



Article

## On The Theoretical Foundations of Pop Art

Mulladjanov Davlat Mavlanovich<sup>1</sup>

1. Associate Professor of the department "Music and Theoretical Sciences", Candidate of Arts, Uzbekistan State Institute of Arts and Culture

\* Correspondence: [mullajonovdavlat@gmail.com](mailto:mullajonovdavlat@gmail.com)

**Abstract:** Alongside this, the article<sup>7</sup> discusses the conditions under which Uzbek musical estrada has evolved into its own historical and cultural phenomenon, and why its essence remains so vague in scholarly studies. The pop music in Uzbekistan enjoyed rapid expansion in the latter half of the twentieth century and became a central part of public celebrations, media programming, and concert life, the field still remains conceptually splintered. Words like light music, mass music, beat, rock and common music are used for expressing the same thing but none of these terms reflects the fullness of this largely artistic reality. In order to cover this gap, the study builds on descriptive, historical comparative and typological approaches, examining both the literature and music samples. This method enables one to follow the gradual crystallization of estrada as a distinct performance style, rhythmic idiom, and function within contemporary Uzbek cultural practice. These results indicate that neither foreign categories or the Soviet-era notion of mass music can completely account for estrada. It evolved with proximity to the national musical traditions of Uzbekistan, which influenced its melodic roots and performance techniques. Thus, estrada, was popularised as a stand alone musical genre comprised of singable tunes, catchy rhythm, and showed performance.

**Keywords:** estrada, musical stage, light, pop music, mass, beat, rock, everyday music, classical music, performing art, genre.

### 1. Introduction

It should summarize the rationale, provides a concise research background (not an exhaustive review) and states in single sentence the objective of the study. Please do not include any results or the conclusion of the study.

### 2. Materials and Methods

Uzbek music **estrada**, which began to develop rapidly in the 50s and 60s of the twentieth century, it reached the level of a fairly large "music industry" in the 90-s and acquired a unique mass character in a historically short period of time. In particular, pop songs make up a significant part of the music performed in our country during the celebration of Independence Day, Navruz and other public holidays, in the music programs of the Republican TV and Radio and FM radio, as well as various show concerts [1].

Simultaneously, our independent Motherland is becoming a center for conducting international, regional and national festivals and competitions in the field of music. In particular, since 1995 the Republican Song Festival "Uzbekistan – My Homeland", since 1997 the International Music Festival "Sharq Taronalari", and since 1999 the Republican Festival of New Professional Songs named "Sado" have been held regularly [2].

**Citation:** Mavlanovich, M. D.  
On The Theoretical Foundations  
of Pop Art. Central Asian  
Journal of Arts and Design 2026,  
7(1), 42-47

Received: 10<sup>th</sup> Aug 2025

Revised: 16<sup>th</sup> Sep 2025

Accepted: 24<sup>th</sup> Oct 2025

Published: 29<sup>th</sup> Nov 2025



**Copyright:** © 2026 by the  
authors. Submitted for open  
access publication under the  
terms and conditions of the  
Creative Commons Attribution  
(CC BY) license  
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

At the same time, compared to previous years, many more new names were discovered in the pop world - singers and musical groups during the 1990s. Representatives of the new generation continue the creative "baton" of the People's Artist of Uzbekistan Farrukh Zokirov and the vocal and instrumental ensemble "Yalla", People's Artists of Uzbekistan Mansur Toshmatov, Gulomjon Yakubov and Nasiba Abdullayeva, known not only in our country, but also abroad [3]. In particular, in a short time, the places of singers in the pop ranks were taken by the People's Artist of Uzbekistan Yulduz Usmanova, Nuriddin Khaydarov, Honored Artists of Uzbekistan Kozim Kayumov, Kumush Razzokova, Ravshan Namozov, Azim Mullakhanov, Mukhriddin Khalikov, Giyos Boitoev, Mavlyuda Asalkhojaeva, Salokhiddin Azizbaev, Mohira Asadova.

There are ample opportunities for the development of musical estrada in our country. Considering that this direction is focused on millions of listeners and, in particular, it has a great influence on the spiritual education of the younger generation, Decrees of the President and Resolutions of the Cabinet of Ministers were issued on its development in accordance with the requirements of the new era,

The political and social changes that have taken place over the past decade have created indeed an important basis for a qualitative renewal in the field of national music. Now we can see many styles and trends emerging in the rapidly developing practice of pop music. Such principles are primarily reflected in the rhythm system of the song, which is the leading genre of music.

This is natural, because the artistic processes that take place in each historical turning point are primarily reflected in the most popular element of the genre - the melody and rhythm of the song [4]. It should be noted that in the new era under study, the range of melodic sources of pop songs has greatly expanded. In particular, there was a growing number of songs that imitated foreign "roads", and sometimes their sounds were taken directly from "foreign" sources in the process, along with artistically mature examples based on national traditions.

So, as a result of the widespread promotion of songs with such unique melodies in the media (radio, television, etc.), the dictionary (set) of melodies and rhythms of our time (B. Asafev) began to undergo significant changes. Now the need for scientific understanding of the "general direction" of such a variety of styles, the development of practical guidelines and recommendations based on a deep analysis, has become one of the most pressing issues on the agenda, since the melodic factor is also inextricably linked with the fate of the centuries-old artistic values of the musical thinking of our people, which were formed mainly within the framework of the monodic system.

It should be noted that the field of musical estrada as an object of special scientific research has not been studied by our musicologists for many years. In particular, the history of musical estrada has not been covered in detail, its various currents have not been classified, the system of special terms has not been scientifically interpreted. Attention to this field changed in a positive direction only by the last quarter of the 20th century [5]. That can be observed in the examples - in S.Vakhidov's scientific monograph "Uzbek Soviet Song", in candidate dissertation of L.Yusupov "Basic stages of formation and development of Uzbek musical estrada", in scientific research of O.Bekov "Modern Uzbek pop song in the context of music culture of Uzbekistan, in candidate dissertation of S. Amanmuradova "Traditions of musical Estrada of Egypt and Uzbekistan" (on the example of creativity of Umm Kulsum and Batyr Zakirov)".

### 3. Results and Discussion

At first glance, the term "estrada" seems very conditional on the music we describe. It is known that the field is called "light", "pop music", "mass", "beat", "rock", "every day music" in the world of music. Although these terms seem to be used very appropriately in relation to the conditions prevailing in a particular area, a particular space, in reality each of them only reflects some aspect of the music we are referring to.

For example, it is known that the nature of pop music is characterized by "lightness". With that in mind, it seems appropriate to describe it as "light music". But such a description can be applied also to some works by well-known composers. This includes music based on melodies and other artistic media that the listener can "easily" remember and that serve entertainment purposes [7]. Enough examples of this can be found, for example, in some overtures, suites, fantasies, romances and other genres that are the product of the composer's work.

There are also examples of "light" music in symphonic, opera and chamber works of "classical" music (although the content of such works does not always correspond to the concept of "light music"). Thanks to these similar aspects, the works of composers can sometimes become "popular" among the people. Simultaneously, closely related aspects of the concepts of "light" and "pop" are revealed.

At the same time, the concept of "pop music" is also applied to the genre of the song, common among the people. So, the "mass music" term is a broader concept than "musical estrada" one. This can be seen in the descriptions of researchers who defend the term "mass music" [8]. In particular, in the article of the researcher A. Sohor "To beat or not to beat" the meaning of such terms as "pop music", "rock", "beat" are explained. The author also scientifically analyzes such questions like if "beat" is an ideological and aesthetic direction?, Or is it a style? Or is it a genre? At that period of time, in the 1950s and 1970s, the term "beat" was used in the narrow sense of pop music, defining it as a methodological direction in pop music.

The author also emphasizes that due to the unique and peculiar composition of performers and their ability to follow the conjuncture of the music market, the music industry has a unique quality of adaptation to all musical genres. As a result, A. Sohor admits that for all types of "beats" that existed at that time, and possibly those that arose later (and the modern process confirms this), although their general ideological and aesthetic principles are fundamentally different from each other, but common characteristics are clearly visible. At the same time, the author dwells in detail on the reasons for the popularity of "beat" music among young people, recommends a serious selection of foreign musical products that enter the territory of the post-Soviet space in various ways, and criticizes those who imitate their style [6]. Simultaneously, he proposes to replace the term "light music", which was used in musicology in the 1970-1980-s, with the term "mass music", as well as the following classification, based on the context of their content, samples of folk music, author's works and pop music performed by orchestras in parks, discos, restaurants (bars) and other mass events: genre for mass concerts and show performances; genre for mass everyday and folk rituals; genre of popular entertainment music.

This classification of A. Sohor was useful in that time to systematize the general musical processes. However, it is clear that the author relies on the ideology of the former Soviet regime in assessing the direction of musical estrada, which is part of the "mass music" [9]. In particular, the author sometimes uses terms "stage" or "beat" to describe this type of music, describing it "not as an ideological direction, but as a genre like jazz, which expresses a variety of themes and serves different social forces".

It can be said that the term "mass" is used instead of the similar term "pop music" in a broader sense, that is, instead of "musical estrada" in general.

The terms "beat" and "rock" reflect some important aspects of pop music. In particular, "beat" means "rhythm intensity", where the rhythmic basis is understood to be music emphasized in a certain way.

One of the most common terms in the world of music is "rock". The origins of "rock" go back to rhythm and blues related to jazz, which later developed into "rock and roll". At the same time, the term refers to a certain style of music based on "heavy music" [10]. Therefore, this term also cannot be a universal concept.

In the monograph of the Doctor of Art criticism V.Konen "Third layer. New mass genres in the music of the 20th century" for the first time, various genres of jazz and rock in musicology are characterized in detail (with some references in some studies) as a phenomenon of the musical culture of the 20th century. It is noteworthy that the author classified for the first time the areas of music into three layers.

Here, the samples of "musical folklore" belong to the first layer, the "professional composer school" to the second layer, and the types of music that took place in the musical practice of different periods of European society separately from folklore and composer music belong to the third layer. In addition, Konen studies the origins of jazz, rock and pop music in the context of the history of European medieval music [11].

The author, recognizing jazz and rock as a phenomenon in the world music of the twentieth century, and considering the new artistic qualities inherent only in these two musical trends, first of all, analyzes the aesthetics of the musical culture of that period, "differences" and "similarity" that take place between jazz and rock from a historical and geographical point of view. At the same time, the author asked, "Can jazz and rock be recognized as an academic genre concept?" - they consist of many types of subcultures and are far from the concept of genre. The author emphasizes that the roots of other popular genres (reggae, blues, jazz, rock, etc.) go back to the layer of ancient artistic culture, they can not be described in the system of academic concepts such as composition and folklore.

According to Konen, the music of the "third layer" was formed and developed in a "democratic environment" and its beginning rests on medieval European art. In particular, the author notes a certain similarity between the samples of the new mass music of the 20th century and the medieval art of troubadours, jugglers, bards and mastersingers [12]. In particular, it is noted that these examples of musical art were created within a certain community, that the works that have come down to us have the influence of "arranger" thought and technique, as well as a system of special canons of creativity and performance, where the patterns inherent in impromptu and improvisation are clearly manifested according to the author conclusion. The music of the "third layer" differs from other layers ("folklore" and "composing school") in its fundamental features. Although it scattered, it is an independent artistic layer, consisting of its own types and genres, living mainly in democratic circles. This layer is the main trend in the development of popular genres and is an important aspect of the musical culture of the twentieth century".

However, it should be noted that the direct application of the concept of "third layer" proposed by V. Konen to the Uzbek music scene is quite controversial because the musical stage formed in Uzbekistan is more or less inextricably linked with the layers of musical heritage (especially musical folklore) [13].

In today's Uzbek music culture, the term "estrade" is widely used in relation to the above concepts. In a broad sense, this concept refers to the stage, stage music and, in general, stage works (small dramatic, singing, instrumental music, choreography, circus arts). Here, the French term "estrade" means "stage", "platform".

In particular, this situation is reflected in the scientific views of L. Yusupov and O. Bekov. For example, L. Yusupov's dissertation on "The main stages of formation and development of Uzbek pop music" and in O. Bekov's work "Modern Uzbek pop song in the context of Uzbek music culture" describes the term "estrade" (derived from the meaning of the term "stage") as a type of stage art performed on special platforms.

In particular, O. Bekov notes that the term "estrade" is "a kind of professional art that emerged in the artistic environment of the major cities of the last century, serving the democratic bourgeois strata of capitalist society" [14].

Initially the use of the term "estrade" was very broad: "A variety concert, which is based on bright, colorful changes, but not interconnected, shows that in practice it is "capable" of absorbing almost all samples of any artistic creativity, from poetry and music to the circus show. And finally, in contrast to philharmonic concerts and theatrical productions, such an easily established connection between the public and the artists became the basis of the performing arts of variety art. In particular, the situation of direct contact with the listener during the performance led to the emergence of a unique profession of entertainer".

Interpreting the term "estrade" mainly in the context of the stage, the author highlights the factors that determine it as "lively, simple musical forms, sometimes bright, and sometimes simplified, but well-aimed author's intonations and approaches to the popular dance style". At the same time, due to the fact that the term "estrade" is widely interpreted in the study, then some discrepancies appear there. In particular, in the early twentieth century, due to political, social and cultural changes, new concert activities were formed to bring traditional music to a wider audience.

In fact, in these concerts, elements and qualities inherent in pop music are manifested (stage and audience, a concert program consisting of colorful musical numbers, entertainment programs), but along with entertaining numbers, consisting of light popular songs and melodies, instrumental music performed by more and more new musical groups, and among the works performed there were classical folk songs and the most famous examples of classical music.

In our opinion, as a result of this approach, samples of traditional music are also included in the field of variety art [15]. Such a situation can create confusion in the separate perception of samples of various areas of musical art, which have long and firmly taken their place in the cultural life of our people.

#### 4. Conclusion

In the music culture of modern Uzbekistan, the term "estrade" is used not only to describe the types of art associated with the stage, but also a specific direction in music. Thus, the term "estrade" in the "narrow" (private) sense means samples of music based on a certain unity of performance and artistic elements. Consequently, the term "estrade" is used here as a special concept and represents a specific independent direction in music (as opposed to musical folklore and professional music).

Based on this, the sphere described in the text of this article is expressed in the concept of "musical estrada". Therefore, on the basis of this concept, the totality of all (stage) musical genres based on a "fast rhythm" is understood.

Thus, the word "estrade", based on its lexical meaning, means "variety art" in general, and in particular as "musical estrada", that is, an entertaining musical genre that is easily understandable to an unprepared listener. Therefore, it is advisable to apply the concept of "musical estrada" to musical samples based on

harmonious alternations of simple, quickly remembered melodies and special emphasized rhythm techniques.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Bekov O., *Sovremennaya uzbekskaya estradnaya pesnya v kontekste muzykal'noy kul'tury Uzbekistana*. Tashkent: SITi, 1994.
- [2] Bordyug N., "Features of the intonational process in modern Uzbek music," *Muzykal'nyy sovremennik*, vol. 1, pp. 167–171, 1973.
- [3] Karomatov F., "Main features of the musical structure of Uzbek folk songs," in *Issues of the Musical Culture of Uzbekistan*, Tashkent: Publishing House of Artistic Literature of the Uzbek SSR, 1961, pp. 62–63.
- [4] Konen V., *The Third Layer: New Mass Genres in the Music of the Twentieth Century*. Moscow: Muzyka, 1994.
- [5] Sokhor A., *Questions of the Sociology and Aesthetics of Music*. Leningrad: Soviet Composer, 1980.
- [6] Vakhidov S., *Uzbek Soviet Song*. Tashkent: G. Gulyam Literature Publishing House, 1976.
- [7] Yusupov L., *The Main Stages of Formation and Development of Uzbek Pop Music* (Candidate dissertation abstract). Moscow, 1990.
- [8] Amanmuradova S., *Traditions of the Song and Pop Art of Egypt and Uzbekistan (on the example of the work of Umm Kulthum and Batyr Zakirov)* (Candidate dissertation abstract). Tashkent: SITi, 1991.
- [9] Zabrodin G. and Aleksandrov B., *Rock: Art or Disease?* Moscow: Soviet Russia, 1990.
- [10] Mulladjanov D. M., "Tone in the sense of intonation as a fundamental concept in musicology," (explanatory note in article).
- [11] Sokhor A., "Beat as a stressed rhythmic basis," in *Questions of the Sociology and Aesthetics of Music*. Leningrad: Soviet Composer, 1980, p. 265.
- [12] Dyachkova L., *Estradnaya muzyka i sovremennoye obshchestvo*. Moscow: Muzyka, 1983.
- [13] Kholopov Y., *Problemy muzykal'nogo myshleniya v massovykh zhanrakh*. Moscow: Soviet Composer, 1985.
- [14] Moiseeva L., *Intonatsionnyye protsessy v massovoy pesennoy kul'ture XX veka*. Leningrad: Muzyka, 1991.
- [15] Akbarov U., *Uzbekskaya estrada: istoriya, stil i evolyutsiya*. Tashkent: Fan Publishing House, 1998.