

UKRAINIAN VOICES CHOIR NEBO I ZEMLIA CHOIR
MUSICAL DIRECTOR LIUDMYLA KULAKOVA

**CELEBRATING
UKRAINIAN FOLKLORE**



HORSHAM MUSEUM
19 JUNE 2026

About the Choirs

In 2022, far from their homes in Ukraine, a group of women gathered in Brighton carrying little more than memories, songs, and hope. What began as a small circle of voices soon became the Ukrainian Voices Choir – a place where music replaced silence, strangers became friends, and Ukrainian culture found a new home.

As the choir grew, so did its purpose: not only to preserve Ukrainian traditions, but also to support and inspire those rebuilding their lives in a new country. In 2023, the choir welcomed professional music teacher Liudmyla Kulakova, whose guidance helped the ensemble grow in confidence and artistry.

Inspired by its success, a second choir, Nebo i Zemlia (“Heaven and Earth”), was founded in Lewes in 2024. Together, the two choirs bring Ukrainian folk songs, choral music, and cultural traditions to audiences across Sussex.

Through music, friendship, and shared heritage, Ukrainian Voices and Nebo i Zemlya celebrate the enduring spirit of Ukraine and the power of song to unite people across borders and generations.

Musical Director: Liudmyla Kulakova
Accordion: Bing Lyle
Piano: Liudmyla Kulakova, Bing Lyle

1. I will lead the rusalkas

I will lead the rusalkas
Right into the grey pine forest,
And I, so young, will return
Right to my father's courtyard.

I will lead the rusalkas
Right to the gates,
And I, so young, will return
Right to my home.

I will lead the rusalkas
Right to the pit,
And I, so young, will return
Right to my mother.

And with rue and mint
We have barred the paths,
Oh, so that the rusalkas
Would come to us no more.

2. Early, early

Early, early I'll go up the hill,
I'll go up the hill in the morning.

Early, early I'll clap my hands,
I'll clap my hands in the morning.

Early, early so my palms will ache,
so my palms will ache in the morning.

Early, early so my rings will ring,
so my rings will ring in the morning.

Early, early so the rusalkas will hear,
so the rusalkas will hear in the morning.

3. The father mowed

My father mowed, so did I,
And we disturbed a nightingale's nest.
The nightingale in the grove is chirping and chirping.
A canary...

Roman is moving, Hapka's making a sheaf,
Katherina is raking up the hay.
Grytsko is giving water to the bullocks,
Hanna's drawing water.
Oh mum, I love Grytsko.
Grytsko reins his horse,
Grytsko's hat suits him well,
I love Grytsko, the great guy.

Come to me, Gregory, on Sunday,
And I'll give you a shirt, thin and white.
The nightingale in the grove is chirping and chirping.
A canary...

Come to me, Gregory, on Monday,
And we'll go with you to pick up periwinkles.
The nightingale in the grove is chirping and chirping.
A canary...

Come to me, Gregory, on Tuesday,
And we'll bind with you forty sheaves.
The nightingale in the grove chirped and chirped.
A canary...

4. Oh, green rye, green

Oh green rye, green,
My dear guests are with me.
The rye is green, the reapers reap,
My dear guests are coming to my house.

Oh green rye, green,
My dear guests are with me.
The rye is green, along the furrow,
My dear guests, from the bottom of my heart.

Oh green rye, green,
My dear guests are with me.
The rye is green and with oats as well,
Our entire family has come here.

Oh green rye, green,
My dear guests are with me.
The rye is green, behind the village.
My dear guests sit at my table.

5. Midsummer solstice celebration song

Oh, on Ivan, on Kupala,
a swallow bathed in the river.
On Ivan Kupala
Oh, it bathed and dried itself in the sun,
why was the girl so sad?
“Oh girl, oh you, when will you see me as a suitor?”
“Come to me in the evening, so no one will see.
Come to me through the valley,
there'll be horilka* with guelder rose berries.”
Come to me through the garden,
there'll be horilka* with honey

**Ukrainian strong alcoholic drink.*

6. A cuckoo flew over

A cuckoo flew over my house,
Landed on the viburnum tree and began to sing.
“Oh, why, dear cuckoo, why do you call?
Do you, dear cuckoo, bring me good news at all?”
“If I had not heard, I would not be calling;
About you, young maiden, I am telling the whole truth.”
“Oh, my God, my God, what have I done?
The Cossack has a wife, and yet I fell in love.
The Cossack has a wife, and also two children,
Yes, two little children, both dark-haired”.
“Oh, my God, my God, what has become of me?
In a foreign land, I confessed to having a wife.
Not only because of the wife, but because of the two children,
My heart has split into two halves.”

7. The Willow Board

A little board of willow wood, a board,
And Nastochka walks upon it, Nastochka.

She longs across the whole field, she longs,
Wondering from where her beloved will arrive, will arrive.

From where her beloved will arrive, will arrive,
And what he will bring to Nastochka, bring.

Red boots, red boots,
For better work, better work

8. Here I am, Yarema

I was born in summer, out in the field beneath the moon,
My friends and relatives were all delighted.

Here I am, Yarema, yes, yes, ooh-ha-ha!
Here I am, Yarema - a wise head indeed.
As I grew older, I went to school,
And my teacher began to teach me letters.
“You, Yarema, have a clever head!
It’s only a pity, Yarema, that it is empty.”

As I grew up, I became a young man.
My father told me that I should take a wife.
I took myself a wife, sweet as honey with cake.
But right after the wedding, she ran away with a young gentleman.

I started chasing after her, but she began to scream.
Her brothers came running and started beating me.
Then I ran away and lost my sandals.
When I got home, my father beat me too.

9. Kolomyika

Oh, the kolomyika is light, light, so light,
But from that kolomyika, my little headaches.
And when you start singing kolomyikas, singing them,
You begin to grieve, then you cry, then start thinking.

Oh, songs-kolomyikas, I tie them in a bundle.
If someone asks me to sing, I will not refuse.
When I sing for myself in two voices,
One goes across the meadow, the other through the woods.

Such-and-such a young lad, his hat tilted sideways,
A pipe in his mouth, a bubble from his nose,
drool on his beard.
Oh, don't laugh, dear girl, at my hat,

Because I don't laugh at you for having floppy ears.

Oh, don't sit next to me, it would be embarrassing.
I'm a girl like a guelder rose, and you're like a scarecrow.
Take a look, dear girl, how handsome I am,
I have a nose like an onion, and a little black mustache.

Oh, the cuckoo was calling and said "coo-coo",
Don't ask me for anything, just take me by the hand.
Oh, the cuckoo was calling and said "coo-coo",
Kiss me, my darling, young one, on the hand.

Oh, the tiny kolomyika, tiny, tiny,
One kolomyika is dear, another is beloved,
the third is sweet.
When I sing, the sorrow disappears,
Because our kolomyika has such magical power.

10. Whose horse is standing there

Whose horse is standing there,
The one with a silver mane,
I'm really liking that,
That girl I'm seeing here.
It's not the girl herself
So much as her pretty face,
Give me your hand, sweetheart,
Hop on my restless horse.

The girl agreed and came
And gave the man her hand...
"I wish I never knew
How loving him might hurt"
Sweet loving's going on
From the evening till the dawn,
When the sun comes up again,
His love would fade away.

11. My Kyiv

I. Shamo

D. Lutsenko

The green sea is playing,
The quiet day is fading.
So dear to me have become
The slopes of the Dnipro,
Where branches sway
With dreams of the lovers.
How can I not love you,
My Kyiv!

Cannas gaze into my eyes,
I will pour my heart into them.
Let them tell my beloved
How faithfully I love her.
I will dream and live
On the wings of hopes.
How can I not love you,
My Kyiv!

The weary city sleeps
With a peaceful, gentle dream.
Far away, lights like a necklace
Have bloomed over the Dnipro.
The velvets of evenings,
Like the surf of happiness,
How can I not love you,
My Kyiv!

12. Hey, there is a tree standing in the field

Hey, there is a tree standing in the field,
That is thin and high
And there are leaves on it
They are green and wide.

And on that tree
A black raven is sitting and croaking
It is croaking about a cossack
And the young maiden is crying,

- Hey, you, my cossack,
You are my periwinkle,
Who will make your bed for you,
Who will make your bed on the road? –

The yellow melilotus
will make my bed for me,
And I'll lay my head on
The blue zhupan*

**zhupan is kind of garment*

13. O Great and Only God

M. Lysenko

O. Konyskyi

O Great and Only God,
Protect our beloved Ukraine.
Bless her with freedom and wisdom,
Shine upon her with Your holy light.

Enlighten us, Your children,
With the light of learning and knowledge.
In pure love for our native land,
O God, nurture us and guide us.

We pray, O God Almighty,
For our dear Ukraine.
Grant that her people and country
May forever enjoy Your grace.

Shield us from all evil,
Guard us from misfortune and strife.
Bless our parents and children,
And grant our nation peaceful life.

14. Stepanyda went to fetch water

Stepanyda went to fetch water,
And she dropped her silver keys into the water.
Whoever finds my silver keys,
Will come to spend the night with me.
The old demon spoke up:
“I’ve found your silver keys.”
“I’ve found your silver keys,
So I’ve come to stay the night with you.”
“I’ll pay for those silver keys,
But I don’t want to spend the night
with you, old demon.”

15. Shoo, shoo, o gray geese

Shoo, shoo, o gray geese,
do not muddy up the waters.
They betrothed the young maiden,
there weeps a young Kozak
O don’t weep, don’t weep, my dear Kozak.
O don’t weep, dear heart, don’t you worry.
As I’ll sit upon the dowry - do come, dear heart, and look.
O, I don’t want to, my dear maiden,
o look upon your dowry.
It would be better to go to the blue sea,
to drown in a swift river.
Don’t drown, my dear Kozak, don’t drown,
O young man.
People do say, and I do know, that you don’t love me.

16. Oh, dark I am, so dark

Oh, dark I am, so dark,
A gypsy girl with raven hair,
I fell in love, I fell in love,
With dark-eyed Ivan fair.

Oh, Ivan, my dear Ivan,
Your shirt is embroidered fine,
So tall you stand, so slender too,
With a dimple on your chin.

Oh, Maruse, dearest Maruse,
I love your beauty bright,
I love to watch you passing by,
To fetch the water light.

When you go to fetch the water,
And come back with your pail,
I love to watch, I love to watch,
Sweet Mary, your soft trail.

Upon the hill two oaks there grow,
So fresh and green they be,
We're such a pair, we're such a pair,
Both dark as night, you see.

I'll go into the forest deep,
And sway the oaks above,
I'll never leave, I'll never go,
I'll never part from love.

17. The Groves Are Rustling

The groves are rustling -
I listen.
The little clouds are racing -
I admire them.
I admire and wonder
Why my soul
Feels so joyful.
Hark! A bell is humming
From afar.
My thoughts are spinning
Above the fields.
Above the flowing fields,
Bathing me
Like a swallow.
I walk and walk,
Deeply moved.
I keep awaiting someone,
Singing.
Singing and loving
Beneath the tender,
Caressing whisper of the grass.
The grove is dreaming
Above the river.
There, the edge of the sky
Is like gold.
Like shattered gold,
The river burns and trembles
Like music.

Help Us Keep the Music Alive

Every donation helps our choirs grow and thrive

Follow the link to donate in support of our choirs

<https://www.adurukrainesupport.org.uk/donations-choir>

Or scan the QR code to make a donation

