





## SOUNDING THE UKRAINIAN SOUL: AESTHETIC AND CIVIC DIMENSIONS IN YAKIV STEPОВYI'S VOCAL MINIATURES

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**SUMMARY.** The article presents a comprehensive study of Yakiv Stepovyi's vocal miniatures based on the verses of Oleksandr Oles as exemplary manifestations of poetic-musical synthesis in Ukrainian chamber music of the early 20th century. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of intonational structure, harmonic language, and piano accompaniment, as well as to the disclosure of the emotional, symbolic, and cultural significance of these works. The article highlights how Stepovyi's miniatures, through their poetic and musical fusion, form a psychologically nuanced artistic space where melody and harmony serve as vehicles of both aesthetic experience and cultural memory. In addition to musicological and literary analysis, the article explores the civic-educational potential of Stepovyi's vocal works in the 21st century. It argues that this repertoire can function as an educational resource that fosters historical reflection, cultural empathy, and national self-awareness, thus becoming a tool for civic education and identity formation.

**Keywords:** chamber vocal lyrics, Ukrainian modernism, musical impressionism, poetic-musical synthesis, civic education

### 1. Introduction

In the modern Ukrainian humanitarian discourse, the need to comprehend the cultural phenomena that have shaped the Ukrainian national identity is becoming increasingly tangible, not declaratively, but intimately, through

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aesthetic and sensual experiences. One such experience is the chamber-vocal genre in which the synthesis of poetic text and music becomes an exceptionally subtle instrument for reflecting the mentality, spirituality, and worldview of a Ukrainian.

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, Yakiv Stepovyi<sup>5</sup> was among the supporters of chamber and vocal music and the founders of the Ukrainian professional composer school. He stands alongside the most prominent representatives of Ukrainian musical modernism, having created a unique chamber-vocal style. Among his most lyrical works, it is the songs on verses by Oleksandr Oles<sup>6</sup> that constitute the highest example of poetic-musical synthesis. The creative work of Yakiv Stepovyi in this genre embodied deeply the national feelings—tenderness, sadness, longing for the ideal, and connection with nature—using the means of the sophisticated European musical language. The appeal to the poetry of Oleksandr Oles strengthened this expression, because its symbolism and sensual imagery turned out to be as close as possible to the chamber-vocal embodiment.

While large choral or symphonic genres appeal to collective experience, vocal miniatures appeal to the individual listener, appeal to the inner ‘I’, and awaken personal emotion. It is through chamber intimacy that Ukrainian vocal lyrics of the early 20th century formed a subtle psychological portrait of the nation, relevant even today, in times of rethinking identity in the conditions of war and global challenges. Thus, the study of vocal miniatures by Yakiv Stepovyi to the words of Oleksandr Oles is not only an artistic historical analysis but also an act of a modern cultural return to the deep formative sources of the Ukrainian soul, which makes this study relevant and expedient.

The vocal miniatures by Yakiv Stepovyi on verses by Oleksandr Oles hold a unique place in Ukrainian musicology yet remain little known internationally. Despite limited specialized literature, existing studies outline their cultural-historical and stylistic context.

T. Bulat’s monograph “Yakiv Stepovyi”<sup>7</sup> identifies the lyrical orientation, poetic sensitivity, and folk intonational roots of his chamber-vocal style, noting the cycle “Songs of Mood” for its intimate lyrical gesture and impressionistic color. The research by O. Berehova<sup>8</sup> links Stepovyi’s work to the ending

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<sup>5</sup> Yakiv Stepovyi (the real name: Yakiv Yakymenko, 1883–1921) — a Ukrainian composer, music critic, and pedagogue, representative of the “New Ukrainian School.”

<sup>6</sup> Oleksandr Oles (the real name: Oleksandr Kandyba, 1878–1944) — a prominent Ukrainian poet, playwright, and representative of early literary modernism.

<sup>7</sup> Bulat, T. *Yakiv Stepovyi (Translated Title)*. Muzychna Ukraina, 1990.

<sup>8</sup> See Berehova, O. “Stylistic Tendencies in the Chamber Music of Ukrainian Composers of the 1990s. The Situation of Postmodernism” (*Translated Title*). *Ukrainske muzykoznavstvo*, no. 29, 2000, pp. 103–08. Berehova, O. “A Range of Problems in the Works of Modern Ukrainian

“chamber thinking” in Ukrainian music, while O. Kozarenko<sup>9</sup> situates him among the creators of a modern national musical language that combines folklore with European, particularly impressionistic, techniques. N. Semenenko<sup>10</sup> highlights the folk-based harmonic tendencies—minor modality, pentatonicism, also evident in his chamber accompaniments.

From a literary angle, T. Hundrova<sup>11</sup> and M. Ilnytskyi<sup>12</sup> reveal Oles's poetic code of dream, passion, symbolism, and lyrical intuitionism, which Stepovyi translates into music. The 1969 edition of “Songs of Mood”<sup>13</sup> provides direct insight into form, harmonization, rhythm, piano texture, and melodic variability. Studies by Bench-Shokalo<sup>14</sup>, Hrytsa<sup>15</sup>, and Hubanov<sup>16</sup> frame these works as a modernized form of archaic folk experience, reinforcing their role in national identity.

Thus, combined musicological, literary, and ethnographic perspectives reveal Stepovyi's cycle as both an artistic and a national-identification phenomenon.

The purpose of this study is to examine the lyricism and innovation of vocal miniatures by Yakiv Stepovyi on the verses by Oleksandr Oles from the point of view of their artistic value, intonational novelty, and role in the formation of Ukrainian national identity. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of poetic and musical synthesis, which reveals the deep lyrical and worldview structures of the Ukrainian soul of the early 20th century and highlights the significance of the chamber-vocal genre as a means of subtle artistic construction of Ukrainian identity in the conditions of the cultural national awakening of the early 20th century.

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Composers” (*Translated Title*). *Ukrainske muzykoznavstvo*, no. 30, NMAU im. P. I. Chaikovskoho, 2001, pp. 150–55.

<sup>9</sup> Kozarenko, O. *The Phenomenon of the Ukrainian National Musical Language* (*Translated Title*). NTSh, 2000.

<sup>10</sup> Semenenko, N. F. *Folkloric Features of the Harmony of Choral Music* (*Translated Title*). Naukova dumka, 1987.

<sup>11</sup> Hundrova, T. “The Manifestation of the Word: The Discourse of Early Ukrainian Modernism” (*Translated Title*). *Krytychni studii*, Instytut krytyky / Chasopys “Krytyka,” 2009.

<sup>12</sup> Ilnytskyi, M. *From the “Young Muse” to the “Prague School”* (*Translated Title*). Lviv, 1995.

<sup>13</sup> Stepovyi, Ya. *Romances “Songs of Mood”: A Vocal Cycle to the Words of O. Oles* (*Translated Title*). Muzychna Ukraina, 1969.

<sup>14</sup> Bench-Shokalo, O. *Ukrainian Choral Singing: Actualization of the Customary Tradition* (*Translated Title*). Ukrainskyi Svit, 2002.

<sup>15</sup> Hrytsa, S. *Through the Eyes of an Ethnomusicologist* (*Translated Title*). Mizhnarodnyi Muzychnyi Festyval Kyiv Muzyk Fest, 1999.

<sup>16</sup> Hubanov, Ya. “The Cluster as a Component of Modern Thinking (Using the Example of Ukrainian Soviet Music of the 1970s–80s)”. *Ukrainske muzykoznavstvo*, no. 24, Muzychna Ukraina, 1980, pp. 118–25.

## **2. A Dialogue between a Poet and a Composer: Aesthetic and Ideological Consonance**

The creative dialogue between Yakiv Stepovyi and Oleksandr Oles is a unique phenomenon of the Ukrainian culture of the early 20th century. Both artists, although they worked in different types of art, sought to convey the inner depth of the Ukrainian soul, its emotional landscape, hidden longing, and dream through a sophisticated artistic form. They are united by a commonality of aesthetic orientations: poetic and musical impressionism, symbolism, and emotional saturation, which is conveyed not through external expression, but through the intonation of silence, echo, pause, and hint.

Oleksandr Oles – one of the central figures of Ukrainian literary modernism – developed the ideas of symbolism, giving preference to images that convey psychological states, intimate experiences, and a sense of unity with nature. Night, silence, spring air, flowers, and sighs often appear in his poems, which are not just descriptions but become poetic metaphors of the inner world of a person. Oles does not sing of events – he sings of mood, state of mind. This makes his texts extremely close to musical embodiment.

Sharing the aesthetics of symbolism and lyrical impressionism, Oleksandr Oles filled his poems with images of nature, silence, dreams, and sensuality. Stepovyi, in turn, had an exceptional sense of musical transformation of words and skillfully transformed this poetic fabric into a sound aery landscape.

In his vocal miniatures, Oles's poetry is not illustrated – it is embodied in sounds, as if in touch, in breath, in a watercolor line of a melody. The poetic fabric acquires musical breathing in him, in which the piano and voice interact delicately, like two equal interlocutors. It is here that a real meeting of two worlds – verbal and sound – takes place, which, intertwining, creates a new artistic reality.

The thematic choice of texts is also significant. Stepovyi does not turn to pathos or heroics – he is attracted by intimate lyrics, landscape sensuality, and subtle national elegiacism. In this sense, Oles's poems were ideal material for musical interpretation: they lack rhetoric, but instead they contain what is especially important in music – mood, emotional ambiguity, and semitones of feelings.

Throughout his life, beginning with his conservatory studies, Yakiv Stepovyi was drawn to music merging with words. His romances are closely linked to the imagery-intonational essence of the folk song creativity, especially its lyrical character. The multifaceted depiction of a person's heartfelt feelings, thoughts, and experiences resonates with the artist's inner world. The fusion of professional and folk elements occurred through a functional reinterpretation of typical musical-stylistic features within his creative context. This process

unfolded gradually. In 1905–1906, the composer published the vocal series “Barvinky”<sup>17</sup>. The influence of the Ukrainian folk elements is obvious in this cycle. The sources of his melodic style lie in the various – but predominantly typical – intonational motifs of lyric-domestic songs that he absorbed by ear. The folkloric material is transformed by the composer following his individuality and worldview. He is drawn to the moods of gentle sadness, heartfelt lyricism, and enlightened affirmation of life.

Yakiv Stepovyi's music exhibits key characteristics such as a transformation of lyrical melody, which leads to a unique emotional expression. His waltzes, particularly, reflect an organic synthesis of Romantic and Impressionist elements, showcasing a delicate balance between traditional forms and innovative content. The use of lyrical themes, combined with a focus on emotional depth and a departure from strict genre conventions, contributes to the distinctiveness and richness of his musical language, embodying neoromantic tendencies of the early 20th century<sup>18</sup>.

Thus, the combination of Oles's poetry and Stepovyi's music creates a chamber space of Ukrainian lyrical experience, in which the voice of the Ukrainian heart sounds not loudly, but deeply, sincerely, and eternally relevant.

### 3. The General Features of Stepovyi's Vocal Style in Miniatures

Yakiv Stepovyi's vocal miniatures to words by Oles constitute a special group in his chamber work, in which the synthesis of music and poetry is most fully realized. These works are not formally united into a complete cycle, but they form a spiritual and stylistic unity, common in theme, emotional palette, and artistic approach. The composer consciously turns to intimate, psychologically profound lyrics, avoiding declarativeness or external effects. He strives for maximum expressiveness in minimal means – that is why the form of the miniature becomes ideal for him.

One of the leading features of the composer's style is his *melodic flair*, which is manifested in an extremely singing, smooth, linear melody. It develops naturally, following the poetic text, often literally copying its intonation structure. The vocal line reveals a close connection with the Ukrainian folk song tradition, in particular, in the use of characteristic flexible phrasing, lyrical intonation, and melismas, reminiscent of ancient ritual chants. At the same

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<sup>17</sup> “Periwinkles” (*Translated title*).

<sup>18</sup> Lihus, O. “Neo-romantic Tendencies in Ukrainian Piano Music of the Early 20th Century” (*Translated title*). *Khudozhnia kultura: Aktualni problemy*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2020, pp. 94–98. [https://doi.org/10.31500/1992-5514.16\(2\).2020.217797](https://doi.org/10.31500/1992-5514.16(2).2020.217797) (accessed 10.07.2025)

time, the melody is not a folklore quotation, but the author's reinterpretation of folk melos in the spirit of modern chamber music.

Stepovyi's melody is not just a carrier of the text but an instrument of deep psychological modeling. It often acquires a dramatic function, revealing internal fractures, hidden emotions that the poem only outlines.

Stepovyi's *harmonic language* is distinguished by sophistication and delicacy. It balances between tonal clarity and coloristic "blurs", which brings the composer closer to impressionistic practices. His harmony is soft, without sharp contrasts, with frequent deviations into neighboring keys, hidden modulations, the use of parallelisms, second consonances, and disintervalization of chords, which creates the effect of a soft watercolor musical palette.

A special role is played by the *minor* coloristics, which the composer combines with modal diatonics, creating a sound in which sadness and tenderness, light longing and calm admiration sound as a single emotional chord. Harmony does not impose a structure, but frames and supports the poetic text in its internal logic.

Piano *accompaniment* in Stepovyi's vocal miniatures is not an accompaniment in the usual sense, but an equal emotional and semantic layer. His part develops the images embedded in the poem and the vocal line, sometimes entering into a dialogue with the voice, sometimes creating a contrasting background that deepens the drama of the work.

The texture of the accompaniment is picturesque, distinct, often associative: tremolo resembles a breath of wind, arpeggios - raindrops, fragments of chord technique - echoes of bells or pulsation of the heart. In some works, the accompaniment functions as an independent image – for example, in "Charms of the Night" it conveys the flickering of the starry sky, and in "Asters" – the elusive autumn anxiety.

Thus, Stepovyi's piano is not an accompanying instrument, but an instrument of inner space, psychological depth, the "voice of the subconscious". The accompaniment does not illustrate the text, but unfolds the emotional fabric of the work, weaving it with the vocal line into a single whole.

#### **4. Major Findings of Stepovyi's Vocal Miniatures Analysis**

The composer's "Barvinky" cycle includes the romance by Lesia Ukrainka "Dosyt' nevil'naja dumka"<sup>19</sup>, a dramatic monologue based on Taras

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<sup>19</sup> "My Captive Thought" (*Translated title*) (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

Shevchenko's poem "Za dumoju дума"<sup>20</sup>, and the vocal poem "Step"<sup>21</sup> set to the words of M. Cherniavskyi. The collection also features a solo piece "Zymoju"<sup>22</sup> based on the poem by Oleksandr Oles<sup>23</sup>.

In interpreting the refined poetic content, the composer created a distinctive coloristic sketch with a psychological undertone. He innovatively approached poetry, discovering fresh intonational turns and harmonic colors. The composer achieves a vivid illustrative effect by turning to folk modal-harmonic techniques: modal mutations, major-minor juxtapositions (D–major–D–minor), and the variability of tonic-subdominant harmonies (T–SII<sub>2</sub>).

And all of these expressive means are already declared in the introduction, then continue, develop, and move into another functional sphere in the first part: SII<sub>2</sub> - | T - | SII<sub>2</sub> | T | D<sub>7</sub> - | DVII<sub>4/3</sub> | T | DDVII<sub>6/5</sub> - D<sub>7</sub> | D<sub>4/3</sub> → T(E-major) | T- D<sub>7</sub>- D<sub>5/6</sub> → | VI(B-major) – D<sub>9</sub> → | D - DVII<sub>7</sub>-VI, etc.

The unstable alternating background creates a shimmering of harmonic colors in the accompaniment; these are thirds-based combinations, altered chords, and a chain of seventh chords on the dominant organ point. Such colorful harmony provides a backdrop for an expressive, somewhat capricious melodic line through which the composer seeks to convey the subtlest nuances of poetic intonation. It is a kind of melodic recitative combined with declamation (see Table 1).

**Table 1**

Ukrainian:	Transliteration:	English:
Дивилося сонце на срібнії віти Всміхалося їм, і вони не змогли Усмішки блискучого сонця стерпіти І танути в млості якійсь почали...	Dyvylos' sontse na sribniji vity, Vsmikhalosja jim, i vony ne zmohly Usmishky blyskuchoho sontsja sterpity I tanuty v mlosti jakij's' pochaly...	Looked the sun on silver branches, Smiled at them, and they could not Bear the smile of the brilliant sun And started to melt in a kind of a fainting spell...

**The lyrics of the song "Zymoju" (an extract) by O. Oles**  
(<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025)

<sup>20</sup> "Thought Follows Thought" (*Translated title*) (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

<sup>21</sup> "An Endless Steppe" (*Translated title*) (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

<sup>22</sup> "In Winter" (*Translated title*) (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

<sup>23</sup> The autograph of this romance with a dedication to Oleksandr I. Kandyba is kept in the library of the State Television and Radio of Ukraine.

In the second part of the solo song, the restrained ascending motion of the melody gradually intensifies, leading to a climax that bursts out like a wave of despair. Rhythmically transformed elements from the introduction in the accompaniment emphasize the dramatic character of the image. This technique seems to recall the previously carefree mood. The repetition of the climactic phrase leads to the conclusion. These qualities of the intonational structure are further supported by micro-shifts and altered diminished harmonies on the words "Oh sun, sun!":  $II4/3-7 \mid s_2- DVII_7 \rightarrow |T(F\text{-major}) S_{4/3} - |VI^{\flat}_6 \mid II_7 |VI^{\flat}_6$ . Here, through predominantly subdominant sphere chords, D-minor is affirmed. A sense of subdued sorrow, a kind of stillness, is conveyed through the monotonous oscillation of octave triplets against sustained chords in the background.

The solo song "Zymoju" was highly appreciated by M. Lysenko<sup>24</sup> and K. Stetsenko<sup>25</sup>, who called it a masterpiece. On the occasion of the publication of "Barvinky," K. Stetsenko wrote a large review, in which he highlighted Stepovyi's poetic inspiration and pointed out the closeness of musical language to folk songs, in particular the steppe songs of Slobozhanshchyna<sup>26</sup>. "As for the technical side of Stepovyi's music," the reviewer emphasized, "it reveals the author to be an experienced man, well-acquainted with the secrets of music, its colors, and the methods of using them to illustrate the subjects he has chosen"<sup>27</sup>.

Most poets of the 20th century showed a tendency to combine poems into cycles. It is also observed in the musical works of Ukrainian composers, who aimed to portray the lyrical hero on a larger, more comprehensive scale.

The cycle of romances "Pisni nastroiui",<sup>28</sup> based on the poems by O. Oles, was a new work by Yakiv Stepovyi from his conservatory period (1907–1908). While in the cycle "Barvinky," the composer primarily relied on traditions and stylistic norms developed in domestic lyrical song, "Pisni nastroiui" is dominated by innovative tendencies. Striving to reveal the psychological subtext of the poem as deeply as possible, the composer sought to bring the musical language closer to the rhythmic and intonational structure of the poetic word.

<sup>24</sup> Mykola Lysenko (1842-1912), a Ukrainian composer, pianist, conductor, and ethnomusicologist of the late Romantic period, was a central figure in Ukrainian music during his time.

<sup>25</sup> Kyrilo Stetsenko (1882-1922), a prolific Ukrainian composer, conductor, critic, and teacher.

<sup>26</sup> This is a historical region in the northeast of Ukraine, bordering the Russian Federation.

<sup>27</sup> As cited in Kozarenko, O. *The Phenomenon of the Ukrainian National Musical Language* (Translated Title). NTSh, 2000:21.

<sup>28</sup> "Songs of Mood" (Translated title).



It is impossible to determine the exact date of this cycle's completion, as neither the autographs nor the published version bears any dates. Since 1907, individual pieces from the cycle have been published separately.

The collection opens with a beautiful lyric poem by Oleksandr Oles, "Lyvsja spiv kolys' u mene"<sup>29</sup> (for soprano or tenor), filled with melancholy, tenderness, and images of nature. The song belongs to intimate lyrics, where the feeling of loneliness and pain are combined with the musicality of the poetic word.

This poem is about the loss of spiritual harmony, loneliness, and unending longing. The poet notes that he used to have a song, a symbol of joy and inspiration. Now he has transferred the right to sing, even his suffering, to a nightingale as a symbol of nature and beauty. The poet contrasts his suffering and longing with the shining star, distant, unattainable, as the personification of the unchanging and eternal.

The composer arranged two stanzas of O. Oles's verse in a simple two-part form A+A1 (B-minor). The variability of the emotional state of the lyrical hero in Yakiv Stepovyi's solo song is expressed in the variant implementation of all expressive means: melody, harmony, etc. Characteristic, mainly tetrachordal diatonic and chromatic melodic intonations are already declared in the four-bar introduction. The change of mood and internal pain are conveyed by short chants.

The ascending movement – fis<sup>1</sup>, gis<sup>1</sup>, ais<sup>1</sup>, h<sup>1</sup> (melodic B-minor) is compensated by the descending wave – d<sup>2</sup>, h<sup>1</sup>, a<sup>1</sup>, g<sup>1</sup>. The harmony of the introduction (B-minor) <sup>1</sup> t-t<sub>6</sub> | <sup>2</sup> | s<sub>7</sub> – (A-major) T<sub>6/4</sub> – D<sup>3</sup> | (B-minor) t<sub>6/4</sub> / D – / D<sup>4</sup> | D D | (the last two bars – on the sustained dominant) – combines elements of the traditional major-minor system with the principles of folklore thinking, in particular, the violation of the functional triad and modal-tonal variability (a different key in each bar).

The harmonic language of the work gradually becomes more complicated due to the use of elliptical turns – sequences of seventh chords without a traditional solution. The mode palette is enriched with major-minor chords, numerous delays (sometimes in three and four voices), as well as the use of lists. The repeated variant performance of harmonic sequences in the first part of the solo singing, which is distinguished by gradual structural complication with flexibility of the tonal plan, gives particular expressiveness.

In the period of repeated construction in two sentences and the introduction, there is a re-harmonization, indicating impressionistic tendencies in the solo singing. The modulating transition to the second part (B-minor -

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<sup>29</sup> "Once Song Poured Forth from Me" (*Translated title*) (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

D-major) is distinguished by its bright sound painting: characteristic grace notes, fast trichords in sixteenths, and second chord clusters convey the ringing trill of the nightingale.

The melodic horizontal of the second part, with its measured, almost meditative rhythm, conveys the intonations of a living spoken language, filled with thoughtfulness and trust. It is in the last sentence of this part that the culmination of the entire solo unfolds – an emotionally heightened, intonationally open construction, concluding the hero's statement. The expressiveness of the poetic text is enhanced by romantic-impressionistic harmonies: a series of deviations and a chain of elliptical turns - D-major ( $T - II_2 \mid II_2 - D \mid II_7 - II_{6/5} - D$ );  $t_6 \rightarrow$  (B-minor) та  $D_9 \rightarrow F\#$ -major - y ( $D_7 - t$  (B-minor)  $\mid s_7 - D \rightarrow t$  (modulation in B-minor)  $\mid s_7 - II_{6/5} - t \mid D_{6/5}$  (A-major) –  $s_6 \mid t_{6/4} - t$ ), which give the harmonic plan flexibility, internal tension and a sense of the elusiveness of the final solution.

In the composition "O, shche ne vsi umerly zhali"<sup>30</sup> (for soprano or tenor), clear evolution of the lyrical hero's emotional development is traced, passing through several psychological states, gradually replacing each other. The emotional tone – a feeling of hopelessness, despair, and inner fatigue – is set already in the first lines, where the motif of destroyed hopes and muffled pain sounds ("Oh, not all sorrows have died..."). The hero seems to be on the verge of a mental breakdown, internal devastation. In the next stage, an impulse to action appears, heroic tension, the awakening of strength, determination, and protest – "... the blood is still boiling, gurgling in fury, and the heart is beating like a bell inside me". This is the moment of transition from suffering to an internal explosion – musically, it is amplified by an increase in dynamics, timbre saturation, and dramatic accents. The final state is the affirmation of vitality and creative calling, defined as the apogee of inspiration and spiritual growth: "I will unfold as a wild steppe, I will spill out as a sea of singing...". The hero seems to identify himself with the elements – the steppe, the sea, the song – symbols of the artist's unlimited will and strength. This is a cathartic moment, the affirmation of personal strength through creativity.

This emotional development determines the expressive means of solo singing: from soft, mournful intonations to a pathetic climax, reflecting the transformation of the hero from depressed to inspired, from broken to affirming.

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<sup>30</sup> "Not All Sorrows Have Died" (*Translated title*) (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

The beginning of the piece is like an impressionistic sketch in the alternating E–major–C#–minor, which creates a trembling background on the alternation of the first and third of their tonic triads. A similar organ figuration sounds throughout the entire piece. Against its background, a melodic line is played with octave duplications in the piano part and unison of the soloing voice (soprano or tenor) with the upper voice of the instrument.

The harmonic language gradually becomes more complex: there appear chord sequences without traditional solutions, consonances with added and replaced tones, delays on augmented triads of the 3rd and 6th degrees, figurations on different types of chords. In the constant comparison of major and minor spheres (E-major — C#-minor), modulations to the keys of A-major and B-minor are heard, enriching the harmonic palette and giving the musical image inner variability and emotional depth. The blurring of harmonies and the “watercolor” coloring testify to impressionistic features.

The second part of the solo song is built on a variational development of the material from the first part (see E.g. 1).

**E.g. 1**

The musical score for E.g. 1 consists of two systems. The first system shows a vocal line (soprano or tenor) and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with the lyrics "ЖИТ... ТИ... НАМ... Я... НЕ... СКО... ПРО... СЯ... ПОГ... НО... СЛЮ...". The piano accompaniment features a complex, rhythmic pattern. The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics "...ЗА... НИ... НЕ... ЗА... АЮ, ... БУ... НИМ... СЕ... ПОМ... РОЗ... ГОР...". The piano accompaniment continues with a similar complex pattern.

**Ya. Stepovyi ““O, shche ne vsi umerly zhali” (“Oh, Not All Sorrows Have Died”) (from the cycle “Pisni nastroi”) Part II, measures 12-15<sup>31</sup>.**

Romantic-impressionistic features are indicated by polyfunctional combinations, the appearance of which is already embedded in the textural presentation itself, where the accompaniment is stratified into several textural levels: the organ point is combined with other harmonic functions, and the melodic line is duplicated or accompanied by counterpoint. Modal

<sup>31</sup> Stepovyi, Ya. Romances “Songs of Mood”: A Vocal Cycle to the Words of O. Oles (Translated Title). Muzychna Ukraina, 1969:5.

chiaroscuro and modal mutations arise due to the chromatization of the melodic movement, which gives depth to the image of the hero, shading his confidence and determination with nuances of internal variability and spiritual bifurcation.

The solo song concludes with material from the introduction and, accordingly, the first and second parts, which frame the composition like an arch. The optimistic E-major affirms the hero's faith in his strength and victory.

The solo songs "Lyvsja spiv kolys' u mene" and "O, shche ne vsi umerly zhali" demonstrate the variability of the lyrical hero's emotional states, which becomes defining for the entire cycle. Both works serve an expository function, establishing the leading intonational-imagery and psychological vectors for the further development of the musical dramaturgy.

A new stage in revealing the psychological palette of the lyrical hero is represented by three romances – "Dolyny spljat,"<sup>32</sup> "V kvitakh bula dusha moia,"<sup>33</sup> and "Skoro sontse zasmijet'sja,"<sup>34</sup> analyzed below.

In the first of them – "Dolyny spljat" (for bass) – the image of a person engulfed in deep solitude and inner turmoil emerges. The composer conveys this state through a restrained, semi-declamatory monologue immersed in the nocturnal silence of nature (see Table 2).

**Table 2**

<b>Ukrainian:</b>	<b>Transliteration:</b>	<b>English:</b>
Долини сплять, а я на горах один на цілу ніч стою Шукаю в небі в добрих зорях зорю недобрую свою...	Dolyny spliat, a ya na horakh odyn na tsilu nich stoju Shukaiu v nebi v dobrykh zoriakh zoriu nedobruiu svoiu...	The valleys slumber, but I am on the mountains Alone for all the night I stand. I search the sky among the kind stars for my own ill-fated star...

**The lyrics of the song "Dolyny spljat" (an extract) by O. Oles  
(<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025)**

The lyrical hero is contrasted with the peace of the surrounding world: while everything around falls asleep, his troubled, restless soul is overwhelmed with painful memories. He is not merely reminiscing. He is looking for his "ill-fated" star, a symbol of fatal love or lost hope, in order to give her "all the gifts" – perhaps sincere feelings that were not reciprocated. This nocturnal inner cleansing culminates in a desire to burst into tears. Yet this is not just an emotional outburst, but a catharsis — a painful, yet necessary release (E.g. 2).

<sup>32</sup> "The Valleys Slumber" (*Translated title*) (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

<sup>33</sup> "My Soul Has Blossomed" (*Translated title*) (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

<sup>34</sup> "Soon the Sun Will Laugh" (*Translated title*) (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

E.g. 2

До-ли-ни сплять, а я на го-рах о-дин на ці-лу ніч сто-

*sempre legato*

**Ya. Stepovyi “The Valleys Slumber” (from the cycle “Songs of Mood”)  
4-6 measures<sup>35</sup>.**

The two-part form of the piece, with a three-measure introduction and conclusion, embodies the gradual escalation of the lyrical hero’s emotional unrest and despair. The tense harmonic language of the introduction—modulations to distant keys (C-minor- $\text{Db}$ -major) and a series of elliptical progressions—establishes a psychologically intense mood that permeates the entire work.

A sustained tonic organ point throughout the entire first section serves as the background against which there are observed the alternation of the tonic, altered double dominant, and diminished leading-tone chord, as well as the major and minor subdominants — all these elements depict a dramatic emotional landscape: a confrontation with the past that brings no peace, and a longing to break free from it through spiritual revelation amid the silence of nature: (C-minor)  $1|t - \text{DD}_{4/3}^{55} 2| t - \text{DVII}_{43} \rightarrow 3| \text{DVII}_{43} \rightarrow (\text{Db}) - S - s^4| K_{6/4} - \text{DD}_{4/3}^{55} |$ .

These same harmonic constructions become the basis for forming the texture of the accompaniment: in the first part, it is a concentrated, measured chord movement, which seems to convey a restrained inner tension, silent expectation. In the second, they are transformed into an excited, restless triplet movement, which gives the music a feeling of inner trembling and psychological instability. The short conclusion, echoing the intonations of the introduction, creates a figurative arch, which seems to frame the emotional space of the work, from restrained pain to a heartbreaking confession.

<sup>35</sup> Stepovyi, Ya. Romances “Songs of Mood”: A Vocal Cycle to the Words of O. Oles (Translated Title). Muzychna Ukraina, 1969:7.

The romance “V kvitakh bula dusha moia” (for soprano or tenor) is set to the poetry of Oleksandr Oles, whose figurative language is deeply saturated with metaphors and symbols that allude to the aesthetics of symbolism, with its inclination toward the inner, transcendent, and supra-rational world. It is a profoundly intimate, expressive lyrical confession, stylistically akin to symbolism. Multifaceted metaphors, associative images, and philosophical emotionality dominate in his poetic world. The key symbol is fire, in which the hero’s soul burns—not as tragic self-destruction, but as purification through passion and self-denial. The image of flowers, with which the soul is identified, symbolizes beauty, fragility, memory, or love doomed to destruction for the sake of a higher emotional truth. The motif of gray mist creates a semi-real, metaphysical space where this symbolic burning takes place.

The poem is filled with rhythmic repetitions (“*let them burn*,” “*I have no regrets*”), which intensify the obsessive, almost trance-like phonation of the text. This is not merely an emotion but a state into which the hero is immersed. His inner gesture—“look, admire, do not extinguish”—is not a plea but, on the contrary, a demonstrative act of dignity, a symbolic sacrifice, an aestheticized suffering. This is the culmination of an inner burning, not public, but spiritual, detached from real time and space.

This poem finds a subtle musical embodiment in Yakiv Stepovyi’s romance “V kvitakh bula dusha moia” from the cycle “Pisni nastroiui”. The composer delicately transfers the symbolist imagery of the text into the realm of sound, employing restrained impressionistic harmonies, a transparent accompaniment texture, and a semi-declamatory vocal line. The song does not dramatize the text but subtly conveys the psychological nuances of the protagonist’s inner state. The vocal part gravitates towards speech intonation, preserving the natural melody of spoken language while maintaining lyrical expressiveness.

The harmonic language of the romance is rich in alterations, diminished and augmented chords, which create tension and a sense of uncertainty — a musical equivalent of the mist in which the soul burns. Gradual harmonic modulations (A-minor, G-minor, D-minor, ending in C-major), polytonal combinations, and a trembling triplet accompaniment accompany the main theme of combustion. For example, in the very first phrase “My Soul Has Blossomed” the melody sounds in A-minor, and the accompaniment in D-minor or within its harmonic sphere. This tonal splitting creates the effect of spiritual duality and anxious tension.

The use of tetrachords from the double harmonic minor scale lends particular expressiveness, as do chord progressions without traditional resolution, evoking a sense of suspended emotion and inner trembling. The composer eschews an external climax, instead crafting an intimate psychological étude in which every intonation, harmonic shift, or dynamic fade carries significance.

Overall, Yakiv Stepovyï's romance is a musical fusion with poetic metaphor, in which the hero's soul does not merely sing about pain—it burns silently, yet with dignity. The composer keenly captures the poetics of O. Oles, preserving the atmosphere of detached, aestheticized suffering and creating a model of national chamber lyricism, where symbolism, impressionism, and Ukrainian song intonation merge into a unified whole.

In the third romance, "Skoro sontse zasmijet'sja" (for soprano or tenor), the lyrical hero undergoes a painful return from an illusory world of inner burning to a bitter but inevitable reality. The realization of an insurmountable distance from personal happiness resonates as a farewell to a dream that only recently blazed in the heart. The emotional palette of the piece is filled with sorrow, anxiety, and quiet despair, which the composer masterfully conveys using techniques similar to those in the previous romance, but within the framework of a three-part form that lends the imagery a dynamic sense of inner searching and acceptance of the inevitable.

The modal-tonal shifts reflect changes in the emotional state: the introductory section unfolds in A-minor, transitioning to F-major, a major key that sounds like a fleeting hope or a memory of light that existed once and fades. The middle section sustains F-major, as if holding onto the echo of this illusory brightness, while the reprise returns to A-minor, symbolizing the inevitability of inner darkness and the completion of the emotional cycle.

Short tetrachordal phrases, gradually expanding and developing through variation, convey the touching intonations of inner trembling. They resemble fragmented, anguished speech, where each intonation echoes both pain and hope. This melodic flexibility makes it possible to express the delicate emotional impulses of the protagonist, his invisible struggle between the desire for happiness and the acceptance of loss.

The ostinato chord progression in the introductory section — s - t<sub>7</sub> – t | s - t<sub>7</sub> – t|, similar to the previous romance, establishes a vertical interplay of tonic and subdominant, sounding like a repetitive, almost mesmerizing gesture of inner focus, a backdrop for the unfolding of emotions. Later, a harmonic sequence t – t<sub>7</sub> – DDV<sub>II</sub>7 – t, t emerges, which, while maintaining a stable tonic foundation, evokes a sense of emotional pause, quiet acceptance of fate, and tranquility after an inner breakdown. All of this creates the impression that the hero does not merely suffer—he exhausts his longing in the music, leaving it encoded in the sounds.

The three solo songs described above serve as an intimate introduction, a kind of prologue to the cycle's only romance with a civic resonance—"O slovo ridne!"<sup>36</sup> (for baritone), which rises from individual pain and experiences into

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<sup>36</sup> "O Cherished Word!" (*Translated title*) (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

a grand generalization, an appeal to eternal values. They pave the way from personal emotion to a national ideal, preparing the listener to move beyond subjective lyricism into a space affirming universal aesthetic and spiritual ideals.

In the crescendoed three-part open form A+B+C with a continuous thematic development that gradually grows like a wave, the composer creates a passionate, inspired appeal to the word as a living entity, a symbol of creativity, strength, spiritual weapon, and light. In the first two stanzas, there is admiration and awe; the poetic images of the word reach a metaphorical height: it is compared with the whisper of trees, the music of the stars, and the silken singing of the Ukrainian steppes. But already in the culminating third stanza, this admiration develops into a passionate call to serve the people, into a poetically pathos oath of the artist:

**Table 3**

<i><b>Ukrainian</b></i>	<i><b>Transliteration</b></i>	<i><b>English</b></i>
О слово! Будь мечем моїм! Ні, сонцем стань! Вгорі спинися, Осяй мій край і розлетися Дощами судними над ним!	O slovo! Bud mechem moim! Ni, sontsem stan! Vhori spynysia, Osiai mii krai i rozletysia Doshchamy sudnymy nad nym!	O word! Be my sword! No, become the sun! Stop at the top, Illuminate my land and scatter In fateful rains above it!

**The lyrics of the song “O slovo ridne!” (an extract) by O. Oles**  
(<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

The entire romance encompasses a wide emotional range—from epic impulse to heroic exaltation, embodied in both the content and the musical texture. The dynamic, energetic melody with chromatic intonational turns gradually transforms into a broad, flexible line that carries solemnity and power. The composer strives to capture and convey the intonational nuances of the word with utmost precision, creating a declamatory melody filled with expressiveness and sensitivity.

It is accompanied by the piano in a restrained chordal texture (a sustained pulsation of a four-part chord presentation in fourths) in the outer sections, while in the middle section, a triplet-based, arpeggiated sound emerges, adding lightness and fluidity. The harmony is built on simple tonic-dominant relationships, with modal fluctuations between F#-minor and A-major, as well as modulations and deviations to closely related keys, which give the image internal movement and modal-tonal flamboyance.



Everything in this work—both word and sound—serves a single purpose: to create an emotionally powerful image of the artist as a visionary and fighter, for whom the native word is not only a means of expression but also a tool for shaping the future.

The cycle is completed by the romances “Ne berit iz zelenoho luhu verby”<sup>37</sup> (for soprano or tenor) and “Ni, ne spivai pisen veselykh”<sup>38</sup> (for soprano or tenor).

The poem by Oleksandr Oles “Ne berit iz zelenoho luhu verby”, set to music by Yakov Stepovyi, is a vivid example of deeply figurative, symbolic lyrics, which in the composer’s work is embodied in the style of elegant chamber emotionality inherent in Ukrainian impressionism of the early 20th century.

**Table 4**

Ukrainian	Transliteration	English
Не берить із зеленого лугу верби, Ні на жовті піски, ні на скелі, Бо зів'яне вона від жаги і журби По зеленому лузі в пустелі...	Ne berit iz zelenoho luhu verby, Ni na zhovti pisky, ni na skeli, Bo ziviane vona vid zhahy i zhurby Po zelenomu luzi v pusteli...	Do not take willows from a green grove, Neither on the yellow sands, nor on the rocks, For it will wither from thirst and sorrow For the green grove in the desert...

**The lyrics of the song “Ne berit iz zelenoho luhu verby” (an extract) by  
O. Oles (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025)**

These lines demonstrate the metaphorical opposition of the natural environment and the alien elements. The willow is a symbol of a tender, fragile soul that can exist only in its natural, emotionally nourishing space. Moving it “*to the yellow sands*”, “*to the rock*” acquires the meaning of spiritual destruction. Similarly, a pine tree, torn from the mountains, “*will wither in the water*”, unable to withstand another environment. The figurative system of the poem is completely symbolic, built on delicate metaphors and allusions to the inner world of a man, his need to be in harmony with his nature. The poem is dominated by a restrained, sad emotional tone, with a hint of internal protest, but presented through the prism of quiet elegy.

<sup>37</sup> “Do Not Take the Willow from the Green Grove” (*Translated title*). (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

<sup>38</sup> “Do Not Sing Happy Songs” (*Translated title*) (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025).

M. T. Rylskyi<sup>39</sup> highly appreciated and noted its proximity to folklore: “Our wonderful composer Yakiv Stepovyi wrote music to Oles’s words “Ne berit iz zelenoho luhu verby” to a poem whose heartfelt sincerity evokes the lines of Heine or Lesia Ukrainka, while at the same time being imbued with the pure breath of a folk song”<sup>40</sup>.

Yakiv Stepovyi, a subtle lyricist and a master of the chamber vocal genre, embodies this poetic symbolism in music in the romance with exceptionally delicate means.

The smooth melody tends towards declamation, but at the same time retains a gentle melodious nature, as if “uttered in a whisper.” It reproduces the inner movement of the soul - oscillations between longing and peace, acceptance and farewell. The wave-like movements of the melody, restrained dynamics, and constant intonation variability form a vulnerable, poignant emotional background that deepens the mood of the poetry.

The harmony is marked by tonal variability (A–minor–E–minor), the use of soft modulations, and modal layers. It seems to pulsate with the text, conveying the instability, fragility of the state of mind. Such harmonious language is one of the signs of Stepovyi’s style, which tends towards psychologism and lyrical multi-layering.

The texture of the piano part is restrained, almost transparent. It performs not only an accompanying function, but also creates an emotional environment: soft arpeggios, triplet figures, half-fading chords resemble the rustling of leaves, the swaying of branches, the echo of the nature – willows, pines, mountains. This textural imagery is a distinctive feature of Stepovyi’s compositional style, in which nature often becomes a psychological reflection of human experiences.

The couplet form of the romance, with its variant development, gives the work unity and dynamic development at the same time. Such a structure allows demonstrating organically the lyrical mood, gradually changing the intonation palette, and increasing the emotional tension.

Laconicism, natural intonation, emotional depth, sincerity, and simplicity of the composer’s musical language form a holistic artistic concept, in which intimate lyricism, psychological depth, and poetic symbolism dominate.

The romance “Ni, ne spivaj pisen’ veselykh” (for soprano or tenor) embodies deep emotional experiences born of pain, misfortune, and universal sorrow. The central part of the work contains imagery that emphasizes the overall oppressive atmosphere:

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<sup>39</sup> Maksym T. Rylsky (1895–1964), a Ukrainian poet, translator, academician, and doctor of philology.

<sup>40</sup> As cited in Bulat, T. *Yakiv Stepovyi (Translated title)*. Muzychna Ukraina, 1990:23.

**Table 5**

<i><b>Ukrainian</b></i>	<i><b>Transliteration</b></i>	<i><b>English</b></i>
Дивись, нещастя, лихо всюди, нудьга і горе скрізь живе, чи чуєш стогін той невпинний, той плач, що серце жалеє рве?	Dyvys, neshchastia, lykho vsiudy, nudha i hore skriz zhyve, chy chuiesh stohin toi nevpynnyi, toi plach, shcho sertse zhalem rve?	Look, misfortune, disaster are everywhere, boredom and grief live wide, do you hear that incessant groan, that cry that tears the heart with pity?

**The lyrics of the song “Ni, ne spivaj pisen’ veselykh” (an extract) by  
O. Oles (<https://ukrainianartsong.ca/list> - accessed 10.07.2025)**

The inner world of the lyrical hero unfolds against the backdrop of tragic existence, approaching a philosophical contemplation of loss. The gradual overcoming of personal pain leads to the discovery of universal truths, embodied in the sound of the vocal part: a delicate, intonation-sensitive melody, close to folk-song chants, retains an individual character. It is complemented by an energetic, toccata-like piano accompaniment, at times doubling the main melody.

Comparing the vocal cycles “Barvinky” (“Periwinkles”) and “Pisni nastroi” (“Songs of Mood”), one can trace the evolution of the approach to the interaction between poetic text and musical form. In “Barvinky”, the basis of the romance is typically a lyrical, everyday-colored melody that defines the harmonic language and modal-tonal relationships; the accompaniment sensitively responds to the vocal line.

In contrast, in “Pisni nastroi”, Yakiv Stepovyi employs a more complex harmonic language: numerous modal-tonal juxtapositions, modulations, and deviations from the main key cause modal mutations in the melodic line. In the piano texture, combinations of different tonalities in the vertical dimension are found, indicating a complication of the musical language and a deepening of the psychological content.

## **5. A Civic Dimension of Stepovyi’s chamber music**

When Ukrainian society is faced with the challenges of preserving national identity, the formation of an active citizen involves not only knowledge of history or politics, but also a deep understanding of cultural heritage. In this context, the chamber vocal work by Yakiv Stepovyi, in particular the cycle

“Pisni nastroi” to the words of O. Oles, is valuable not only as an aesthetic but also as a civic act.

Ya. Stepovyi turns to Ukrainian poetry at a time when the public expression of national identity threatened with challenges of censorship and repression. The choice of an intimate genre — a chamber vocal miniature — is not accidental: through lyricism, silence, hint, metaphor, the composer creates an “inner space of identity,” where the nation is not declared, but experienced. In a world where the loud expression often displaces the essential, this form acquires special importance — as a manifestation of the artist’s responsibility to his culture and history.

Today, in the 21st century, an active citizen is not only a participant in political life but also a person capable of cultural choice, aesthetic reflection, and protection of intangible values. Listening to, analyzing, and rethinking such works as Stepovy’s romances forms cultural memory in the younger generation, and with it, empathy, responsibility, and dignity, which are essential components of civic competencies<sup>41</sup>.

A separate role is played by the poetic word of Oleksandr Oles, which in musical embodiment acquires a new sound as a call to inner truth, to silence as a source of strength. In the final song of the cycle “O slovo ridne!” the word appears as a spiritual weapon. This image has not lost its relevance: today, as a hundred years ago, the Ukrainian word is a field of struggle for freedom of thought, for the right to be oneself.

Therefore, turning to the work of Yakiv Stepovyi is not only a gesture of academic interest but also a tool of civic education, a means of forming a culturally conscious, emotionally mature personality capable of seeing in music not only beauty but also an ethical obligation to one’s people, history, and future.

## 6. Conclusion and Discussion

In the vocal works by Yakiv Stepovyi, particularly in the cycle “Pisni nastroi”, one can trace the characteristic stylistic features of Ukrainian musical modernism of the early 20th century, which combine national elements with influences from European Romantic and Impressionistic traditions. The composer organically blends the foundations of classical major-minor tonality with folk modality, particularly through the disruption of the functional stability of the triad and active modal-tonal variability.

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<sup>41</sup> Council of Europe. Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture, 2024. <https://rm.coe.int/prems-056824-rfcdc-guidance-doc-for-vet/1680b1c6f4> (accessed 04.08.2025).

The entire concept of "Pisni nastroi" is deeply lyrical, immersed in psychological experiences, emotional subtlety, and nuances of mood. The music does not merely illustrate the text but reveals its subtext, hidden tension, lyricism, and dramatism.

The cycle reflects a folk foundation reinterpreted in a new stylistic manner: Stepovyi skillfully transforms intonational elements of Ukrainian folk song (primarily of a recitative-declamatory type). Instead of direct folk quotations, there is stylization and intonational modeling (motifs of lullabies, laments, and ritual songs).

In the harmonic realm, the composer employs extended tonality and coloristic harmony, non-functional harmonic relationships, chromaticized harmony, and modality, bringing his style closer to Impressionism. Frequent use of major-minor combinations, variability of tonal planes, and free handling of the tonic are evident. Parallelisms, modal shifts, tonal-modal instabilities, suspensions, and anticipations create subtle emotional tension.

The vocal line tends toward speech-like intonation, with careful attention to the poetic text, poems by O. Oles. A recitative style is prevalent, organically combined with melodic lyricism. In the cycle, rhythmic plasticity plays a significant role, guided by the inner impulses of the poem rather than strict metrical-rhythmic patterns.

The piano part acts as an equal participant in a dialogue or duet. The piano serves not only an accompanying role but also a co-creative one, shaping the emotional space, coloration, and subtext. The piano texture is dominated by impressionistic traits: blurred harmonies and a "watercolor" sound palette. Often, the piano's sound illustrates the hero's mood, complementing or contrasting with the vocal line.

The cycle "Pisni nastroi" by Yakiv Stepovyi is an example of Ukrainian intonational-modal Impressionism, rooted in national traditions while remaining open to modern European trends. It features a stylistic synthesis of folk elements, Romanticism, Impressionism, and Symbolism. This is one of the most profound embodiments of the poetics of Ukrainian "mood music" from the early 20th century.

The works by Yakiv Stepovyi on verses by Oleksandr Oles are a model of a subtle poetic-musical synthesis, in which the Ukrainian soul appears in all its sensual, emotional, and symbolic depth. Stepovyi acts as a master of musical language, capable of reflecting national identity not declaratively, but through an intimate world of images and feelings. His vocal miniatures are a dialogue with cultural tradition, a continuation of European trends in a national key, and at the same time an innovative step in the development of Ukrainian chamber vocal music.

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