

Yara Arts Group from La MaMa Experimental Theatre presents:

# YARA'S WINTER FESTIVAL: WORLD EPIC SONGS

Finnish Kalevala

November 2020

[www.yaraartsgroup.net](http://www.yaraartsgroup.net)

Yara Arts Group from La MaMa Experimental Theatre presents:

## Yara's World Epic Song Festival

### Finnish Kalevala

**Entrance music:** melody from the Kalevala  
Performed by Honey paw

**Introductions** Virlana Tkacz

**On the Finnish Kalevala** - Virlana Tkacz

**Introducing Honey paw:** *Jurgita Zvinklyte and Matti Palonen*

**Music:** second runo from *The Kalevala*  
Performed by Jurgita Zvinklyte and Matti Palonen

**Discussion on Epics** with Julian Kytasty

**Music:** from *Iloodaiks*"  
Performed by Jurgita Zvinklyte and Matti Palonen

**Discussion on Epics** with Julian Kytasty

**Music:** from *Poika Ja Pilves*  
Performed by Jurgita Zvinklyte and Matti Palonen

**Exit Music** from *Varas Koristeet*

Performed by Honey paw

virtual event directed by Virlana Tkacz

bandurist and epic singer: Julian Kytasty

special guests: Jurgita Zvinklyte and Matti Palonen

visual design: Waldemart Klyuzko,

tech support: Chris Ignacio

**KALEVALA** epic was collected in Finland, Karelia, and Ingria (present-day St Petersburg Oblast in Russia) in the 1800s and early 1900s. The epic songs and runos tell creation stories, as well as about the adventures of heroic shamans like Väinämöinen, Ilmarinen, and Lemminkäinen. Other runos tell stories of hunters and shepherds, or describe weddings and other celebrations. The best-known stories come from the version of the Kalevala that was published in 1835 by Elias Lönnrot.

**HONEYPAW** was formed in 2019 when Jurgita Žvinklytė and Matti Palonen began to share music from their ancestral traditions. They play the Baltic psaltery, known as kantele in Finland, and kanklės in Lithuania. They play music from the Kalevala tradition of Finland and the surrounding region. The epic songs and runos tell stories of the creation of the earth, the adventures of heroic shamans, and the lives of hunters and shepherds. Band webpage: <http://honeypawband.com/>  
Livestreams: <https://www.facebook.com/honeypawband>

**MATTI PALONEN** has performed Finnic, Scandinavian, and Celtic music in concerts and festivals with many groups across Canada since 2008. He studied Lutherie, and builds stringed instruments including kantele, harp, and lyre.

**JURGITA ŽVINKLYTĖ** has performed with the Davila and Sėdauta ensembles from Utena, Lithuania in Festivals in several European countries since 2016. She holds a MFA from the Vilnius Academy of Fine Arts, and her piece, "Riddle: Where Is the Centre of the World? Answer: Where You Stand" was part of the National Art Gallery of Lithuania's Sweet Sweat of the Future Exhibition in May 2020.

**VIRLANA TKACZ** heads the Yara Arts Group and has directed over thirty original shows at La MaMa Theatre in New York, as well as in Kyiv, Lviv, Kharkiv, Bishkek, Ulaanbaatar, and Ulan Ude. She has co-produced a series of concerts and recordings of Buryat Mongolian artists and of the Koliadnyky of Kryvorivnia from the Carpathian Mountains. She has also worked with Kyrgyz artists to create two theatre pieces based on Kyrgyz epics songs.

**JULIAN KYTASTY** grew up within a strong tradition of family music-making. He is a third generation bandurist following in the footsteps of his father Petro and grandfather Ivan Kytasty, and is recognized for his performance of Ukrainian epic songs. He works frequently with Yara Arts Group, most recently on a series of virtual events exploring the life and work of NY bandurist Zynoviy Shtokalko. His work on Yara's *1917-2017 Tychyna, Zhadan, and the Dogs* earned him a NY Innovative Theater Award for best original score.

**WALDEMART KLYUZKO** is an artist from Kyiv who has collaborated with Yara Arts Group since 2010, most recently creating the set for *Opera GAZ*. He is a visual artist who has had exhibits at La MaMa Galleria, the Ukrainian Institute of America and the Bezpala Gallery in Toronto.

**CHRIS IGNACIO** works at La MaMa Experimental Theatre. He was in Yara's *Dream Bridge, Winter Songs on Mars* and *1917/2017: Tychyna, Zhadan, and the Dogs* at La MaMa.

**STAFF:** Folklorist: Iryna Voloshyna, Publicity: Zoriana Siokalo

**YARA ARTS GROUP** was established in 1990 and is a resident company at La MaMa, the acclaimed experimental theater in New York. Yara has created thirty-seven theatre pieces based on extensive research in Eastern Europe, Siberia and Asia, in Yara's signature style of multilingual dialogue and songs supported by evocative visuals and documentation. Yara has also created numerous traditional music events and the *Kurbas: New Worlds* exhibition for the Art Arsenal in Kyiv. **Yara Arts Group 306 East 11th St #3B, New York, NY 10003 (212)475-6474 yara@prodigy.net [www.yaraartsgroup.net](http://www.yaraartsgroup.net)**

**Yara's Virtual Events** are made possible by public funds from New York State Council on the Arts and the New York City Department for Cultural Affairs, as well as the friends of Yara Arts Group.



**OTHER YARA VIRTUAL EVENTS:** [www.yaraartsgroup.net](http://www.yaraartsgroup.net)  
**Zinoviy Shtokalko:** Bandura Instrumentals, Singer of Tales and Epic Modenist

**Ukrainian American Cultural Figures:**

**Pawlo Humeniuk** -known as the "King of Ukrainian Music" in the 1920s.

**Vasile Avramenko** -who brought Ukrainian dance to New York in 1929.

**Zinoviy Shtokalko** Ukrainian epic singer in New York in the 1950-60s

**Oleh Lysheha** – Ukrainian poet who worked with Yara in the 1990s

**Yara Winter World Epic Song Festival**

**Kyrgyz** epic, or datan

**Finnish** Kalevala

**Buryat** epic or uliger

**African American** Songs

**Ukrainian** epic or дума