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# Prague Pages of the Creative Work of the Ukrainian Composer Vasyl Barvinskyi

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## Abstract

The research deals with the main biographical details of the life and creative work of the outstanding Ukrainian composer, pianist and teacher Vasyl Barvinskyi (1888–1963), connected with his studies, concert and creative activities in Prague. At first Vasyl Barvinskyi received his musical education in Lviv from the famous Czech teacher Vilém Kurz, and later, on his advice, he continued his musical studies in Prague at the Philosophical Faculty of Charles University. There he attended the lectures of the outstanding Czech scientist and art critic Zdeněk Nejedlý and the esthetician, historian and art critic Otakar Hostinský, improved his piano playing in professors Kurz and Holfeld, and studied composition with professor Vítězslav Novák. It is important that a lot of facts are supplemented by interesting descriptions of events, moments of communication with his teachers, impressions of learning and creativity, which have been preserved in Barvinskyi's epistolary heritage, as well as in the composer's memoirs. After returning to Lviv in 1915, Vasyl Barvinskyi became a director of the Mykola Lysenko Higher Music Institute, engaged in pedagogical work and educated a lot of famous pianists and composers, and also worked as a music critic, but from 1948 to 1958 he was persecuted and imprisoned by the communist regime in Ukraine. The cycle of his piano preludes, written while studying with Vítězslav Novák, is analyzed. In the creative work of Vasyl Barvinskyi – in piano, vocal, choral, symphonic compositions – various currents of European musical culture naturally combined with bright manifestations of the Ukrainian national element.

## Key words

Vasyl Barvinskyi, Vítězslav Novák, Vilém Kurz, Praha, Brno, Lviv, music of the 20th century, artistic collaboration, composer's creativity

## Introduction

The creative personality of Vasyl Barvinskyi (1888–1963), one of the most prominent Ukrainian artists, is characterized by great breadth and versatility. He became a bright representative of the Ukrainian musical culture of the 20th century, who devoted his whole life to serving art and native culture. The creative figure of the artist is impressive for its extraordinary and profundity, because he was not only an outstanding composer and pianist, but also a talented teacher, music- and public figure and critic.

For a long time, the name of Vasyl Barvinskyi was silenced, because after the “case” incriminated against him by the Bolshevik regime, he was forced to serve his sentence in the Mordoviia camps (1948–1958) together with his wife Nataliia (a daughter of the famous scientist Ivan Puliui).

## Vasyl Barvinskyi – origin of the composer

The composer came from the famous ancient Galician family of the Barvinskis, whose representatives set themselves a single goal in life – dedicated service to the Ukrainian nation in the fields of education, culture, literature and science. The father of the composer – Oleksandr Barvinskyi – was an outstanding educational figure, the author of the first school textbooks on Ukrainian spelling, the founder of the edition “*Rus Historical Library*” (1886), the head of the Ukrainian Pedagogical Society, the ambassador to the Austrian Diet and the Minister of Religions and Education in the government of the ZUNR in 1918.<sup>1</sup> The composer’s mother, Yevgeniia (from Lyubovychs), was a gifted pianist and conductor. The Barvinskis represented in Ukrainian culture an elitist stratum necessary for every nation, which caused particular fury on the part of the Bolshevik regime: in numerous publications (such as, for example, in the book by Volodymyr Beliaiev and Mykhailo Rudnytskyi “*Under Foreign Flags*”) they were denounced as traitors, ideologues of bourgeois nationalism only because they firmly and consistently adhered to the statist line in their activities.

Vasyl Barvinskyi was born on February 20, 1888 in Ternopil, and later the family moved to Lviv. The Barvinski family has always hosted prominent figures of Ukrainian culture in their home, including Ivan Franko, Lesia Ukrainka, Mykhailo Hrushevskyi, and others. And in 1903, at his parents’ house, the 15-year-old boy met Mykola Lysenko, who drew attention to Vasyl’s extraordinary talent and predicted great success for him in the future<sup>2</sup>. It was in the family environment that Vasyl Barvinskyi was able to keep abreast of affairs and events related not only to Ukrainian, but also to European culture from childhood. The future composer received his initial musical training from his mother, and received his professional education at the Lviv Conservatory, where his piano teacher was the famous Czech teacher Vilém Kurz (1872–1945). Vilém Kurz highly

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1 ПАВЛИШИН, Стефанія. *Олександр Барвінський*. Львів: Академічний Експрес, 1997, С. 125.

2 ПАВЛИШИН, Стефанія. *Василь Барвінський*. Київ, 1990, С. 6.

valued the pianistic talent of his student, as well as his gifts as a composer. This is precisely what Liudmyla Sadova emphasizes in her monograph about Vilém Kurz, noting that this is confirmed by the inclusion of Vasyl Barvinskyi's piano cycles *Шість мініатюр на українські народні теми* (*Six miniatures on Ukrainian folk motifs*) and preludes to her methodical work – the program of a ten-year piano training course *Progress at learning to play the piano* (*Postup při vyučování hře na klavír*), which was created by the professor together with his wife Růžena Kurzová and published in Brno in 1921.<sup>3</sup>

## Studying in Prague (according to the memoirs of Vasyl Barvinskyi)

The profession of a musician was not very prestigious at that time, so Vasyl Barvinskyi, after finishing high school and studies at the conservatory, entered the History department of the Lviv University. However, the desire to improve his musical education prevailed.

At the beginning of his studies with Vilém Kurz, the young pianist already performed Ludwig van Beethoven's *Piano Concerto with Orchestra No. 1*, but he did not have enough knowledge of the theory and history of music. Along with playing the piano, Vilém Kurz taught his student the initial basics of the music theory, and later the beginnings of harmony, at the same time Barvinskyi began to record his first creative attempts: *Дві думки* (*Two Thoughts*), *Plainte*, *Мелодія* (*Melody*), *Мазурка* (*Mazurka*) etc. It was on the advice of Kurz, who guided the gifted student to respectable music lessons and noticed the pupil's great creative talent, that at the end of April 1907 Barvinskyi left for the composer's studio in Prague “to the most outstanding, close by J. Suk, Dvořák's student, Vítězslav Novák”<sup>4</sup> – that is what Vasyl Barvinskyi wrote about his teacher. However, two weeks later, due to a serious illness, Barvinskyi had to return to Lviv and only a year later, in April 1908, he left for Prague to continue his studies.

It is worth noting that at the beginning of the 20th century Prague was a large cultural and educational centre where outstanding Ukrainian scientists lived and worked (Ivan Horbachevskiy, Ivan Puliui and many others), poets (Olexandr Oles, Oleg Olzhych, Olena Teliga, Yevhen Malaniuk), a lot of Ukrainian magazines and books were published, talented Ukrainian young people got an education. The Free Ukrainian University, the Ukrainian Academy of Economics, the Ukrainian Art Studio and the Mykhailo Drahomanov Ukrainian Pedagogical Institute were there. Ukrainians were also educated at the Technical University of Prague, at the Masaryk University in Brno, at the Mining Institute in Příbram, and of course at the Faculty of Philosophy at the famous Charles University.

Vasyl Barvinskyi entered the Philosophy Faculty of Charles University, where he attended lectures of the outstanding Czech scientist-philosopher, musicologist and literary critic Zdeněk Nejedlý (1878–1962), the Czech esthetician, historian and art critic Otakar

3 САДОВА, Людмила. *Фортетіанна школа Вілема Курца*. Дрогобич: Посвіт, 2009, С. 36.

4 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Коментований список творів. Ін *З музично-письменницької спадщини. Дослідження, публіцистика, листи*. Упор. В. Грабовський. Дрогобич: Коло, 2004, С. 137.

Hostinský (1847–1910) at the Music studies department, and studied composition at Vítězslav Novák (1870–1949).

As the composer recalled, in two months of study (May–June 1908) with professor Novák, he completed almost the entire course of harmony based on the textbook *Nauka o harmonii* (*Study on Harmony*, 1887) of the Czech composer Josef Foerster (1833–1907). Vasyl Barvinskyi studied privately with V. Novák from 1908 to 1914.<sup>5</sup>

Later Barvinskyi wrote about his teacher, for whom he showed special respect: “[...] *no less than a composer, Novák had and still has a huge influence on the development of Czech music as a teacher. [...] Almost an entire generation of young Czech composers graduated from his school. In particular, we Ukrainians should be grateful to prof. Novák, and his name is now inextricably linked with the history of our young art. V. Barvinskyi, N. Nyzhankivskyi, and after some time, Z. Lysko graduated from Novák’s school, and this year M. Kolessa is graduating from his studies.*”<sup>6</sup>

Vasyl Barvinskyi interestingly mentioned his studies with Vítězslav Novák in the work *Коментований список творів* (*Annotated List of Works*). In the memoir-narrative, the author emphasizes the delicacy of the professor, his ability to work with his students in such a way as not to harm them with excessive remarks: “*When, after a short period of study, I began to write or correct some of the works written up to that time, Novák said to me: ‘Now compare yourself – as you wrote earlier, as a miss from a boarding house,’ naively. At the time, I could not have told you that or written it, because you would have, perhaps, not understood it and it would have hurt you then, and now you yourself will understand why I responded so briefly to your first creative attempts.*”<sup>7</sup>

After mastering the basics of harmony, Barvinskyi, under the guidance of a professor, began to thoroughly study Ukrainian folk songs and “*harmonize them not with precisely developed voice knowledge, but only, so to speak, paint a harmonic background.*”<sup>8</sup> In a letter to his mother, the composer wrote: “*Ukrainian songs were collected by P. Bazhanskyi, later I will bring Lysenko to myself and harmonize those melodies for practice.*”<sup>9</sup> At the same time, Barvinskyi began writing smaller forms, such as piano preludes, and later more complex ones – variations, sonata form, contrapuntal forms – “*first for piano, then for ensembles – orchestra; this is how the science of forms happened in practice. My first works were, so to speak, ‘creative problems’ solved under the care of a great teacher.*”<sup>10</sup>

Revealing all the versatility of his talent, already at such a young age, but under the tutelage of the great master – professor Novák, Barvinskyi writes mature, completed works: the cycle of *Preludes* (1908–1909), *Variations* in C minor, *Sonata* in C sharp major,

5 ФІЛЬЦ, Богдана. Василь Барвінський та його внесок у національне музичне мистецтво (до 130-річчя від дня народження композитора). In *Студії мистецтвознавчі*, 2018, № 3, С. 63.

6 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. 60-ліття чеського композитора Новака. In *Новий час*, 1930, 19 грудня.

7 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Коментований список творів. In *З музично-письменницької спадщини. Дослідження, публіцистика, листи*. Упор. В. Грабовський. Дрогобич: Коло, 2004, С. 138–139.

8 Ibid., s. 139.

9 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Листи до матері від 2. 12. 1908 р. *Рукописний відділ ЛНБ ім. В. Стефаніка*, Барв. 93, п. 14.

10 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Коментований список творів. In *З музично-письменницької спадщини. Дослідження, публіцистика, листи*. Упор. В. Грабовський. Дрогобич: Коло, 2004, С. 139.

which belongs to the first highly artistic examples of this form in Ukraine, the cycle *Пісня. Серенада. Імпровізація* (*Song. Serenade. Improvisation*), two piano Trios – E flat minor and A minor – a piano *Sextet* in memory of Mykola Lysenko and Vasyl Barvinskyi's mother – a variation *Думка* (*Thought*), the cycle *Любов* (*Love*), dedicated to his future wife Nataliia Puliui, and *Українська сюїта* (*Ukrainian Suite*). The composer also turned attention to the symphonic genre, creating in 1911 *Українська рhapsодія* (*Ukrainian Rhapsody*) for a large symphony orchestra and the first part of the cantata *Українське весілля* (*Ukrainian Wedding*); in the chamber-vocal genre – solos to the poems of Bohdan Lepkyi *Вечером в хамі* (*In the evening in the house*) and *В лісі* (*In the forest*), a collection of adaptations of Ukrainian folk songs for voice with piano.<sup>11</sup>

For Vasyl Barvinskyi, the memoirs of the favorable reviews of his music from Vítězslav Novák were especially dear. He tried to recall all these statements in the *Коментований список творів* (*Annotated List of Works*) and noted that: “Novák – as I knew from his other and older students, was very stingy with praise, so every favorable review about a work was very important for me.”<sup>12</sup> Therefore, the professor's favorable remarks about some compositions were embedded in the memory for years, such as the Sonata in C sharp major for piano in 4 movements, which ends with a fugue, and which Vítězslav Novák spoke of as “a good example of a modern piano fugue (this was in 1912–13).”<sup>13</sup> After writing the *Sextet* (6 variations on his own theme), Novák prophesied to the young composer that: “This work will be successful,” as it happened in the future and today this wonderful composition, restored from memory by Barvinskyi before his death, sounds from the concert stage.

Vasyl Barvinskyi, a young composer at the time, was fascinated by organ music that inspired his creative work. “One evening, Barvinskyi, listening to the organ, sat in the church and created in his imagination. People, having prayed, left the church. A sexton closed the door and left. Remembering that the divine service was over, Barvinskyi went for the exit, but in vain. The church was locked, and the parson's house was at the end of the yard. After sitting till morning in the church, Barvinskyi created and created in his imagination. Since then we have recorded some of his beautiful works, such as, for example, the Choral Prelude or the Piano Sonata, which in terms of music and art are very close to church music.”<sup>14</sup> – so wrote the well-known bibliographer Roman Savytskyi Jr., who probably learned about this case from his father, the famous pianist Roman Savytskyi, a student of Vasyl Barvinskyi.

In Prague, Vasyl Barvinskyi continued to learn the piano from his former teacher Kurz, who at that time became a rector of the Prague Conservatory and from professor Jakob Holfeld. There he often performed as a pianist. For the first time in Lviv, V. Barvinskyi performed as a pianist at the Lviv Boian concert in 1910, where he performed two miniatures by Vítězslav Novák, a nocturne in C sharp minor by Mykola Lysenko, as well

11 НІМИЛОВИЧ, Олександр. Фортепіанна творчість Василя Барвінського. Дрогобич: Коло, 2001, С. 8.

12 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Коментований список творів. Ін *З музично-письменницької спадщини. Дослідження, публіцистика, листи*. Упор. В. Грабовський. Дрогобич: Коло, 2004, С. 139.

13 Ibid., s. 140.

14 САВИЦЬКИЙ, Роман, мол. Видатні музики зблизка. Ін *Альманах Українського Народного Союзу*. Джерзі Ситі, Нью-Йорк, 1975, С. 128.

as two of his own preludes, revealing a vivid independent interpretation of them. Quite often he performed in Prague or other Czech cities. In Zuzana Šalplachtová's bachelor's thesis, we find information about Vasyl Barvinskyi's performance as a director of the Mykola Lysenko Higher Music Institute and a famous singer, the first tenor of the opera houses in Lviv, Kraków, Hamburg and the State Theater in Zagreb, Roman Liubynetskyi, in Brno on November 21, 1923. In the program of the concert of Ukrainian music, organized under the patronage of the *Slavs* society, the solos of Denys Sichynskyi, Stanislav Liudkevych, Mykola Lysenko, Yakiv Stepovyi, Vasyl Barvinskyi were performed by Roman Lyubinetskyi, and Vasyl Barvinskyi performed his piano compositions – Prelude from the *Ukrainian Suite* and the cycle *Six miniatures on Ukrainian folk motifs*.<sup>15</sup>

Quite often, the works of V. Barvinskyi were heard in Prague and, in particular, in Brno, performed by Dariia Gordynska-Karanovych, Bohdan Berezhnytskyi, or Anda Ostapchuk-Naumenko, which were recorded at a radio studio in Brno and broadcast on local radio.<sup>16</sup>

Subsequently, Stanislav Liudkevych, recalling the performance of Vasyl Barvinskyi, wrote: “When, 30 years ago, Vasyl Barvinskyi, a twenty-year-old boy, appeared on the stage of the Lviv Philharmonic as a pianist and composer, I remember well, there was something fresh coming from the stage, which had previously been the case with the piano productions of our concerts, could not be felt before. [...] Now I understand well the reason and meaning of my instinctive impression of Barvinskyi's first works. It was then that original Ukrainian piano-chamber music was born and awakened for the first time in Galicia, which Lysenko and other pioneers of our music did not have time to express fully and reveal their original face.”<sup>17</sup>

In his student years, Vasyl Barvinskyi was interested in musical and social life, participated in Czech and German musical evenings, organized the Evening of Ukrainian Folk Song performed by the Czech Hlahol society. For this evening the composer wrote the first part of the vocal-symphonic piece of music *Ukrainian wedding* for mixed choir, quartet of soloists, orchestra (later he wrote the second part in Lviv). A Czech musicologist Petr Kalina noted that this concert took place on June 10, 1914 in the Smetana's Hall. Jaroslav Křička conducted the piece of music, and Vasyl Barvinskyi performed the piano part.<sup>18</sup> For the program of this concert Barvinskyi also chose Ukrainian folk songs in adaptations by Ludvík Kuba, Mykola Lysenko, Stanislav Liudkevych, as well as his own adaptations. Barvinskyi also prepared and published a thorough article about a Ukrainian folk song and Ukrainian composers presented at the concert.

15 ŠALPLACHTOVÁ, Zuzana. *Hudební aktivity Ukrajinců v meziválečném a protektorátním Brně*. Brno: Masarykova univerzita, 2013. Bakalářská diplomová práce. Vedoucí práce PhDr. Petr Kalina, Ph.D., s. 31–32. Dostupné z: <https://theses.cz/id/lybz2g/?lang=en>

16 KALINA, Petr; ŠALPLACHTOVÁ, Zuzana. Hudební aktivity Ukrajinců v meziválečném Brně. In *Musicologica Brunensia*, 2013, roč. 48, č. 2, s. 59–72. Dostupné z: [https://digilib.phil.muni.cz/bitstream/handle/11222.digilib/129653/1\\_MusicologicaBrunensia\\_48-2013-2\\_6.pdf?sequence=1](https://digilib.phil.muni.cz/bitstream/handle/11222.digilib/129653/1_MusicologicaBrunensia_48-2013-2_6.pdf?sequence=1).

17 ЛЮДКЕВИЧ, Станіслав. Василь Барвінський. У 30-ліття музичної діяльності. In С. Людкевич. *Дослідження, статті, рецензії, виступи / Упорядкування З. Штундер. Т. II*. Львів: Дивосвіт, 2000. С. 365.

18 KALINA, Petr. Vasyl Barvinskyj, ukrajinský žák Vítězslava Nováka. *Opus musicum*. Brno: Opus musicum, 2015, roč. 47, č. 1, s. 24.

Back then, along with other works, the Czechs heard for the first time adaptations of folk songs by Stanislav Liudkevych and Vasyl Barvinskyi. At that time V. Barvinskyi was a member of the popular Prague art club *Dieblaue Kunstlerinnen*. He also worked as a concertmaster at Miss Lauter's school, which implemented the Dalcroze system,<sup>19</sup> wrote many articles, reviews, and reviews in the Czech press. We learn about interesting facts from the composer's life in Prague from his epistolary heritage, in particular letters to Oleksandr Barvinskyi's father, published by professor Liubov Kyianovska, who noted that Vasyl Barvinskyi's letters became "*an important testimony of the era*".<sup>20</sup> Bright pages and foundations of pedagogical and creative activity of Vítězslav Novák – the beloved teacher of Vasyl Barvinskyi also appear from this epistolary stratum.

## Composer, concert, and teaching activities of the artist

In 1915, Vasyl Barvinskyi was invited to the post of a director of the Mykola Lysenko Music Institute, in connection with the mobilization to the front of Stanislav Liudkevych. Heading the Music Institute in Lviv for 30 years, he led a piano class and taught theoretical subjects: harmony and composition. Vasyl Barvinskyi trained a whole galaxy of pianists, including such world-famous names as Dariia Gordynska-Karanovych, Roman Savytskyi, Halyna Levytska, Oleg Kryshtalskyi, Maria Krykh-Ugliar, Mariia Krushelnytska and many others. Among the best students in composition, we highlight the composers Zynovii Lysko, Anton Rudnytskyi, and Mykola Kolessa. Mykola Lysenko Higher Music Institute had branches in many Galician cities. Barvinskyi had to solve important issues of the educational process and methodical problems every day. He worried about study plans and programs, settled difficult financial matters, because the institute did not have a state budget. Despite such a busy schedule at that time, the composer wrote such wonderful works as the second part of the cantata *Українське весілля, Заповіт* (*Ukrainian Wedding, Testament*) for choir and soloist, solos on Ivan Franko's poem *Місяцю-князю* (*Prince's Moon*), *Благословенна будь* (*Blessed Be*) and *Псалом Давида* (*Psalms of David*) to the words of Panteleimon Kulish, piano works.

Vasyl Barvinskyi continued to give concerts in Western Ukraine with singers Modest Mentsynskyi, Oleksandra Liubych-Parakhoniak, cellist Bohdan Berezhnytskyi, violinist Yevhen Perfetskyi, made a concert tour to Czechoslovakia with a singer Roman Liubynetskyi in 1923 and in 1928 together with Bohdan Berezhnytskyi visited Soviet Ukraine. The author's concerts were held in Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odesa, and Dnipropetrovsk. Vasyl Barvinskyi's compositions were performed in Ukraine and abroad by well-known pianists Liubka Kolessa, Halyna Levytska, Roman Savytskyi and others. Nestor Nyzhankivskyi in particular recalled: „*Wherever it was possible, we performed Barvinskyi's works and were happy*

19 КИЯНОВСЬКА, Любов. Листи Василя Барвінського з Праги до родичів у Львові. In *Вісник Львівського університету*. Серія «Мистецтво». 2008. Вип. 8. С. 165.

20 Ibid., s. 169.

*when not only we, but also foreigners said that they understood his musical language, because he speaks to them in European musical and expressive means known to them.*"<sup>21</sup>

In order to establish and raise the level of musical life in a professional aspect, Barvinskyi, together with fellow musicians Nestor Nyzhankivskyi, Mykola Kolessa, Zynovii Ly-sko and others, founded the Union of Ukrainian Professional Musicians (SUPROM) in 1934, which was engaged in publishing the works of Ukrainian composers and plays of a pedagogical nature, as well as the musicology magazine *Ukrainian Music*. Since 1936, SUPROM has been planning and broadcasting Ukrainian music radio broadcasts in Lviv as soon as possible.

In 1935, on the initiative of Nestor Nyzhankivskyi, the *Bohemian* circle was organized, the active members of which were Vasyl Barvinskyi, Nestor Nyzhankivskyi – a writer, Nartsyz Lukiyanovych – a poet, Volodymyr Baltarovych – a composer, Maria Sabat-Svirska – a singer, Halyna Golubovska – a visual dancer, Oleksa Novakivskyi – a painter, etc. The goal of the members of the group was to work hard on themselves, improve their talents, support each other, and organize concerts, evenings, so that all this would help the development of Ukrainian art. *“There were moments during the great holiday when Vasyl Barvinskyi sat down at the piano. He played his works, starting from children’s plays and ending with piano concerts... Among all, he stood out with exceptional abilities, but he was unusually delicate, gentle, well-mannered, modest, and spoke in a low voice. He was a real aristocrat of spirit.”*<sup>22</sup> The activities of the members of the circle for three years protected the artistic treasures of the Ukrainian people, our spirituality, nurtured ancient customs, in order to pass everything on to the future generation.

## The fate of the “composer without sheet of music”

Vasyl Barvinskyi was arrested in Kyiv in 1948 in connection with his accusation of anti-Soviet activities,<sup>23</sup> at that time he was in the capital on a business trip. Without an open trial, he was convicted and sent to a place of imprisonment for ten years.<sup>24</sup> As you know, Vasyl Barvinskyi was released from Mordovia prison after ten years on January 11, 1958, and rehabilitated on March 21, 1964 (only after his death).

After his return from exile, exhausted Vasyl Barvinskyi, continuing to work on the restoration of his destroyed works from memory, participated in the work of the Union of Composers, consulted pianists-teachers and students for free, even though he was in financial trouble. There is an interesting memoir of the composer Bohdana Filts (1932–2021) about a conversation with the granddaughter of Mykola Lysenko, Rada Lysenko, to whom Vasyl Barvinskyi *“already sick and destitute, and, certainly, to put it mildly, ‘not very financially well-off’, systematically sent letters and the money and asked to buy and put*

21 НИЖАНКІВСЬКИЙ, Нестор. Три стрічі. In *Українські вісті*. 1938. № 38. С. 3.

22 КОМАРИНЕЦЬ, Олександра. *Марія Сабат-Свірська про себе і свій час*. Львів: Каменяр, 1995. С. 45.

23 *Культурне життя в Україні. Західні землі (1953–1966)*. Львів, 1996. С. 193.

24 ФЛОНЕНКО, Людомир. «Особова справа» Василя Барвінського. In *Записки НТШ. Праці Музикознавчої комісії*. Львів, 2009. Т. CCLVIII. С. 492–506.

flowers from him on the graves of figures of Ukrainian culture on their birthdays. This primarily concerned M. Lysenko, V. Kosenko, P. Kozytskyi and M. Zankovetska.”<sup>25</sup> This circumstance testifies Vasyl Barvinskyi as a person who, despite all the tragic events and misadventures, left in his soul a lot of warmth, kindness to people, deep feelings for his colleagues, true respect for outstanding artists of Ukraine.

Most of Vasyl Barvinskyi’s works were destroyed after his arrest in Ukraine, moreover, loyal servants of the criminal regime forced the professor to abandon his compositions, which the maestro repeatedly mentioned in despair that “he is a composer without notes”.

Until the last days of his life, Vasyl Barvinskyi restored his Sextet from memory. After his death, on June 9, 1963, Stanislav Liudkevych added the final measures of the work. Fortunately, with the exception of a few individual works, his manuscripts have been found, mostly abroad.

## Musicological heritage of V. Barvinskyi

Musicology and music-critical activities have an important place in the creative biography of Vasyl Barvinskyi. Among his fundamental works, it is worth mentioning *Огляд історії української музики (Review of the History of Ukrainian Music)*<sup>26</sup>, which was included in the study *Історія української культури (History of Ukrainian Culture)* edited by Ivan Krypiakievych. It is not surprising that Vasyl Barvinskyi considered it his duty to create Ukrainian music, especially those genres that were underdeveloped. In the article *Українська музика (нова доба) (Ukrainian music (new era))* he submitted the following lines: “The main characteristic feature of that era of Ukrainian musical creativity, starting with Lysenko: a noticeable preference for vocal music – especially choral music, based mostly on folk songs as the main sources of Ukrainian musical creativity.”<sup>27</sup>

V. Barvinskyi’s reviews and articles were published in the Ukrainian, Polish, and Czech newspapers *Ruslan*, *Shliakhy*, *Hromadska Dumka*, *Dilo*, *Novyi Chas*, *Krakivski Visti*, *Lvivski Visti*, *Vilna Ukraina*, as well as in the magazines *Nazustrich*, *Ukrainian music*, and many others.<sup>28</sup>

His memories of the arrival of the outstanding Hungarian national composer and scientist Béla Bartók in Lviv are an interesting and unique contribution of Ukrainian culture to the study of Béla Bartók’s creativity and folkloristic activities.<sup>29</sup> Vasyl Barvinskyi has an interesting article about the French composer Maurice Ravel.

25 ФЛЫЦ, Богдана. Спогади про композитора В. Барвінського. In *Соломія* (Тернопіль). 1998. № 4.

26 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ Василь. Огляд історії української музики. *Історія української культури* / Заг. ред. І. Крип'якевича. Львів: Вид. Івана Тиктора, 1937. С. 691–718.

27 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Українська музика (нова доба). In *Українська загальна енциклопедія*. Львів-Станіслав-Коломия, 1939. С. 468.

28 МИСЬКО-ПАСІЧНИК, Роксолана. Жанрові пріоритети музичної публіцистики Василя Барвінського. In *Студії мистецтвознавчі*. К.: ІМФЕ НАН України, 2009. № 4 (28). С. 23.

29 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Бела Барток у Львові. In *Українська музика*. 1937. № 5–6. С. 71–76.

One of his best journalistic works was the article *В обороні доброго імені нашої музичної традиції* (*In defense of the good name of our musical tradition*), published in the Lviv newspaper *Novyi Chas* on March 21, 1934. He made an accusation against the formalist composer Antin Rudnytskyi, who wrote an article in the Polish newspaper *Sygnaly* that was a dirty defamation on Ukrainian classical music, in particular on the work of Mykola Lysenko, Mykola Leontovych, Kyrylo Stetsenko, as well as Ukrainian composers in Galicia.

For many years after completing his studies in Prague, Vasyl Barvinskyi maintained close ties with artistic circles. In 1929–30, he again visited Prague on a creative leave, and expressed his impressions of the development of musical life in the articles *Музичне життя у Празі чеській* (*Musical Life in Czech Prague*)<sup>30</sup> (later the article was republished in 2012)<sup>31</sup> and *Прага та її музичне життя* (*Prague and its musical life (Dilo)*)<sup>32</sup>, which were published in 1930.

Vasyl Barvinskyi gave a detailed overview of the musical life of Prague at that time, describing opera, ballet, and operetta performances, productions of operas by classical composers and modern authors, both Czech and foreign. Here we also find a detailed overview of symphony concerts in the Czech Philharmonic, an analysis of concert programs with the author noting that these programs often feature works by Czech composers – Josef Suk, Vítězslav Novák, Josef Foerster, Otakar Ostrčil, Jaroslav Křička, Karel Boleslav Jirák, Emil Axman, etc. Vasyl Barvinskyi focused considerable attention on the description of achievements in the field of chamber music, namely on concerts in the *Czech Society for Chamber Music*, holding solo concerts of various performers, mentioned powerful sheet music publishing houses (*Hudební matice Umělecké besedy, F. Urbánek* and *M. Urbánek*), and also highlighted the activities of the *Music Department at the Mykhailo Drahomanov Ukrainian Pedagogical Institute* and submitted a list of the names of young Ukrainian musicians who studied at the Prague Conservatory.

Another interesting work of Vasyl Barvinskyi was the *Коментований список творів* (*Annotated List of Works*)<sup>33</sup>, which the composer dictated to the future author of a monograph on his work, the young musicologist Stefaniia Pavlyshyn in the late 1950s, after returning from exile. It is difficult to imagine the state of the composer, who was aware that almost all his works were destroyed, and to compare it with the calm narrative nature of the work, the description of all his works interspersed with vivid memories, the disclosure of his interests, successes, facts, funny incidents and collaborations with iconic personalities.

Vasyl Barvinskyi was the first Western Ukrainian composer whose music went beyond the borders of this region. His works were published by publishing houses in Austria, Japan, the USA and Poland.

30 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Музичне життя у Празі чеській. Ін *Музичний вісник товариства ім. М. Лисенка*. 1930. Квітень. С. 586; *Боян*. 1930. Ч. 4–5. Квітень–Травень. С. 58–61.

31 МОЛЧКО, Уляна. Публіцистичний огляд Василя Барвінського «Музичне життя у Празі чеській». Ін *Василь Барвінський і сучасна українська музична культура* / Упор.: В. Грабовський, Л. Філоненко, О. Німілович. Дрогобич: Посвіт, 2012. С. 124–136.

32 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Прага та її музичне життя. Ін *Діло*. 1930. Ч. 78. 9 квітня. С. 2.

33 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Коментований список творів. Ін *З музично-письменницької спадщини*. Дослідження, публіцистика, листи / Упор. В. Грабовський. Дрогобич: Коло, 2004. С. 136–174.

## Renaissance of the composer's work

A real renaissance of the creative figure of the Galician artist is taking place these days. Currently, a monograph on Vasyl Barvinskyi of which S. Pavlyshyn is the author, has already been published in Ukraine, about ten scientific collections published in Ternopil and Drohobych are devoted to separate aspects of his life and work, as well as articles by Volodymyr Grabovskyi, Oleh Smoliak, Nataliia Kashkadamova, Liubov Kyianovska, Roman Savytskyi Jr., Oleksandr Kozarenko, Bohdan Tikhoniuk, Liudomyr Filonenko, Oleksandra Nimylovykh, Liudmyla Sadova, Nataliia Huralnyk, and others.

Confirmation of the revival of the composer's legacy and its research is the holding of a number of scientific and practical conferences dedicated to the life and work of Vasyl Barvinskyi. Streets and art institutions in Lviv, Ternopil, Drohobych, Ivano-Frankivsk, and museums in Lviv and Drohobych are named after him. It was in this ancient city Drohobych where the *Vasyl Barvinskyi Scientific and Cultural Society* was established.

Pianist competitions held in Drohobych, Ternopil, and Lviv became traditional. His works were found, preserved and published (in Ternopil, Drohobych, and Lviv), most of which were considered lost and today are experiencing their second birth, because "manuscripts do not burn". Among them were the composer's *Три прелюдії (Three Preludes)*, which were written precisely during his studies with professor Vítězslav Novák in Prague.

## A cycle of piano preludes by Vasyl Barvinskyi, created under the tutelage of Vítězslav Novák

Vasyl Barvinskyi's cycle is built on a combination of eight contrasting pieces of music. The preludes emerged as tasks in Vítězslav Novák's composition class. At first, the composer did not intend to perform and publish them. In a letter to his mother dated February 13, 1910, he writes with doubts "*whether to perform them at a concert in Prague or not, because he is not sure of their perfection and independence*".<sup>34</sup> In the *Annotated List of Works (Komentovanyi spysok tvoriv)*, the composer mentioned that "*while writing the preludes, Novák exposed me more than once to their musical nature or content ('write now a pastoral prelude, now a choral, technical, or heroic, etc.')* [...] *Since I came to Novák for lectures twice a week, then I usually brought a ready-made prelude, or a significant part of it. I wrote 8 preludes (I later chose 5 of them, changing the order and subjecting them to some musical editing)*".<sup>35</sup>

Five of them were printed in 1918 in Leipzig and they immediately brought popularity and recognition to their author. The composer himself, who was an excellent concert pianist, and famous performers such as Liubka Kolessa, Roman Savytskyi, Volodymyra Bozheiko, Taras Shukhevych, Dariia Gordynska-Karanovych, etc., included them in the repertoire and performed them in concert programs. In 1988, these preludes were

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34 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Листи до матері від 13.02.1910 р. *Рукописний відділ ЛНБ ім. В. Стефаніка*, Барв. 90 п. 14.

35 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Коментований список творів. In *З музично-письменницької спадщини. Дослідження, публіцистика, листи / Упор. В. Грабовський. Дрогобич: Коло, 2004. С. 139.*

published in a collection of piano works by Vasyl Barvinskyi, edited by Stefaniia Pavlyshyn in Kyiv.<sup>36</sup> The other three preludes remained in manuscript until 2007 and were published by the Drohobych publishing house *Kolo*.<sup>37</sup> In 2019, a cycle of preludes with eight compositions was published separately in Drohobych.<sup>38</sup> We believe that it is appropriate to mention the article *Три прелюдії Василя Барвінського* (*Three Preludes by Vasyl Barvinskyi*) by Vasyl Vytvytskyi that was published in a collection of scientific works, articles and reviews by Vasyl Vytvytskyi in 2003.<sup>39</sup> The author of the publication quite justifiably notes that “*these preludes have their own values, and not only pianistic, but also purely musical.*”<sup>40</sup> Having made a professional musical and aesthetic analysis of the mentioned compositions, determining their architecture, Vasyl Vytvytskyi wrote that the preludes were created during the “*heyday of musical neo-romanticism with its interpretation of music primarily as a means of conveying feelings*”.<sup>41</sup>

In *Prelude № 1 in F major Moderato assai*, at first glance, calm intonations prevail (against the background of the barcarole accompaniment in the left hand, a pastoral melody sounds in the chordal arrangement), but dynamic outbursts enhance the internal tension of this miniature. Using a rather difficult metro-rhythmic scheme for the performer (the melody sounds in duos, and the accompaniment in triplets), Vasyl Barvinskyi achieves bright sonoristic effects.

*Prelude № 2 in A flat major Allegro* is a contrast to the previous one. It is technically quite complex, a virtuoso play of a sketch character. It is permeated with non-showy expression and excitement, but if you carefully listen and analyze, then its figurative and emotional content is distinguished by sophistication, charm and lightness, and the original harmonic juxtapositions give reason to assert the impressionistic nature of the work.

*Prelude № 3 in E minor Andante sostenuto* to four in the cycle (Nos. 2, 3, 4, 6) marked by the influence of impressionism. It seems to reflect the composer’s search, where echoes of folk songs, impressionistic sophistication, and contemplativeness of the musical image are used side by side.

The chanting, transparent, diatonic melody of the piece, intonationally close to a folk song, is presented by the composer each time in a different, unusual textural design: carrying out a melodic line with octaves in the upper register, harmonizing with sextachords, septachords, deep bass – all this lives, “breathes” with boundless space.

The “pastoral” *Prelude № 4 in F sharp major Allegretto pastorale* also is shrouded by the spirit of impressionistic contemplation. The composer remembered how highly Vítězslav

36 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. *Твори для фортепіано* [Ноти] / Упор. С. Павлишин. Київ: Музична Україна, 1988. 160 с.

37 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. *Три прелюдії для фортепіано* / Упор.: Л. Філоненко, В. Сенкевич. Дрогобич: Посвіт, 2007. 36 с.

38 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. *Вісім прелюдій. Для фортепіано: Навчальний посібник* / Упор.: Л. Філоненко, О. Німилевич. Дрогобич: Посвіт, 2019. 64 с.

39 ВИТВИЦЬКИЙ, Василь. *Три прелюдії Василя Барвінського. Василь Витвицький. Музикознавчі праці. Публіцистика* / Упор. Л. Лехник. Львів, 2003. С. 237–238.

40 Ibid., s. 237.

41 Ibid., s. 237.

Novák appreciated this work: “*Even today, I feel a kind of joyful excitement when I remember how my teacher, after reviewing and playing the «pastoral» prelude I brought (which I wrote in 4 hours) said, that this was a good bite.*”<sup>42</sup>

This merry moody prelude is built on the basis of melodic line patterns (*leggiero*) that resembles *vesnianky* (Ukrainian spring songs) and a rhythmically clearly organized background (*sempre porta mente*), which carries with it fondness for the colors of the intervals of a major third, a pure fourth, and a major second. In the last section, the melodic motif, dividing into registers, is transferred from one voice to another as if two pipes echoed. This episode, adding a prelude of national flavor, gradually calms down and moves to a solemn chord progression.

*Prelude № 5 in G minor Moderato-Allegro* is the only one in the cycle with a pronounced Ukrainian basis, because it can be called a stylized *kolomyika*-dance, which is emphasized by non-stop motor movement with repetition of specific formulas of this Hutsul fiery dance.<sup>43</sup> The melodic line seems to circle in the volume of the trichord with a return to the original tonic support. In the introduction and ending, the main *kolomyika* turn is emphasized by accented chords, as if by a dance dulling. The main thematic material undergoes timbral changes, passing through different registers. At the same time, the play has inherent features of romantic *impromptu*-virtuosic, brilliant character. Thus, the composer, using the features of the *Kolomyika*, strives to bring the Hutsul flavor to the world by means of professional music.

*Prelude № 6 in C sharp major Vivace scherzando* is characterized by grace and virtuosity. The character is cheerful, humorous. Vasyl Barvinskyi tastefully uses frequent tonality changes, tonal deviations and modulations, passing and altered sounds – a kind of color game takes place. The element of an exquisite *scherzo* dominates until the end of the work and ends with a solemn and optimistic finale.

*Prelude № 7 in B flat minor Andante religioso* impresses with its unusual beauty and similarity to a beautiful, strict chorale. The melodic material of this piece is diverse; it also includes separate Ukrainian intonations, namely the characteristic gradual movement from the upper to the lower octave sound with the first move to a third. The composer determines the initial character of the performance – *Andante religioso*, that is, slowly and prayerfully, with a spiritual sense.

But already the second performance of the chorale theme sounds fuller, more solemn (*Maestoso*). Gradually, the chord-harmonic texture is complicated by additional sounds, which leads the development to a rich climax, where four-tone chords sound in the parts of both hands. The prelude ends with the magical sound of quiet, multi-registered chimes frozen in space (*quasi campana*), which gives it an impressionistic color. The polarity of the registers, the composition of the chords, and the lowest level of their volume contribute to the sense of ringing of the Debussy-Ravel plan.

42 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Коментований список творів. Ін *З музично-письменницької спадщини. Дослідження, публіцистика, листи* / Упор. В. Грабовський. Дрогобич: Коло, 2004. С. 139.

43 ПАВЛИШИН, Стефанія. *Василь Барвінський*. Київ, 1990. С. 19.

The last *Prelude № 8 in C minor Allegro patetico* of a romantic composition, according to the composer's definition "heroic",<sup>44</sup> continues the virtuosic direction of the fifth. The play is based on continuous figurative movement, which, starting with Chopin, is qualified by the term etudes. Dr. Stefaniia Pavlyshyn suggested that this prelude "is modeled after Chopin's Revolutionary Etude."<sup>45</sup> Virtuoso performance of complex technical layers at a fast pace, sensitive clean pedaling, transparent management of melodic turns, clear metrorhythmic canvas of the work require a special concentration of sound attack, stroke and rhythmic unity from the performer to achieve the artistic image of the prelude.

The cycle of preludes by Vasyl Barvinskyi turned out to be so original and artistically valuable that contemporary concert pianists boldly performed it alongside the classical piano repertoire, and it was not by chance that the pianist Liubka Kolessa chose the Preludes to perform on a London television broadcast in 1937.<sup>46</sup>

## Conclusions

Vasyl Barvinskyi considered that the musical culture of a nation consists not only of its folk song, no matter how artistic and rich it may be, but also of authorized literature, which, although it should organically grow out of the folk, should develop larger, artistic forms and means and shift the focus from vocal to instrumental and operatic music. The creative work of Vasyl Barvinskyi was the turning point that changed the face of Ukrainian musical culture – from a specifically vocal to a balanced vocal-instrumental one, an example of which is the analyzed *Вісім прелюдій для фортепіано (Eight Preludes for the piano)* by Vasyl Barvinskyi are an example.

Vítězslav Novák directed the talent of the young composer to the path of realistic music based on the use of the melodic basis of the Ukrainian folk song. Cross currents of different musical cultures left their traces in Vasyl Barvinskyi's creative work, but they did not only reject the national element in his works, but, on the contrary, structurally and stylistically consolidated it.

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44 БАРВІНСЬКИЙ, Василь. Коментований список творів. In *З музично-письменницької спадщини. Дослідження, публіцистика, листи* / Упор. В. Грабовський. Дрогобич: Коло, 2004. С. 139.

45 ПАВЛИШИН, Стефанія. *Василь Барвінський*. Київ, 1990. С. 19.

46 КАШКАДАМОВА, Наталія. Українська фортепіанна музика в репертуарі піаністів Галичини (60-і роки XIX ст. – 1939 р.). In *Записки НТШ*. Том ССXXXII: Праці Музикознавчої комісії. Львів, 1996. С. 13.

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