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Article

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Kazakh Folk Music in Saxophone Works by Composers of Kazakhstan

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Keywords: saxophone, Kazakh folk music, composers of Kazakhstan, national repertoire, saxophone performance, composition, national color.

Abstract. This article is about studying the saxophone works of Kazakh composers Arthur Orenburgsky, Alibi Abdinurov and Yulia Lebedeva, based on Kazakh folk music. These compositions have become an important part of the performing and pedagogical practice of saxophonists in Kazakhstan, and they are regularly performed at major concert venues, festivals and competitions. The purpose of the work is to study the process of creating compositions, their role in the formation of the national repertoire and the development of performing practice, as well as to identify the characteristic features in style and performance technique.

The authors use various methods in their research: complex approach, including analytical and historical that includes collection and exploration of archival material, as well as anthropological method like interviews with Kazakh composers and teachers of saxophone class of the Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory.

The study revealed the main musical characteristics of saxophone compositions corresponding to Kazakh traditional music: metrical freedom, improvisation, uniqueness of rhythm, shaping and timbre. The studied works represent the authors' reinterpretation of traditional primary sources, through imitation of rhythmic elements of dombra playing and sound production characteristic of folk wind instruments. These elements define the national color in music and can be considered as "ethnic identity".

From a practical point of view, this work will be useful for musicians, teachers and researchers interested in the synthesis of folk and contemporary music, unique stylistic features and new possibilities of using the saxophone in Kazakh musical culture.

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Contribution of the authors

Azamat Imanbayev – collection of archival information and published sources, conversation with composers and teachers of the saxophone class of the Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory, preparation of the text, compiling the list of sources.

Galiya Begembetova – correcting the outline of the article, systematizing the material, editing the text, writing an abstract.

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Мақала

Дәйексөз үшін: Иманбаев, Азамат, және Галия Бегембетова. «Қазақ халық музыкасы Қазақстан композиторларының саксофондық шығармаларында». *Saryn*, т. 12, № 3, 2024, 74–94 б. DOI: 10.59850/SARYN.3.12.2024.218. (Ағылшынша)

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Қазақ халық музыкасы Қазақстан композиторларының саксофондық шығармаларында

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Тірек сөздер: саксофон, қазақ халық музыкасы, Қазақстан композиторлары, ұлттық репертуар, саксофондағы орындаушылық, шығарма, ұлттық бояу.

Аңдатпа. Бұл мақала қазақ композиторлары Артур Оренбургский, Әліби Әбдінұров және Юлия Лебедеваның қазақ халық музыкасына негізделген саксофондық шығармаларын зерттеуге арналған. Бұл шығармалар Қазақстандағы саксофоншылардың орындаушылық және оқытушылық тәжірибесінің маңызды бөлігіне айналды, олар үлкен концерттік алаңдарда, фестивальдерде және байқауларда жиі орындалады. Жұмыстың мақсаты – шығармалардың жазылу үдерісі мен олардың ұлттық репертуарды қалыптастырудағы және орындаушылық тәжірибені дамытудағы рөлін зерттеу, сонымен қатар орындау стилі мен техникасының өзіне тән ерекшеліктерін анықтау.

Авторлар зерттеуде әртүрлі әдістерді қолданады: кешенді тәсіл, оның ішінде аналитикалық, тарихи – мұрағаттық материалды жинау және зерттеу; антропологиялық – Қазақстан композиторларымен және Құрманғазы атындағы Қазақ ұлттық консерваториясының саксофон сыныбының оқытушыларымен сұхбат жүргізу.

Зерттеу барысында қазақтың дәстүрлі музыкасына сәйкес келетін саксофондық шығармалардың негізгі музыкалық ерекшеліктері анықталды: метрикалық еркіндік, импровизация және ырғақ, пішін қалыптасуы мен тембр бірегейлігі. Зерттелген шығармаларда домбыраның ырғақтық элементтеріне және халық үрмелі аспаптарына тән дыбыс шығаруға еліктеу арқылы дәстүрлі түпдеректерді қайта қарастыру белгіленеді. Бұл элементтер музыкадағы ұлттық нақышты анықтайды және оларды «этникалық бірегейліктің» белгілері ретінде қарастыруға болады.

Тәжірибелік тұрғыдан алғанда қазақ музыка мәдениетінде саксофонды қолданудың өзіндік стильдік ерекшеліктері мен жаңа мүмкіндіктерін ашатын бұл жұмыс халық музыкасы мен қазіргі заманғы музыка синтезіне қызығушылық танытатын музыканттарға, ұстаздар мен зерттеушілерге пайдалы болмақ.

Алғыс. Авторлар Құрманғазы атындағы Қазақ ұлттық консерваториясының мұрағатына және Алматы қаласының мемлекеттік мұрағатына ұсынылған материалдары үшін, Құрманғазы атындағы Қазақ ұлттық консерваториясының саксофон сыныбының профессоры И. Шубинге, композиторлар А. Оренбургский мен Ю. Лебедеваға кеңестері үшін, сондай-ақ анонимді рецензенттерге пікірлері мен ұсыныстары үшін алғыс білдіреді.

Авторлардың қосқан үлесі

А. К. Иманбаев – мұрағаттық мәліметтер мен жарияланған дереккөздерді жинау, Құрманғазы атындағы Қазақ ұлттық консерваториясы саксофон сыныбының оқытушыларымен және композиторлармен сұхбаттасу, мәтін жазу, дереккөздер тізімін ресімдеу.

Г. З. Бегембетова – мақала жоспарын түзету, материалды жүйелеу, мәтінді редакциялау, аңдатпа жазу.

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Статья

Казахская народная музыка в саксофонных произведениях композиторов Казахстана

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Авторы прочитали и одобрили окончательный вариант рукописи и заявляют об отсутствии конфликта интересов.

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Ключевые слова: саксофон, казахская народная музыка, композиторы Казахстана, национальный репертуар, исполнительство на саксофоне, произведение, национальный колорит.

Аннотация. Настоящая статья посвящена изучению саксофонных произведений казахстанских композиторов Артура Оренбургского, Алиби Абдинурова и Юлии Лебедевой, основанных на казахской народной музыке. Данные композиции стали важной частью исполнительской и педагогической практики саксофонистов Казахстана, их регулярно исполняют на крупных концертных площадках, фестивалях и конкурсах. Цель работы – изучить процесс создания сочинений, их роль в формировании национального репертуара и развитии исполнительской практики, а также выявить характерные черты стиля и техники исполнения.

Авторы применяют различные методы в исследовании: комплексный подход, включающий аналитический, исторический – сбор и изучение архивного материала; антропологический – беседы с казахстанскими композиторами и преподавателями класса саксофона Казахской национальной консерватории имени Курмангазы.

В ходе исследования были выявлены основные музыкальные характеристики саксофонных сочинений, соответствующие казахской традиционной музыке: метрическая свобода, импровизационность, уникальность ритма, формообразования и тембра. Изученные произведения представляют собой авторское переосмысление традиционных первоисточников посредством имитации ритмических элементов домбровой игры и характерного для народных духовых инструментов звукоизвлечения. Эти элементы определяют национальный колорит в музыке и могут рассматриваться как признаки «этнической идентичности».

С практической точки зрения данная работа, раскрывающая уникальные стилистические особенности и новые возможности использования саксофона в казахской музыкальной культуре, будет полезна музыкантам, преподавателям и исследователям, интересующимся синтезом народной и современной музыки.

Благодарности. Авторы выражают благодарность архиву Казахской национальной консерватории имени Курмангазы и Государственному архиву города Алматы за предоставленные материалы, профессору класса саксофона Казахской национальной консерватории имени Курмангазы И. Шубину, композиторам А. Оренбургскому и Ю. Лебедевой за консультирование, а также анонимным рецензентам за замечания и рекомендации.

Вклад авторов

А. К. Иманбаев – сбор архивных сведений и опубликованных источников, беседа с преподавателями класса саксофона Казахской национальной консерватории имени Курмангазы и композиторами, написание текста статьи, оформление списка источников.

Г. З. Бегембетова – работа над планом статьи, систематизация материала, редакция текста, написание аннотации.

Introduction

Kazakhstan like other many countries of Central Asia has faced a new type of performing practice atypical for traditional musical culture since the 1930s of previous century. This period is associated with active introduction of new forms and genres of musical art for Kazakh culture after the change of social system. The foundation of Almaty State Conservatory was a striking phenomenon that took place in 1944. Today it is known as Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory. From this moment the mastering European orchestral instruments, related forms of music-making and performance began. And saxophone became one of them.

It is important to note that the main milestone in the development of saxophone performance of the 20th century on the post-Soviet territory was the active performing and teaching activity of *Margarita Shaposhnikova* (People's Artist of USSR, Professor of Gnessin Russian Academy of Music (1973-2024), who worked from the first days of the saxophone class to present. This period of the musical culture development clearly demonstrated all the innovative ideas in the sphere of saxophone performance able to be defined in bold and unexpected syntheses of various musical genres.

A noticeable increase in musical and creative activity took place as well, bearing completely new works for saxophone and combining different musical genres and performing techniques. They were: *Concerto for Saxophone and Symphony Orchestra Es-dur Op. 109* by Aleksandr Glazunov (1934), *Concerto Capriccio for Saxophone and Wind Orchestra* by Grigory Kalinkovich (1970), *Sonata for Saxophone and Piano* by Edison Denisov (1970), *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Orchestra* by Mikhail Gotlib (1974), *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra* by Alexander Flyarkovsky (1984) and many others. In these works, the saxophone stands out as a solo instrument in a joint performance with an orchestra or a piano.

The repertoire of the saxophone becomes more varied and technically complicated. Timbre expressiveness of the instrument and the variety of performance possibilities for conveying artistic ideas should be noted as well. The improvement of performing skills and expansion of repertoires for saxophone were the result of accumulated experience, development of new methods of teaching how to play saxophone and improvement of all the instrumental techniques. The point is that the saxophone with its wide range of performance possibilities, is able to express composers' most surprising artistic ideas. The instrument's unusual sound range has found its use both in classical academic music. This is especially true of contemporary works using new playing techniques, as well as jazz, as the object of performing experiments and creative discoveries of composers, who helped to make the instrument popular and increased the interest in it.

The saxophone appeared in the performing and composing practice of Kazakhstan rather recently. Training of professional staff and saxophone performance specialists began in 1984 at Kurmangazy State Conservatory in Almaty. A special saxophone class had been opened at that time. The problems of repertoire and development of new methods stood out acutely. Saxophonists desperately needed original works from Kazakh composers as well as various methodological recommendations of experienced teachers to help the performing process in the country to grow. Gifted young performers and teachers including Yakov Tkachenko, Gersh Geller, Igor Shubin and Batyrkhan

Shukenov, gave the necessary impetus to the creative searches of the composers who created the first works for playing the saxophone in Kazakhstan.

Another important point, is that not only composers of different generations worked on creating music for saxophone. Performing musicians took an active part, supporting the educational process, solving pedagogical problems and developing professional trainings. They've created an actual modern performing repertoire with numerous arrangements of Kazakh folk music. The first experiments of the national composers in the field of saxophone music were a bold fusion of different styles and trends. It turned out to be a number of unique sound combinations, timbres and performance techniques that have great success among performers and listeners.

The compositions for saxophone occupy a very small place among the total number of works by Kazakhstan composers. That's why it is rather difficult to discuss the repertoire for saxophone that exists since the beginning of the second half of the 20th century. The creation of the first original composition for this musical instrument with the use of Kazakh folk songs was preceded by the history of mastering saxophone at the Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory (1984) as well as the *Concerto for Saxophone and Symphony Orchestra* by Kuddus Kuzhamyarov (1985) together with the founder of the saxophone class and concerto's first performer Yakov Tkachenko. The opening night took place in 1985 at the Zhambyl Kazakh State Academic Philharmonic.

Currently, the saxophonists' repertoire includes about seventy works of various genres and a number of original works among them. It also includes different arrangements as well as solos accompanied by the piano or an orchestra including compositions for various instrumental ensembles (most of works are in the collection *Pieces by Kazakh Composers Arranged for Saxophone and Piano* by Pavel Serebryannikov). The following ones should be highlighted among the existing works written by Kazakhstan composers: *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra* by Kuddus Kuzhamyarov (1985), *Elegy for Alto Saxophone and Symphony Orchestra* by Tles Kazhgaliyev (1989), *Romance* by Mault Rakhimbayev (1989), *Pamyati stranica (Memory Page)* by Aleksandr Romanov (2000), *I povtoritsya vse... (And Everything Will Be Repeated...)* for Saxophone, Soprano, Viola and Piano by Dmitry Ostankovich (2000), *Dialogues for Saxophone and Piano* by Kuat Shildebayev and Batyrkhan Shukenov (2002), *Bakhytzhan* for Saxophone and Piano by Balnur Kydyrbek (2008), *25* for Alto Saxophone and Piano by Alibi Abdinurov (2003), *Capriccio for Alto Saxophone and Piano* by Marat Sutyushev (2007), *Adagio for Soprano Saxophone and Piano* (2017), *Sonata for Alto Saxophone and Piano* (2012), works for saxophone ensemble: *Saxophonia No. 1* for saxophone sextet (2012), *Polyphonic Improvisation* for four instruments (2012) by Artur Orenburgsky and others.

The majority of the presented works in the repertoire of saxophonists are based Kazakh folk music (see [table 1](#)), lyrical songs in particular. They are organically combined with the saxophone due to its melody and length. There are also a number of pieces where composer focuses on the timbre consonance of the saxophone sounding organically with ethnic instruments such as sybyzgy, syrnai and kernei. One of the brightest examples among them is *Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Orchestra* by Kuddus Kuzhamyarov (1985) where the saxophone possesses its own charming timbre. It sounds

similar to the Uyghur folk instrument *surnai*¹. In another composition called *sybyzgy*², created by Alibi Abdinurov, the saxophone imitates bourdon performance together with the piano with fully opened lid and pressed pedal to bear an overtone sound sequence.

Table 1. List of saxophone works by Kazakhstan composers based on samples of folk music

No.	Name	Composer	Instrumental composition	Genre	Applied material
1	<i>Otrazhenie (Reflection)</i>	Artur Orenburgsky	Alto Saxophone and Piano	Piece	"Aittym salem, kalam kas"
2	<i>Fantasy for a quintet of saxophonists</i>	Artur Orenburgsky	Saxophones: Soprano, 2 Alto, Tenor, Baritone	Piece	Abai's song "Kozimnin karasy"
3	<i>Kusni Korlan</i>	Artur Orenburgsky	Alto Saxophone and Piano	Piece	Variations for a Kazakh folk song "Kusni Korlan"
4	<i>Variation Piece</i>	Artur Orenburgsky	Tenor Saxophone and Piano	Piece	Kazakh folk song "Ak Bayan"
5	<i>Concert piece</i>	Artur Orenburgsky	Alto Saxophone and Piano	Piece	Abai's song "Zhelsiz tunde zharyk ai"
6	<i>From KZ Concert for Saxophone and Wind Orchestra</i>	Yulia Lebedeva	Soprano Saxophone for the first movement, Alto Saxophone for the second movement, Baritone Saxophone for the third movement	Three-movement Concerto	Concert for the theme "Bir bala" and "Kara zhorga"
7	25	Alibi Abdinurov	Alto Saxophone and Piano	Piece	Kazakh folk song "25"
8	<i>Moldabaidyn ani (Song of Moldabai)</i>	Alibi Abdinurov	Saxophones: Soprano, 2 Alto, Tenor, Baritone	Piece	Kazakh folk song "Moldabaidyn ani"
9	<i>Shashu</i>	Alibi Abdinurov	Saxophones: Soprano, 2 Alto, Tenor, Baritone	Piece	Kazakh folk kui "Shashu"
10	<i>Syldyrmak</i>	Alibi Abdinurov	Saxophones: Alto, Tenor and Piano	Piece	Kazakh kui "Syldyrmak"
11	<i>Zholga shuktyym bir zhyym-zyrt tunde zhalgyz</i>	Alibi Abdinurov	Alto Saxophone and Piano	Piece	Abai's song "Zholga shuktyym bir zhyym-zyrt tunde zhalgyz" (<i>I Go Out on the Night Road Alone</i>)
12	<i>Nurgisa Tlendiyevev shygarmasyna fantazia (Fantasy on Tlendiyevev's Works)</i>	Alibi Abdinurov	Alto Saxophone and Piano	Piece	Tlendiyevev's musical themes
13	<i>Kara Kesek</i>	Yelena Nikonova	Alto Saxophone and Piano	Piece	Madi's theme "Kara Kesek"
14	<i>Fantasia for Saxophone and Piano "Kyzyl Kaiyn" (Red birch)</i>	Artem Pestov	Alto Saxophone and Piano	Piece	Fantasy for Kurmangazy's kui "Kyzyl Kaiyn"

Today it can be stated that performance practice of the saxophonists has its own theoretical and methodological base. The main problems of growth and quality requirements in contemporary saxophone

- 1 The *surnai / zurna* is a woodwind musical instrument with a double reed, common in the Near and Middle East, India, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Balkans.
- 2 *Sybyzgy* is a Kazakh wind instrument of the whistle type, traditionally made of reed or wood, later and less frequently of silver.

performance as well as the existing technical methods of playing the instrument were investigated in the proceedings listed below: Vladimir Ivanov's thesis "Osnovnie problemi teorii i praktiki igri na saksofone v voennom orkestre" (*Basic Problems of Theory and Practice of Saxophone Playing in Military Orchestra*) (1988), Vladimir Ivanov's doctoral thesis "Sovremennoe iskusstvo igri na saksofone: problemi istorii, teorii i praktiki ispolnitelstva" (*Modern Art of Saxophone Playing: Problems of History, Theory and Practice of Performing*) (1997), Anne Nykänen's doctoral thesis *Methods for Specification of Sound Quality Applied to Saxophone Sound* (2004), Antonina Ponkina's "Saksofon v muzikalnoi kulture XX veka (na materiale sonatnogo tvorchestva zarubejnih i ukrainskih kompozitorov)" (*Saxophone in the Musical Culture of the 20th century (on the Material of Sonata Works of Foreign and Ukrainian Composers)*) (2009), Sergey Kirillov's "Tehnika igri na saksofone i problemi interpretacii originalnih proizvedenii" (*Technique of Saxophone Playing and Problems of Interpretation of Original Works*) (2010), Mariya Begovatova's "Sovremennoe ispolnitelstvo na saksofone v aspekte rasshireniya zvukovih vozmojnostei instrumenta" (*Contemporary Saxophone Performance in the Aspect of Expanding the Sound Possibilities of the Instrument*) (2012), and Sukh-Ochir Bayarsaikhan's dissertation "Traktovka saksofona v proizvedeniyah dlya simfonicheskogo i duhovogo orkestrrov" (*Saxophone Interpretation for Symphony and Wind Orchestras Compositions*) (2018).

The following proceedings and articles written by foreign saxophone teachers also helped students in comprehending the diverse phenomena and processes that occur in the musical and performing creativity of saxophonists: *High Notes for Saxophone* by Santy Runyon (1974), *Saxophone High Tones* by Eugene Rousseau (1978), *Preliminary Exercises and Etudes in Contemporary Techniques for Saxophone* by Ronald Caravan (1980), *Les sons multiples aux saxophones* by Daniel Kientzy (1982), *Extended Techniques for Saxophone: an Approach through Musical Examples* by Patrick Murphy (2013), *The Poetics of a Multiphonic Landscape* by Torben Snekkestad (2016).

There are numerous works of Kazakh musicologists, who were studying the historical development and theoretical aspects of Kazakh folk music in its various formats. Articles, monographs and dissertations describing particular methodological significance and value have been written by different theoreticians, and were dedicated to the history of the Kazakhstan's composer school, to the engagement problems of tradition and innovation, to the system of genres and style trends. These musicologists are: Nurgiyana Ketegenova, Sara Kuzembai, Umizhan Jumakova, Tamara Dzhumaliyeva, Valeriya Nedlina, Aizada Nussupova, etc. However, the saxophone compositions based on Kazakh folk music have not yet received a comprehensive and holistic coverage in academic studies. It can be said, that from the position of defining performance features, musical content, development of the Kazakh performing repertoire, the presented study is relevant and fresh.

Results and Discussion

After proclaiming the independence in Kazakhstan, it became necessary to develop ethnic musical culture as well as to form a pronounced ethnic style in the art of composition. Young and promising composers like Alibi Abdinurov and Artur Orenburgsky eagerly

began to compose various musical forms for saxophone, including concertos, sonatas, fantasies, pieces, ensembles of different number of musicians.

The compositions of the talented composer Artur Orenburgsky especially stand out as solo works for saxophone and for ensembles. They can be characterized by a depth of musical ideas and an original style of performance. Some of them demonstrate the composer's ability to create complex and multi-layered musical compositions. Among such works are based on the song art of the Kazakh people: *Reflection* on the theme of Abai's song "Aittym salem, kalam kas" (*Hello to You, a Thin-browed Girl*); *Fantasy* for a saxophone quintet on the theme of Abai's song "Kozimnin karasy" (*The Light of My Eyes*) and *Kusni Korlan*, a variation on the theme of the Kazakh folk song of the same name; *Variation Piece* on the theme of the Kazakh folk song "Ak Bayan" and *Concert Piece* on the theme of Abai's song "Zhelsiz tunde zharyk ai" (*A Bright Moon on a Windless Night*).

Artur Orenburgsky possesses a lot of significant achievements besides his composing and teaching. The musician's versatile creativity has not been fully explored by Kazakhstan scholars and musicologists. The scope of his activity and musical heritage that enriches the musical world require a more careful study.

First of all, the style of composer is defined with a refined taste and original musical language. His works contain a complex combination of intellect and emotion, a keen modernity sense and romantic tension. It is ensured by his numerous works in the style of jazz, modern arrangements of folk melodies with jazz harmonization and transcriptions of Baroque music in a contemporary key. A unique feature of his compositional style is a masterful combination of jazz music with the rich heritage of Kazakh culture. He keeps the basic musical ideas in their original form. Most of his works are orientated to a wide audience and are intended for mass perception.

The compositions for saxophone play an important role in works of Artur Orenburgsky. This instrument helps him to expand the aesthetic space of music thanks to its characteristic timbre and expressive possibilities. Saxophone opens up new horizons and inspires the composer to create bright, contemporary works, as well as to experiment with atypical ensembles (mixed ensembles of European and Kazakh musical instruments). Artur Orenburgsky supposes, that creating music is a very hard-labor process that requires deep knowledge and confidence to choose compositional techniques aimed at achieving an artistic idea. He pays serious importance to creativity, addressing different genres and instruments. The works for saxophone occupies a special place in his oeuvre whether for solo instrument, orchestra or ensemble (Imanbayev 10).

In this case, it's necessary to keep its basic melody, sequence of supporting tones, main functions of voices, harmonic and metrorhythmic features, as well as its form and stylistic unity (Medvedeva).

Musical style of Artur Orenburgsky clearly traces ethnic traditions and world canons of the composer's school. One of his works is called "Otrazhenie" (*Reflection*). It was composed on the theme of Abai's song "Aittym salem, kalam kas" for Alto Saxophone and Piano (ex 1). It was created in 1995 while he was a student. First time this work was performed by Igor Shubin, a professor of the saxophone class

at the Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory. Later it became popular among performers and started to be regular performed at various concert events.

This piece is divided into three parts, conveying the emotional depth, subtle longing and soft lyricism of Abai's song. As Boris Yerkovich points, "this Abai's song represents a peculiar step in his creative development and demonstrates similarities with the Russian democratic song and romance" (22).

The first and the final parts of the composition are written without changes to Abai's basic musical material, except the moment the composer transferred it to a different tonality that was more convenient for saxophone. The middle part takes the form of a development based on the song with jazz harmonization. Artur Orenburgsky added a virtuoso cadenza as a new thematic element to imitate the theme of the song.



Ex. 1: Source: Artur Orenburgsky. "Otrazhenie" (*Reflection*) on the theme of Abai's song "Aittym salem, kalam kas", bars 5-16³. 1995.

The song called "Aittym salem, kalam kas" is often found in various composer arrangements and transcriptions due to its popularity among the audience and musicians. During the years famous Kazakh singers like Amre Kashaubayev, Zhusupbek Yelebekov, Temirbulat Argynbayev and many others were the performers of this song. It has entered the performing repertoire not only for folk singers, but also for instrumentalists. "Aittym salem, kalam kas" can be found in various editions, musical and stroke interpretations and in various tonalities (most often presented in *d-moll* and *e-moll*). The singularity of this interpretation lies in the saxophone's imitation of the human voice through fine vibration and warm exhalation inherent in folk singing. It gives velvety sound to the instrument.

Lyrical folk songs are often the material of works created for saxophone in the compositions of Artur Orenburgsky. That's because saxophone is an instrument that speaks the language of the soul. He can be both bright and sad, and always captivates with its melodious sound. Margarita Shaposhnikova, professor of Gnessin Russian Academy of Music and USSR People's Artist, believes regarding the sound of the saxophone that it speaks of love, passion, longing, and creates music that gains the hearts of people forever (Turchinsky).

Assessing the quality of performance, we first of all emphasize a clean intonation. That why saxophonists need to reach a quality bond in interval leaps, to have a clear work of lip muscle apparatus and a dense sound in all registers. A slight increase

in the air jet during the performance can ruin a perfect performance or cause breakdowns that will later affect the sound

3 Artur Orenburgsky. *Reflection* www.arturorenburgskij.musicaneo.com/ru/sheetmusic/sm-163729_otrazhenie.html (audio and music sheet of the piece).

or intonation “boosts”. On the other hand, the excessive caution in playing can cause a certain uncertainty and sound “rattling”. Therefore, the attention should be paid to the correct balance of air blown capacity and the active work of the performing apparatus. To be careful to fine vibrato and sustain of all durations, as the correct work of embouchure plays a key role in the correct tuning of the instrument, affecting the lip position, pressure force and airflow pressure in the mouthpiece of the alto saxophone (Ukshini and Dirckx, “Influence of Lip Position”).

It is important for each performer to be broad-minded and cover the entire musical material, because the development of the theme is realized by intensifying the sound from the nuance of *p* to *f*, and by gradually changing the register of the sound. At the same time, the quality of the performer’s breath should never change, only the quantity of exhaled air. In other words, the quality and traits of his own sound maintained with any dynamics. For example, at *fortissimo* one must not lose the nobility and volume of the playing sound and, meanwhile, not slip into a shouty and forced one; *pianissimo* gives clarity, stability and expressiveness but without outbursts or any other sound.

That kind of performance on saxophone is very important, because the thin reed is placed on the mouthpiece in a way that forms a narrow gap between the tips of the instrument and the mouthpiece. The reed is made of elastic fibers that gradually tapers towards the tip. The player places the lower lip on the cane and both lips form a tight seal around the mouthpiece (Ukshini and Dirckx, “Time-resolved Strain”).

The works for saxophone created by Artur Orenburgsky are also turned to the song “Zhelsiz tunde zharyk ai” (*A Bright Moon on a Windless Night*). *Concert Piece for Saxophone and Piano* (2017) (ex 2), based on the motifs of Abai’s song, is a lyrical and melodic composition that reflects deep feelings and has dreamy lyrics. This composition demonstrates that the author used chords of non-terza structure and melodic turns inherent to Kazakh musical tradition.



Ex. 2: Source: Artur Orenburgsky. *Concert Piece for Saxophone Alto and Piano* on the theme of the song “Zhelsiz tunde zharyk ai”⁴, bars 13-31. 2017.

The structure of the piece consists of three parts where the outermost sections are exactly repeated. The introduction precedes the main theme of the song, where the intonations and rhythmic motifs are easily recognizable. The piece is characterized by a bright melody, the use of chords and melodic phrases.

4 Artur Orenburgsky. *Concert Piece for Saxophone and Piano*, www.arturorenburgskij.musicaneo.com/ru/sheetmusic/sm-303430_koncertnaya_pesa_dlya_alt-saksofona_i_fortepiano.html (audio and music sheet of the piece).

They create a sense of calmness. The main theme of the song becomes a leitmotif that seeps through all the parts of the piece, varying in the accompaniment of auxiliary musical motifs as well.

The arranged version of this song reflects the texture of the piano accompaniment throughout the whole piece. It emotionally supports the soloist without any disturbance. In spite of a slight change in Abai's original musical material for the soloist's part, it only touched the tonality and in the enlargement of notes, the subtle lyricism in the musical landscape of Abai's moonlit night is supplemented with emotional content, reflecting the motility and rhythmic development of the music right up to the cadenza that uses arpeggios built on a chromatic basis. The composer skillfully modifies the melody structure and chordal accompaniment, subtly conveying the emotional state and images of nature. Special attention is paid to various elements of the song, such as interval structure, harmonic combinations and the rhythmic pattern.

The piece is not particularly difficult in terms of performance. It requires the basic knowledge of technique from the musician (attack, introduction, connection and termination of sound). The performing apparatus is essential as well as the movement technique of the performer's fingers and the quality of nuance and phrasing. Last, but not least is the choice of the right cane that can show all the variety of colours and timbres of sound. Saxophone players have an expression: "If you want the instrument to sound good, choose a singing reed". It means that musicians should "sing" the instrument, not just play it. A good reed can convey the necessary volume of sound, allows to keep a quality timbre in all registers (at leaps in the melody and sudden changes of nuances), and stimulates the crystal-clear intonation and playing vibrato.

An important factor is the content and quality of intonation. It is important to master a musical timing. Slow solo sections should be performed wisely. Even the slowest tempo as *adagio* or *largo* requires a definite movement and has its own core speed. The notes of long duration, half and whole, used for creating slow music provoke rhythmic passivity. The loss of counting during performance leads to the internal music amorphousness. In this case, we should pay special attention to the sound to achieve its melodiousness and hover, and also fill the sound palette with colourful timbre. The sound should be felt, touched, as something material, alive, hovering, resonating, piercing. It must not be extinguished or directed during the rehearsal and concert period.

Deep immersion into the world of artistic images of the composition and its high-quality performance will certainly give invaluable creative experience. It can help to spread the performing thinking and to sharpen the skills of the saxophonist. In addition, it is also important to gain experience of stage performance.

Artur Orenburgsky's creative portfolio also includes works for ensembles and orchestra. We can highlight some of the them, for example *Fantasy for quintet of saxophones* (2013) (soprano saxophones, two alto saxophones, tenor saxophone and baritone saxophone) that was encouraged by Abai's song "Kozimnin karasy" (*The Light of My Eyes*). This song appears in a completely new guise for the audience due to the substitution of composer's habitual jazz chord filling with contemporary non-chord consonances.

This song is one of the most famous one in Abai's works. It remarkably reflects the soul of the Kazakh peoples, its beauty and musical skills. The song is performed

not only locally but all around the world in different languages and musical instruments, on different stages and events. It epitomizes the spirit of the Kazakh nation, its wisdom and creative heritage.

Fantasia for saxophone quintet written by Artur Orenburgsky (ex 3), captures a subtle lyricism, calmness and peace. The soloing instrument, in this case the soprano saxophone, has a delicate sound with a rich timbre, that smooths and adds a “velvet” sounding the song. At the same time, other instruments serve as a counterpoint addition and accompaniment. At first performance, this composition may seem a bit incomprehensible, and the song melody itself can be heard only in the soprano saxophone part due to the complex harmonization and non-chord consonances.

Ex. 3: Source: Artur Orenburgsky. *Fantasy*⁵ for saxophone quintet, bars 9-21 (soprano saxophone solo is highlighted in red).

The parts include interval leaps easy to play but there are risks of inaccurate intonation due to the dissonant sound. There is also a medium fast section presented as a polyphonic cadenza structure on marcato sixteenth notes in the quintet parts. At fast tempo performance, it is necessary to demonstrate all the skills of mastering the instrument as well as virtuosity, finger technique, competent breathing, nuance finesse and purity of intonation. Because of the fast tempo, the question of stability of “bearing” technical material arises acutely. The aphorism of Timofei Dokshizer is quite appropriate here. He always actively stood for the ground rules, saying: “Do not push fast music and do not pull the slow one” (Dokshizer 209).

Abai’s song “Kozimnin karasy” is often performed in repertoire of saxophonists both in solo and ensemble versions. The example of such work can be presented by a composition for wind orchestra with a group of saxophones called Kazakh Souvenir (2007) (see fig. 1) written

5 Artur Orenburgsky. *Fantasy for saxophone quintet*, www.arturorenburgskij.musicaneo.com/sheetmusic/sm-186254_fantaziya_dlya_kvinteta_saksofonov.html (audio and music sheet of the piece).

by Aleksandr Fedyanin, Professor of the Department of Wind and Percussion Instruments of Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory. Saxophonists perform here as soloists.

This energetic and incendiary composition created on the basis of abovementioned Abai's song is characterized by the influence of jazz music. The work is notable for its colour and performing drive. Starting with the lyrical introduction goes the saxophone ensemble solo, continues with the improvisational part and finalises with an orchestral "tutti" resembling West European and American jazz big bands.



Figure 1. QR-link to the video *Kazakh Souvenir* by Aleksandr Fedyanin.

The ensemble improvisation of saxophonists in the middle of the composition is presented in a virtuoso structure and variety of musical details. A quick change of rhythms and textures of the part performed in a swing style is especially striking. It is also worth to mention the orchestral accompaniment, energy and scale of the orchestra's sound reminiscent of the Gordon Goodwin's.

The correct execution of strokes is important as well since they build a figurative sphere of the entire work and each one has its own characteristics and consonance, but while interacting they do not replace each other. This is carried out with switching from one stroke to another in accordance with the changes in the music nature.

The statement of Aleksandr Fedyanin himself about the peculiarities of the performing strokes is intriguing. He says that "the sound gradation of the strokes can be infinitely increased, depending on the personality of the performer. This is especially true of dynamic shades and technical quality of performance. All this creates the opportunity to achieve different sound nuances within one stroke, constituting together a palette of stroke colours. The more diverse and richer the palette, the more skilled is performer and more expressive his performance." (Imanbayev – Fedyanin).

The long-term performing and pedagogical experience of Aleksandr Fedyanin makes it possible to achieve a good performing result for every musician investing his work and talent in studying. These musicians are not random persons in music and have set themselves the goal of productive process achievement.

In addition to Artur Orenburgsky, whose composing for saxophone enriched the repertoire with various concert works, there are some other masters in Kazakhstan. Alibi Abdinurov is an active composer with distinguished works and wide range of musical genres and his own approach. He skilfully uses elements of Kazakh music capturing its unique sound and contemporary trends. He works with various forms and genres of music including symphonic, chamber, opera and film music. Alibi Abdinurov's pieces are full of emotional depth that makes them memorable and inspires emotion among audience. In compositions he turns to historical and cultural themes of Kazakhstan, forming the fund for preservation and transmission of cultural heritage.

One of the frequently performed Alibi Abdinurov's compositions for a quintet of saxophonists is based on the folk song of the same name "Moldabaidyn ani" (*Song of Moldabai*) (see fig. 2).

The ensemble recreates the natural sound and rhythmic similarity with a folk song accompanied by *dombra* with its characteristic rhythmic patterns. "Moldabaidyn ani" allowed the author



Figure 2. QR-link to the video "Moldabaidyn ani" (Song of Moldabai) by Alibi Abdinurov performed by the quintet of saxophonists of the Kurmangazy Kazakh National Conservatory.

to experiment with a combination of Kazakh folk song melody and jazz harmony, introducing the variation part of the song in the blues style with a syncopated and swing rhythm. It should also be noted that the composer's innovative ideas and elements such as imitation of laughter on the saxophone, trampling on a weak fraction during performance, ensemble-performing dialogue, which expresses itself in the decomposition of the musical theme into all parts by the performers.

The concise and dynamic work is based on the virtuosity of saxophone parts, on a fast and staccato attack of performance, colour and contrast of sound. The saxophone part is diverse and technically complex, with fast passages and connections in all performance registers as well as ensemble sequence and coherence. During the performance of this work musician must carefully listen to the original song since it is based on imitation of the figurative nature of Moldabai's comic song and the motor skills of playing the *dombra*.

Ensemble contact of all performers is required in performance, particularly in fast tempo, by methods of both gesture and eye contact. Although movement is not the purpose of music making, it is an important behavioural marker as it is closely linked to the cognitive processes underlying musical experience as a form of communication and interaction (Moura and Serra).

The piece is quite complex in performing terms since it contains characteristic touches of *dombra* performance, quick passages on staccato and syncopated phrases. Ensemble unison is especially important, despite the presence of a solo instrument. The performance of the piece requires, first of all, concentration among the ensembles, since the phrases are distributed over the entire quintet picking up and alternating sound at a fast pace. A slight stop or delay in execution will lead to a slowdown in the pace and loss of a scanty character.

Here it is necessary to learn how to determine the structure of a musical work correctly (motives, phrases, sentences, periods, etc.) as well as to install and perform caesuras; to identify and embody climaxes; to convey the genre-stylistic features of music, etc. Due to the variability and repeat of the sound, phrasing and dynamic shades acquire special importance. Reasonable use of dynamic colours and verified phrasing significantly revives the musical performance, deprives it of monotony. In this regard, it is recommended to think in phrases since the musical movement goes to the end of the phrase and to a larger duration.

Also, one can find Kazakh folk themes in the genres of instrumental concerts. The parts of such works are performed as separate concert numbers. A vivid example of that is the *From KZ Concert for Saxophone and Wind Orchestra* by Yulia Lebedeva, a leading composer-arranger of the State Wind Orchestra. Many of her compositions are distinguished by a free interpretation of genre foundations, the active use of elements

typical of Kazakh folk music. She appeals to national means of expression in particular such as characteristic metro-rhythmic pattern, quarto-quintal vertical structure, timbre-sound properties inherent in Kazakh folk instruments and folk singing style.

From KZ by Yulia Lebedeva is featured by the distinctiveness of interpretations of Kazakh folk music, an unusual approach in choosing a solo instrument (different type of saxophone is used in each part of the concert: soprano, alto, baritone). An elaborate choice of the solo instruments was made on the estimation of individual characteristics of the sound, performing capabilities and timbral characteristics of each type of saxophone. An alto saxophone (es) was chosen for the first part of the concert as the most stable and vivid kind among the saxophone family. The second part is written for a soprano saxophone (b), which has the most lyrical timbre for performing musical fragment, based on the Kazakh folk song "Bir bala". The third part is the Kazakh folk dance "Kara zhorga" (*Black Pacer*) is meant for a saxophone-baritone (es).

The *Concert for Saxophone* by Yulia Lebedeva is one of the most striking examples that reflects the composer's love for the nature of his homeland with its landscapes and mountains, lakes and rivers, scenes of folk life and festivities. The distinctive side of the concert lies in the construction of musical and thematic material, demonstrated in brightness and contrast of musical content, in the free interpretation of ideas and variability causing the dynamic development of the images. The parts of the concert are formed on the ethnic features of musical folklore and song traditions as well as instrumental art. It shows itself in the epic presentation of the material, use of consonances of a non-terza structure, variety of fret plexuses, variable meter, triols and dotted rhythms and rhythmic ostinato (Imanbayev and Nussupova 176).

The *Concert* presents a consistent change of artistic images, from contemplation excitement and pressure to a rapid emotional upsurge. About the performing terms, it is possible to say that the work cannot be underestimated. The performer will be faced with the task of playing "dangerous" compounds built on abrupt octave intervals, achieving smooth sound science, playing light notes with a staccato stroke and correct nuance. At the same time, to show the ability to master the techniques of contrast dynamics in the construction of musical phrases is a key.

Music like a fabric is saturated with a variety of texture and melodic elements. The performer needs to know musical space and technological process of performance. All this depends on the experience and level of performing skills of the saxophonist himself. To master different instruments equally is a particularly difficult task. That kind of approach to perform is rather uncommon not only for Kazakhstan but also beyond its aisles, since saxophonists mainly specialize on one type on a professional level.

The second part of the concert is a spiritual and floating lyrical centre of the entire concert musical construction, that carried out "in one breath". The music is formed as a free interpretation based on the topic of the folk song "Bir bala". Here a soprano saxophone is used (ex 4), and its gentle and melodic timbre complements the depth and colour of the solo musical presentation. The melody is transparent and pure without any sharpness and emotional outbursts. The difficulty of performing lies in the competent nuance and combination of phrases. The quality of intonation is also essential.



Ex. 4: Source: From KZ Concert for Saxophone and Wind Instruments Orchestra by Yulia Lebedeva, the theme of the song "Bir bala" from the 2nd movement in the soprano saxophone part.

All saxophonists and those who know the specifics of performing on a soprano saxophone know that this instrument is one of the most unstable types, and has its own difficulty in pure reproduction of intonation and the ability of connecting sounds. It shows itself in the second octave and above. Working on the text, musicians should pay attention to the places of rational change in breathing, to the stable maintenance of the sound-altitude system by the saxophone player. If intonation correction is necessary in ascending and descending movements, the embouchure should change its position to a lesser extent.

Otherwise, unacceptable defects may appear during performance such as: "burning" of sound, uneven registers, tone breakdowns and sound "bubbles". The latter is one of the most common things when performing on a saxophone. Its characteristic feature is the instability of certain notes, futile entrances and inflations, wide vibration and poor filleting or its absence. A special approach is needed when choosing canes for this part. It should sound at all nuances with the same high quality for the most expressive transmission of an artistic idea.

The third part of the concert is a scanty beginning of the composition, the artistic image of it shows a folk festival and joy. The theme is based on the melody of the folk kui "Kara zhorga" in the form of an exposition show. This statement is explained by the fact that the development of music takes place on the basis of metro rhythmic drawings, meanwhile the theme itself is listened to only at the beginning. The high-speed and fast-paced fragment passes like a whirlwind, a light staccato based on the eighth and two sixteenth notes, draws the image of a steed. Here, the saxophone-baritone stands as solo instrument. It's not typical for the instrument to execute such fast and fluent compositions.

Conclusion

The works for saxophone, presented for the study, composed by Artur Orenburgsky, Alibi Abdinurov and Yulia Lebedeva are important both for the development of musical art in Kazakhstan as well as the school of saxophone performance. A review of the most significant works for saxophone created by composers of Kazakhstan based on the material of Kazakh folk music was carried out in order to identify the features of musical content and performance issues.

The results of the study show the importance of saxophone compositions based on Kazakh folk music. It forms and improves the performing repertoire and the school of playing the saxophone in contemporary academic music in Kazakhstan. They also reflect an important result of cooperation between composers and leading performers of Kazakhstan in searching new means of expression and performance techniques.

The research identified several key musical features of saxophone compositions that align with Kazakh traditional music, including metric freedom, improvisation, rhythmic characteristics, form, and timbre. The examined works represent a new concert format that is based on traditional sources. They include incorporating elements of folk singing styles, rhythmic patterns of *dombra* playing, and the sound production techniques of folk wind instruments like *sybyzgy*, *syrnai* and *kernei*. All of them are vividly expressed by the saxophone. These elements often carry "ethnic flavour" and can be seen as indicators of "ethnic identity".

The conclusions on this study open up new prospects for a deeper understanding of the progress made in academic saxophone music in Kazakhstan. It will help to arouse the interest of local instrumental musicians to perform new works for the instrument. This exploration confirms the importance and progress potential of academic music for the saxophone which has become an independent form of national art in Kazakhstan over the forty-year period of its development.

The results obtained can be used in educational programs of secondary and higher musical institutions on such disciplines as "special instrument", "history of Kazakh music", "instrumentation and instrument making", "history of performing and musical culture of Kazakhstan". It can also set the foundation for the practical work of saxophonists while studying works of Kazakhstani composers.

The author hopes that this article will contribute to the popularization of saxophone works among performers. It is quite obvious that the process of their creation is in construction. It opens up new opportunities for further study of the selected topic.

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