

The Washington Group Cultural Fund  
In collaboration with The Embassy of France  
presents



# THIS UKRAINIAN AMERICAN LIFE

a Concert/Cabaret Benefit Concert for  
Ukraine with contralto ***Vira Slywotzky***  
and composer/pianist ***Dina Pruzhansky***

at La Maison Française, Embassy of  
France on **Thursday, March 16 at 7:30pm**



**LA MAISON  
FRANÇAISE**  
WASHINGTON, D.C.



Vira  
Slywotzky

Has performed principal roles with Seattle Opera, Chautauqua Opera, Chelsea Opera, Center for Contemporary Opera, Light Opera of New York, Sarasota Opera, Boston Midsummer Opera and Victor Herbert Renaissance Project – LIVE!, and has appeared in concert with Boston Youth Symphony Orchestra, Cambridge Symphony Orchestra, Rockland Camerata and New Haven Chamber Orchestra. She has sung recitals, concerts and cabarets in New York at Merkin Hall, Metropolitan Room, Opera America, Sheen Center, SubCulture, Symphony Space, The Duplex, Ukrainian Institute, Ukrainian Museum and Weill Hall. Internationally Slywotzky has performed at the Hudson Music Festival in Hudson, CA, Festival D'Avignon in Avignon, FR, at Le Musée des Arts Décoratifs and the American Church in Paris, FR, at the Armel Opera Festival in Szeged, HU, at the Rimsky-Korsakov State Conservatory in St. Petersburg, RU and at the Gustov Adolf Church in Sundsvall, SE.

The recipient of a 2007 Richard F. Gold Career Grant, Slywotzky has twice been a New England Regional Finalist in the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, and in 2009 was the sole representative of the United States at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition. Slywotzky received an MM from Mannes and a BA from Yale. She is a member of the Berkshire Opera Festival's Board of Directors.

[www.viraslywotzky.com](http://www.viraslywotzky.com)



Dina  
Pruzhansky

Is an award-winning composer and pianist. Praised for her “cinematic, movingly evoking” compositions (Broadway World) that “brought forth the liveliest playing” from the performers (The New York Times), she maintains a diverse international career. Her creative output ranges from classical concert music to cabaret and from liturgical works to musical theater. As composer/performer, she has been featured at venues such as Carnegie Hall Stern Auditorium, Jazz at Lincoln Center, Bargemusic, Aspen Music Festival, 92NY, The Kosciuszko Foundation, Le Poisson Rouge, and others. Selected credits: opera-film ‘Heroes of New York’ with libretto by Briana Hunter (official selection for Festival O22 by Opera Philadelphia), opera ‘Shulamit’ (Aspen Music Festival, Carnegie Hall, off-off Broadway NYC), musical ‘Central Park’ (NYMF 2019, finalist).

Born in Azerbaijan to Jewish Ukrainian parents and raised in Israel, Ms. Pruzhansky moved to New York in 2006. She is a postgraduate alumna from the Mannes School of Music and the BMI Advanced Musical Theater Workshop. Ms. Pruzhansky holds an MA in piano performance summa cum laude and a BA in Art History from Tel-Aviv University.

[www.dinapruzhansky.com](http://www.dinapruzhansky.com)

## PROGRAM

VOLODYMYR ANTONOVYCH & MYKHAILO DRAHOMANOV  
Червона Калина / Red Viburnum

MYKOLA LYSENKO  
Човен / Boat | Yevhen Hrebinka

AARON COPLAND  
Long Time Ago | traditional

YAKIV STEPOVY  
Місяць Яснесенький / Bright Little Moon | Lesia Ukrainka  
Зимою / In Winter | Oleksander Oles

SHEILA SILVER  
What Lips My Lips Have Kissed | Edna St. Vincent Millay

KYRYLO STETSENKO  
Моргана / Morgana | Mykola Vorony

CLAUDE ACHILLE DEBUSSY  
La flûte de Pan / Pan's Flute | Pierre Louÿs

AMY BEACH  
Mine Be The Lips | Leonora Speyer

IHOR SONEVYTSKY  
Твої Очі / Your Eyes | Ivan Franko

DINA PRUZHANSKY  
AM New York  
Sh'chora Ani | original Hebrew of Song of Songs

COLE PORTER  
Were Thine That Special Face | Cole Porter

MARTIN HENNESSY  
That's What I Recall | Barbara Hammond

BOHDAN VESOLOVSKY  
Лети, Тужлива Пісню / Fly, Sad Song | Bohdan Vesolovsky

DINA PRUZHANSKY  
Been There, Drunk That | Gaby Gold

JACQUES BREL  
Amsterdam | Jacques Brel

VASYL MYKHAILYUK  
Черемшина / Bird Cherry | Mykola Yuriychuk

DINA PRUZHANSKY  
Contra Spem Spero / Against Hope I Hope | Lesia Ukrainka

# CONTRA SPEM SPERO

(I hope against hope)

by Lesia Ukrainka

Thoughts away, you heavy clouds of autumn! For now springtime comes,  
agleam with gold! Shall thus in grief and wailing for ill-fortune, all the  
tale of my young years be told? No, I want to smile through tears and  
weeping, sing my songs where evil holds its sway. Hopeless, a steadfast  
hope forever keeping, I want to live! You thoughts of grief, away! On  
poor sad fallow land unused to tilling, I'll sow blossoms, brilliant in hue.  
I'll sow blossoms where the frost lies, chilling, I'll pour bitter tears on  
them as due. And those burning tears shall melt, dissolving all that  
mighty crust of ice away. Maybe blossoms will come up, unfolding,  
singing springtime too for me, someday. Up the flinty steep and craggy  
mountain, a weighty ponderous boulder I shall raise, and bearing this  
dread burden, a resounding song I'll sing, a song of joyous praise.  
In the long dark ever-viewless night-time, not one instant shall I close  
my eyes, I'll seek ever for the star to guide me, she that reigns bright  
mistress of dark skies. Yes, I'll smile, indeed, through tears and weeping  
sing my songs where evil holds its sway. Hopeless, a steadfast hope  
forever keeping, I shall live! You thoughts of grief, away!



Showcasing Ukrainian Culture in the Nation's Capital

For more information about The Washington  
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Razom for Ukraine is a non-profit 501(c)(3)  
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Ukrainian and serves as a constant reminder of  
the community that it takes to create, build and  
do. It is responding to the invasion of Ukraine  
by providing critical humanitarian war relief.  
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