

**OFF Laboratory Production Studio Presents** 

# a song for m

an Oleksandr Fraze-Frazenko film about Bohdan Rubchak

VI

fifths feature film of the POETS Series

# A REMINISCENCE ABOUT THE MOON by Bohdan Rubchak

When I touch your face my fingertips are redolent of apple blossoms, the moon above us lives the life of a saint

Then within me is born a virgin horizon, and you caress it, like a breeze in May.

But someday He will return, that Moon, who'd been our friend, and with a malevolent touch will turn our happiness into dry sand.

And once more we'll take it into our hands and pour it between our greedy palms, seeking in vain that near miracle that was with us for so long.

We'll gaze together into the reaches of the rivers, into the reaches of our hearts, until we get pricked by the cold realization of our efforts' futility, until we comprehend that for us all is already dead.

And then we'll say good-bye with an awkward, disoriented smile, and leave one another — strangers.

When mirrors of tears wilt in my irises, when leaves of my palms blacken, when the last fruit falls from my forehead, and autumn pins grays to my temples —

be with me then. Be with me when all that's left in the wake of my eyes is this big empty white moon, and nothing more.

Love me then.

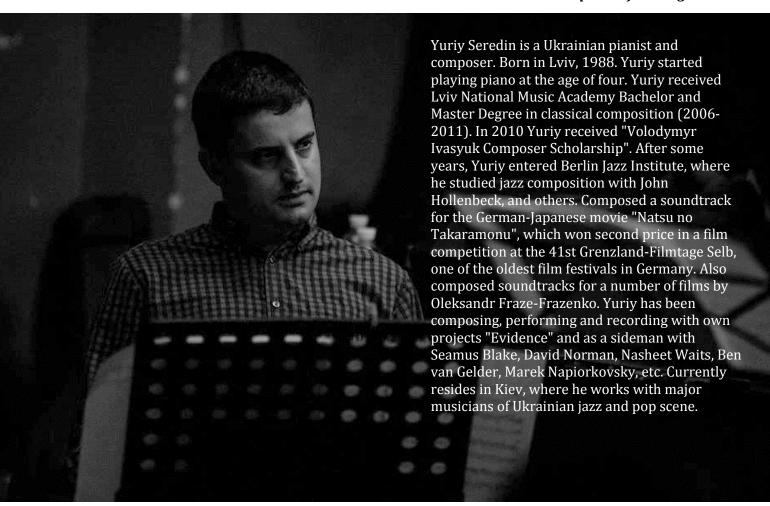
Bohdan Rubchak was born on March 6, 1935 in Kalush, W. Ukraine. Together with his parents he emigrated to Germany in 1941. After the war they lived in a Displaced Persons camp and later in Kaufbeuren, where he lost his father in 1947. A year later he came to New York with his mother, and subsequently moved to Chicago, where he completed high school. In 1952 he enlisted in the Korean army and served until 1953. Upon his return to Chicago he resumed his studies, and pursued what was to become a distinguished career as poet, scholar, literary critic, and essayist, for which he received numerous prestigious awards. There he attended the U of Illinois at Navy Pier, followed by Roosevelt University, earning his BA in literature, followed by an MA in Comparative Literature from the University of Chicago. In 1963 Bohdan Rubchak accepted a teaching position at the U of Manitoba in Winnipeg. He returned to Chicago the following year, where he worked at La Salle Extension University until 1966. Rubchak moved to New York in 1967 to supervise the Ukrainian Desk at Radio Liberty, and subsequently to neighboring New Brunswick, NJ in 1969 to teach Russian Literature and Language at Rutgers University. In 1973 Rubchak returned to Chicago to take up a position as Professor of Ukrainian Literature and Language from a Comparative Literature perspective at the University of Illinois. Here he also taught briefly at Chicago and Northwestern Universities. He earned his Doctor of Philosophy degree in Comparative Literature from Rutgers University in 1977. Bohdan Rubchak retired as Professor Emeritus in 2005, and moved to Boonton, NJ. During his retirement he participated in Aquarium in the Sea, a feature documentary about the New York Group of Poets, directed by Oleksandr Fraze-Frazenko, and continued writing for a time. On September 23, 2018 Bohdan Rubchak died in a hospital in nearby Denville, NJ.



# director of "A Song For M"

Oleksandr Fraze-Frazenko is a filmmaker, poet, photographer, translator, musician, co-founder of the "OFF Laboratory" production studio. Born in Lviv, Ukraine, Oleksandr is known for his feature documentaries about Ukrainian artists and poets ("Chubai" in 2014, "The House on Seven Winds" in 2015, "An Aquarium in the Sea" in 2016, "Mister Nobody" in 2017). His oeuvre includes several hundred films and videos. He is also involved in producing commercial advertising and music videos. His first feature film "Don't lie to me" was premiered in 2016 at Wiz-Art Lviv International Short Film Festival. Oleksandr has authored ten books of poetry; they all are collected in a volume "Decadence" (2017). He is the first to have translated Jim Morrison's poetry into Ukrainian and published it in 2013. He has also translated English poetry of the Restoration Period, including works of John Rochester. Oleksandr is a performing artist and plays improvisational music and indie-rock. His discography consists of more than 50 albums.

# composer of "A Song For M"





Vasyl Makhno is a poet, prose writer, essayist, translator. An author of ten collections of poetry: "Skhyma" (1993), "Caesar's Solitude" (1994), "The Book of Hills and Hours" (1996), "The Flipper of the Fish" (2002), "38 Poems about New York and Some Other Things" (2004), "Cornelia Street Café: New and Selected Poems" (2007), "Winter Letters" (2011), "I Want to be Jazz and Rock'n'Roll" (2013), "Bike" (2015) and most recently "Jerusalem Poems" (2016) and "Chicken Don't Fly" (2016). He has also published collection of short stories "The House in Baiting Hollow" (2015), two books of essays "The Gertrude Stein Memorial Cultural and Recreation Park" (2006) and "Horn of Plenty" (2011), and two plays "Coney Island" (2006) and "Bitch/Beach Generation" (2007). He has also translated Zbigniew Herbert's and Janusz Szuber's poetry from Polish into Ukrainian, and edited an anthology of young Ukrainian poets from the 1990's. Makhno's work has been translated into over twenty-five languages, and volumes of his selected poems and essays were published in Poland, Romania, Serbia and the USA. He is the 2013 recipient of Serbia's Povele Morave Prize in Poetry and BBC Book of the Year Award 2015. Makhno currently lives in New York City.











**OFF Laboratory** is a production studio founded in 2013 in Lviv, Ukraine by **Oleksandr Fraze-Frazenko** and **Olga Fraze-Frazenko**. The studio started with promotional films for a number of main cultural institutions in Western Ukraine and Poland, music videos, and commercial advertising. The first feature documentary "Chubai" premiered in 2014 with great success and made a huge impact on Ukrainian filmmaking and culture in general, bringing it to an international level.

"This is a breakthrough in Ukrainian documentary. Without pathos, panegyrics and bombast words." — Olesva Yaremchuk. "Memories and flashes" // Ukrainian Magazine, 2014, Czech Republic.

The film screened in Ukraine, Europe, and the USA. That was the beginning of a new period for OFF Lab. We started the project 'The Poets'. We decided to strive to change the mindset of Ukrainian culture. XX century transformed the world completely, Ukraine became a part of the Soviet Union and because of that our cultural process was ruined, the biggest writers, painters, philosophers, theatrical and film directors were killed or repressed. Meanwhile, the Western World, as we know, was developing with the speed of light, especially its cultural process. Despite the fact that Ukraine has been independent since 1991, our minds are still enslaved, we are afraid to be free and open-minded because of memory, which is painful. Therefore, we focused on Poetry, as the most universal and ancient form of art, and decided to formulate a new aesthetic canon of Ukrainian modernist poetry of XX century. Not only by revitalizing forgotten and unknown poets, but to show all the main concepts that accompany them, concepts of human, love, hate, home etc.

Since "Chubai" in 2014, we did 4 feature films (and a number of shorts) in the Poets series: "The House on Seven Winds" about poet Vasyl Makhno in 2015 (premiered in Wroclaw), was screened a number of times in the US, Europe, and Ukraine. The Complete Script is published by Harvard Books in Cambridge, Massachusetts (ISBN 978-163587459-4). "An Aquarium in the Sea" about The New York Group of Poets in 2016 (premiered in New York, then we did a festival "The Great Return of the New York Group" with poetry readings, book presentations of publications especially for the fest, a film and academic program in Lviv as a special project of Publishers Forum in Lviv). We had a number of screenings in the US, Europe, and Ukraine. The Complete Script is published by Harvard Books in Cambridge, Massachusetts (ISBN 978-163587462-4).

"Mister Nobody" about poet and dissident Ihor Kalynets, made in 2017, premiered in 2018 at Molodist International Film Festival in Kyiv.

"Casi Desnudo" is the fifth feature in The Poets Series; the premiere took place at the Ukrainian Institute of America, New York. March 8, 2019 with the director and Yuriy Tarnawsky, the poet, present.

"It's not just a documentary. It's also an artistic film and I think the interactions of the documentary aspects and the artistic vision of the filmmaker made it rather unique and pleasant experience." — Professor George G. Grabowicz, from his speech before "An Aquarium in the Sea" premiere screening at Harvard University.

At the same time OFF Laboratory continues to work on **other projects**, which include movies, music, literature, performing arts, and master classes. We did a big **socially conscious** film project "**I See**" about blind Ukrainian activists cycling all over Ukraine. It premiered at United Nations Headquarters in New York, 2016.

The model within our company is unique; it works as a corporation and a community at the same time on a win-win basis. We are located in Lviv, Kyiv, and New York. We have done approximately 1000 video-products, produced over 50 music albums, and published a number of books. Join us!

# "A SONG FOR M"

A feature documentary about **Bohdan Rubchak** 

Directed by **Oleksandr Fraze-Frazenko**Produced by **Vasyl Makhno**Score composed by **Yuriy Seredin** 

#### THE PLOT

After Bohdan Rubchak's death his wife, Mar'iana, while gathering his papers for the archive, finds his diaries. "It seems I never knew him" – she wrote in the letter to Oleksandr Fraze-Frazenko, "he had so many masks, he was hiding the real himself all these years we lived together". Therefore, she decided to tell the story of a great poet and her beloved husband.

In addition, the film is going to be packed with stories, told by Yuriy Andrukhovych, Viktor Neborak, Bohdan Bouchuk, Vasyl Makhno, and other well known artists, who knew Bohdan Rubchak in person. Some audio tapes with his poetry reading, and some images from the family archive are going to be presented for the first time.

#### WHAT IS DONE

We already did all the shootings for "A Song For M" in the USA (New York City, Hunter, NY, Boonton, NJ, and Chicago, Il, 2015-2019) and in Ukraine (Lviv, 2017-2019). Also we published a book of his novellas in 2017 in Lviv, Pyramid Publishers, it was the first ever book of prose by Rubchak published.

We already did a trailer. Here it is: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CPA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CPA</a> 91M2rcM

### **EXPENSES**

#### Block 1. **Production**

Production (research, shooting, etc)	\$ 5000
Postproduction (montage, color correction, etc)	\$ 3000
Composing and recording the soundtrack	\$ 2000
Sound Design (mastering the final film sound)	\$ 1000
Subtitles in English (including poems translation)	\$ 500
Total	\$ 11500

## Block 2. Premiere preparations in the US and Ukraine

Flight for two from Ukraine to the US and back*	\$ 2000
Apartment rent for a month*	\$ 2000
Daily needs for two for a month	\$ 1000
Advertising the premiere (posters, fliers, online ad)	\$ 1000
Total	\$ 6000

<sup>\*</sup>There can be minor budget changes, the average flight and accommodation prices are indicated.

#### What can we offer except the film?

We can put your logo on our printed production, online advertising, we can thank you in film credits, and put your logo there, we can speak about you on the screenings, during the interviews, and we can do any advertising film about your organization and so many other goodies we can offer! Let's think what is the best for you!



Mar'iana Rubchak, Vasyl Makhno with his wife Svitlana, Bohdan Rubchak, Oleksandr Fraze-Frazenko. May 4, 2015, Boonton, NJ.