



Press Release

Wednesday 20 December 2023

Royal Opera House streams 'Songs for Ukraine' Christmas Concert in Ukraine

Friday 22 December 2023

- The Royal Opera House partners with the State Agency of Ukraine on Art and Artistic Education to broadcast the Songs for Ukraine Chorus.
- A recording of the Christmas Concert performed at the Royal Opera House will be premiered on the State Agency's [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#) pages.
- This is the first-time friends, loved ones and supporters in Ukraine will see and hear the Chorus perform in full – a majority of ROH Songs for Ukraine singers were displaced by the conflict.
- Features traditional Ukrainian carols and a special performance by members of the Royal Opera Chorus in a display of hope and solidarity.

The **Royal Opera House (ROH)** and the **State Agency of Ukraine on Art and Artistic Education** will stream a Christmas Concert performed by the **ROH Songs for Ukraine Chorus** on Facebook and YouTube. This partnership will enable audiences around the world to watch the singers' performance at the Royal Opera House. It includes music that spans 1000 years of the Ukrainian Christmas tradition and a special rendition of 'O Holy Night' by members of the **Royal Opera Chorus**.

Set up in 2022 in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the ROH Songs for Ukraine Chorus is made up of 130 Ukrainian people, a majority of whom have been displaced by the war. Created as part of the Royal Opera House's Learning & Participation programme, the ROH Songs for Ukraine Chorus brings together Ukrainian singers with the Royal Opera Chorus to demonstrate the power of music to inspire hope and solidarity.

Having now performed a series of successful concerts in London and Bradford this year, the Royal Opera House is delighted to partner with the Ukrainian Government to stream the Chorus' incredible voices across the globe, particularly to friends, loved ones and supporters in Ukraine who have not had the chance to hear them sing before.

The premiere stream of the 'ROH Songs for Ukraine Christmas Concert' will be available concurrently on the State Agency of Ukraine on Arts and Artistic Education's Facebook and YouTube channels at **18:00 GMT on Friday 22 December**. It will be publicly accessible from the UK, Ukraine and other territories

around the globe.

Jillian Barker, Director of Learning and Participation at the Royal Opera House, said:

'We began the ROH Songs for Ukraine Chorus to unite Ukrainian people in song in the face of such devastation and adversity. Having now performed across the UK, we are delighted that the Chorus' performance in the Royal Opera House will be available to be streamed online to continue to inspire hope and resilience worldwide. The hearts of the ROH Songs for Ukraine Chorus members are with their homeland, so it feels only right that this concert can be shared, watched, and felt, across Ukraine.'

Olha Rossoshanska, Acting Head of State Agency of Ukraine on Art and Artistic Education, said:

'The State Agency of Ukraine on Art and Artistic Education is proud to be in partnership with the Royal Opera House to present the magical ROH Songs for Ukraine Christmas Concert. This remarkable event is a powerful message of unity and optimism, offering the people of Ukraine the opportunity to immerse themselves in our rich cultural heritage across the globe amidst the difficult times for our country. We strongly believe that art has the incredible power to bring inspiration and motivation to keep us moving forward and opening our cultural heritage to the world.'

Eduard Fesko, Chargé d'affaires of Ukraine in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, said:

'As Ukraine is going through the hardest period of its history, the world gets to know my country not only as a nation of valiant warriors but also as a nation with rich cultural heritage. The Songs for Ukraine Chorus, comprising of Ukrainians displaced by the war, is an embodiment of resilience, creativity, determination, talent and dedication.'

We are grateful for the Royal Opera House's commitment to supporting Ukraine, providing a much-appreciated opportunity to share our cultural traditions with our UK friends. The outcome of the remarkable collaboration on highlighting Ukrainian Christmas singing traditions is absolutely astounding and the audience is truly made to feel the spirit of the Ukrainian Christmas.'

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

[Images can be downloaded here](#)

PRESS CONTACT

Lucy Wolstenholme: Lucy.Wolstenholme@roh.org.uk | Learning Communications Officer

About the Royal Opera House

Home to The Royal Ballet, The Royal Opera and the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, the Royal Opera House brings together world-class performers and trailblazing creative teams to share unforgettable performances with audiences near and far. Our theatres are in the heart of London's Covent Garden, but our work is accessed and experienced across the UK and globally through ROH Stream, tours, cinema programme, radio broadcasts and TV output. Our work in schools and communities up and down the country is driven by our curriculum linked Create & Learn programmes, specially designed to inspire creativity, broaden participation and diversify the future of opera and ballet. These sit alongside industry-leading talent development projects, regional partnerships, and a raft of daytime events, family activities, tours, exhibitions and free concerts here in our iconic Covent Garden home. We are also expanding our audience through our flagship Young ROH scheme and are committed to reducing our impact on the environment and aim to achieve net zero emissions by 2035.

About the State Agency of Ukraine on Arts and Artistic Education

The State Agency of Ukraine for Arts and Art Education is a central government agency whose activities are directed and coordinated by the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine through the Minister of Culture and Information Policy, which implements state policy in the arts and specialized art education field. We promote the artistic identity of artists and motivate different groups of people to interact with art to develop the creative potential of Ukrainian society and the value of modern culture.

About Learning and Participation at the Royal Opera House

The Royal Opera House's dedicated Learning and Participation programme covers the length and breadth of the country, playing a vital role in building and diversifying the future of ballet and opera. The programme aims to inspire creativity and widen access to our art forms, offering a free, curriculum-linked national schools' programme; a suite of activities for families and individuals in and around our iconic Covent Garden home; and a number of events and performances specially designed to broaden participation, nurture young talent and, more recently, thank the NHS for the work its dedicated staff are continuing to do in response to the pandemic.