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## HISTORICISM IN THE CONTEXT OF OPERA PRODUCTIONS AND VOCAL PERFORMERS ON THE STAGE OF THE STATE ACADEMIC BOLSHOI THEATRE OF UZBEKISTAN. (Named After Alisher Navoi)

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### Abstract

This article provides a brief historical overview of the formation of European and Uzbek productions, as well as vocal performers of Uzbekistan on the stage of the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre named after Alisher Navoi. Every decade has been analyzed in detail, from the 1960s to the present. Attention is drawn to the performances of the period of the 60s – 70s, where the vocal and musical nuanced accents of national opera works are considered and analyzed in detail.

**Keywords:** *opera, production, performance, theatre, opera singer, soloist, performer, artist*

Opera production is part of a theatrical systematization, representing the interests of the composer’s thought process, the conductor’s schematic and technical demonstration, the director’s scenic and visualized presentation, and the vocal and artistic performance of the opera singer. Taken together, all of the above-mentioned individuals form a structure aimed at revealing individualistic qualities in the creation of one’s own worldview in the vocal production process.

A profound understanding of such an event as an opera performance prompts reflection on the multifaceted approach to studying this structure, not only as a creative process but also as a scientific process, encompassed within the specifics of theatrical design. The key element is historical

composition, based on technical and actor-driven schematization within the context of the individual concepts of each object related to a given musical form model. It should be noted that, in terms of the development of this historical composition, various performance and acting decisions directly influenced the historical sequence, which is distinguished by the conductor’s and vocal spectrality and the composer’s and director’s variability. A crucial aspect of any opera performance is the conductor’s work. He or she is not only the orchestra’s leader, ensuring the precision and coherence of the performance, but also the interpreter of the work’s musical fabric. The conductor sets the tempo, dynamics, and emotional tone, breathing life into the score and guiding

the performers. His vision of the music has a profound impact on the overall perception of the performance. The vocal skill of the performers is the foundation of opera. The voice is the primary instrument for conveying emotion and revealing a character's personality. Opera singers must possess not only a powerful and beautiful voice but also acting talent to convincingly embody a role and convey the meaning of the work to the audience. The virtuosity of the performance of arias, duets, and ensembles is an integral part of an operatic performance. One of the main objects of any operatic performance is undoubtedly the composer's music. It is the musical element that determines the mood, tempo, and emotional depth of the narrative. It conveys the characters' feelings to the audience, emphasizes dramatic moments, and creates a unique atmosphere. Without music, an opera loses its essence, turning into a mere theatrical production. An equally important aspect of operatic art is directing. The director creates a holistic vision of the performance, uniting all elements into a unified artistic work. He works with the singers on their acting, determines the *mise-en-scène* and the dynamics of the onstage movement, and coordinates the work of all creative teams. A good director is able to breathe life into an opera, making it engaging and meaningful for the audience.

In examining theatrical opera performance in the context of its historical development, I would like to turn to the productions of the State Academic Bolshoi Theater named after Alisher Navoi. Beginning in the 1960s, operatic works based on the themes of past eras became popular.

In the early 1960s, contemporary Uzbek composers explored a new vocal genre: the "opera-monograph." An example of this is the operatic duology "Hamza" by S. Babayev and "The Heart of a Poet" by M. Ashrafiy.

In Sabir Babaev's creative approach to the revolutionary and historically brilliant operatic work "Hamza," dedicated to the renowned poet and playwright, the work was dominated by pan-European vocal and traditional detail, with only nuanced elements of Uzbek operatic culture. The opera is structured according to a schematic development, with solo and ensemble-choral numbers

serving as the most important components, with a leitmotif-like fragmentation of the musical and dramatic development.

In one review of Mukhtar Ashrafiy's "The Heart of a Poet," a production performed at Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre in 1967, it was noted that the opera's vocal and musical elements are free of direct folkloric quotations, while its melodic and rhythmic accents are deeply colorfully national, dynamically contrasting, and vividly temperamental; this complex of characteristics undoubtedly plays a significant role in conveying the singer's interpretation of the opera's plot and configurational line and serves as the basis for its technical gradations.

The mid-1960s are marked by the appearance of an opera saturated with musical folklore, intonations and *lazo*-rhythmics of Khorezm melodies – "Song of Khorezm" by M. Yusupov. "In the musical embodiment of the characters, M. Yusupov also turns to the means of leitmotif. Vocal declamatory nature, characteristic of the epic works of Khorezm (*dastans*), is reflected in the recitatives of the opera. Features inherent in its song culture find their bright trace in the construction of individual opera numbers. This is reflected in the diatonicism of the melos with the predominance of a descending, step-by-step form of movement; and in the characteristic modes (Phrygian, Dorian, Mixolydian); and in the unique metric structure (5/8, 7/8); and in the periodic variability of the time signature (3/4, 3/8); and in a favorite, often dance-related movement in 6/8" (Pekker Ya. B., 1984, p. 232).

The end of the sixties is associated with the activities of the second opera theater in the republic – Samarkand (1967), where a number of opera works were staged – "Yoriltosh" by S. Babaev, "Zafar" by H. Rakhimov, "Oydzhamol" by I. Khamraev.

In the early 1960s, the Bolshoi Theater named after Alisher Navoi welcomed a number of young, gifted soloists who soon achieved a high level of vocal mastery. Among them were Saodat Kabulova, Lev Pinkhasov, and Rafaat Kuchlikova.

The 1960s and 1970s were associated with such new opera productions at the Bolshoi Theater named after Alisher Navoi as Verdi's "Il Trovatore" and Gounod's "Faust,"

as well as prominent operatic names such as Rosalinda Laut and Rano Khidoyatova. In the 1970s, Verdi's "Don Carlos" and I. Akbarov's "The Leopard of Sogdiana" were staged. All of this played a significant role in the development of academic vocal music in the country, as the arrival of new faces and performances expanded the theater's repertoire, increasing audience interest and, consequently, enriching it with new creative ideas, concepts, and productions that, to some extent, supported the concept of enlightenment.

The 1980s are associated with the names of such opera artists as Kurkmas Mukhitdinov, Ismail Dzhaliyov, Olga Alexandrova, Nina Semizvonkina, and Alevtina Ryabova.

Since the 90s, the stage of the Bolshoi Theater has been decorated with such opera singers as People's Artists of the Republic of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan – Muyassar Razzakova, Avaz Rajabov, Honored Artists of Uzbekistan – Gulshan Azizova, Ruslan Gafarov, Normumin Sultanov. Their successors were the Laureates of International competitions – Yanika Bagryanskaya, Anzhelika Mukhametzyanova, Saida Mamadalieva, Kirill Borchaninov. And very young talents, young soloists – Malika Normatova, Ramiz Usmanov, Samandar Alimov, Rakhim Mirzakamalov, Dzhabrail Idrisov.

Considering the historical stage – the 90s of the twentieth century in the formation of the vocal culture of the Republic of Uzbekistan, "a distinctive feature of the operas of this period is the search by composers and playwrights for new genre varieties, a synthesis of various genres. The possibility of introducing new technologies, the use of television and radio systems contributed to the emergence of joint projects of composers, choreographers and television directors, the birth of such genres as television opera and television ballet. Among the most interesting projects are the ballet-oratorio for choir, symphony orchestra and dance group "Zardushtiyalar Marosimi" (1995), the opera-dastan for a reader, dance group, choir and orchestra of folk instruments "Bukhoroi Sharif" by M. Bafoev (1997), the opera-oratorio "Ibtido Khatosi" by I. Akbarov (1995)" (Mamadjanova E. U., 2020, p. 141).

Returning to the historical line of the main opera house of Uzbekistan, 2007 was

a significant year for the Bolshoi Theater named after Alisher Navoi in that it marked the beginning of the implementation of the project – the International Festival of Opera and Ballet Art "Tashkent Bakhori", in which opera artists from Russia, Italy, Spain, Ukraine and Kazakhstan took part.

"The 14<sup>th</sup> International Italian Opera Performers Competition, "Competizione dell'opera", held in November 2014 also caused a great stir in the country. Its winner back in 2012 was Rahim Mirzakamalov, a soloist with the Alisher Navoi Bolshoi Theater. An equally significant event was the Yoshlik Bakhori competition for young opera performers, which has been held in Tashkent since 2015 at the State Conservatory of Uzbekistan. The jury included renowned professors from Italy, Russia, and Belarus. The discovery of new young opera talents such as R. Usmanov, Zh. Piyazov, B. Ismatullaeva, D. Rakhmonov, and D. Idrisov has attracted the interest of renowned conductors, soloists, and directors to our country. The opening of the Bolshoi Theater named after Alisher Navoi in 2016 was a true gift to all connoisseurs of high art after reconstruction... In May of that same year, a veritable opera festival, "The Enchanting Spring of Opera", took place on the stage of the country's main Theater. It featured performances by People's Artist of Uzbekistan and Karakalpakstan Muyassar Razzakova, Italian conductor Gerardo Colella, Honored Artist of North and South Ossetia Veronika Dzhioeva, and many talented young opera performers" (Mamadjanova E. U., 2020, P. 152–153).

Today, the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre named after Alisher Navoi has reached the pinnacle of global excellence, renowned in almost all musical circles around the world. Mastery, diplomacy, and ambition are the main criteria that one of the most important and prosperous theatres in the Republic of Uzbekistan sets for itself in the future, and even now. All doors of world opera classics are open to it, because its grandeur is boundless. It unites a triune process that encompasses Uzbek, European, and contemporary vocal performance art.

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