

THE RELEVANCE OF MUSIC JOURNALISM IN UKRAINE

D. Solodenko

National Aviation University, Kyiv

Academic adviser: M. Mayevska.

Music journalism as a separate field appeared in the 18th century and reporting of music was done by such publications as «Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung», «Neue Zeitschrift für Musik» and «The Musical Times» [4]. But unlike journalism in the conventional sense, music journalism not only informs the reader, but also show them the world of music and art.

American musician Frank Zappa once said about such genre in music journalism as rock journalism that: «People who can't write, interviewing people who can't talk, for people who can't read». And the problem is that modern music journalism is beginning to resemble this statement. This genre evolved because of the underground scene and developed thanks to genuine music fans, but right now it began to turn into a glossy-magazines story, with a total lack of critical thinking and understanding of music itself.

So as we can see there is also a problem of the qualifications of a music journalist. After all, not all journalists are musicians, nor are all musicians good journalists. Furthermore, music journalism is not always taken seriously, so. For example, young people start writing about music just to make a quick money. The Irish novelist and publicist Bernard Shaw wrote about this in 1894: «... it happens that the post of music critic is taken up by journalists in search of temporary earnings and they take up the job, covering up their shortcomings with many purely descriptive reports or bits of news about music and musicians» [3, c. 48].

Later on, specialists start to move to publications that are living off the big music companies, which do not benefit from a journalist writing objectively about a certain product by criticising it. They only need the most positive feedback on a new project. And on the other hand, with the development of social media, there are more music blogs and channels run by ordinary people, which suggests that anyone now can become a music critic. This raises the question of the value and informative sense of such material.

Today there are still many music periodicals that do not allow this

genre to disappear and which continue to publish news about new releases by artists who are not yet world-famous. But if we take Ukraine into consideration, we can immediately notice that music journalism here is just beginning to evolve.

There are some major music publications in Ukraine, that include:

- «Comma» – an online media outlet that publishes news about current Ukrainian and world music.
- «Karabas Live» – Ukraine’s biggest online music publication, more focused on a popular, mainstream product.
- «LiRoom» – an online media about new Ukrainian music. The main goal of this publication is to present more Ukrainian artists, both new and experienced, who have not ceased to exist.
- «Музика» (Music) – magazine appeared in 1923 and the publication immediately became a unique event in the musical and cultural life of Ukraine of the 1920s. The magazine mainly publishes news about festivals, competitions, concerts of the Ukrainian diaspora, etc.

In Ukrainian medias that dedicated to music topic journalists, unfortunately, write more about famous foreign musicians, while local performers and their work do not receive much attention. Ukrainian journalist and critic Oleksandr Yevtushenko commented on this: «There is a lack of strong healthy patriotism. I believe you have to love your motherland if you want to be a journalist. I often do not see this love in the articles of modern music journalists. When an author prefers a foreign band to a Ukrainian one, such material becomes uninteresting to me, no matter how well-written it is» [2]. We are used to get more information about popular foreign performers, thus forgetting that musicians in our country are just as good, perhaps even better. And, unfortunately, with some neglect, we do not allow Ukrainian performers to become better known in their own country.

Alexey Bondarenko, founder of the LiRoom blog, also points to the problem of education in «music journalism»: «...we do not have a music journalism and media institute that educates journalists in this field» [1].

It should be noted that today in Ukraine there is a lack of understanding of music journalism, and most often it simply ends with writing news about the release of a new album, song or music video of a particular band. That is why the founders of music blogs or online publications in Ukraine are enthusiasts for whom highlighting information about the world of music is just a hobby rather than a profession. As a result, writing critical articles is out of the question, because even these are sometimes not accepted and understood by the audience or the performers themselves. The most criticism is directed at artists who are not yet well known, while performers who sell out concerts are untouchable. These blogs are not popular for a wide

audience and from this comes the next problem, the problem of a lack of an authoritative publication where professionals would work and where contemporary Ukrainian performers would dream to be in.

That is why the development of modern Ukrainian publications and music blogs on the Internet is particularly important. After all, thanks to this platform, people have begun to pay more attention to the subject of music and performers; also thanks to them, classic journalistic genres have changed too, and the usual interviews, reports and reviews have taken on a more hybridised form.

As a conclusion, it is worth to mention that Ukrainian music journalism is just beginning to develop and already existing publications are starting to pay proper attention to Ukrainian music in their works. But this type of journalism will be most developed in Ukraine when, firstly, the publication will stop serving popular musicians and start publishing non-biased critical materials, which will increase readers' interest in the publication, and secondly, the journalist himself will have his own ideas, views on life and music, which will help him to ask non-trivial questions that will create an interesting material for both the reader and the musician.

References:

1. Двадцять тез про музичну журналістику [E-resource]. – Access mode: <https://zbruc.eu/node/52061>
2. Інтерв'ю з Олександром Євтушенком [E-resource]. – Access mode: <http://rock-oko.com/pro-avtora/ntervyu-karabas-lve.html>
3. О музыке: [Сб. эссе и статей] / Б. Д. Шоу; пер. с англ. А. Гиривенко [и др.]; сост. А. Парин. – М.: Аграф, 2000. – 304 с.
4. Vujić, Bojan (n.d.), “Criticism of Music” in The Oxford Companion to Music, Oxford Music Online [E-resource]. – Access mode: <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199579037.001.0001/acref-9780199579037-e-1716#acref-9780199579037-e-1716>