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Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky appeared in a surprise cameo at the Grammy Awards, to say he hoped Ukraine and its musicians could soon “be free” like those on the Grammys stage. “Our musicians wear body armour instead of tuxedos,” he said. “They sing to the wounded. Even to those who can’t hear them... but the music will break through anyway.” As human beings, around the world, with conscience, and the ability to think and act, we cannot afford to stay silent on the unimaginable horrors that we are witnessing in Ukraine everyday. As musicians and music lovers, we truly believe that music has the power to change the world for the better. “Historically, literature, painting and photography have been able to adapt by claiming direct relevance. Paintings and literature can bear witness to war’s horrors.... [On the other hand], music may have an even greater claim than the other arts to being indispensable in time of war.” (Botstein, 1991). In order to recognise the noble efforts of musicians around the world and to take a snapshot of the performing arts response for historical record, paper, which is part of a book, set for publication in September 2023, is made up of a series of interviews with performing artists around the world - who have been using their musical talents and skills, along with their incredible compassion and generosity: • to perform in charity concerts to raise funds to help the refugees fleeing Ukraine; • to perform lift the spirits of Ukrainian soldiers every day; • to perform boost both civilians and military morale; • to send messages of hope and encouragement via their music performance to the refugees who have lost their homes and love ones.

These interviews have been critically analysed to assess the performing arts response to the outbreak of war and to contextualise the international perspective on the outbreak of this war through arts performances.

Biography:

Dr Rebekah Okpoti Lectures in Musicology at Liverpool Hope University and is Associate Organist at Leeds Cathedral, UK. Rebekah studied at Chethams School of Music, the Royal Northern College of Music, then completed her MA & PhD in Sonic Installation Art, Theology and Composition at UCLAN. 2020 saw the release of the Finding Home Collection in the UK, USA, China as a Reimagined Last Supper of Miniature 1:12 scale of Sonic Installation Art Pieces. In 2021 SetFootPress released Rebekah’s Experimental Organ album ‘Dressing’ on both cassette & digital. Recently Rebekah ran the Arts Council Funded Organs of Anne Lister Project (BBC’s Gentleman Jack) where she was commissioned to write a contemporary Organ sonata. Anne Lister’s Organ Sonata was published in July 2022 by Tim Knight Music Publishers. Rebekah’s scholarly work includes thesis on the Repatriation of Domesticity within Sonic Installation Art and the topics of Space, Void, Poise and Composition. Along with a series of books On Culture and Performing Arts and chapters on Digital Submissions. Title: “Stop the War: solidarity with Ukraine, performing artists across the world call for peace”.