Accepted: 27.01.2025 · Published: 28.02.2025
DOI: https://doi.org/10.64681/h5eb8450

ilmiy uslubiy jurnali – научно-методический журнал – research and methodological journal

Institute of Uzbek National Musical Art named after Yunus Rajabi
JOURNAL OF NATIONAL CULTURE, 1(1), 2025
www.jnculture.uz

The Uzbek national school of composition: past and present

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Abstract

This article examines the evolution and transformation of the Uzbek national school of composition, with a focus on its institutional and stylistic developments in the 21st century. Drawing on the pedagogical practices of the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan and the newly established The Institute of Uzbek National Musical Art named after Yunus Rajabi, the study highlights the unique integration of maqom traditions, the aruz poetic system, and national instrumentation into modern composition education. Particular attention is given to the Department of Composition, Bastakor and General Piano, which was founded in 2021 with the aim of cultivating a new generation of composers grounded in maqom-based creativity. Innovative projects, such as the creation of the first digital dutar library, further illustrate the department's commitment to preserving and reinterpreting Uzbek musical heritage. The department's achievements, including the organization of the International Festival on Maqam Creativity, mark a new chapter in the global recognition of Uzbekistan's national compositional identity.

Keywords: composer, orchestra, composer school, maqom.

Аннотация

В данной статье рассматриваются эволюция и трансформация узбекской национальной композиторской школы с акцентом на её институциональное и стилистическое развитие в XXI веке. Основываясь на педагогической практике Государственной консерватории Узбекистана и недавно созданного Института узбекского национального музыкального искусства имени Юнуса Раджаби, исследование подчеркивает уникальную интеграцию традиций макома, поэтической системы аруз и национальных инструментов в современное композиторское образование. Особое внимание уделяется кафедре композиции, бастакорства и общего фортепиано, основанной в 2021 году с целью воспитания нового поколения композиторов, творчески опирающихся на макомную традицию. Инновационные проекты, такие как создание первой цифровой библиотеки дутаров, демонстрируют стремление кафедры к сохранению и переосмыслению узбекского музыкального наследия. Среди достижений кафедры — организация Международного фестиваля макомного творчества, что знаменует собой новую веху в глобальном признании национальной композиторской идентичности Узбекистана.

Ключевые слова: композитор, оркестр, композиторская школа, маком

Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqolada o‘zbek milliy bastakorlik maktabining evolyutsiyasi va o‘zgarishlari, xususan XXI asrdagi institutlashtirish va uslubiy rivojlanish jarayonlari tahlil qilinadi. Tadqiqot O‘zbekiston Davlat konservatoriyasi hamda yaqinda tashkil etilgan Yunus Rajabiy nomidagi O‘zbek milliy musiqa san’ati instituti pedagogik tajribalariga asoslanib, zamonaviy bastakorlik ta’limida maqom an’analari, aruz she’riy tizimi va milliy cholg‘ularning noyob integratsiyasini ta’kidlaydi. 2021 yilda tashkil etilgan Kompozitsiya, bastakorlik va umumiy

fortepiano kafedrasiga alohida e’tibor qaratilib, maqom asosidagi ijodga tayanadigan yangi avlod bastakorlarini tarbiyalash maqsadi ilgari suriladi. Birinchi raqamli dutor kutubxonasining yaratilishi kabi innovatsion loyihalar, kafedraning o‘zbek musiqiy merosini saqlash va zamonaviylashtirishga bo‘lgan sadoqatini ifodalaydi. Kafedra tomonidan tashkil etilgan Xalqaro maqom ijodiyoti festivali esa O‘zbekistonning milliy bastakorlik identitetini dunyo miqyosida e’tirof etilishida yangi sahifani ochadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: bastakor, orkestr, bastakorlik maktabi, maqom

A composer is a composer of music who can combine different directions, styles and techniques in his works. The Uzbek school of composition developed during the Soviet era and developed rapidly. The 20th century became a very unique and fruitful century for Uzbek music. Because, as we know, everything that surrounded us influenced this, this is social life, this is everyday life, these are the stories that happened, this is the formation of a new way of thinking of humanity. What was happening around us undoubtedly showed its reflection in different types of art, including music [1: 48].

Based on the experience of foreign countries, when training students in the direction of "Composition", it was necessary to divide them into branches according to the specific direction of the compositions. The Department of "Composition and Instrumentation" of the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan mainly teaches how to compose works of an academic nature. At the end of their studies, bachelor's degree graduates must compose a work for a symphony orchestra in a large form. For example, instrumental concertos, overtures, multi-part musical pictures. Master's students of the same department approach the final exam mainly with one-part symphonies.

In the last 20 years, Felix Yanov-Yanovsky, Mustafo Bafoev, Mirhalil Makhmudov, Farhod Alimov, Rustam Abdullaev, Avaz Mansurov, Khurshida Khasanova, Oydin Abdullaeva and other teachers have worked at the department. Among them, the students of Professor F.M. Yanov-Yanovsky's class stood out. Jahongir Shukur, Emre Sihan Kaleli, Farrukh Akramov and others studied with the mastodon of the Uzbek school of composition. Compared to the classes of other teachers of the department in "Composition and Instrumentation", these young composers composed in a modern style, while preserving national shades and using different timbre-instrumental ratios. The musical language of each student differed from each other, interesting and creative approaches to creating works were observed, for example, the choice of the composition of instruments. The works of these relatively young composers are still successfully performed on various foreign stages.

The classes of professors M. Bafoev, M. Makhmudov, F. Alimov, R. Abdullaev are distinguished by their emphasis on national musical specifics. Students of professor M. Bafoev stand out in their work with rhythm and unique instrumentation. The main elements of rhythmic development in the works are shown with a large number of percussion instruments, active use of the timpani. Other outstanding composers-professors of the department rely on the originality of Uzbek themes, characteristic features of the musical life of the regions when teaching. In their works, a rich national flavor is felt, which is also helped by national musical instruments. They also addressed historical representatives of Uzbek culture in their writings. It should be noted that the composers used mainly the romance genre [2: 51].

A new stage of the Uzbek national composing school begins in accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated May 26, 2020 No. PF-6000 "On measures to further enhance the role and influence of culture and

art in the life of society." On September 2, 2020, according to the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the organization of the activities of the Uzbek National Institute of Musical Art named after Yunus Rajabi", the Institute of Uzbek National Musical Art named after Yunus Rajabi was organized [3]. The institute focuses on studying the basics of maqom creativity. Subsequently, the development of this direction in accordance with modern methods and innovative approaches, through new arrangements and processing of parts of the maqom.

On the initiative of Ozodbek Nazarbekov (rector of the institute, Minister of Culture of Uzbekistan), the Department of Composition, Bastakor and General Piano was created in 2021. The department set a goal according to which future young composers should compose exclusively on the basis of maqom creativity. In creating students' compositions, the department's teachers pay attention to form, rhythm, mode formation and subject matter. In education, the main emphasis is placed on the study of aruz, traditional bastakor and the basics of the Shashmaqom mode. These three subjects help students consciously use the basics of maqoms in their works.

The first years were taught by Professor Avaz Mansurov and Associate Professor Akrom Khoshimov. The main teaching staff of the department are Abdulaziz Khasanov, Viktor Khandamian and Nodirbek Makharov. Currently, an experienced teacher, Professor Mirkhalil Makhmudov, works at the department. He helps beginning composers study the basics of composing, compose melodies of a national character, work with form formation (combine classical forms with maqom form formation). It is also worth noting the work of musicologist Nasiba Yuldasheva, who was the acting head of the department in the first year and helped with the organization of the department's documents. Since 2023, the head of the department has been elected as Acting Associate Professor, winner of the “Kelajak

Bunyodkori" medal, winner of international competitions, composer, doctoral student at the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan - Nodirbek Makharov.

The department's teachers actively participate in concerts at the national and international level. For example, Nodirbek Makharov collaborates with the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra. The concert program "Gulf Folk Meets the Philharmonic" has been causing stormy applause from the public for several years. The audience highly appreciates the oriental melody and intense character of the piece "Shukrona", composed by Nodirbek Makharov specifically for this concert program. At the same time, it works together with the Ministry of Culture of Kuwait on symphonic concerts.

Associate Professor Victor Khandamian is working on the creation of an electronic sound base of national instruments (dutar, doira, tanbur). Victor Khandamian and sound engineer Todd Orin Stillwell (USA) worked together for almost a year to create the First Digital Dutar Instrument. It was created on the basis of a collection of traditional Uzbek dutar sounds and is the first example among digital libraries of oriental sounds in the world. As a doctoral student at the institute, V. Khandamian studies traditional Uzbek musical instruments in the context of sample library development (in historical, theoretical and practical terms).

In April of this year, the department hosted the First International Festival "Modern Problems of Maqam Creativity". As part of the festival, two concerts (a piano concert, a symphony concert), the 1st International Conference on "Modern Problems of Maqam Creativity" and master classes by domestic composers and representatives of foreign countries were organized. Representatives of the following countries took part in the conference: Tajikistan, Qatar, Kuwait, Azerbaijan and Russia.

Summing up the results of 2024, despite the three-year activity of the Department of Composition, Bastakor and General Piano, we can confidently say

that holding events at the international level and regular participation of department representatives on international stages testifies to the focus of the department and are a sign of high results.

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