

МУЗИЧНА КУЛЬТУРА: СУЧАСНИЙ ВИМІР

MUSIC CULTURE: THE MODERN DIMENSION



## Genre and performing style of instrumental compositions for bandura by Kostiantyn Miaskov

### Виконавська стилістика інструментальних композицій для бандури Костянтина Мяскова

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**Abstract.** Thanks to the work of Ukrainian composers of the post-war period (Mykola Dremluha, Kostiantyn Miaskov, Anatolii Kolomiets, Serhii Bashtan, Vasyl Herasymenko, etc.), the process of academization of the instrumental bandura was actively established, marked by a significant expansion of genre-style and expressive-performing paraphernalia. In this direction, an important role belongs to Kostiantyn Miaskov, an outstanding personality in composing for bandura. A vital component that forms the style of his legacy for instrumental bandura is the reliance on folk dance and folk song themes and their reinterpretation in line with academic performance. Among the author's stylistic techniques that are most often traced in instrumental works for bandura are sequencing, variation, improvisational development of musical and thematic material, tempo and dynamic contrast, bright dynamization of the development of musical fabric, on the one hand, and organic use of timbre — phonic and technical-expressive capabilities of the instrument, on the other. The kinship of the composer's style with the foundations of folk music thinking was manifested in the melodicism of his instrumental canvases for the bandura. Reliance on folklore became, for the artist, a factor that, to a certain extent, determined the individual style of writing of this master, where the principle of music making, typical of folk Instrumental Performance, became decisive for his compositions in the field of bandura creativity.

*Keywords:* instrumental bandura, Kostiantyn Miaskov, musical stylistics, instrumental bandura genres, performing and expressive possibilities.

**Problem statement.** Since the second half of the twentieth century, bandura's artistic, expressive and socio-cultural roles have gradually been rethought. Thanks to the appearance of a significant number of works by composers, for whom bandura has become an entire field of search and professional approval, bandura has entered the academic genre, style, and performance space. After all, "...the active appeal of professional composers to the timbre-sonorous palette of the bandura made it possible to significantly enrich the stylistic expressiveness

of the instrument and expand the formulas of instrumental play" [3, p. 34]. In the post-war period, famous Ukrainian composers and performers- Mykola Dremluha, Kostiantyn Miaskov, Anatolii Kolomiets, famous bandurists-composers Serhii Bashtan and Vasyl Herasymenko, etc. — actively created for the instrumental specifics of bandura. Their work significantly expanded bandura creativity's genre style and expressive-performing space, and new concepts and forms of concert-performing and pedagogical processes were defined at that time.

Kostiantyn Miaskov, a Pyotr Tchaikovsky Kyiv State Conservatory graduate in the composition class of Kostiantyn Dankevych, plays an essential role in updating and improving the constructive and expressive capabilities of the bandura. His work in the field of bandura is characterized by deep lyricism and spirituality, at the same time inspired by meter rhythmic concentration, tempo contrast, and dramatic tension in the climactic zones of the work. The kinship of the composer's style with the foundations of folk-musical thinking can be traced in the melodicism of his work; folklore primary sources seem to have determined the kind of writing of this master, where the principle of music making, typical of folk-Instrumental Performance, became one of the most characteristic features of K. Miaskov's bandura creativity. Attention to the instrumental bandura creativity of this master to outline the stylistic features of his compositions is the relevance of this article.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The stages of K. Miaskov's life creation are revealed in the study of O. Stelmashenko [10] from the publishing series "portraits of Ukrainian composers" (Kyiv: musical Ukraine, 1981), the specifics of K. Miaskov's work in the course of instrumental bandura are considered in the works of O. Buha [1; 2] and I. Druzha [3; 8]. The problem of compositional creativity, its genre, and stylistic characteristics are actualized in the works of Yu. Diachenko [4], E. Nazaikinskyi [6], A. Polkanov [7].

The article aims to characterize the style of K. Miaskov's works for instrumental bandura with attention to the problems of stage implementation of this heritage.

Main part. In the interpretation of the concept of stylistics, it should be noted that this phenomenon, as an active component of a musical text, is based on characteristic techniques and means of artistic design — "layout techniques developed in professional composer's culture are related to a specific work" [6, p. 43] and appear as a reflection at the level of a specific author's plan of the general stylistic paradigm of the composer's life-creating. Let's say in every bandura piece of K. Miaskov genre-stylistic

component manifests itself through the principles and means of unfolding the musical fabric of the work, where the figurative-semantic structure of the work is determined not only by the tonal plan and thematic processes but also by variable combinations of genre and stylistic manifestations of the author's expression.

As part of the instrumental heritage for bandura, K. Miaskov turned to various genres and forms: concert sketches, preludes, scherzo, variations, fantasies, improvisations, folk dances, concert pieces, and three concertinos for bandura and orchestra. In the style of his ideas, the composer widely used folk dance and song themes, where his primary so-called author's compositional techniques are consistency, variation, improvisational development of musical and thematic material, tempo and dynamic contrast, and dynamization of musical development. A striking example of the above characteristics is his Variations, where the primary thematic material used is the Ukrainian folk song "You are my little quail." Based on folk melodies, at the same time, the composer creates whole fields of sonorous effects — playing at the stand, enriching the scale of performing strokes, and so on. At the same time, the idea of the work is multi-part, as evidenced by the dramatic unfolding of the musical fabric with the introduction of two cadences, significant transformations of the leading musical image, and the end-to-end development of which is indicated by the features of orchestration.

In this case, "Baida" is also prominent — a concert piece by K. Miaskov on the themes of two Ukrainian songs for bandura accompanied by piano. The work can serve as a reference example of the embodiment of the composer's stylistic preferences in the context of bandura expressiveness. On the one hand, the composer continues to actively use folklore, using two folk songs, namely, "Oh that is Baida drinking" and "Oh, the girl walked along the river bank," and, on the other, we observe a deeply individual reading of the genre of a concert piece — fantasy, it's virtuoso invariant.

Continuing the theme of bandura virtuosity, it should be remembered that the most significant in this course are the Etudes for bandura by K. Miaskov.

For example, the concert Etude e-moll, which, in addition to a rich set of techniques and strokes — like a sharp rhythmic-textured change in the presentation of musical material, melody, laid out by sequences from the sixteenth, which is quite characteristic of his compositional style, contains polyrhythmic difficulties and various options for conducting a chord theme (especially in the middle part of a complex three-part structure, ABA + coda. In the G-moll Etude, to enrich the figurative and semantic context of the idea, the middle section is contrasted with the extreme ones both tonally and textured (wide arpeggiated chords) and tempo.

A characteristic feature is the rhythmic ostinato of the bass line in both etudes. However, in the first case, the bass quarts have a more background character with a constant rhythmic element (a quarter with a dot and an eight), iconic for many of the composer's works. An intonationally flexible, elegiac syllable melody in the middle section is built on dance-synopated basses. The author's presentation style is immediately recognized, thanks to the characteristic beating of the main melodic line by the sixteenth. In addition, in the composer's ideas, the dynamic and tempo characteristics often depend on the direction of development of the musical material — up or down in sound pitch. It is this synchronicity that allows one to control the release of hands.

The e-moll scherzo has a grotesque character and contrasting orchestral coloring. The initial theme in lowercase is marked with sequences of staccato stroke and sforzando in the right hand. The second section of Scherzo has slightly different artistic imagery. This is a barcarolle inspired by a chord texture. The tempo of Andante sostenuto agitato determines the freer and more improvised nature of intonation, especially the arpeggiated theme in upper case. For the performer, along with the richness and continuity of the sound of the central theme, it is necessary to monitor the softness and slow flow of the arpeggios. Before each dynamic and melodic chord Arch in the middle register, it is essential to take barely noticeable breaths, contributing to a high-quality display of the textured lines of the musical fabric.

The sharpness and clarity of dotted chord structures are achieved here by attaching the sixteenth note to the next eight. I want to warn performers against "smearing" these chords, which causes a very unpleasant acoustic sound. To do this, it is advisable to take the eight after the short sixteenth with a raised hand and a very short, decisive blow, especially since the emphasis is on it.

The genre of a concert piece in Miaskov's work is one of the most revealing and beloved. The contrast of themes, the use of folk leitmotiv, relief, bulge, virtuosity, and imaginative brightness — this is not a complete description of the concert pieces c-moll and G-dur for bandura and piano, a Concert piece for two banduras (1974), a Concert piece for bandura and orchestra on the theme of the Ukrainian folk song "This night has so much moon in the sky," a Concert piece g-moll for bandura solo.

In the Concert piece g-moll for bandura solo, the bright, dynamic palette of the work uses contrasting dynamics, especially when comparing themes, motifs, and sequences in a register. The concert piece "This night has so much moon in the sky" for bandura and orchestra (g-moll) intonationally echoes the previous work. The first performance of the theme is played in a bandura and performed by a double tremolo in a high register. The tempo increases by the end of the work; dance motifs replace the first theme: the theme of the Ukrainian folk song "Oh, what the noise has happened" and the Ukrainian Hopak, the intonations of which are intertwined throughout the work until the last bars on the crescendo.

The concert piece "The evening on the street" (g-moll) is constructed differently. It contains two minor cadences already in the first chapter: a descending one with a rhythmic deceleration at the end and an ascending one with a gradual acceleration. The first implementation of the introduction theme is developmental, where a piano picks up the bandura part. Only in Andante comodo does the melody of the folk song used to appear in all its full-fledged beauty. The work has a variational character of development. The theme takes place alternately

in both parties that complement each other. There are also no other genre-figurative and metric contrasts. The only sharp tempo change occurs before the last cadence, where *Allegro moderato* appears after *Andante*. Here the composer again uses the technique of tremulation in thirds.

The concert piece *c-moll* (or a Concert piece on two Ukrainian themes) for bandura and piano has a different character. This virtuoso, contrasting in thematic, vivid work begins with an energetic rhythmic-intonation formula typical of the composer, which creates a sense of anxiety and drama. Disturbing images of war do not disappear in the next section of *sostenuto*, where the theme takes place for the first time in the bandura part, which is also facilitated by the ostinato pulsation of eighths in the piano. After thematic development in both instruments' parts, the melody returns to the bandura again, but in a completely different form. Now it is a gently enlightened theme (*F-dur*), which develops sequentially, gradually increases, and turns into a fun dance, where the theme of the Ukrainian folk song "Oh, the girl walked along the river bank" is used. The bandura entirely plays this theme in the key of *B-dur*, size 2/4. The dashed sharpness of the bass is also preserved in conducting the theme in thirds. The second element of the music — a sequential descending series, which has a different sound pitch direction throughout the work, is another kind of leitmotif of this play. In interpreting this canvas, the bandurist must maintain the same tempo throughout the sequence. In addition, the performer should strive for register coherence in the game. The composer uses a complex technical technique before the final section. In his opinion, applying the Kharkiv way of playing and staccato at a fast pace is necessary. This passage should be performed freely, like a minor cadence, using the second and third fingers in the left hand to achieve a smooth sound in the lower register. In addition, removing the last chord of the work with the whole hand is more expedient. The concert piece under consideration strives for development, which is related to the formation of stages of the sonata form.

Separately, we need to focus on the various cycles of K. Miaskov, on which more than one bandurist generation was brought up. The composer mainly builds these cycles on the themes of Ukrainian folk songs. For the junior-level bandurist performers, the most productive from the point of view of forming performing skills are variations on the theme of the Ukrainian folk song "The cranes flew in" and variations on the theme of the Ukrainian folk song "Zhenychok-brenychok." These are two completely different compositions. Suppose the composer divided the first variations (*g-moll*) into six variations, the second cycle (*G-dur*) is more complex in structure and thematic development.

K. Miaskov uses the theme of the lyrical Ukrainian song in variations of "Marusya, Marusya, you come from a glorious family" (*e-moll*). In short sections, the left-hand movement is supported by the pedaled sixteenth of the right hand. A new element of variational development is found in the *g-mole* section of the work, which requires a cover of chords with the fingers of the hand. In the intonation of these dissonant upper register chords, it is necessary to monitor the sound quality and not force the dynamics.

Variations on the Ukrainian theme of *g-moll* are more concentrated in form than the previous ones. They are based on the theme of the Ukrainian folk song "Ukraine has been sad." The composer uses wide arpeggiated chords here, intervals in the left hand. In the *a-moll* section, the canon that sounds in *f* requires concentration and attention. The swaying element in the final barcarolle *Andante* (*h-moll*) is transformed into a scherzo *Allegretto* (*Es-dur*), into a rhythmic intonation pattern of a dance nature.

One of the latest works — Concert variations of *a-moll* — is based on contrasting themes. The first of them — as if marching hymnic, begins with a characteristic quart course against the background of syncope in lowercase. A sharp comparison with the previous one is the work's second theme, which significantly dramatizes the further development of the musical fabric. In its last performance, the composer

used broad “jumps” of dotted sixth chords, the phonetic scale harmoniously confirming this canvas’s formative integrity.

The Fantasy on Ukrainian themes G-dur for bandura solo and improvisation on Ukrainian folk theme e-moll for bandura solo is quite close to the genre of concert variations. In the first work, the composer used several quotes from folk sources. It begins with a solemn introduction, in which the composer suggests using the Kharkiv way of playing. Further — in the theme of the Ukrainian folk song “Hey-hey, geese, go to the pond,” the double tremolo technique is again used, and at the end of the section — an octave deceleration, which prepares the appearance of a quick dance theme of the Ukrainian folk song “Kozak is leaving.” The glissando technique introduces a repetition of the second period of the theme. By the end of the piece, the pace accelerates, the dynamics increase, and the whole movement is directed to a graceful ending.

Another play — an improvisation on the Ukrainian folk theme — K. Miaskov wrote at the end of his life. Intonationally, by the nature of its development, it echoes the variations of “Marusya, Marusya...”, which also belong to this life-creating stage of the artist. Designed mainly in minor tones, it ends calmly and enlightened, which is also typical for a-moll concert variations. Exhibited in the Moderato section, it seems to “dissolve” in G-dur Andante doloroso. The diverse dash palette of musical fabric in Allegro requires exceptional auditory control of the performer when conducting the main, enlightened melody. In the Allegretto scherzando section, a virtuoso dance theme appears, which requires a precise staccato from the performer, as noted in the musical manuscript.

As in the plays of small forms of K. Miaskov and his variations, fantasies, and improvisations, the performer needs to remember an essential feature of the composer’s style — a significant figurative saturation of the composer’s canvases, their emotional concentration and drama require the performers to be able to “hold” this dynamic development according to the work’s time-space unfolding form,

where the interpreter’s attention is focused on creating the integrity and completeness of the musical and dramatic development of the idea.

As for the performance notes in reading the texture of the idea, we emphasize that performers often involuntarily accelerate in the upward movement of sequences and passages. When moving down, they slow down development. This is not worth the work because this approach sprays the dramatic growth of the work while impoverishing the overall impression of listening to it. As for the dynamics, it is essential not to force the sound on *ff* and not “disappear” on *pp*. Frequent changes in dynamics, the undulation of its development, require constant psychomotor control of the performer and the ability to maintain meter rhythmic stability, which is especially important when performing K. Miaskov’s works for bandura and orchestra.

The composer created three concertinos for the bandura and orchestra, characterized by the expressiveness of images, the intensity of development, and tempo-dynamic growth until the end of the work, resulting in bravura virtuoso cadences. These works are based on their similar and distinctive musical and dramatic features. All three concertinos begin with an orchestral, rather dynamic introduction. The introductions of the First (g-moll) and Third (d-moll) do not contain the central theme. The heroic introduction of Concertino No. 1 (*Allegro moderato energico*) begins with a quart tetrachord grace note, which seems to prepare the leitmotif rhythmic grain of the central theme. Another important rhythmic and intonation element of the introduction is based on the pre-dictate intonation taken from the main theme (the two sixteenth of the last fate tend to the accentuated eighth of the first fate). The central theme of Concertino No. 3 is much faster and more active due not only to the tempo (*Moderato con moto*) but also to the pulsation of ostinato chords in the orchestra part. At the same time, arpeggiated chords should be performed briefly and actively.

The next stage of theme development in all three works is similar in the eventfulness of the movement:

the orchestra picks up the first motif of the theme and develops thanks to melodic and harmonic means. At the same time, the bandurist performs ascending and descending passages and sequential constructions. Further, in Concertino No. 1, before the second section (*Allegro-scerzando*), K. Miaskov introduces another minor cadence, which prepares a quick three-part dance in the part of the orchestra. In Concertino No. 2, before the short section, the composer uses “jumping” chords in the soloist’s part of writing. Two-stroke acceleration in the Orchestra prepares the appearance of the G-Dur theme from the second section of this piece in the bandura part. This light, fast two-piece dance, which takes place entirely in the bandura part, intonationally echoes the D major section of *Allegretto con moto* Concertino No. 3. syncopated accents and a characteristic presentation of the orchestra accompaniment emphasize the grotesqueness of the theme.

The cadence of Concertino No. 2 is very short. It represents a kind of introduction to the third section of *Agitato con anima*, in which the tutti orchestra plays the central theme of the first part. After it is held, the intonation of the hidden modified theme of the second chapter returns. The First and Third Concertino cadences are large-scale, improvisational, and technical in performance. They are vivid examples of various types of techniques, different techniques, and strokes. Chord sequences from the Concertino cadence No. 3 are complicated to perform, where it is proposed to use the Kharkiv method of playing in the small octave and bass.

In the final section of the works, the central theme occurs in the tutti orchestra. The tempo increase, the brevity of size, General dynamization, and staccato chords of the orchestra characterize the climaxes of all three concertinos. Concertino finale No. 1 — built on the dance theme of the middle episode. And in the final of Concertino No. 3, a new technique was applied in the bandura part — glissando behind the stand. The rhythmic and intonation similarity of the final last chords of the first and Third Concertino is also due to the same tempo slowing for both works. The final construction of Concertino

No. 2 also has a heroic, optimistic, and affirmative character. In general, all the concertinos considered are characterized by the expressiveness of images, the intensity of development and tempo-dynamic tension directed towards the end of the work, and virtuoso cadences.

Concertino No. 1 was first performed by the soloist of the state TV and Radio Broadcasting Company of Ukraine, Petro Chukhrai. He also served as executive editor of this work. Concertino No. 3 was the first broadcast on the radio in 1988. The piece was performed with the orchestra of folk instruments of the national radio company of Ukraine, Svitlana Mirvoda, its soloist. There is a stock record of this work. In this context, it is necessary to mention the recording in the fund of Ukrainian Radio of work for bandura with an orchestra of folk instruments — fantasies on Ukrainian themes, the first performer of which is the Honored Artist of Ukraine, head of the Department of folk instruments of the National Music Academy of Ukraine named after Petro Tchaikovsky Liudmyla Kokhanska.

Conclusions. As you can see, K. Miaskov’s bandura legacy covers various genres of bandura creativity. Its stylistic palette is based on the extensive use of folk dance and song themes. Its main components are consistency, variation, improvisational musical and thematic material development, tempo, and dynamic contrast. The style of his ideas for bandura absorbed the influence of the folk performing tradition, which can be traced through the brightness and dynamization of the development of the musical canvas and the stylistic techniques characteristic of academic creativity — profound figurative poetry, picturesqueness, the richness of coloristic finds. As for the aspects of the performing style of Miaskov’s bandura ideas, first of all, we need to mention the organic virtuosity of his canvases. Virtuoso, technically complex passages from chord chains, multi-layered textures with elements of polyphony, various types of finger and chord techniques, etc., significantly enriched the technical and expressive capabilities of the modern bandura, its figurative and sound palette.

The evolution of instrumental bandurism in the second half of the twentieth century, thanks to the instrumental works of K. Miaskov, resulted in a new model of performing creativity on this instrument. Its academic innovation context is based on the improved capabilities of a professional-academic, solo-virtuoso instrument, where the improvement of the instrument design, systematization

of professional musical education, and the creation of an original repertoire are organically combined. The contribution made by Miaskov to the repertoire for bandura is challenging to overestimate. The composer was the first among those who started and developed the trend of creating original professional music designed to be performed on this instrument.

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**Людмила Ларікова. Виконавська стилістика інструментальних композицій для бандури Костянтина Мяскова**

**Анотація.** Завдяки доробку українських композиторів повоєнного часу (Микола Дремлюга, Костянтин Мясков, Анатолій Коломієць, Сергій Баштан, Василь Герасименко та ін.) активно утвердився процес академізації інструментальної бандури, позначений значним розширенням жанрово-стильової та виражально-виконавської атрибутики. У цьому річичі важлива роль належить Костянтину Мяскову, непересічній особистості на ниві композиторської творчості для бандури. Важливим компонентом, що формує стилістику його доробку для інструментальної бандури є опора на народно-танцювальні та народно-пісенні теми та їх переосмислення в річичі академічного виконавства. Серед авторських стилістичних прийомів, що найчастіше простежуються в інструментальних творах для бандури, — секвенційність, варіаційність, імпровізаційність розвитку музично-тематичного матеріалу, темпова та динамічна контрастність, яскрава динамізація розвитку музичної тканини, з одного боку, та органічне використання темброво-фонічних та технічно-виражальних можливостей інструменту, з іншого. Спорідненість стилю композитора із засадами народно-музичного мислення проявилася в мелодизмі його інструментальних полотен для бандури. Опора на фольклор стала для митця фактором, що певною мірою визначив індивідуальну стилістику письменця цього майстра, де принцип музикування, типовий для народного інструментального виконавства, став визначальним для його композицій у царині бандурної творчості.

*Ключові слова:* інструментальна бандура, Костянтин Мясков, музична стилістика, інструментальні бандурні жанри, виконавсько-виражальні можливості.