

New Ukrainian Folk Opera Explores Women's Connection to Earth

Title: **ZEMLYA / EARTH : A Ukrainian Folk Opera**

Created and Directed by: Marichka Marczyk

Performed and Presented by: Kalendar Folk Ensemble

Date: Thursday May 18, 2017

Time: 8:00 PM

Location: St. Vladimir Institute (620 Spadina Ave)

Tickets: \$30 (info at kalendar.ca)

DETAILS:

ZEMLYA / EARTH is an original folk opera that explores the connection between Ukrainian women and the earth.

The project was initiated by Toronto-based **Kalendar Folk Ensemble**, who commissioned ethnomusicologist **Marichka Marczyk** (Lemon Bucket Orchestra) to bring their idea to life. It is sung in traditional polyphony while video of urbanization looms in the background, calling into question the mechanization of the roles of modern women and their traditions. Each vignette in this powerful series is connected to the earth in some way: women rolled in the earth so that their spines would stay straight; babies were made on the earth; bodies buried in the earth. Both women and the earth give birth, create that which is necessary for our survival.

Kalendar (Stephania Woloshyn, Danya Hrycyna, Lyudmyla Pogoryelova, Andrea Kuzmich and Mario Morello) grew out of Toronto folk group Kosa Kolektiv's urban folk movement 3 years ago, when their desire to dig deeper into the nuances of Ukrainian polyphony necessitated the group's formation. The group focuses on singing traditional polyphonic songs from all regions of Ukraine, with an emphasis on songs related to important calendar events related to familial tradition, ancient pagan tradition, folklore, celebration and religion. **Marichka Marczyk**, a founding member of renowned Bozhychi Folk Ensemble in Kyiv, Ukraine, and co-creator of the award-winning folk opera "Counting Sheep", selected songs she personally gathered on 15 years' worth of ethnomusicological expeditions through central and eastern Ukraine for this project.

The show will premiere at the St. Vladimir Institute on Thursday May 18, 2017 and aims to make the audience wonder whether women's connection to the earth will ever be the same.

This project is generously supported by the Ontario Arts Council, the Shevchenko Foundation, and the Ukrainian Credit Union.