

**THE LIFE AND CREATIVE LEGACY OF MUTAL BURHONOV: HIS PLACE AND
INFLUENCE IN THE MUSIC CULTURE OF UZBEKISTAN**

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Abstract: the article explores the life and creative work of the People's Artist of Uzbekistan, Mutal Burhonov. It analyzes his romances, ballads, music for cinema and theater, as well as his pedagogical activities. Burhonov's work is based on the integration of national musical traditions with modern styles.

Keywords: Mutal Burhonov, Uzbek music, romance, ballad, theater music, film music, pedagogical activity.

The life and creative activity of Mutal (Mutavakkil) Burhonov, the author of the State Anthem of the Republic of Uzbekistan, People's Artist of Uzbekistan, and laureate of the Hamza and Berdakh State Prizes, are directly linked to the development of contemporary Uzbek musical culture. This exceptional talent introduced the cultural heritage of our country to the world through his mature and captivating works, all of which are distinguished by a national and original style. Mutal Burhonov was born on May 5, 1916, in the Bozori Nav neighborhood, Kavshi Olak district of Bukhara, into the family of madrasa teacher Muzainiddin Burhonov. One of his third-degree paternal uncles, Mukammil Burhonov, participated in the activities of the Bukhara Jadid movement. Despite the complex trials of life, Mutal Burhonov pursued his education in both traditional and modern schools during his childhood and adolescence, nurturing his love for music from an early age. He initially learned to play the tanbur from his uncle Mukammil Burhonov, and later from the renowned tanbur master Ota G'iyos Abdug'ani. Between 1928 and 1932, he studied at the Uzbekistan Institute of Music and Choreography in Samarkand. During this period, Burhonov's musical skills were nurtured and developed under the guidance of prominent mentors, including Ota Jalol Nosirov, Ota G'iyos Abdug'ani, Domla Halim Ibodov, Hoji Abdulaziz Rasulov, Abduqodir Ismoilov, Ahmadjon Umrzoqov, Matyoqub Kharratov, and Abdurahmon Umarov. Furthermore, creative evenings attended by S. Ayni, A. Cho'lpon, Botu, Elbek, and the young H. Olimjon served as a formative platform for Burhonov's artistic development [1], [2]. After completing his studies, between 1932 and 1935, Mutal Burhonov worked as a music director and instrumentalist at the Hamza and Lohuti Drama Theatres in Tashkent and Dushanbe. During this period, his interest in composition intensified, leading him to study at the “Uzbek Opera Studio” affiliated with the Moscow Conservatory in 1935. In 1939, he continued his advanced studies at the main course of the Moscow Conservatory under the supervision of Professor S.N. Vasilenko. With the outbreak of World War II, he joined the volunteer army to defend Moscow, returning to Tashkent in 1942, where he engaged in creative work during his recovery. In 1949, he successfully graduated from the

composition faculty of the Moscow Conservatory [3]. During his student years, Burhonov composed his first works, including romances and ballads such as “Ey Bulbul” (lyrics by A. Lohuti), “Buti Nozaninam”, and “Ishq O’ti” (lyrics by Mashrab). During the war years, he created notable songs such as “Jangchilar Qo’shig’i” (lyrics by Uyg’un), “Samolyot” (H. Olimjon), “Uchib Ketasan” (Z. Diyor), “Paxtam Ochilsa” (Kamtar), “Ishqida” (Uyg’un), and “Dilbari-mo” (A. Lohuti). It was at this time that Burhonov became recognized as one of the first composers to introduce the romance genre into the musical life of the republic [4], [5]. In addition, his work in film music holds special significance. Between 1950 and 1970, he composed music for films such as “Samaliyotlar Qo’nomadi” (Z. Sobirov), “Boy ila Xizmatchi” (L. Fayziyev), “Surayyo” (U. Nazarov), and “Abu Ali ibn Sino” (K. Yormatov), leaving a lasting mark on the history of Uzbek cinema. Simultaneously, Burhonov composed music for theatrical productions staged at the Hamza State Academic Drama Theatre, including “Hikmat” (Sh. Tuyg’un), “Alisher Navoiy” (Uyg’un and I. Sulton), and “Boy ila Xizmatchi” [6], [7]. He also created works for the “Uzbek National Orchestral Folk Instruments Ensemble,” including “Mavrigi”, as well as waltzes and other compositions for various plays, symphonic suites, and string ensembles (violin and cello). Burhonov composed songs for children’s choirs, such as “Vatan Bizga Mexribon” (lyrics by M. Mirzo) and the a cappella choral piece “Buxoroyi Sharif” (poem by Rudaki), which continue to resonate with audiences today. In the history of Uzbek music, Mutal Burhonov is particularly noted for composing the five-movement requiem “Abadiy Xotira” for soloists, choir, and symphonic orchestra [8]. This work is dedicated to the memory of Uzbek intellectuals who were victims of political repression and was first performed on May 14, 1996, at the Turkiston Palace.

Mutal Burhonov made an invaluable contribution to the development of Uzbek culture through his musical and scholarly activities. He was honored with the titles of “Honored Art Worker of Uzbekistan”, “People’s Artist of Uzbekistan”, and the “Mehnat Shuhrati” medal, as well as honorary certificates from the governments of Tajikistan and Belarus. In 1999, he received the “Order of Outstanding Services” from Islam Karimov, the first President of independent Uzbekistan. In 2001, during the jubilee concert dedicated to the 85th anniversary of his birth, he was awarded the “El-Yurt Hurmati” Order. Mutal Burhonov passed away on June 15, 2002, in Bukhara [9], [10]. Burhonov’s creative legacy is studied not only through his compositions but also as a significant stage in the formation of Uzbek musical culture. His musical activity reflects a combination of fidelity to national traditions with the assimilation of contemporary compositional techniques. This aspect allows his works to demonstrate a synthesis of national ornamentation and melodic features with modern orchestral techniques [1], [6]. Consequently, Burhonov’s oeuvre is regarded as representing a new aesthetic direction in the history of Uzbek music. Although his works in the genres of romance and ballad are deeply rooted in the national musical context, they successfully integrate European harmonic and symphonic styles. For instance, romances such as “Tabassum Qilmading” and “Namedonam Chi Nom Dorad” are distinguished not only by their poetic and melodic expression but also by their rhythmic and harmonic complexity [4], [5]. These compositions exemplify Burhonov’s aspiration to harmonize folk music with classical and contemporary compositional methods.

His work in film and theater music further expanded the scope of his creativity. The music he composed for films and stage productions served as a crucial tool for expressing the psychological states of characters. By strengthening musical dramaturgy, he enhanced the

dramatic effects on stage and screen, exerting a significant influence on the modern development of Uzbek theater and cinema [7], [8]. Burhonov's pedagogical and cultural contributions are also of particular importance.

Burhonov's contributions to the romance genre occupy a unique place in Uzbek musical culture. Through this genre, he not only set the lyrical poetry of prominent poets to music but also integrated national musical ornamentation and melodic features with contemporary compositional techniques. For example, romances and poetic settings based on the works of Navoi and Hafez enriched the national musical heritage through expression in classical symphonic language. These works clearly demonstrate Burhonov's mastery in reconciling national identity with universality [4], [5]. In the realm of ballads and vocal-symphonic poems, Burhonov's works introduced dramaturgical depth and expressive possibilities to Uzbek music. Ballads such as "Shoir Orzusi", "Unutmas Meni Bog'im", and "Kelsa Nogox..." are exemplary not only in poetic and musical terms but also as models of psychological and aesthetic expression. In these compositions, the composer endeavored to convey war, love, national pride, and historical events through musical dramatization. At the same time, he developed new pedagogical and creative methods by integrating orchestral and solo performance, thereby expanding the horizons of symphonic and vocal interpretation [1], [6]. Burhonov's film music marked a significant turning point in the development of Uzbek cinema. The scores he composed for films in the 1950s–1970s not only enhanced the dramatic effect of the stage and screen but also evoked profound emotional resonance in audiences. For instance, the musical motifs composed for "Boy ila Xizmatchi" and "Surayyo" effectively conveyed the psychological states of the characters [7], [8]. By strengthening musical dramaturgy, Burhonov elevated the interaction between film and theater to a new level.

In the field of theater music, Burhonov's work significantly enriched national dramaturgy. The music he composed for productions staged at the Hamza State Academic Drama Theatre, including "Hikmat", "Alisher Navoiy", and "Boy ila Xizmatchi", brought the characters to life on stage and enhanced the dramatic impact of the performances. These compositions served not only as an artistic resource for performers but also provided audiences with a profound musical and aesthetic experience [6], [7]. Additionally, Burhonov's requiem "Abadiy Xotira" holds exceptional significance in the history of Uzbek music. This five-movement work is dedicated to the memory of Uzbek intellectuals who were victims of political repression and serves to preserve historical and cultural memory through musical expression. In the requiem, the people's pain, losses, and hopes are conveyed through the language of music [8], [9]. In this regard, the composition is valued not only for its compositional mastery but also for its pedagogical significance in shaping national cultural consciousness.

Burhonov's pedagogical contributions are also noteworthy. He taught students to integrate national musical traditions with contemporary compositional techniques and placed great emphasis on developing the creative thinking of young composers. The methodological approaches he developed during his work at the conservatory and theater continue to be applied in modern pedagogical practice [2], [5], [6]. Furthermore, his compositions for children and youth have served as an important tool for transmitting national culture to new generations. Songs composed for children's choirs, such as "Vatan Bizga Mexribon" and "Buxoroyi Sharif", foster national pride and aesthetic sensibilities among young audiences [4], [10]. This aspect

demonstrates that Burhonov's work possesses not only aesthetic but also educational significance.

A defining feature of Burhonov's creative output is his ability to harmonize national and contemporary elements. His works combine national ornamentation, melodic, and rhythmic features with modern harmonic and symphonic techniques, thereby expanding the expressive, pedagogical, and aesthetic potential of music. From this perspective, Burhonov's oeuvre holds both theoretical and practical importance in the development of Uzbek musical culture [3], [6]. Consequently, the life and creative legacy of Mutal Burhonov should be regarded not only as a record of personal achievements but also as a crucial stage in the development of an entire musical culture. His compositions, theater and film music, and pedagogical activities integrated national musical traditions with modern musical technologies, maintaining their relevance in shaping contemporary musical culture [7], [9]. An analysis of Burhonov's compositional legacy reveals the inseparable relationship between his creative style and pedagogical approach. He was not only a composer but also played a vital role as an educator in the development of musical culture [2], [5], [8]. His pedagogical activities focused on guiding students to integrate national musical traditions with contemporary compositional techniques, a methodology that continues to inform music education today.

In his works in the romance and vocal genres, Burhonov prioritized the harmony between poetic text and musical expression. While enriching the lyrical poetry of poets with musical dramatism, he simultaneously integrated national ornamentation and rhythmic elements with contemporary harmonic techniques. For example, romances based on the ghazals of Navoi and Hafez are not only complex in melodic and rhythmic terms but also convey profound psychological and aesthetic depth [4], [5]. These compositions demonstrate Burhonov's mastery in reconciling national and contemporary musical values. In the domain of ballads and vocal-symphonic poems, he excelled in creating dramaturgical depth. Works such as "Shoir Orzusi", "Kelsa Nogox...", and "Unutmas Meni Bog'im" reflect national historical events, wartime experiences, human emotions, and motifs of national pride. Through these works, Burhonov achieved not only musical but also psychological and aesthetic pedagogical effects, thereby enhancing the social and spiritual role of music [1], [6]. His work in film and theater music illustrates Burhonov's multidisciplinary approach to art. In cinema, he intensified stage dramatization through musical means, while in theater productions he created compositions that harmonized with both characters and stage movements. For instance, the music composed for the films "Boy ila Xizmatchi" and "Surayyo" enhances the dramatic effect on stage and exerts a significant impact on audience psychology [7], [8]. In theater, his music translated dramatic situations on stage into musical expression, contributing to the development of a new aesthetic in Uzbek theater.

The works of Mutal Burhonov in the genres of requiem and vocal-symphonic poems play a crucial role in preserving historical and cultural memory. His requiem "Abadiy Xotira" commemorates the Uzbek intellectuals who fell victim to political repression, while simultaneously integrating musical and philosophical perspectives on national history. This work is significant not only for its compositional mastery but also as a pedagogical tool for preserving historical and spiritual values [8], [9]. Through his compositions for children and youth, Burhonov also contributed to transmitting national culture to younger generations. Songs such as "Vatan Bizga Mexribon" and "Buxoroyi Sharif" cultivate in children a sense of national pride, aesthetic taste, and awareness of musical culture. Thus, his creative output develops not only

musical aesthetics but also educational and moral values [4], [10]. Another defining feature of Burhonov's work is his ability to harmonize national and contemporary elements. By combining national ornamentation and melodic features with modern symphonic and harmonic techniques, he expanded the expressive, pedagogical, and aesthetic potential of music. From this perspective, his oeuvre holds both theoretical and practical importance in the development of Uzbek musical culture and contributes to maintaining national identity within global musical processes [6], [7]. As a result, the life and creative legacy of Mutal Burhonov are regarded as a unique phenomenon in the history of Uzbek musical culture. His works in romance, ballad, cinema, theater, requiem, and pedagogical activity integrate national and contemporary musical values, playing a crucial role in shaping contemporary musical culture and educating the younger generation. Burhonov's legacy must be studied and transmitted as both an aesthetic and spiritual-pedagogical resource [4], [8]. Mutal (Mutavakkil) Burhonov occupies a unique place in the history of Uzbek musical culture. His works in the fields of romance, ballad, vocal-symphonic poem, film, and theater music elevated Uzbek music to a new aesthetic level by combining national and contemporary musical values. His creative activity, based on the integration of national ornamentation and melodic characteristics with modern symphonic and harmonic techniques, makes his works significant not only aesthetically but also pedagogically and spiritually [1], [4], [6]. As an educator, Burhonov focused on developing the creative and musical abilities of young musicians, devising effective methods to integrate national musical traditions with contemporary compositional techniques. Moreover, his compositions for children and youth serve as an important medium for transmitting national culture across generations, cultivating educational and aesthetic values [2], [10]. His requiem and vocal-symphonic poems preserve historical memory and commemorate the victims of political repression, conveying the historical and spiritual heritage of the Uzbek people to future generations. At the same time, his work in film and theater music enriched characters and dramatic situations through musical expression, significantly contributing to the development of stage and screen arts.

Consequently, Mutal Burhonov's creative legacy should be appreciated not only as a record of personal achievements but also as a crucial historical stage in the development of Uzbek musical culture. His works, which integrate national musical traditions with contemporary aesthetic principles, continue to be relevant in contemporary musical culture and pedagogical practice. Therefore, the study and transmission of Burhonov's life and creative legacy are essential for the preservation and advancement of Uzbekistan's musical heritage.

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