

# Music in narrative construction



## MUSIC IS A CORE PART OF THE IDENTITY OF STATES AND MOVEMENTS

- Music has historically been a universal form of expression, with unique instruments, themes and performance styles being the result of centuries of development alongside a nation's politics and culture, as well as interactions with other styles from other groups or states. National Anthem's are the culmination of this.
- Most music is interpreted according to the individual, but often represents a feeling that reaches multiple people; this can be utilised to convey important messages through a captivating medium:
  - During the Civil Rights Movement, '[Freedom Songs](#)' played a role in inspiring prominent activists and encouraging sympathy for the cause.
  - The song '[Bella Ciao](#)' became an anthem for Italian partisans that remains a popular today.
  - During the [Arab Spring](#), multiple artists used their platforms to deliver pro-democracy messaging.
- Not all movements who utilise music are positive; a growing phenomenon among new generation Jihadists is '[Jihadi rap](#)'; a blend of traditional hip hop with Jihadist messaging. But on the whole, music continues to be a significantly positive force, as is being shown in Ukraine.

## FOLLOW THE LINKS FOR UKRAINIAN MUSIC

- [Andriy Khlyvnyuk](#)
- [DakhaBrakha](#)
- [Kazka](#)
- [Sviatoslav Vakarchuk](#)
- [Kalush Orchestra](#)
- [Ukrainian musical instruments](#)

'Oh, in the meadow the red viburnum leaned / Our glorious Ukraine is somehow upset / We will raise that red viburnum / We will cheer up our glorious Ukraine!'

Sviatoslav Vakarchuk in an acapella from the frontlines that has since gone viral (see the full video via the link under Ukrainian musicians).

## FILLING THE SILENCE: MUSIC FOR MORALE

- Music's ability to connect with individuals emotionally, express multiple sentiments simplistically and its connection to national identity can make it a powerful tool for boosting morale by acting as form of catharsis and as a reminder of better times that will come again.
  - Dmytro Mazuriak, a wind instrumentalist for Kazka, was inspired to keep writing music after witnessing a fellow Ukrainian signing while making camouflage nets. His latest song "[I'm not Okay](#)" expresses the struggle Ukrainians deal with, but with a hopeful and identifiable message that they will overcome their current struggle.
- Multiple Western artists have gone to perform in Ukraine in bomb shelters in order to boost their spirits and demonstrate the West's resolve in standing with Ukraine.
  - Some of the most viral musical moments of Ukraine's music haven't come from professional musicians. In one instance, a young girl singing the theme to Disney's 'Frozen' captured the world's attention and encouraged outpourings of sympathy, including Idina Menzel, who sang in the original 'Frozen', who tweeted "We see you. We really, really see you".

## MUSIC AGAINST DISINFORMATION

- Much of the Kremlin's narrative has rested on the lie that Ukraine is not a real country; rather it is an artificial construct of the Cold War and its aftermath.
- Music's traditional role in the formation of national identity makes it evidence of Ukraine's nationhood; exposing the Kremlin's falsehoods.
- Ukrainian musicians have gone to great lengths to assert this:
  - In their performances, DakhaBrakha wear traditional Ukrainian costumes.
  - In the recent Eurovision Song Contest, the winning Ukrainian team featured an indigenous song and traditional instruments.
- Music also acts as an effective 'pre-bunking' tool that builds resilience to disinformation narratives by being a gateway to understanding more about Ukrainian history and the current conflict, and is more attention grabbing and memorable than text alone.
- Ukrainians are not the only musicians using music as a tool of resistance. Multiple Russian musicians have cancelled shows or contributed to anti-war concerts and charity events in solidarity with Ukraine.