

Yara Arts Group to stage Radio 477!, depicting four versions of Ukraine's war-torn Kharkiv

by Virlana Tkacz

NEW YORK – Yara Arts Group announced it will sing at La MaMa in New York about Kharkiv, pre-war Ukraine's second largest city, in a unique performance set to take place on March 10-19. The performance is inspired by a jazz show that took place in the city in 1929 at Les Kurbas's Berezil.

At that time, Ukrainians were discovering the joys of jazz, radio and singing the stories of their city of Kharkiv. The audiences loved the show's catchy songs, wild dances and dazzling sets. But the Communist Party bosses did not, so the show and its artists disappeared in Stalin's purges. Today Ukrainian culture is once again threatened, but the performance, billed as Radio477!, will draw connections between past and present in an effort to maintain some of Karhkv's unique musical culture.

"Radio 477!" is a new show created by Virlana Tkacz, Yara Arts Group and other artists. The show will present various versions of the city. The first will present the city as it was in December of 2021, just before Russian President Vladimir Putin launched a full-scale war on Ukraine and as organizers first started working on the show.

The second will present Kharkiv as it existed in spring 2022, as the city proved it was made of reinforced concrete and despite all predictions stood up to Putin and the Russian invasion.

The third will be a memory of the city as the home of the Ukrainian avantgarde of 1929, a dream which comes to life for an instant in Radio 477!, while a fourth Kharkiv will present the city as it stands today, on the forefront of a war that Ukraine will win.



Courtesy of Virlana Tkacz

Serhiy Zhadan

Yara's Radio 477! will include texts and lyrics by award-winning Ukrainian poet Serhiy Zhadan who lives in Kharkiv and who is scheduled to attend the opening performance at La MaMa. Mr. Zhadan will read his newest poems at the end of the show's opening weekend.

Music for the performance is by New Yorker Anthony Coleman, who was inspired by the score Yuliy Meitus created for a show at the Berezil in 1929. Everyone believed the music and text were lost or destroyed, but Ms. Tkacz found the conductor's score in a Kharkiv archive and used it to conceive of the project.

At La MaMa, Ms. Tkacz will direct a diverse cast of Yara performers and Ukrainian artists in the new version of the show, while Mr. Coleman has assembled a stellar group of seven musicians who will perform live during the shows.

In November 2021, Yara was in Kharkiv and worked on Radio 477! with Mr. Zhadan, Ukraine's most celebrated writer who won four major international literary awards last year, including the Hannah Arendt Prize for Political Thought. His poetry has been featured in many publications, including The New York Times.

His first volume of selected poetry, "What We Live For; What We Die For," was translated by Ms. Tkacz with Wanda Phipps and was published by Yale University Press in 2019. Mr. Zhadan's his second volume, "How Fire Descends," will be published later this year.

Mr. Zhadan lives in Kharkiv and shares Yara's passion for the Kharkiv avantgarde of the 1920s. He has worked with Yara since 2005 and is the front man for his band that was featured in Yara's award winning "1917-2017: Tychyna, Zhadan and the Dogs," which was staged at La MaMa in 2017.

Yara Artists in the show include George Drance, Noah Firth, Silvana Gonzalez, Akiko Hiroshima, Oksana Horban, Susan Hwang, Petro Ninovskyi and Lesya Verba. The live orchestra in Radio 477! will be led by Mr. Coleman (piano) and it will include Frank London (trumpet), Martin Ehrlich (clarinet), Erica Mancini (accordion), Paul Brantley (cello), Anna Abondolo (bass) and James Paul Nadien (drums).

Today, as Ukraine fights for its survival, Yara believes it is very important to share Ukrainian culture with its diverse New York neighbors. Yara's work is bilingual, but



Pavlo Terekhov

Members of the cast of the Radio 477! show (from left to right): Lesya Verba, Susan Hwang, Silvana Gonzalez, Petro Ninovskyj, George Drance and Akiko Hiroshima rehearse a dance number.

can be understood by all because of the context that is created in the show. Yara stressed that it is also a show for its English-speaking friends.

Yara Arts Group is a resident company of the world renowned La MaMa Experimental Theatre in New York and it creates original shows from fragments of poetry, songs and historical material. Since its founding in 1990, Yara has created over 40 original shows, 25 of which were inspired by material from Ukraine. Yara started working on Radio 477! in November 2021 in Kharkiv. A second Kharkiv workshop was planned for March 2022, but the Russian invasion of Ukraine prevented it. Last summer a concert version of the show

was performed for the Vaclav Havel Festival at the Bohemian National Hall in Manhattan and a work-in-progress version was performed at Performance Space for the 21st Century in Chatham, N.Y.

Radio 477! will be held on March 10-19 at La Mama's Ellen Stewart Theatre, located at 66 East 4th St. in Manhattan. Shows will take place on Thursday through Saturday at 7 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$10-\$30 and can be purchased at www.lamama.org.

Radio 477! is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts, the New York City Department for Cultural Affairs, Self-Reliance Foundation and the numerous other friends of Yara Arts Group.

La MaMa Experimental Theatre and Yara Arts Group present:

RADIO 477!

Jazz / Kharkiv / 1929 / Today
Yara Arts Group + Serhiy Zhadan + Anthony Coleman

March 10-19, 2023
Thur-Sat at 7PM+Sun 2PM

La MaMa's Ellen Stewart Theatre
66 E 4th St. New York City

Tickets: www.lamama.org

February 28
12:00 pm EST
online

RESILIENCE, SERVICE LEARNING AND UNITY – UCU ONE YEAR LATER

Discussion with UCU President Metropolitan Archbishop Borys Gudziak and UCU students and leaders

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As we approach the one-year anniversary of the Russian invasion, we invite you to join us for a special webinar, "Resilience, Service Learning, and Unity – UCU One Year Later," detailing UCU's humanitarian work over this past year. At this live webinar, UCU leaders and students will update you on UCU's relief efforts and plans for this year and beyond.

**FEBRUARY 28TH
12PM EST, VIA ZOOM**

Register now by scanning the QR code to the right or visiting ucufoundation.org/oneyearlater



OUT & ABOUT

Through March 5 New York	Photo exhibit by Maks Levin, "In Defense of Truth and Freedom," The Ukrainian Museum, www.ukrainianmuseum.org	March 14 Online	Online pysanka writing demonstration, Ukrainian History and Education Center, www.ukrhec.org/events
Through March 11 New York	Ukrainian embroidery workshop, with instruction by Lubow Wolynetz, The Ukrainian Museum, www.ukrainianmuseum.org	March 18-26 New York	Ukrainian Easter Egg Pysanka decorating workshop, with instruction by Lesia Lebed and Tania Snihur, The Ukrainian Museum, www.ukrainianmuseum.org
Through March 11 New York	Ukrainian beaded necklace "gerdany" workshop, with instruction by Olha Lesko, The Ukrainian Museum, www.ukrainianmuseum.org	March 18 Western PA	Lenten Retreat, "Discernment vs. Judgement," Ukrainian Orthodox League, www.uolofusa.org
Through April 15 New York	Film "Malanka" and photography exhibit "For Odesa by Yelena Yeremchuk, The Ukrainian Museum, www.ukrainianmuseum.org	March 18 Jenkintown, PA	Ukrainian Paska baking master class, "Your Apron - Our Recipes," Ukrainian National Women's League of America (Branch 10), Ukrainian Educational and Cultural Center, www.ueccphila.org
Through April 15 New York	Art exhibit, featuring works by Ukrainian Lemko artist "Nikifor" (Epifani Dvorniak, 1895-1968), The Ukrainian Museum, www.ukrainianmuseum.org	March 18 Leighton, PA	Pysanka workshop, Ukrainian Homestead of CEC ODWU, www.ukrhomestead.com or oseliaodwu@gmail.com
February 26 Online	Virtual Town Hall, "Every War Must End," with Phillip Karber and Gen. Wesley Clark, Organization for the Defense of Four Freedoms for Ukraine, Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, www.ucca.org	March 21 Somerset, NJ	Lemko "Drop-Pull" Pysanka Workshop, with Marko Lyszyk, Ukrainian History and Education Center, www.ukrhec.org
February 28 Washington	Panel discussion, "U.S.-Ukraine Security Dialogue XV: Taking Measure of Ukraine's Defense Capabilities and Needs After a Year of War," Center for U.S.-Ukrainian Relations, Ukrainian Congress Committee of America, American Foreign Policy Council, National Press Club, https://usukrainerelations.org	March 25 Chicago	Poetry reading, "Ukrainian American Poets Respond" with Virlana Tkach and Olena Jennings, Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, www.uima-chicago.org
March 3-17 Chicago	Art exhibit, "Parallel Worlds" by Luna Prysazhniuk, Ukrainian National Museum, www.ukrainiannationalmuseum.org	March 26, 28, April 8 Somerset, NJ	Pysanka meet-up, Ukrainian History and Education Center, www.ukrhec.org
March 4, 11, 18, 25 Chicago	Pysanka workshop with Anna Chychula, Ukrainian National Museum, www.ukrainiannationalmuseum.org	April 1 Jenkintown, PA	Lenten Retreat, Ukrainian Orthodox League, Basilian Spirituality Center, nsufler@aol.com or 610-892-7315
March 4, 5, 12, 21 Somerset, NJ	Pysanka workshop, Ukrainian History and Education Center, www.ukrhec.org	April 1 New York	Ukrainian Easter Traditions workshop, with instruction by Lubow Wolynetz, The Ukrainian Museum, www.ukrainianmuseum.org
March 10, 23 Chicago	Performance by Anders Zanichkowsky, "Aesthetics of Loss: For G," Ukrainian Institute of Modern Art, www.uima-chicago.org	April 2 Leighton, PA	Easter Bazaar, Ukrainian Homestead of CEC ODWU, www.ukrhomestead.com or oseliaodwu@gmail.com
March 12 Montreal	Taras Shevchenko Concert, Ukrainian Canadian Congress (Quebec Provincial Council), Ukrainian Youth Center, 438-764-9392		

Entries in "Out and About" are listed free of charge. Priority is given to events advertised in *The Ukrainian Weekly*. However, we also welcome submissions from all our readers. Items will be published at the discretion of the editors and as space allows. Please send e-mail to mdubas@ukrweekly.com.

Mudryk signs...

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prone to individual play on the pitch and who sometimes coughs up the ball, he is improving his combination skills. His innate ability to swiftly execute his actions (darting off-the-ball runs, change of pace and instinctual decision-making) is one of his tremendous attributes and a reason why so many elite clubs are attracted to him.

Mudryk owns a low center of gravity and can improvise when it seems he is completely out of options. These features make it difficult for defenders to stop his progress and make it fun for fans to watch him play.

Room for improvement

Mudryk has a tendency to fly solo with his dribbling and too often sets his sights directly on goal. This can be positive when his drives result in scoring chances, but he also ignores teammates around him. He has a tendency to sometimes lose control of the ball, yet remains a high-risk player who can quickly make the defense pay for a weak play. Shakhtar's director of football, Darijo Srna, told CBS Sports, "Mudryk is a serious talent. After Kylian Mbappe and Vinicius Junior, he's the best player in Europe at his position."

Shakhtar donate \$25M from Mudryk transfer

On January 16, FC Shakhtar Donetsk President Rinat Akhmetov announced that he was donating \$25 million to assist

Ukrainian soldiers and their families. The \$25 million was part of the \$75 million fee obtained in the transfer sale of Mudryk and will be donated to a project called "The Heart of Azovstal" to aid Ukrainian forces who defended the city of Mariupol and who were holed up in the Azovstal steel works for weeks while fighting off the Russian military.

In his official statement, Shakhtar's president said, "We have to do everything we can to bring this day closer. That is why I have made a decision to launch the 'Heart of Azovstal,' a project designed to help Mariupol defenders and the families of fallen soldiers.

"Their acts of bravery are unparalleled in modern history. It is them, their sacrifice and courage that helped contain the enemy in the first months of the war and let all of us feel the inevitability of the victory of Ukraine now," Akhmetov said.

Regarding the allocated \$25 million, he added that, "the money will be used to cover different needs - from providing medical and prosthetic treatment and psychological support to meeting specific requests."

"To ensure transparency, the project will have a professional, independent team that will be in touch with the Azovstal defenders, their families, care providers and volunteers. We are forever indebted to our soldiers," he said.

(Based on reporting by ESPN, Irish Post.com and wtop.com.)

Ihor Stelmach may be reached at iman@sfgsports.com

Once teammates...

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"The war continues and people die and cities are destroyed every day," Saladukha said. "And what do we see in Russia? Hundreds of professional athletes expressed their support for the war in Ukraine. But we did not hear that anyone spoke against the war. Tell me, under such conditions, is it honest and fair to allow Russians to compete even under a neutral flag?"

Klitschko asks Russian athletes to denounce war

According to Kyiv mayor Vitali Klitschko, if Russian athletes publicly denounce the war with Ukraine, they should be permitted to compete in Paris at the 2024 Summer Olympics. In an official statement on February 13, the former world heavy-weight boxing champion also added that in his opinion Russian and Belarusian athletes

are afraid to say no to war.

While Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has suggested a boycott of the upcoming Olympics if Russian athletes are allowed to compete, Klitschko has asked the athletes to tell their government to put a stop to "this senseless war."

Ukraine's reaction to the IOC exploring a "pathway" to permit Russian and Belarusian competitors to take part in the Olympics as neutrals has been swift and strong. Bach professed sharing the "grief and human suffering" of Ukrainians, but said individual governments should not decide who participates in international sports competitions.

Klitschko was willing to invite Bach to Kyiv to see how Russia has destroyed cities, villages and killed thousands of innocent civilians and to get a better understanding of the dire situation in the country.

(Based on reporting by the Associated Press, Inside the Games, Yahoo News and Agence-France-Presse.)

Win the war...

(Continued from page 7)

house full of books. Multiply this countless times. Our partner institutions in Chicago, Detroit, New York, Boston, Bound Brook, N.J., and elsewhere also have massive collections of duplicate materials about Ukraine.

Yale historian Timothy Snyder signaled his intention to help rebuild the library at Chernihiv. Ms. Kaptur and other elected officials want to direct U.S. aid to Ukraine to replenish libraries there once peace is achieved.

The critical priority for Ukraine right

now is military, economic, humanitarian and diplomatic support - there's no substitute for that today and security/alliance guarantees going forward. But the war is all about existence and that's all about culture and the time to plan for that is now.

Nearly 50 years after both Mr. Denesiuk and my father, Alexander, passed away, I'm moved by the way history unites long-gone generations toward a beneficent goal to defeat evil today. The 14-volume set of Taras Shevchenko's work reminds me of that every day. Tens of millions of similar threads define Ukraine's determination to resist, to exist and insure her ultimate triumph.

INSIDE:

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In nationally televised address, Putin blames West for war, claims it threatened Russia's existence

RFE/RL

U.S. President Joe Biden issued a scathing rebuke just hours after Russian President Vladimir Putin on February 21 vowed to continue the war in Ukraine into a second year. Mr. Biden said in a speech in the Polish capital that Moscow's invasion will fail in the face of a global alliance backing Kyiv.

He also vowed "unwavering" support for Ukraine and continued North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) resolve as the invasion's first anniversary approached on February 24.

"President Putin's craven lust for land and power will fail, and the Ukrainian peoples' love for their country will prevail," Mr. Biden said. "Democracies of the world will stand guard over our freedom today, tomorrow and forever. That's what's at stake here: freedom."

"One year ago, the world was bracing for the fall of Kyiv," Mr. Biden told a crowd at Warsaw's Royal Castle one day after a surprise visit to the Ukrainian capital in a major show of solidarity. "I can report: Kyiv stands strong, Kyiv stands proud, it stands tall and, most important, it stands free."

Mr. Biden added that "Ukraine will never be a victory for Russia. Never."

The U.S. leader also met with Polish President Andrzej Duda, who has been among the most outspoken supporters of sending weapons and other aid to help Ukraine beat back the Russian forces.

"I call on all European states, NATO states, to show solidarity with Ukraine, to provide military support to Ukraine, so that they have something to fight with," Mr. Duda said. "Do not be afraid to provide this support."

Hours earlier, Putin used a major address to claim that Russia's existence was being threatened by the West, which has rallied around Kyiv after the Kremlin launched its full-scale invasion more than one year ago.

Speaking in a nationally televised address to Russia's Federal Assembly just days ahead of the February 24 anniversary of the invasion – an incursion that Putin's camp expected to last weeks at most but which shows no signs of concluding 12 months later – Putin repeated familiar and often false narratives about Ukraine and other issues, and lashed out at Washington and the West, saying he had tried to avoid war "but behind our backs a very different scenario was being prepared."

Mr. Biden rejected the idea that the West wanted to attack Russia, adding, "Millions of Russian citizens who only want to live in peace with their neighbors are not the enemy."

Putin's February 21 address, which was canceled in December amid several military setbacks in Ukraine, came one day after Mr. Biden's historic visit to Kyiv, which served to undercut the Russian leader's recent statements that the West is losing interest in backing Ukraine.

Many experts said Putin was hoping for a major battlefield success prior to the talk to provide him with a victory to hail in the speech. However, a Russian offensive appears to have stalled in eastern Ukraine near the city of Bakhmut with severe losses

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Biden makes unannounced trip to Kyiv ahead of war's anniversary, denting Putin's plans for Ukraine

U.S. president pledges 'unwavering' support to Ukraine

by Mark Raczkiewicz

CHICAGO – U.S. President Joe Biden's hazardous trip to Kyiv ahead of the first year anniversary that marked the start of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine was seen more as a stringent message to his counterpart in the Kremlin.

As the first U.S. commander-in-chief to visit Ukraine since 2008, Mr. Biden on February 20 proclaimed Washington's "unwavering and unflagging commitment to Ukraine's democracy, sovereignty and territorial integrity."

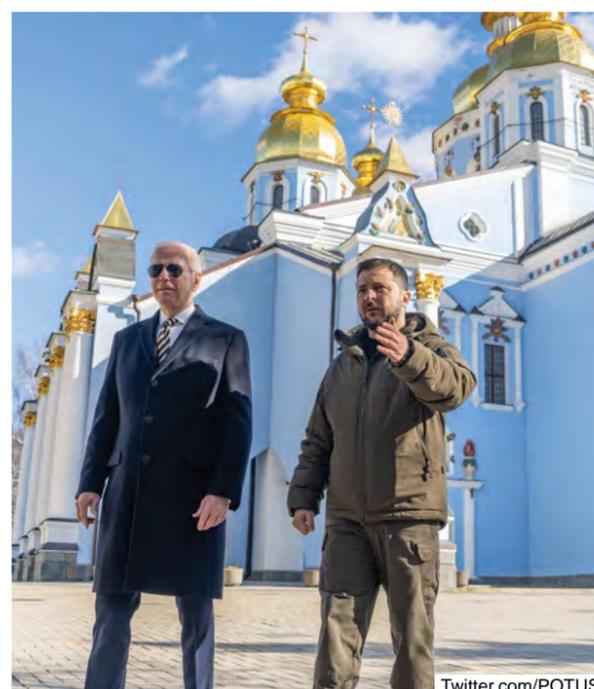
The White House press pool schedule didn't reflect the surreptitious journey; it showed only Poland as his destination, where he travelled after meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and taking an outdoor walk on Saint Michael's Square with his trademark aviator glasses on as air raid sirens blared.

It was a gesture that went beyond symbolism and underscored three messages, said former U.S. Gen. Ben Hodges who is now a senior advisor at the Human Rights First nonprofit group in Germany.

To him, Mr. Biden's trip was "extremely important." He communicated "to the Kremlin, as well as to the Ukrainian and American people that there is a lot more at stake than what is seen on television."

What was disappointing was the lack of an outright expression that "yes, Ukraine is going to win, ... but we haven't heard that yet [from Mr. Biden]," Gen. Hodges said.

Still, any meeting or "face-to-face" talk is better than virtual communication because the "two presidents probably spoke about what is actually going on, about risk, about time and requirements and that is important," Gen. Hodges said.



Twitter.com/POTUS

U.S. President Joe Biden (left) walks with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Saint Michael's Square in Kyiv on February 20.

As for being in what Kremlin autocrat Vladimir Putin believes is his backyard, the visit was "a gut punch to Russia's leader," said Eliot Cohen, a professor of international studies at Johns Hopkins University and a contributing author to the Atlantic Monthly magazine.

He wrote in the publication that, "for a leader obsessed with strength, like Putin, that is a blow. His own people will quietly or openly ask, 'Why could we not prevent this?' And

(Continued on page 4)

As invasion anniversary passes, no letup in fighting in east, says Ukraine's military

RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service

Ukrainian forces repelled scores of Russian attacks in the eastern regions of Donetsk and Luhansk over the previous day, Kyiv said on February 23, as Moscow's full-scale invasion approached the one-year mark.

Russia launched artillery barrages on Bakhmut, Lyman, Avdiivka and Shakhtarsk in Donetsk, as well as on Kupyansk, in the northeastern Kharkiv region, the General Staff of the Ukrainian military said in its daily report.

"During the past 24 hours, the Ukrainian military repelled about 90 attacks by Russian forces in five directions [in the Donetsk region], where they are concentrating their main offensive efforts," the General Staff said.

"At the same time, the enemy launched 10 missile and 19 air strikes as well as 37 rocket-system salvos. Once again, peaceful towns, villages and civilians suffered," the General Staff said.

The Donetsk city of Bakhmut, which Russian troops have been trying to capture since July, remains the epicen-

ter of the battle for the Donbas, with Moscow's forces launching a fresh offensive to take the city last month.

However, military analysts say that the capture of Bakhmut would have a rather symbolic meaning for Russia, since its strategic importance is limited.

The British Ministry of Defense said in its daily intelligence bulletin on February 23 that intense fighting has been continuing in and around Bakhmut for the last two days, but that Ukrainian forces have been able to keep their resupply lines open to the west in spite of the Russians' attempts to encircle the city over the past six weeks.

British intelligence also noted that Russian forces have resumed heavy shelling of the Donetsk town of Vuhledar.

"There is a realistic possibility that Russia is preparing for another offensive effort in this area despite costly failed attacks in early February and late 2022," it concluded.

On February 19, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Russian forces had suffered "extraordinarily significant

(Continued on page 4)