

# Serbian Month

in Great Britain

2024

## Serbian culture MUSIC AND FOLKLORE

British Serbs *part four*

*This catalogue has been produced by the Serbian Council of Great Britain,  
on behalf of the Round Table of Serbian community organisations in Britain.*



# Serbian Month in Great Britain Catalogue

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## The Serbian Month Catalogue

The Serbian Month Catalogue was first produced in 2018 to celebrate the tenth anniversary of Serbian Month in Great Britain. It was modest in size and ambition and featured the programme, a summary of Serbian community organisations active in Britain and short biographies of prominent Serbian artists, academics and sports men and women. It was a success and it was decided that it should be a regular feature of Serbian Month.

In 2021, the Round Table agreed that the Serbian Month Catalogue should be expanded and have themes that would be of interest to the Serbian community and the wider British public. The main theme of the catalogue has been 'British Serbs', which has provided an opportunity to tell the history of the Serbian communities in Britain and Ireland, explore what it means to be a British Serb, to celebrate prominent Serbs who lived or studied in Britain and British people who helped Serbia and the Serbian community in Britain, and to trace the relationship between Serbia and Britain over the years. In 2023 it was decided to expand the theme to cover Serbian food and customs and the role they play for British Serbs.

The theme of the 2024 catalogue focuses upon Serbian culture, and in particular, Serbian music and folklore. The articles not only highlight the history and the role of these areas for Serbian identity but also their importance for British Serbs in celebrating their Serbian heritage and maintaining links with Serbia and other Serbian Diaspora communities. There are also articles on the great Serbian inventor Nikola Tesla and his relationship with Britain. We hope there is something for everyone and that you will enjoy reading the catalogue.

We can only produce the catalogue with voluntary contributions from many people and we would like to take this as an opportunity to thank them. They are: Avram Balabanović, Sonja Besford, Žarko Cvejić, Nikola Čobić, Fiona Garwood, Mirjana Jovanović-Lazić, The Very Reverend Milun Kostić, Jelena Krzanicki, Ivana Miladinović Prica, Vera Milanković, Lara Medić, Dr David Norris, Danica Petrović, Carole Powell, Miloš Rašić, Aleksandra Smiljanić, Olivera Ristanović-Santrač, Stan Smiljanić, Jelena Stanojlović, Branco Stoysin, and Angelina Vuletić.

## Serbian Month

Now in its sixteenth year, Serbian Month in Great Britain is recognised as one of the most significant festivals of Serbian arts and culture in the Serbian Diaspora, showcasing artists from Serbia and British Serbian artists. It is one of the best examples of what the Serbian Diaspora in Britain can achieve when it works together for the good of the community. It has done much to raise the profile of the Serbian community in Britain and Serbia and amongst other Serbian Diaspora communities across the world.

## With special thanks to

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs – The Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region for their financial support of Serbian Month, sponsors and advertisers, and all the Serbian organisations and individuals who have contributed to this catalogue and the success of Serbian Month in Great Britain.



**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**  
**THE OFFICE FOR COOPERATION WITH  
THE DIASPORA AND SERBS IN THE REGION**

Events will be available for viewing on the Serbian Month YouTube channel at

<https://www.youtube.com/@serbianmonth1108>

# SERBIAN MONTH PROGRAMME

London, Bedford, Birmingham, Bradford, Corby, Halifax, Leicester,  
Peterborough, Tunbridge Wells, Worthing

Full programme available at <https://serbiancouncil.org.uk> and <https://www.serbianrt.com>

## ST SAVA CELEBRATIONS & RELIGIOUS EVENTS

- Sat 27th Jan** London and Corby  
**Sun 28th Jan** Bradford, Birmingham and Leicester  
**Sun 4th Feb** Halifax, Bedford and London  
**Sat 10th Feb** Peterborough  
**Sat 24th Feb** Lazarica, Birmingham: Pilgrimage by members of the Russian Orthodox Church to the icon of Three-Handed Mother of God from Hilandar

## MUSIC & FOLKLORE

- Sun 28th Jan** French Music  
Yana Burova, violin and Mina Miletić, piano  
**Mon 5th Feb** ArHai  
**Fri 9th Feb** Traditional Sevdalinka songs  
Çigdem Aslan (vocal) and Živorad Nikolić (accordion/vocal)  
**Wed 14th Feb** Valentine Day's Concert in Tunbridge Wells  
Silva McQueen, soprano and Maya Jordan, piano  
**Wed 21st to Sat 24th Feb** Le Nozze di Figaro  
Hastings Philharmonic Orchestra Ensemble and Ensemble OrQuesta Opera Academy  
**Thu 22nd Feb** Hari Mata Hari & Zijo Valentino  
**Fri 1st March** Band Paprika  
**Sat 2nd March** Classical concert  
Silva McQueen, soprano & Timothy End, piano  
**Sun 3rd March** Vremeplov Band Live in Birmingham  
**Sun 3rd March** Worthing Symphony Orchestra  
with Miloš Milivojević, accordion and Kosmos Ensemble  
**Sat 9th March** Serbian Folklore Groups in UK, Smotra in Peterborough

## FILMS

- Thu 1st Feb** Dvoje/And Love Has Vanished (Aleksandar Petrović, 1961)  
**Sat 17th Feb** Uzrok smrti ne pominjati/Do Not Mention the Cause of Death (Jovan Živanović, 1968)  
**Fri 23rd Feb** Next to You (Pored tebe) followed up by Q&A with the movie director and actors  
**Sat 24th Feb** Nevinost bez zaštite/Innocence Unprotected (Dušan Makavejev, 1968)  
**Thu 29th Feb** Vrane/Crows (Gordan Mihić, Ljubiša Kozomora 1969)

## TALKS

- Thu 8th Feb** SCC event with Lazar Džamić  
**Fri 16th Feb** Talk and Exhibition by Nick Ilić: The Role of the British in Yugoslavia in WW2  
**Mon 19th Feb** Talk by David Norris 'Serbian Traditions and Cultural Change: Struggle, Negotiations'  
**Thu 22nd Feb** Remembering Borislava Pekić, actor Pavle Pekić  
**Thu 29th Feb** Mary Novakovich book promotion 'My Family and Other Enemies'  
**Thu 7th March** Book Promotion of Prof Dejan Djokić's 'A Concise History of Serbia'

## ZOOM EVENTS

- Tue 30th Jan** Prof Slobodan Markovich  
**Sat 3rd Feb** Mala biblioteka: The Serbian language  
Lazar Džamić, Aleksa Gordić and Veljko Žižić  
**Tue 6th Feb** HMA to the Republic of Serbia  
Mr Edward Ferguson Q&A  
**Sun 3rd March** Round Table Meeting  
**Sat 9th March** The British who defended Serbia during the Great War 1915-18 with Nick Ilić

## CHARITABLE & FUNDRAISING EVENTS

- Sat 3rd Feb** St Sava's Ball  
**Fri 1st March** Lifeline 30th Anniversary Gala Ball

## EVENTS

- Wed 31st Jan** Serbian City Club networking event  
**Thu 1st Feb** Jasenovac and Holocaust Foundation  
Holocaust Memorial Day  
**Sat 10th Feb** British-Serbian Medical Association  
Lectures by Doctors followed by Q&A; Documentary film screening 'Moć žene'  
**Mon 19th Feb** AGM SCGB  
**Sat 24th Feb** Celebration of Nikola Tesla  
Award Ceremony for Serbian Language students on the Azbukum and RT Courses  
Tesla talk by Avram Balabanović  
Concert by guitarist/composer Branco Stoysin  
**Sat 2nd March** Tenth Annual Memorial Service for Women in Foreign Medical Missions in Serbia during the Great War

# *Serbia's Interaction with Other Cultural Communities*

By Dr David Norris



Serbs have been interacting with other countries and other cultural communities for centuries. It is a fact of cultural life that one group of people pick up ideas and ways of life from others with whom they come into contact. Sorting through the differences presented by foreign cultures opens up aspects of our own social practices and aesthetic norms, allowing us to modify our customs and habits in a manner we had not considered before. The interaction is a part of the endless flow of modifying and changing our cultural heritage to blend in with the new conditions and circumstances which history brings in its wake. After some time, we even forget what we first regarded as something alien to our own cultural patterns.

The processes of Serbian cultural interaction with foreign partners are evident from the earliest written records which inform us of the developments which took place during the time of the Nemanjić dynasty. The arrival of Christianity and the inclusion of the first Serbian state in the Byzantine sphere of influence was a profound step in the historical evolution of Serbian society and identity. The formation of a Serbian Church signalled not only a shift from the worship of pagan gods but also expanded possibilities for the organization of cultural expression on a national and an international level with the advent of literacy, the growth of religious art and the introduction of a new world view.

The Serbs accepted influences from the Byzantine Empire in the medieval period, making them their own. The highly stylized form of Old Slavonic which the monks Cyril and Methodius used to translate Christianity's holy works into a language more readily understood by the newly converted relied heavily on borrowings from Greek vocabulary and syntax to provide the necessary framework for the complex and subtle beliefs and ideas they contained. The same language was used across the early Churches in Russia, Bulgaria and Serbia. In time, variations emerged among the different peoples and Serbian Church Slavonic emerged towards the close of the twelfth century, a distinct written language used by the Serbian Orthodox Church which was linked to but different from Russian and Bulgarian Church Slavonic. A similar pattern was seen in religious architecture and painting. The earliest churches were built and decorated in styles taken from outside models, but a more local architectural idiom known as the Raška School appeared from about 1170, to be followed by the more ornate Serbo-Byzantine style after 1300. Monasteries like Studenica, Sopoćani and Gračanica were widely recognized as important centres of worship and scholarship in the Byzantine Orthodox world.

Serbia's place in the network of cultural exchange was assured by the independent status of the Serbian Church and its proximity to the centre of power alongside its medieval kings. The Nemanjić dynasty cultivated a close relationship with the Church, which provided an ideological underpinning to the political coherency of the state. The canonization of most of Serbia's rulers gave rise to the cult of saintly kings, legitimizing their authority not only before other earthly rulers but also before eternity. It is little wonder that the myth of Kosovo was first promoted in a series of Church documents praising the martyrdom of Prince Lazar not long after the battle of 1389, helping to preserve the stability of the Serbian state narrative in a period of extreme crisis. The Orthodox Church transformed Serbia's cultural heritage, becoming a central pillar of Serbian identity, society and political structures.

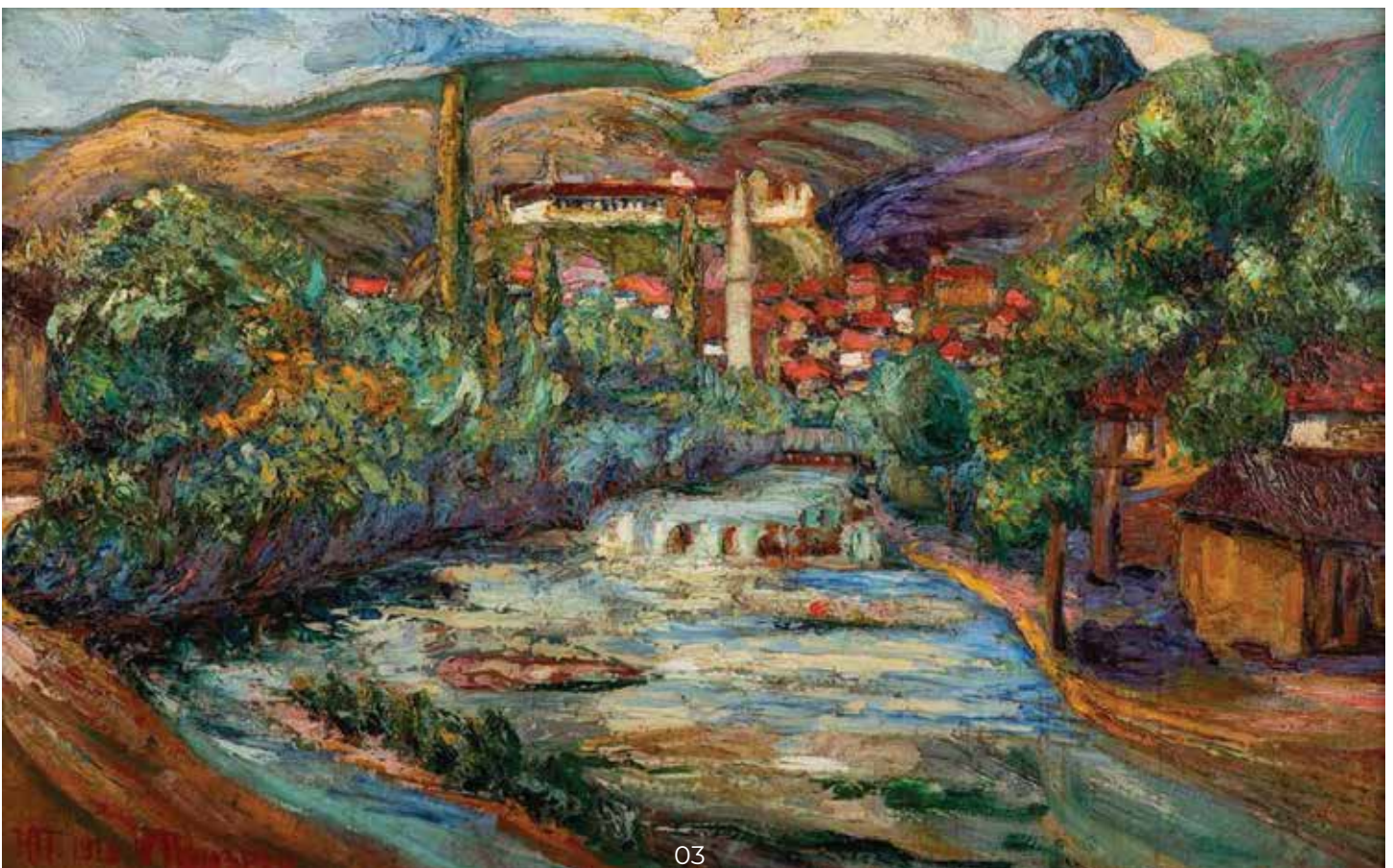


The Ottoman Empire continued to threaten Serbia until it captured the last fortress on the Danube at Smederevo in 1459. The civilization of medieval Serbia, built on a combination of intellectual and artistic exchange with the Byzantine world and its trading contacts with western markets, disappeared from view. The Serbs lived separate lives from the Ottoman ruling class, subjugated and, for the most part, the illiterate vassals of Turkish landowners, excluded from all positions of social, political and cultural authority. The Serbs, however, accepted aspects of Ottoman culture during the long period of their domination evident in the oriental sweets and Turkish words still found in Serbia today. The few Serbs who became wealthy members of the community, usually through trade, adopted Ottoman fashions in dress. Miloš Obrenović, the first Knez of the semi-autonomous Principality of Serbia after the uprisings at the beginning of the nineteenth century, had two portraits painted by Pavel Djurković in 1824. In both of them he is dressed in the manner of a powerful Ottoman landowner or a holder of high office in the imperial service, wearing a richly decorated turban in one picture and a red fez in the other. When Serbs began to adopt European styles of dress later in the nineteenth century, it was not uncommon for them to add accessories, such as a fez, which retained traces of the Ottoman-Serbian past. Culture is a multi-faceted and dynamic expression of identity revealing the modifications and variations which have affected the traditions of a community over time, putting national cultural heritage into an international framework.

The arrival of foreign cultural influences and other ways of looking at the world have rarely been accepted without resistance, at least at first. Serbia in the nineteenth century was transformed from a province on the periphery of the Ottoman Empire, cut off from the West, into an independent kingdom looking to take its place among other European states and nations. A new class of politicians, administrators, teachers, doctors, lawyers and engineers emerged who formed an elite section of the community leading Serbia's social and cultural renaissance. Educated in the universities of Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Russia and France, they brought back with them the models of European modernity which they had witnessed and experienced abroad and which they intended to apply in Serbia. Not everyone was ready for the rapid changes and some people felt confused and alienated from what was taking place around them. The British traveller Mary Durham recorded a conversation she had with a Serbian artist during her first visit to the country in 1902, who told her of the problems, 'Our old patriarchal system is dead, and we have nothing to replace it. Our people have had thrust upon them too suddenly Western ideas which they do not understand.' Alongside the awareness of the advantages brought by modernization, there was also a feeling that an aspect of true Serbian identity was being lost, that the traditions and mentality of old Serbia were disappearing, creating a gap which the modern world could not quite fill with all its innovations and novelties.

The idea that there existed a clear distinction between Serbian and foreign models in political, social and cultural life was a misinterpretation of the reality of the processes of the wider cultural flow in which all communities live. External influences had been integrated into Serbian cultural heritage before and would be again. Disputes and differences dividing those who promoted the changes brought by modernization and those who wished to preserve traditional ways of life were misplaced. But the aggressive nature of their debates obscured the nuanced relationship between heritage and innovation, making compromises on the judicious application of foreign models in the Serbian context more difficult to achieve. In fact, many of those interested in European styles in the arts and modern social practices were also keen to protect national traditions, but in a new way.

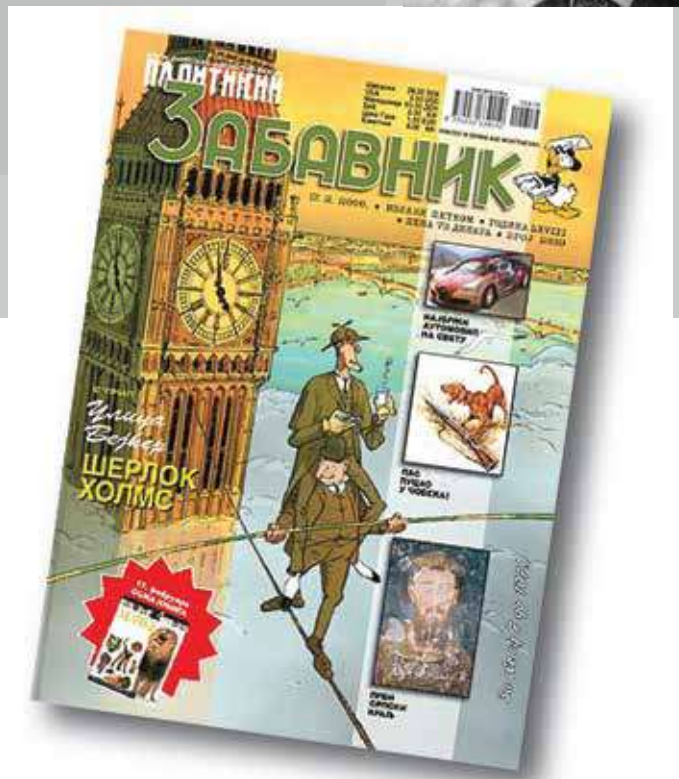
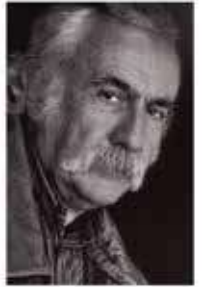
Serbian artists and architects in the twentieth century have worked with modern stylistic trends, adapting them for the expression of local motifs and material taken from Serbian cultural heritage. The painter Nadežda Petrović produced many canvases showing village life in Serbia and using images taken from national mythology in a striking Impressionist style. Her painting *Kraljević Marko and Miloš Obilić* from 1910 is a distinct departure from the earlier type of historical painting by Uroš Predić and Paja Jovanović. Instead of realistic representation, Petrović suggests dynamic movement in her two figures on horseback, drawn with blurred outlines and vivid colours. In 1926 the architect Branislav Kojić offered a playful fusion of traditional Balkan architectural style with art nouveau elements in the family home he designed for 6 Zadarska Street (now renamed Ulica Dobrice Ćosića) off Kosančićev venac in the Belgrade's old city centre.



Writers and filmmakers have been particularly successful in promoting the reputation of Serbian culture and making their mark at home and abroad. Miloš Crnjanski's 1929 novel *Migrations* (*Seobe*) is rightly regarded as Serbia's finest example of European Modernist prose depicting the historical fate of the Serbs living in Vojvodina in the middle of the eighteenth-century. Ivo Andrić received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1961. Danilo Kiš, Milorad Pavić and David Albahari were widely recognized as leading international exponents of literary Postmodernism. Film directors from Serbia associated with the Black Wave were influenced early in their careers by Italian Neorealism and other European trends but went on to make highly celebrated cinema in their own style, telling stories about contemporary Serbian society during the 1960s. Aleksandar Petrović, Živojin Pavlović and Dušan Makavejev won numerous prizes for their work at important European film festivals. The group of directors often referred to as the Prague School who began their careers in the 1980s, such as Goran Marković and Goran Paskaljević, have received similar recognition from the global world of cinematic production.

Popular culture has been drawn to the adaptation of external cultural trends. Comic strips made their first appearance in the 1930s in the Serbian daily press in publications like *Politika* and its children's supplement *Zabavnik*. The first characters were Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, but characters and stories from Serbian history and national myths soon joined the repertoire. The international cabaret star Josephine Baker included Belgrade in her European tour of 1929 introducing the first example of celebrity hysteria in the Serbian capital. Serbs in cinemas up and down the country became used to watching Hollywood films based on a culturally different way of life which they soon became expert at decoding, whether watching in Belgrade or in one of Serbia's smaller provincial towns, as one cultural historian comments: 'Ladies from Leskovac wanted to look like Greta Garbo, Ita Rina, Joan Crawford or Renate Müller. Young men did not only dress like Clark Gable, Rudolf Valentino or Roman Novarro but they also tried to imitate them when walking down the street, sitting at a table in a café, in a car seat or with a cigarette in their hand.'

After the Second World War and the beginning of greater liberalization in Yugoslav cultural life, rock and roll reached Serbia. In 1961 Zoran Mišćević and Branko Glušćević founded one of the first Serbian rock bands, calling themselves The Silhouettes (*Silujete*), clearly reflecting the popularity of the British band The Shadows. They were conscious of operating in a global cultural framework while making music for local audiences. Performers have continued to work in a similar way, taking advantage of what the West has to offer and adapting it to the Serbian context. Singers like Lepa Brena leading the popular revival of neofolk music exploited the technological innovations developed for large concert venues and the marketing strategies of Western recording companies, while combining traditional folk melodies with contemporary disco beats. Serbia enjoyed a very successful scene in popular music at the end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first centuries with bands like *Riblja čorba*, *Idoli* and *Partibrejkers* among many others. Today, Serbian musicians like Bilja Krstić are widely appreciated internationally for their contribution to ethno-music.



Over the centuries Serbia has interacted with many different external trends in varied types of cultural production. Sometimes, they have been resisted as foreign cultural influences which weaken Serbia's authentic national cultural heritage. However, foreign cultural models when used to their best advantage have not been slavishly imitated by Serbian artists but adapted to allow local material to be reformulated or recontextualized in a new framework of international cultural exchange serving as engines for the development of Serbian cultural traditions.



## Serbian Month

in Great Britain



# MUSIC Serbian music in Britain through the decades

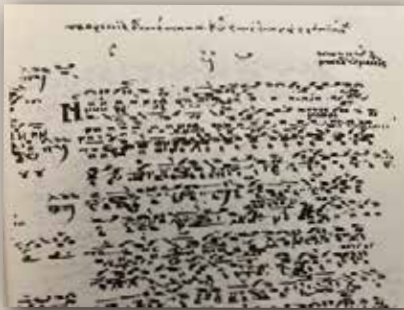
## Religious music

### A Brief Review of the British-Serbian Cultural Relationship in the 20th Century

Today, the fact that the first direct interest in old Serbian music was instigated in the years of the Great War, through British researchers at the University of Oxford, is little known, especially among the younger generations.

After crossing with the Serbian army through Albania and staying on the island of Corfu (1915-1916), the young Serbian composer and conductor Kosta Manojlović (1890-1949) was released from military duty and sent to study music in Oxford (1917). During his studies in this city of science and antiquity, where he met researchers, artists and connoisseurs of various fields, Manojlović also met Rose Newmarch, a Slavist who studied Russian literature and culture. As the beginning of the revolution in Russia ended any possibility of her immediate research in that Slavic country, she became interested in the Serbian cultural past. She encouraged the young Serbian musician to start similar research upon his return to his home country. In Belgrade, Manojlović, in addition to his many duties as a music teacher, conductor, researcher and recorder of folklore traditions, also began searching for liturgical manuscripts from past centuries. He expected to find at least some musical notes in them. Unfortunately, the results of this research did not bring the desired results. In the monastery libraries, Manojlović found liturgical manuscripts and old printed books, but there were no musical or any neume records in them.

Finally, in 1937, before the beginning of the Second World War, he had a stroke of luck. He came upon the discovery in the National Library in Belgrade, in a Greek liturgical manuscript (MS 93). In this manuscript dating from the middle of the 15th century, he found a Late Byzantine type of 'neume', two songs from the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, served in Orthodox churches during Lent: *Ninja sili* (now *The Celestial Powers*, sung instead of the *Cherubic Hymn*) and *Oh Taste and see*, Communion verse, Psalm 34.8. Below the neuma, the texts were written in two languages – Greek and Old Slavonic (Church Slavonic, Serbian) language. Both songs were marked as 'works by Kyr Stefan the Serb'.



*"Ninja sili" by Kir Stefan the Serb*



*Transcription of the song "Ninja sili" into modern*





Regretfully, even after the war, conditions in the country were turbulent. Kosta Manojlović had already been removed from the Music Academy in 1946 by the new authorities. He passed away only three years later (1949). Therefore the students, and then the assistants in the newly founded Musicological Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences, were unable to learn anything about the precious recordings from Manojlović himself. I believe they were directed to them by the director of the SANU Musicological Institute, Petar Konjović, and his colleague, Prof. Stana Đurić-Klein. It is interesting that all three of the first young associates of the Institute (Stojan Lazarević, Miloš Velimirović, Dimitrije Stefanović) showed interest in neume notation and old liturgical manuscripts. However, the first two soon left for the USA, while Stefanović remained in the country firmly determined to somehow go to study with Prof. Egon Wellesz (1884-1974).

As the new European and world war storm had displaced many people from their native cities and countries, the Viennese composer and professor of Jewish origin, Egon Wellesz, found himself in Oxford. Even before the war in his native Vienna, he was interested in the liturgical practice of the Orthodox people. He remembered that in Vienna he was given an Osmoglasnik (Octoechos, a basic singing collection in the Slavic tradition), with melodies of Serbian chant from a Serbian student as a gift. They were the melographic records of Stevan Mokranjac, published in Belgrade in 1908. In Britain, Wellesz also continued his interest in Greek neuma manuscripts, collaborating closely with the British classical philologist and musicologist Henry Jullius Wetenhall Tillyard (1881-1968). Independently of each other, they resolved a number of doubts in the understanding and interpretation of the older Byzantine neuma notation, thus bringing the musical creations of the Middle Ages closer to both modern researchers and potential new performers.

A new stage in the research of the works of Kyr Stefan the Serb began in 1958. The young assistant of the SANU Musicological Institute, Dimitrije Stefanović, was motivated by a great desire to read the unknown 'melodic works of Kyr Stefan'. With the help and understanding of Prof. Walter Oakeshot, the then Rector of Lincoln College Oxford, he was given the opportunity to attend Master's studies with Prof. Egon Wellesz. Today's generations can barely imagine how complex and almost unbelievable a task this was just to try, and then to achieve, from a still largely closed communist country.

In Oxford, Stefanović, dynamic and friendly, met a wide circle of colleagues, Byzantologists, Slavists, art historians and musicians. They were mostly permanent and guest lecturers and researchers at Oxford University, but also people who gathered in the Orthodox Church, at the well-known address, 1 Canterbury Rd.

Orthodox Greeks, Russians – those who escaped from Imperial Russia, Serbs, but also Anglicans, interested in the Orthodox tradition, especially in church music, met there on Sunday services and on holidays. Stefanović and his wife Olga soon gathered a number of older and younger people around them, many of whom were personally and professionally connected to Serbian and wider Balkan cultural heritage. A singing group was also created, with whom Dimitrije, especially popular among young people, performed Orthodox music of various traditions. When, ten years later I also found myself in that environment, I could immediately feel all its benefits with the associated wide range of learning through the exchange of cultural goods, experiences, similarities and differences.

In addition to a series of 'free' activities, Stefanović, under the mentorship of Prof. Wellesz worked diligently, building a sincere friendship between them. These are the circumstances under which Kyr Stefan the Serb's compositions were translated into modern musical notation, so that they would sound like an echo of a distant, until then unknown, past in the new era.



*A collection of songs by Serbian authors from the 15th century transferred into modern musical notation by Dimitrije Stefanović*

On his first return to Belgrade (1960), Stefanović performed and recorded the two compositions of Kyr Stefan as a conductor with the 'Belgrade Madrigalists' choir. He then presented them to listeners in Serbia, thus starting their new life in our time.

It was the era of the Cold War, when interest in Byzantine and Old Slavic art flourished in both Europe and the USA. PhD student Prof. Miloš Velimirović († 2008) from Belgrade, later a distinguished professor of musicology at several American universities, was also a doctorand of Prof. Wellesz. Two more people from Serbia tried to find their place in the USA – Stojan Lazarević (†1989) and Andrija Jakovljević (†2020).

Prof. Anne E. Pennington, a Slavist from the University of Oxford, a close friend of the Stefanović family was also interested in the opus of Kyr Stefan the Serb. While researching the liturgical manuscripts of the Putna monastery (today in Romania), she also discovered a new works created by Kyr Stefan the Serb, but this time with a text in Greek.

Again, in Oxford (1963), during his doctoral studies, Stefanović dealt with older Slavic, more precisely, Russian manuscripts. Nevertheless, he did not neglect further searches for, it seems, the few other preserved Serbian sources. In cooperation with his Oxford colleague Prof. Nigel Wilson, he discovered a sticheron for 'Vavedenje', the Feast of the Introduction of the Mother of God (Sticheron for The Entrance of the Mother of God to the Temple, holy day, 'slava' of the Hilandar Monastery), written in Late Byzantine neume, with a not very easily recognisable Old Slavic text written in Greek letters, and marked as 'Servikon' (AD 1553). At that time, there was a rise in interest in 18th and 19th century neume manuscripts from Hilandar with poems in honour of several Serbian saints.

After his Oxford years, Stefanović, as a young PhD, returned to Belgrade and his home Institute of Musicology. He immediately gathered a group of students from different faculties, ready to hear and learn something about our old music. The members of this group formed a women's singing group, which a few years later would grow into a mixed, Studio Choir. With the outstanding soloist, deacon Vlado Mikić, this chamber choir performed examples of newly discovered old records of various traditions. Thanks to the involvement of Stefanović's British friends and colleagues, the ensemble even visited Great Britain three times (1973, 1980, 1990). The participants of these tours will never forget the kind hosts in whose homes they stayed, as well as the performances in Canterbury and Winchester Cathedrals, in the chapels of the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge, in the monastery of West Malling in Kent, in London's church of St Martin in the Fields or at the University of Leeds.

In the last decades of the last century, these old tunes swiftly conquered not only new listeners, but also new creators. Many of the transcribed and performed chants reached several Serbian composers through invisible pathways. Connecting across the centuries, they feature in the works of Ljubica Marić, Vasilije Mokranjac, Dušan Radić, Aleksandar Obradović, Rajko Maksimović, Rudolf Bruči, Jugoslav Bošnjak and Ivan Jevtić.

The calm, peaceful sounds of the distant past have ennobled and enriched the sounds and spiritual spaces of a new era.

**Danica Petrović,  
Belgrade, October 2023**



## *The Saint Sava Church Choir in London*

Since its inception in 1952, the Saint Sava Church Choir has played a vital role in the Serbian religious community. Its primary role has always been to sing the Sunday liturgies, alongside occasional weekday liturgies on significant feast days like Christmas and St Sava's Day. The choir also actively and regularly participates in various events within the parish including weddings, christenings and funerals, lending its voices whenever called upon.

Beyond its parochial responsibilities, the church choir has been involved in a great variety of celebrations within the Serbian church community and beyond. Notably, the choir had the privilege of performing at the commemoration of the 800th anniversary of the Hilandar Monastery on Mount Athos, celebrated in London in 1998. Additionally, the choir was invited on numerous occasions to sing for the Patron Saint Day (or Slava) of HRH Crown Prince Aleksandar, St Andrew (the first Apostle whom Jesus called to join His mission). The choir was regularly involved in special events pertaining to the Serbian Royal Family until the latter relocated to Serbia in 2001.

On a number of notable occasions, the choir was invited to participate in events outside its immediate community, including: 'The Millennium Songs of Praise' held on the 2nd January 2000 at St George's Church in Enfield. The choir joined prayers led by several Christian denominations residing in the North London area. Similarly, the choir took part in the 'Week of Prayers for World Peace', contributing to a solemn ceremony at St Ethelburga Church in Bishopsgate, London, on the 17th of October 2004. During this event, the Orthodox icon 'Christ our Peacemaker' was brought into St Ethelburga as a symbol of peace.

The Saint Sava Church Choir participated in the annual celebrations of the Pan-Orthodox Vespers, traditionally hosted at a different orthodox church each year in London, including the Russian, Greek, Antiochian, Georgian, and, of course, the Serbian church. This annual event took place every year on the Sunday of Orthodoxy (first Sunday of Great Lent).

The choir has also lent its voices to a large number of public concerts and other events further afield, too numerous to list.

It is fitting to acknowledge that choral singing helps both the congregation and the singers themselves. The former find it easier to offer their prayers while listening to the beautiful sacred chants and compositions of the orthodox tradition, whereas the latter enjoy the experience of collective singing, and feel the profound blessings bestowed upon them from above, as they present their talents, in gratitude, as an offering to the divine Creator.

*Alexandra Smiljanić*

*U vremena davna (In ancient times)*

<https://youtu.be/PYM9T5rGm-Y>



*Himna Svetom Savi (St Sava's Hymn)*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjPdVq76zAA>



# *Holy Prince Lazar Choir*

Lazarica Church in Birmingham

*Tradition. Spirituality. Beauty.  
Power. Connection. Fun.*



The Holy Prince Lazar Choir is a small mixed acapella choir consisting of sopranos, altos, tenors and bass. The choir, is a friendly group of singers who rehearse every Tuesday in the church from 7 pm to 9.30 pm. The singers are between 18 and 70 years old and have different levels of experience.

The current music director is Dragana Zebić. She graduated from Belgrade Faculty of Music with a BA degree in Vocal and Operatic performance (studying as a soprano). Dragana has performed across the Balkans and in several Belgrade churches.

The choir performs in a variety of venues but their primary purpose is to sing the Holy Liturgy in Lazarica once a month and on major Orthodox Church days such as Easter and Christmas. The choir mainly sings spiritual music and performs sacred vocal music from other religions as well as different kinds of secular music.

The choir were honoured to sing at the Kidderminster Golden Concert along with the Kidderminster Male Choir in October 2019. The concert was held at St George's Church and celebrated the 50th anniversary of KEMP Hospice. They were also delighted to perform in the 6th International Music Edict Festival which took place in Niš, Serbia. This momentous occasion featured choirs from eight countries across the globe during a 4 day event.

The choir welcomes new members. If interested contact Dragana by email on [draganazebic@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:draganazebic@yahoo.co.uk) or mobile 0792 828 040 or turn up at a rehearsal.



# *Memories* of Serbian song and dance in the 60s and 70s

My sister and I were teenagers during the 'swinging 60s' in London: a time of teenage rebellion, iconic rock bands with long hair and revealingly tight trousers, miniskirts and hipster trousers and very disapproving parents. Notting Hill with its Portobello Market was one of the centres of this new, iconoclastic era. And yet just down the road was the Serbian Orthodox Church of Sveti Sava and its church hall, which for us was the true centre of fun and epic partying.

Of course we would never have dared admit to our school friends that rather than going to rock concerts or discos and dancing to the Beatles, the Rolling stones or the Who, we actually preferred spending the time with our parents and their friends at the church hall where the singing and dancing were wilder and far more exciting!

While my friends were watching pop bands on TV whose songs were often drowned out by screaming young fans, we were listening to old Serbian songs from the first World War that told of the fate of the Serbian army and its generals, such as *Kreće se ladja francuska*, *Marš na Drinu*, *Tamo daleko* – songs full of pride and sorrow and nostalgia for a distant native land. My memories are of family and friends gathering for Slavas, Christmas or just reunions and singing in unison, eyes filling with tears as the words echoed their own exile from a much-loved native land. For us younger generation, born in the diaspora, the words did not have the same resonance but, nevertheless, we did understand and share at a visceral level their emotions and feelings of alienation and loss.



Alongside these First World War songs were the chansons, the romantic ballads and the more joyful regional songs that evoked intimate spaces, smoky interiors where coffee is being brewed in preparation for a midnight tryst with a dear lover, a young girl admired from afar while she is fetching water from a well or spa waters that have Viagra-like qualities for rejuvenating their male drinkers. These were songs that we children knew were full of risqué innuendos because of the knowing nods, smiles and laughter shared by the adults. Looking back now, it is one of the ironies of our upbringing that our parents were so strict about what we were allowed to wear or do, and so scathing about the sexual liberation of the 60s, whilst the songs they sang were of such romantic daring.

Music, dance and song, along with food and the Church, were the cultural threads that wove us into a Serbian world that our parents' generation created in exile. There were many occasions when we enjoyed the full impact of them. Whether it was the more public festivities like Christmas, Vrbica or Djurdjev Dan or the more intimate gatherings of friends and family for Slavos, christenings or weddings, there was sure to be singing and dancing. The old Church Hall was the scene of many joyful events, with bands providing the music – Bracika on the double bass, Ceca on his accordion – for songs and kolos. I have wonderful recollections of being allowed to break into the long line of a kolo to hold hands with an adult on either side, while the leader of the kolo would hold aloft his free hand and wave a handkerchief, faces would gleam with sweat, groans would be heard when the band upped the tempo or prolonged the music, feet would be flying, bodies twisting and turning this way and that, everyone caught up in the sheer joy and exhilaration from this physical expression of communal spirit and enjoyment. It was certainly a far cry from the awkward embarrassment of school discos where a group of us girls would dance around a pile of handbags not sure whether being asked to dance by one of the anxious boys standing around was to be welcomed or dreaded. Maybe I exaggerate, but the contrast between the individual and the communal was something I felt strongly and I knew which I preferred.



At smaller gatherings, it was a marvel to witness how music and song would be conjured up at a moment's notice. Čika Ceca would pick up his accordion and away everyone go, breaking into song or an impromptu kolo that would weave its way through rooms and corridors. Talented singers like Tetka Sara and Paulina would lead the singing or sing alone and when the spirit took them, glasses or plates would start to fly! These were wonderful and joyous moments that will stay with me for ever. They were also, at times, moments of great poignancy, evoking love and tenderness, of loss and separation, of a beloved country never to be visited again, of family and friends never to be seen again, of lives lost, of lives not lived.

It was ironic that we in the Diaspora were more Serbian than the people back home. Just as the language we spoke and the vocabulary we used, our cultural tastes were those of the world of the 30s and 40s; we were in a time warp because we were cut off from our motherland. When our younger relatives were eventually allowed to visit us in the West, they were excited about seeing Carnaby Street, Oxford Street, buying the latest fashions, seeing the latest pop groups. They would not have been seen dead in a national costume or dancing a kolo or singing Starogradske Pesme! Heaven forbid!

But I feel incredibly grateful and privileged to have been part of that first generation of exiles who showed us how to share joy and sorrow, how to make music and song, how to have a real 'cracking' party, how to 'lumpovati'! Long live their spirit.

*Jelena Stanojlović*

# Serbian Live-Pop-Rock



scene 1990s

Writing an article about the Serbian pop-rock concerts in London made me reminisce about all those wild nights that I spent mooching out and about in the world of Serbian live music. I tried to think of the earliest Serbian gigs I can remember, and you know what? No matter which gig I mention as the 'first one', there will always be someone who'll remember something even earlier. And I am bound to forget to mention some.

But let's have a go – the Serbian nightlife scene deserves it.

As well as the live shows with Serbian bands and singers, it would be unfair not to mention the lively Serbian clubbing scene, which was also very vibrant in the 90s. The very first night of 'domaća muzika' that I recall as a žurka-hungry teenager was at a venue in Soho called Le Scandale. It was a Monday night in the autumn of 1994 and I got a phone call from a friend saying "Idemo na neku nasu žurku!". Mobile phones were extremely rare back then, but somehow the word spread and I soon found myself in a club with over 200 people listening to Riblja Čorba, Bijelo Dugme, EKV, Partibrejkers... And that's all I can remember – which means it must have been a good night.

Le Scandale (or just 'Skandal' as it was known to the Serbs) held a few more parties of this sort, as so many will fondly remember. Mad days indeed.

The next big Serbian party took place in the spring of 1996 at a Leicester Square venue called Zoo Bar. It became known as Zlatni Papagaj. Run by Bojan and Bora, it was named after a well-known trendy bar in Belgrade, famous for its early 80s 'posh kids' clientele. London's Zlatni Papagaj back then was amazing, and not just at weekends. A party would take place every Monday night and there would always be a good crowd. There was also a live performance almost every month, so one month there would be Bajaga, then Partibrejkers two weeks later, then Električni Orgazam, then Rambo Amadeus and so on. Zlatni Papagaj still holds parties from time to time, and they can still be just as mad as they were back in the heyday.

In the early 90s, as the war was raging in the Balkans, and sanctions were in place for Serbs, it was very difficult to organise a concert for Serbian musicians in the UK. However, the very first one that I can recall was a solo gig by Bajaga. This was the autumn of 1994. It took place in Ealing Broadway at a club aptly named **The Boulevard**. I only heard about this gig a day before, but I was super excited to go. These were very different times, as nostalgia was very strong amongst the Serbian community in the UK. In those days there was no internet, no Serbian TV channels, no ways to be in touch with what was going on in the homeland. The only way to stay in touch with what was happening was via phone, which was very expensive back then (no cheap Viber calls, etc). There was a newsagent in Queensway who used to sell *Novosti*. But that took an hour's worth of commuting for most London Serbs, and even when you did get a chance to buy the newspaper, it was already a few days old. So, naturally, people were hungry for anything and everything that came from Serbia.

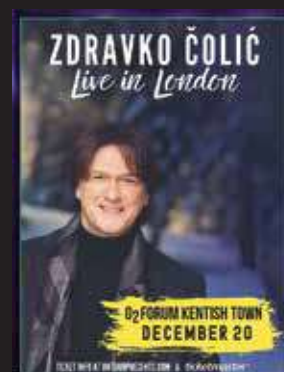


When Bajaga's concert was announced, everyone was up for it. The Boulevard club was chock-a-bloc. People were queuing outside, all eager to see Bajaga. There was a party atmosphere, people in a great mood and ready to sing some hits. Then Bajaga came out to a tiny stage. He was on his own (his band Instruktori were not with him), and he started singing to a backing tape, accompanied only by his acoustic guitar. But that didn't matter one bit to the crowd who went absolutely wild. Everyone was singing at the top of their voice, dancing, having a great old time. Bajaga sang three or four encores. It was an absolute joy. I remember someone saying, "This is just like New Year celebration". It was brilliant.

Also in late 1994, the founder and boss of Disciplina Kičme, Koja, moved to London. He decided to form a London version of the band, changing the spelling to Disciplin-A Kitschme. It was a different band, with Coffe Babe (Jamaican woman) on vocals, a New Zealand drummer and, of course, Koja on bass. They started playing at smaller alternative venues, mainly in Camden and central London. *Borderline* and *The Dublin Castle* pub were favourites. These gigs were also full of people from the exYU who loved alternative music and loved the old Disciplina Kičme. They were energetic, fun, great sounding and very ahead of their time. What's more, they were popular among the English population as well, as they managed to get their album *I think I see myself on CCTV* into the magazines *NMW* and *Melody Maker*.



Quite soon after that, in 1996, Zlatni Papagaj started working regularly. Apart from the usual club nights on Mondays, it started hosting live performances from the exYU region. Even though the stage was more or less improvised, and not very big at all, it managed to hold live gigs from some of the most popular performers. The notable ones included Riblja Čorba, Zdravko Čolić, Parni Valjak, Partibrejkers, Električni Orgazam, Bajaga (again), and soooo many more. Zdravko Čolić's performance in 1997 was truly amazing. There was a record number of people present, and even to this day I am not sure how they all fitted into the Zoo Bar. But it was an amazing night. As were almost all the subsequent gigs that took place there.



Another memorable live show was by the late Đorđe Balašević in the spring of 1996. Probably knowing that it would attract a great number of people, it was booked to play at the *Shepherd's Bush Empire*. And the organisers were right. Tickets were sold out. The audience was treated to a 3-hour performance of emotional songs, in-between jokes by the Panonian sailor, stories and memories that would stay with them forever.

As the music scene in Serbia was rich with new bands, some of them spilled out to the UK too. One of the most popular Serbian new bands of the 90s, Darkwood Dub, also had a gig at Zlatni Papagaj in 1998. Not that well known amongst the Serbian community, the turnout was not great. I remember overhearing a conversation a few days earlier between two acquaintances, which went something like: "Who's playing at Zlatni Papagaj next week?", "I don't know. Some weird Belgraders." And, as it often goes, the weird thing about that gig was that on the same night, a gig by Marina Perazić was taking place elsewhere in London. So the punters decided to go to that instead. Poor Darkwood Dub only played to about 50 people. Still they did a great show and played some of their best stuff to date.



The gigs continued until 1999. Some shows were taking place at the now destroyed London Astoria at Charing Cross, some at the Scala in King's Cross and some at smaller clubs. But they were all really well attended, because the community spirit amongst the Serbs was very much alive, and those gigs were places to see old friends, make some new ones and generally have heaps of fun.

In 1999, NATO launched its aggression against Serbia and Montenegro, which resulted in more sanctions and fewer live gigs. The London Serbs would have to wait another year for the gigs to re-start. With the arrival of the new millennium, and advances in technology, Serbs would have many more opportunities to stay in touch with what was happening in Serbia and follow the scene. The internet and mobile phones brought Serbia into their homes, even if they were not in Serbia. And the nostalgia stopped being so strong. It became easier to hear the Serbian language, listen to Serbian music. People were not so hungry for it. Don't get me wrong, the 2000s brought us many, many amazing live gigs and shows, but you could sense that somehow the thirst was not as strong. But maybe that's a good thing. Perhaps it should be about the music and not just about the nostalgia.

So, there you have it. I know I must have omitted some of the gigs that took place over the years. But it's been nearly 30 years. The Serbian club and live scene was, is and will be rich, as long as there are Serbian people willing to listen to some amazing music, go mad and party. And knowing the Serbian mentality, that's our specialty, our nature – envied by many.

*Nikola Čobić*

**Bajaga:** <https://www.instagram.com/p/BuKmEIQnZ1A/>

**Zdravko Čolić:** <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=625631238178371>

**Đorđe Balašević in London** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZ7w9E0QB-g>

# Serbian Musicians in the UK

## Thank you for the music!

### Maya Jordan

Living in the UK for the last 27 years surrounded by excellent musicians of Serbian origin has been a great inspiration and driving force in my vision of promoting Serbian music and artists.

When I moved to London in 1996, like most professional musicians, I was overwhelmed by the richness and variety of cultural life that this metropolis had to offer. My thirst for the international music scene was not easy to satisfy and did not especially include the need for Balkan music, apart from welcoming any new friends from that region. Naturally, some of them were musicians from Belgrade following a similar path in their professional lives. It was a time of war in former Yugoslavia that added a special note to our new friendships.

Witnessing the demonisation of the Serbian people in the media, feeling angry but helpless, my colleague pianist Gordana Petrović and I came up with the defensive idea of opposing this image with the skill we know best: the beautiful Serbian music which in our performing careers was always well appreciated by foreign audiences. The project 'Sound of the Balkans' was born, as well as my journey of promoting our music and artists. Various concerts took place at venues such as the Yugoslav and Swiss Embassies, the Serbian Orthodox and other churches. Balkan music from Byzantine to modern times was presented by artists from the former Yugoslavia, Britain, Greece, Cyprus, Colombia and USA playing together.

Given the rather limited activities of our community at that time, we soon came across the Serbian Society and the Laza Kostić Foundation, both founded in London in the 90s with the aim of promoting Serbian culture. Pianist Marina Milić Apostolović (Radović), a founder of the Laza Kostić Fund, engaged with leading British musicians: composer Sir John Tavener wrote the song cycle *Epistle of Love* based on the texts of medieval and renaissance Serbian poetry. His work was performed by renowned soprano Patricia Rozario on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Laza Kostić charity fund. Furthermore, *Seven Etudes* by Serbian composer Vasilije Mokranjac was recorded and premiered by distinguished pianist Piers Lane in the Wigmore Hall.



**MOKRANJAC SEVEN ETUDES FOR PIANO Piers Lane**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=myhV3Z1E1ws>



At the same time, Gordana Miller's Gara Entertainment and Serbian Society were also leading forces in bringing culture from Serbia to the doorstep of the Serbian community in Britain.

Driven by this same goal of promoting our music, or due to the natural development of our professional endeavours, Serbian musicians began to collaborate on a smaller or larger scale, expanding our 'magic circle'. Numerous concerts took place, including valuable charity concerts organised by individual artists, the tireless Rebecca Beaconsfield and the British-Serbian Benevolent Fund, Vesna Petković and Pro-Art and Co, the Royal family, the Serbian Church, British charities Blythswood Care, Hospice of Hope and many other organisations, helping Serbian people in need. The most in demand are still 'naši harmonikaši' (our accordionists), proving the popularity of this instrument among Serbs.

The celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Serbian Society with The Blue Danube concert at St John's Smith Square in 2005 was one of the largest gatherings of Serbian musicians at the time. This concert showcased the capacity of our musical community that has grown over the years and a great inspiration for many more collaborations.



**Silent Ritual Dance by Nikola Radan**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4o89T8fbNYl>

The highlight of our vision was the project led by the Serbian Council 'Following Constantine the Great' marking the 1,700th anniversary of the Edict of Milan. Tracing the route of Emperor Constantine from Niš to York, events were held in Niš (Serbia) in 2018 during the NIMUS festival, London, York and the Serbian Cultural Centre in Paris in 2012 and the Serbian Orthodox Church in Frankfurt (Germany) in 2013. Serbian and international artists from the UK, France, Germany, the USA and Serbia, along with choirs from York University and the Niš Symphony Orchestra, worked together in a celebration of cultures and achievements, connecting artists from different countries through art. During this cultural journey, we established links with numerous Serbian and other organisations and artists from around the world, making us all proud of what we have achieved. I was especially proud of driving the 16-seater minibus from York for the first time while being amused by the jokes from the film *Ko to tamo peva* (Who's Singin' Over There?) from my fellow musician-passengers! "It could be a horse, like Constantine," I comforted myself at one point, staring sleepily into the darkness of the empty motorway.



In addition to these joint ventures, each Serbian musician has been pursuing their own professional careers in performing and teaching, leaving their mark on the British cultural scene. Numerous performances range from lunchtime concerts to the Wigmore, Barbican and Royal Festival Halls, including an extensive list of international venues and festivals. Serbian musicians perform and record with prestigious orchestras and labels, teach at eminent institutions such as the Royal Academy, Trinity Laban Conservatory, Eton College, adjudicate and host music festivals such as 'Around the Globe Music and Arts'.

The popularity of world music was another opportunity seized by our musicians skilled in Balkan traditional music. They attracted the attention of a British audience hungry for stronger beats and rhythm. Paprika band, She'Koyokh, Branko & Faith, Kosmos Ensemble are eagerly followed around the country and at festivals. The Arhai duo added a more modern electronic sound to Balkan roots, while Branco Stoysin brought the traditional sentiment and beauty of our songs to the jazz auditorium with his trio and solo performances. With all this on offer, and regular visits from Goran Bregović, Boban Marković and other gypsy bands, tamburaši (tambourine players) and various musicians from Serbia, our memory books continue to fill to the last page...

Through joint and individual efforts, Serbian musicians in the UK convey a strong message of the talent and quality of our artists. And beyond that, the most important thing is the friendship that keeps us together and the joint professional engagements of our community. Turning back to the beginning of this article saying how eagerly I was attending concerts of world-famous artists when I came to England, it seems that the wheel has turned. For many years I have been going mainly to concerts of Serbian/ Balkan artists that I want to hear or support. Does this mean that Serbian music has become an equal part of the British international scene over time? Perhaps nostalgia partially plays a role, but there is so much on offer that it's hard to refuse!

*Check out the 'Serbian Artists in UK' section and you'll see what I am talking about!  
For the encore, please help yourself:*

<https://www.youtube.com/@jovanabackovic>  
<https://www.youtube.com/@nevenabridgensoprano2363>  
<https://www.youtube.com/@mayajordan4954>  
<https://www.youtube.com/@MilosMilivojevic>  
<https://www.youtube.com/@milenasimovic3391>  
<https://www.youtube.com/@brancostoyisin>

<https://www.youtube.com/@ViktorBijelovic>  
<https://www.youtube.com/@MaestroGosta>  
<https://www.youtube.com/@planetmina974>  
<https://www.youtube.com/@zivorad-nikolic>  
<https://www.youtube.com/@ljubicastojanovic1>  
<https://www.youtube.com/@AnaTorbica>



# British-Serbs contribution to the British music scene

## Recording the Sound of Britain

BonaFideStudio, Muswell Hill ( <https://bonafidestudio.co.uk> )  
Brian (Branislav) & Deana (Dušica) Bogdanović



**BFS**  
BonaFideStudio  
London

Muswell Hill has many amenities and one of them happens to be a unique recording studio founded and run by two Belgraders who had found themselves in the UK during the fall of Yugoslavia. Nestled in the heart of this prosperous community in north London, this iconic studio has served as a creative haven for artists, musicians and imaginative souls for over two decades. BonaFideStudio boasts an exceptional track record and a diverse clientele, earning its esteemed reputation as a pre-eminent hub for all things musical. And a hub for great stories about many UK music luminaries.

Founded in 1999 by the husband/wife dynamic duo of Dušica (Deanna) and Branislav (Brian) Bogdanović, the studio has been a constant source of evolution while remaining true to its foundational principles. From its modest origins as a small recording space in Shoreditch to its current status as a comprehensive creative hub in Muswell Hill, the studio has consistently provided artists with a unique sanctuary. Here, they can freely explore their musical ideas while receiving top-notch, professional-grade recordings.

The genesis of this extraordinary story began as a youthful dream in the bustling streets of their hometown, Belgrade, during the early 1990s. Dušica had recently returned from a transformative three-month stay in London, igniting her desire to live and work in the city after completing her law degree. Sharing this dream was her then-boyfriend, Branislav, an accomplished musician in the band Démoniac. Together, they often found themselves parked in Branislav's father's yellow Golf by the Ušće, envisioning a future filled with the harmonious symphonies of a recording studio.

It's fair to say that their current lives represent the realisation of those youthful dreams, as BonaFide (the name is a giveaway of Dušica's law training) has emerged as a hidden gem where artistic excellence intertwines seamlessly with technical mastery. Every time they welcomed an artist into their studio, Dušica and Branislav embarked on a journey alongside them. It was more than just pressing record buttons and adjusting audio levels; it was about truly understanding the essence of the music, the artist's vision, and the stories they wanted to tell.

Dušica, with her keen ear for harmonies and melodies, and Branislav, the technical wizard behind the soundboard, complemented each other perfectly. They meticulously analysed every note, every lyric, and every instrument to ensure that the music was not just technically flawless, but emotionally resonant.

The emotional involvement in each project was what truly set their studio apart. As they worked closely with the musicians, they would often find themselves swept up in the creative process, feeling the passion and dedication that the artists brought to the studio. Whether it was the raw vulnerability of a singer-songwriter pouring their heart into a ballad, or the electrifying energy of a rock band, Dušica and Branislav would immerse themselves in the music's emotion. They were there to witness the birth of songs, the moments of frustration and the triumphs of a finished track. Their eyes would glisten with pride when they saw the smiles on their clients' faces after listening to the final mix.

The emotional involvement was what made BonaFideStudio so special and true to its name. It is a place where music was not just produced but nurtured with love and care. That's why they offer a lot of opportunities for musicians, including rehearsal, recording, music production, pre-production and post-production audio services, catering to a wide spectrum of musical genres and styles. Whatever is someone's style and approach, the Bogdanovičs have the expertise and equipment to tackle it all.

They also do a lot of voice-overs, commercial work, original compositions for film, theatre, TV and the internet. Whether it's a solo artist embarking on a personal journey or a full-fledged band, whether it's a Hollywood film score or a West End theatrical production, the Bogdanovičs have the know-how and creative intuition to encapsulate the essence of each project.

It also helps that the studio is nestled within the Nature Reserve Parkland Walk. This juxtaposition of cutting-edge technology within the serenity of a nature reserve provides artists with a blank canvas upon which they can paint their sonic masterpieces.

The illustrious client list of BonaFideStudio reads like a who's who of the music industry. Their dedication to quality and artistic integrity has attracted a diverse array of talents, ranging from emerging artists to globally recognised stars.

For instance, during One Direction's time at the studio, fans were so dedicated that they camped not only outside but even on the rooftops of nearby houses, eagerly awaiting a glimpse of their idols. When the band Klaxons received the exciting news that they had won a Mercury Award while in the studio, they were so overwhelmed with joy that they rushed to get to the BBC for their live performance, forgetting all their equipment kerbside. Deanna and Brian stepped in, ensuring that their gear made it to the BBC in time.

Kylie Minogue, the beloved pop icon, was met with standing ovations from her neighbours when she was in the studio, while Simon Le Bon of the iconic band Duran Duran had to go into hiding due to overzealous fans from Italy. There are countless stories that will never be fully shared to preserve the confidentiality of the clients. Late-night sessions, tears, the enthusiasm of devoted fans and the occasional tantrum—all these experiences contribute to the unique tapestry of BonaFideStudio.

However, one of the most surprising stories involves the late actor Christopher Lee, renowned for his roles as the iconic Count Dracula in the Hammer films, and later in various roles in Star Wars and The Lord of the Rings. When the studio received a booking for his session, they naturally assumed it would be a voice-over. Much to their amazement, it turned out to be a death metal album, showcasing the extraordinary diversity of clients who have found a home at BonaFideStudio.

With each recording and every client, it continues to honour the art of music and the artists who create it, as an everlasting testament to the power of sound. For more than two decades, BonaFideStudio, founded and run by Brian and Dušica, has been recording the sound of Britain in all its richness.



**EXER Party** For the past 19 years, EXER Party is considered to be the most popular party in London for people from the Balkans. It is a great opportunity for Balkan people (and people from all over the world) to have fun and enjoy some of the best sounds from the region. EXER Party is famous for playing very diverse music, and there is always something for everyone ranging from pop and rock, to dance, modern folk and trumpet music. The only requirement is that it is upbeat.

EXER Party has changed locations several times over the years and has been held at some of the most elite places in central London. At the moment, EXER Party takes place at Blag Club in Kensington. It always attracts a large number of people, and the parties are famous for their unique and uplifting atmosphere and a very friendly crowd. It is a real treat, Balkan style.

Apart from the famous parties, EXER Events also organises events related to the Serbian Diaspora. These include live concerts, art exhibitions, literary evenings and poetry readings. But most people remember EXER Events for the memorable concerts they have organised for famous Serbian bands - Riblja Čorba and Bajaga & Instruktori. So, while we wait for upcoming EXER parties, gigs and events, we would like to say to you are all WELCOME!



## Around the Globe Music & Arts

AGMA is a non-profit company based in England and Wales that aims to promote the development and appreciation of various contemporary music styles, mainly for piano and other keyboard instruments. It was founded in 2019 by classical pianists and educators Marina Petrov and Maya Jordan, who have collaborated for many years on various projects, including the Around the Globe Piano Music Festival in London since 2014. Since its establishment, AGMA has actively supported numerous diverse music and art projects within the UK.

### About Us

AGMA organises music festivals, concerts, competitions, masterclasses, workshops, seminars, exhibitions and lectures open to amateur and professional musicians of all ages and levels to achieve its objectives. Using online and social media and producing printed music magazines and brochures enables AGMA to reach a broad, even global, audience of supporters and participants.

### Our Objectives

An essential aspect of the enterprise is to assist emerging musicians in broadening their musical education by introducing and promoting contemporary composers and performers from different cultural backgrounds and musical traditions. AGMA is actively focusing on organising a range of exciting cultural events, including public and online performances for its competition prize winners and a series of concerts from other exceptionally talented musicians.

In addition to the festival, promoting contemporary global composers has been an essential component of the professionally produced Around the Globe Music Magazines, which feature articles on new piano works, reviews, health advice for musicians and other educational topics.

### About our Competitions

The first AGPMF competition was held in London in November 2014 and became a positive annual fixture. In 2020, due to the pandemic, it was necessary to transform the festival into the Around the Globe Online Piano Competition, a format that has been maintained to this day. The change was welcomed by many new participants from various countries worldwide, leading to its current identity (2023), The Around the Globe International Music Competition.

Our idea is to encourage pianists of all ages and levels to actively search for new repertoire, as the festival and competition are an excellent platform for emerging artists to share their musical achievements and, most importantly, acquire experience of public performance in various music styles. To maintain the momentum of innovation, from 2023 the festival programme includes the first Accordion Competition and an exciting Piano Composition Competition, open to all amateur composers.

Subscribe to AGMA Newsletters: <https://www.agpianomusicfestival.co.uk/blog>

Join us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/globepianomusicfestival/>

YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@aroundtheglobepianomusicfe2098/featured>

# BANDS WITH SERBIAN MUSICIANS

## PAPRIKA

<https://www.paprikamusic.com/>



Silk Thread (Svilen Konac)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IzP\\_5dDTE00](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IzP_5dDTE00)

*"Paprika, a Balkan band that hyperventilates their tunes at an extremely vigorous pace, filled with extreme virtuosity, and unusually guitar-orientated.", Martin Longley, All About Jazz*

*"A must see!", Cerys Matthews, BBC presenter*

## BEHIND THE SCENES

They say that music is the language of the soul, and nothing could be truer for this World Music Band. Composed of a group of inspirational musicians and skillful performers, the artists behind Paprika have earned their reputation as a talented band to look out for.

Throughout the course of their musical union, the members of Paprika have won over the hearts of music lovers from all walks of life. Performing at a variety of venues and making countless public appearances all the while recording new song versions, this talented World Music Band has earned the admiration and affection of critics and fans alike.

Paprika is the UK's leading Balkan band whose line-up consists of two accordions, violin, guitar, bass guitar, and percussion. This electrifying group fuses together Eastern European, Balkan, Gypsy and Classical music in a whirlwind performance of frenzied virtuosity. Fiery melodies and foot-tapping rhythms are interspersed with lilting laments in high-energy sets from this exciting group. Specialising in bringing rare or lost traditional Balkan music back to life, both the curious listener and the well-versed aficionado are sure to enjoy a host of surprises and fast-paced entertainment.

The band released their eponymous album in 2011 and their second album "Wild, Wild East" in 2019. Paprika performed all over the world, from New Zealand to Japan, including Womad and Glastonbury festivals and prestigious venues such as the Royal Albert Hall and the Sydney Opera House.

Miloš Milivojević - accordion / Živorad Nikolić - accordion / Vladimir Štrkalj - guitar  
Rastko Rašić - drums / Marko Tešić - violin / Peter Bakaja - bass



# SHE'KOYOKH



Jasenicko & Milosevo Kolos  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hyBL3r5P97I>

<http://www.shekoyokh.co.uk/>

“One of the finest and most entertaining British-based exponents of global music” (The Guardian).

Çigdem Aslan: Vocals  
Susi Evans: Clarinet, Gaida  
Meg Hamilton: Violin  
Živorad Nikolić: Accordion, Vocals  
Matt Bacon: Guitars, Kaval, Saxophone  
Paul Moylan: Double Bass  
Christina Borgenstierna: Percussion

She'Koyokh has toured the world with highlights at the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam and festivals in Germany, Hungary, Poland, Cyprus, Spain, the Canary Islands and Norway; WOMAD, Sziget and Pannonica Festivals; Fundación Juan March Madrid, London's Wigmore Hall and Southbank Centre, Aldeburgh's Snape Proms and live sessions on BBC Radio.

Four globally acclaimed albums have earned She'Koyokh their reputation as “one of London's musical treasures playing the best klezmer and Balkan music in Britain” (The Evening Standard).

She'Koyokh's line-up is as diverse and excellent as their music making. Their members hail from Turkey, Serbia, Spain and the UK, all with various backgrounds. Three members are graduates from London's prestigious Royal Academy of Music, two are esteemed jazz musicians, accordionist Živorad Nikolić is one of the finest players of Serbian traditional music there is, their singer, Çigdem Aslan, is a celebrity in the world of *rembetiko* music and Susi Evans is “one of the best klezmer clarinetists of our day” (Songlines). All seven of them are virtuoso musicians, each with twenty years absorbing and performing the rich folk music traditions of Jewish Eastern Europe, Turkey and the Balkans.

The band formed in 2001 with the support of a Millennium Award from the Jewish Music Institute. In 2008 they were awarded first prize in the International Jewish Music Festival in Amsterdam and have been shortlisted twice for *Best Group* in the Songlines World Music Awards. She'Koyokh has collaborated with the Aurora Orchestra and with South Indian violinist Jyotsna Srikanth.

In February 2019 their bass player Paul Moylan composed *Klez'Mahler*, a prelude to Mahler's First Symphony which was performed by She'Koyokh as soloists with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra and broadcast live on BBC Radio 3.

The band performed their Wigmore Hall debut in Feb 2023 which was sold to capacity and described by resident chamber orchestra the Nash Ensemble as ‘wonderful’ and ‘moving’.  
She'Koyokh is a Yiddish word meaning “nice one!”





# ARHAI



Beneath The Tree

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rwp3hBe2WxY>

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

*'Jovana Backović's vocals are superb, and both her and Adrian Lever's musicianship are outstanding'. "ethereal, almost otherworldly attraction.....simply irresistible." (Rainlore World)*

*'both timeless and thoroughly contemporary' (Outline Magazine)*

ArHai is a duo based in London UK consisting of composers Jovana Backović (vocals, electronics) and Adrian Lever (medieval dulcimer, Bulgarian tambura). Their music explores the intersection of cinematic, traditional and electronic.

## ORIGINS

The word ArHai stems from αρχή and can be interpreted as 'origin', 'ancient' or 'principle'. It reflects the duo's approach to music-making: both Jovana and Adrian are focused on rethinking the archetypal modes of music performance in the context of modernity.

ArHai began in 1999 and is an ongoing project of composer and vocalist Jovana Backović. The debut LP *Mysterion* (2006) was released on major Serbian label PGP, a collaboration with eight musicians performing both composed music and arrangements of traditional songs from the Balkan region. The line-up performed at major regional festivals until 2008.

The current collaboration began in 2009 and features Jovana with UK folk guitarist and Bulgarian tambura player Adrian Lever. The duo released the LP *Eastern Roads* in 2013 and EP *Where Light Resides* in 2019. A new album is in the works, with the single *Immovable* released in January 2021.



# KOSMOS



<https://www.kosmosensemble.com/>

Još ne sviće rujna zora (Red Dawn)

<https://youtu.be/V2yiRNwsrVA?si=RKwNeaKNL6Q3L47y>

*"Lively, passionate, poignant, serene, mesmerising....words are inadequate to convey the magic of the playing...."  
(John Holt, Advertising Courier, Argyll and Bute Concert tour)*

Described by Richard Morrison (The Times) as having "telepathic rapport, dazzling virtuosity, serious scholarship, intellectual curiosity and impeccable musicianship, I defy you not to be mesmerised", Kosmos Ensemble is re-defining the relationship between classical and world music. The trio has twice been winners of 'Selected Artists' by the Making Music organisation and has gathered accolades from all over the world. United by a shared passion for improvisation, music from around the globe as well as the rigours of classical training, each member of Kosmos is an international soloist in their own right and brings individual flavour to the group.

Harriet Mackenzie: Violin / Meg-Rosaleen Hamilton: Viola / Miloš Milivojević: Accordion

The members of Kosmos have travelled extensively, performing with musicians all over the world, as well as within the broad multiculturalism of London's music scene. They have collectively studied music from North Africa, the Middle East, Jewish, Balkan and Gypsy music, Argentine tango, flamenco, Celtic and jazz traditions as well as contemporary classical music. They combine all their knowledge with a respect for their own Western classical music training, performing freely with panache, innovation and creativity, incorporating improvisation into their own unique arrangements and compositions.

Kosmos has performed across Europe as well as at the UK's most prestigious music festivals. Performing highlights include London's Southbank Centre, Royal Albert Hall, Institute of Contemporary Arts, Kings Place, Padova River Festival (Italy), Festival Estival (Poland), Hydra Festival (Greece), Leeds International Concert Season, Oundel, Ryedale, Swaledale, Deal, Wales and Wimbledon International Festivals, tours of the the Channel Islands, Scotland and Wales. Broadcasts include BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM. 2018 sees Kosmos performing a triple concerto specially written for the ensemble by the eminent composer Errollyn Wallen. The premiere took place at the Jersey Liberation Festival with the Jersey Chamber Orchestra and subsequent performances include Chichester Cathedral with the Worthing Symphony Orchestra and the Beaumaris and Tintern Abbey Festival with the Welsh Chamber Orchestra.



# FAITH I BRANKO



Bumbar

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQau6XxM0QU>

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt12367560/>

*'Moving, breathtaking and virtuosic' (BBC Radio 3)*

*'Their music is the language of the soul' (The Guardian)*

*'Sends shivers down your spine...this duo are beyond talented' (ABC Australia)*

*'One of my favourite bands from the Balkans' (Emir Kusturica)*

Leading Serbian Roma violinist Branko Ristić - 'a performer that Paganini would be proud of' (BBC Radio 3), and English 'passionate nimble-fingered accordionist' Faith Elliott (ABC Radio, Australia) perform virtuosic original Roma-influenced music with their international ensemble.

The duo met in Branko's Romani village in 2009, and - with music as their only tool for communication - began a journey that would lead to their last album 'Gypsy Lover' being placed in the top 10 World Music Charts, a successful international schedule and an award winning documentary tour. From a foundation of 'Serbian-Roma' music, Faith i Branko have created a style that draws from both of their musical heritages and expresses their joint conversation. This forms an original set with a storming ensemble which is joyous, passionate, tragic and virtuosic: 'their music is as colourful, personal and tumultuous as their history' fRoots

Their Serbian Film Fund sponsored documentary 'Faith i Branko' has toured film festivals such as Canada Doc Fest, Aljazeera Doc Fest, Inedit Chile and Guadalajara - with accompanying band performances.

They featured in the Guardian Weekend Magazine, completed a 43-venue tour of Australia and New Zealand - including main stage performances at Port Fairy Festival and The National Folk Festival - and are due to release their PRS sponsored Album with World Music Network (Rough Guides) with recording assistance from Emir Kusturica and The No Smoking Orchestra. Over the last year they have performed at Rosa Sinta Festival (Netherlands); Culture Nomade (Switzerland); The Royal Festival Hall (UK); XX International Sulczyno Festival, Poland; Llangollen International Eisteddfod; The Southbank Centre; Wilderness Festival, Bestival; Guca, for the Serbian President, Boomtown and Glastonbury among others. Online gigs included with Oxford World Music and Canada Doc Fest. Radio play includes Radio 4, BBC Radio 3 Live Sessions, World Service with Stephen Fry, BBC Radio 6 and ABC Sydney. Social Media hits are almost at 1 million, and they have a huge international fan base within the Roma community.



# VREMEPLOV



Vremeplov Band (LIVE)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6FokObRDVA>

<https://www.facebook.com/VremeplovBand>

The Vremeplov band is a musical time-machine. The band's name aptly conveys the essence of their music, which induces nostalgia and transports listeners to bygone times. Comprising six exceptionally talented musicians, their aim is to craft a distinctive experience through our folk (narodna) music. The band members—Nataša Stojsavljević (vocals), Živorad Nikolić (accordion and vocals), Marko Tešić (violin), Goran Milovanović (keyboards), Susi Evans (clarinet), and Rastko Rašić (percussion)—come together to form a unique ensemble that transcends genres and temporal boundaries.

Each member contributes a wealth of musical experience. From Marko, a former member of the RTS Folk National Orchestra, to Žika, a graduate in classical accordion from the Royal Academy of Music, and Rastko, a jazz graduate from Berklee College of Music in the US, to Suzi, one of Europe's premier Klezmer clarinetists, and Nataša, captivated by our folk music since childhood, they collectively create a diverse and dynamic fusion of musical ideas and performances.

Vremeplov distinguishes itself by showcasing folk and Kafana music, representing the heart and soul of their repertoire. Their objective is to convey the scents of the homeland, old love, mother, and yard through a musical cultural bridge that connects the audience in the UK with the rich musical traditions of the Balkans. Join this musical adventure and partake in the journey through time and emotions that Vremeplov offers to its audience.



# Serbian Artists in UK Music

## ***Jovana Backović***



Jovana Backović is a Serbian - born composer and vocalist whose work primarily centres on exploration and reinterpretation of ethnic music traditions of the Balkans. With her project Arhai she has performed widely across Balkans and the U.K. She has 3 releases under name Arhai, with fourth due to be released autumn 2021. Jovana also composes music for theatre, feature and documentary movies and her current interest lies within the field of electro-acoustic music and live improvisational performance – exploring the process of the creation and development of individual music identity through improvisation and the use of technology. Jovana completed her PhD thesis at the University of East Anglia 2014, with the subject 'Between Two Words: Approaching Balkan oral tradition through the use of technology as compositional and performance medium'. Further info [www.jovanabackovic.com](http://www.jovanabackovic.com)

## ***Bratislava Barac Djukić***



Bratislava Barac Djukić graduated from the Faculty of Music in Belgrade majoring in conducting in the class of Professor Darinka Matić Marović. She studied music pedagogy at Trinity College in London. She has been a successful leader and conductor of many Serbian and English choirs including "Holy Prophet Elijah", "All Saints" and "Saint Simeon the Outpourer of Myrrh" in Serbia and the choir "Saint Sava" in London. In 2003 Bratislava received the prestigious Best Conductor Award at the annual competition of Serbian choirs. With the blessing of his Grace Bishop Stefan of Zicha of blessed repose, Bratislava and her sister Olivera Sekulić Barac recorded "Eight Tones" (the Octoechoes) written down by the famous Serbian composer Stevan Mokranjac.

## ***Viktor Bijelović***



Viktor Bijelović is a Serbian born pianist and teacher, living and working in the UK. A graduate of The Purcell School of Music and later The Royal Academy of Music in London (for both the Undergraduate and Master's Degrees), he has travelled extensively, enjoying learning about different cultures whilst sharing his love of music with audiences and students. Both as a soloist and chamber musician, he has performed in many countries, including in front of HRH King Charles III twice. Viktor has a busy teaching practise in London. He has recorded several CDs and to find out more, please refer to his website: [www.viktorbijelovic.com](http://www.viktorbijelovic.com)

## ***Nevena Bridgen***



Nevena Bridgen is an international soprano born in Belgrade. She holds MMus from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London where she studied under the guidance of Sue McCulloch and Rudolf Piernay. Bridgen is a principal soloist of the National Theatre of Belgrade where she performed Susanna Marriage of Figro, Angelica Sister Angelica, Bastienne Bastien and Bastienne, Tatyana Eugenie Onegin, Lauretta Gianni Schicchi, Zerlina Don Giovanni, Mimi La Boheme. Recently she appeared as Mimi La Boheme in the National Grand Opera of Uzbekistan where she was unanimously praised by critics and audience for her powerful dramatic stage presence and beautiful warm voice which brings the music and story telling to life. Bridgen made her American debut in the National Opera Centre of America performing the role of the Countess Marriage of Figaro under the conductor Benoit Renard directed by award winning director Louis Walker. Future engagements include role of Micaela in Opera Carmen and Liu in Turandot at the National Theatre Belgrade and Opera Madlenianum in 2023, in Belgrade.

### ***Ivana Ćetković***



Ivana Ćetković, an exciting, expressive and inspiring British-Serbian violinist has maintained a wide and varied career as concerto soloist, recitalist, orchestral and chamber musician. Born in Belgrade, Serbia to a musical family she has received Bachelor's degree (HONS) in Violin Performance from Faculty of Music Arts in Belgrade. Shortly after Ivana moved to London, UK to study at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with David Takeno and Rachel Podger. She frequently appears as a guest leader of orchestras in UK and Austria. As a soloist Ivana has performed with Manchester Camerata (UK), Slaithwaite Philharmonic (UK), Marcel Sinfonia (UK) Da Salo Soloists (US), Tirolean Chamber Orchestra Innstrumenti (Austria) to name a few. As a passionate chamber musician Ivana is a member of a violin-piano duo Elmbourne Ensemble as well as the up and coming ensemble Camerata Alma Viva with whom she has recorded for NoMadMusic label. In 2019 Ivana took on a role of the leader of an up coming London orchestra London Symphonic Rock Orchestra that takes her across the world performing music inspired by hard rock hits of the nineties as well as tribute bands of Abba from Sweden and Queen Machine from Denmark. Along side her busy freelance career in UK in 2021 Ivana started leading a theatre orchestra focused on performing west-end musicals in Serbia, her home town of Belgrade allowing her to split her time professionally between her two home cities London and Belgrade.

### ***Predrag Gosta***



Recipient of numerous international awards, Predrag Gosta is enjoying a versatile career in the UK and overseas as a conductor, baritone, continuo keyboard player, and impresario. An alumnus of the Trinity College of Music in London (now Trinity Laban), his education also spans the USA, where he received three Master of Music degrees at Georgia State University in Atlanta, as well as training in Russia, Bulgaria, and Germany.

Gosta has performed and recorded in some of the most prestigious music venues around the world, including the Kennedy Center in Washington DC, and the Abbey Road Studios in London. He has conducted orchestras such as the London Symphony Orchestra (as the first Yugoslavian conductor to conduct this orchestra after Lovro von Matačić), the National Philharmonic in Washington DC, the Russian National Orchestra in Moscow, the St Petersburg State Capella, and the Sofia, Ruse, Burgas, and Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestras. In the operatic arena, Gosta has conducted opera companies in the UK, USA, Switzerland, Germany, Bulgaria, and Serbia (National Theatre in Belgrade, Opera-Theatre Madlenianum, etc.). He directs New Trinity Baroque, one of the premier period instrument ensembles in the UK, and has been a principal coach of the OrQuesta Baroque Academy. He also leads the Makris Symphony Orchestra in the UK and Serbia, and has been actively involved in nurturing young musical talent through the Makris Music Society. In Serbia, he is the Artistic Director of the Belgrade Early Music Festival, the Belgrade Baroque Academy, and the New Belgrade Opera. His involvement with these organisations earned him the Artist of the Year Award from the Serbian Association of Musicians (UMUS) in 2018. His CD recordings includes two albums with the London Symphony Orchestra, three with the Makris Orchestra, and ten with New Trinity Baroque, and his scholarly music editions have been used by reputable music institutions such as Schola Cantorum Basiliensis and the London Mozart Players. His recordings have also been regularly played on radio stations such as BBC or Radio Beograd.

A junior member of Christ Church at the University of Oxford since 2019, Gosta is currently in the final year of his doctoral research, which focuses on the development of English opera in the late 18th century. In 2023, he was inducted into the membership of the prestigious Royal Society of Musicians. For more information about Predrag Gosta's activities, please visit <https://www.predraggosta.com>

### ***Andrej Ivanović***



Andrej Ivanović read his undergraduate degree in Music (2018-2021) at St Peter's College, Oxford, where he held an Organ Scholarship and studied organ with Stephen Farr, and subsequently completed his master's degree at the Faculty of Music, Belgrade. He has had performances in London, Southwell, Peterborough, Guildford, Oxford, and Belgrade. His most recent performances include a solo organ recital at the Early Music Festival in Belgrade, a collaborative recital of contemporary organ music and visual improvisations at the Belgrade international organ festival "Dies organorum" (including the regional premiere of the organ works of Kenneth Leighton), a performance of Mozart's Requiem at the Budva City Theatre festival in Montenegro, and two upcoming broadcasts for BBC radio 3 and 4.

His constant desire for improvement led him to attend masterclasses in England, France, and Germany (8th European Organ Academy), with organists such as Michel Bouvard, Martin Schmeding, David Higgs, and Jeremy Joseph.

As a continuo organist and harpsichordist, he's played with ensembles such as Mayfield Baroque, Instruments of Time and Truth, New Trinity Baroque, the Makris Symphony Orchestra, the Serbian National Radio (RTS) Symphony Orchestra, as well as the countertenor Nicholas Clapton, and was awarded for his continuo playing at the 20th Belgrade Baroque Academy. He was recently endorsed by Arts Council England as an individual of exceptional promise because of his work in England and Serbia.

He actively collaborates with the Belgrade Archdiocese as visiting organist at the Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Belgrade. He is currently Organ Scholar at Royal Holloway, University of London, and is pursuing a master's degree in Music. In addition to playing the organ and harpsichord, Andrej occasionally composes.

Mimi La Boheme in the National Grand Opera of Uzbekistan where she was unanimously praised by critics and audience for her powerful dramatic stage presence and beautiful warm voice which brings the music and story telling to life. Bridgen made her American debut in the National Opera Centre of America performing the role of the Countess Marriage of Figaro under the conductor Benoit Renard directed by award winning director Louis Walker. Future engagements include role of Micaela in Opera Carmen and Liu in Turandot at the National Theatre Belgrade and Opera Madlenianum in 2023, in Belgrade.



### **Maya Jordan**

Pianist Maya Jordan MA, has performed throughout the former Yugoslavia, Italy, Cyprus, France, Germany and England and recorded for various Radio and TV programmes. Her performing career has been extended through her interest in bringing music and artists of different countries together. Maya has been co-founder of the project 'Sounds of the Balkans' and Artistic Director of numerous events and projects, promoting Serbian culture and encouraging artists of different origins to work together. She was also a Secretary of the Beethoven Piano Society of Europe for many years. At present Maya is a Secretary of The Serbian Council of Great Britain and has been involved in numerous charity projects in aid of Serbian people and children. She is also a co-founder / Arts Director of the Around the Globe Music & Arts and Programme Director of the Serbian Month in Great Britain.



### **Mina Miletić**

Mina Miletić Prize-winner of many awards, Mina Miletić established her career regularly appearing in recital, as a chamber musician and concerto soloist in concert halls across Europe, Asia and the USA. She completed a PhD on 'Interpretation of Impressionistic Piano Music' and is regularly engaged as an adjudicator for festivals and competitions. Mina is passionate about education and learning and she currently teaches piano at Eton College and Harrow School. Further details may be found on her web-site: [www.minamiletic.co.uk](http://www.minamiletic.co.uk).



### **Miloš Milivojević**

Accordionist Miloš Milivojević from Kragujevac, Serbia was awarded full scholarships from the Royal Academy of Music for Undergraduate, Postgraduate and Master Degree studies. In 2014 he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music ARAM for his contribution to the music. As a result of Miloš's diverse musical interest he is actively performing as a soloist and as a member of eminent opera companies and leading ensembles around UK. Miloš is playing classical music as well as tango and Balkan music. His debut solo CD "Accord for life" is available on Nimbus label and from [www.milosmilivojevic.com](http://www.milosmilivojevic.com).



### **Živorad Nikolić**

Živorad Nikolić is a London based accordionist and a graduate from Royal Academy of Music. He has performed all around the globe and is a member of Fugata Quintet, Balkan group Paprika, Accord-Duo and the best Klezmer and award winning ensemble She'koyokh. Živorad has recorded on the albums of several artists including David Gomez, Aiden Love & Forty Thieves Orchestra, Marti Pellow and featured on Channel 4's How Music Works and in a live performance for the BBC Radio 2 programme, Friday Night Is Music Night. He has also recorded soundtracks for films and some of the most recent collaborations are with Anne Nikitin and Michael Chanyi- Wills. Zivorad also works successfully with students of all ages. He was featured in a World Encyclopedia of Accordionist "Accordion and World's Best Contemporary Accordionist" published in New York in 2020. In the same year, Zivorad was elected as an Associate of Royal Academy of Music (ARAM) for his contribution to Music.

<http://www.zivoradnikolic.com>

### **Viktor Obšust**



Viktor Obšust is a graduate of Bratislava Conservatoire in Slovakia. He accepted a scholarship for double bass masterclass at Dartington International Summer School in 1997 which led to an offer from Trinity College of Music, resulting in Postgraduate Diploma in Performance (PGD) as an Aurelius scholar, and subsequently became Licentiate Trinity College London (LTCL) in 2001 and was admitted Fellow of Trinity College London (FTCL) in 2002, funded by the Lutheran World Federation Regional Development Programme. Viktor's dream of starting jazz workshops in native city was delayed until 2001 by NATO aggression in 1999. Viktor's project proposal in 2007 to launch community music workshops in his homeland won the Inaugural Community Music Award from the International Society for Music Education (ISME) amongst competitions from 65 countries worldwide. He was also the inaugural double bass tutor at ELLSO (2002) and their regular tutor at residential courses (2002-2019) and also NLMS Summer School symphony orchestra double bass coach where he also supported the percussion section (1999-2014). Viktor held a post as an Associate Lecturer at University of Chichester (2006- 2009), and enrolled for his doctoral studies but gave that up to spend more time with his family and four daughters that he ensured spoke all the five languages which their family speaks. Viktor then taught locally at Blackheath Conservatoire and Addey and Stanhope School whilst continuing his residential courses at Benslow Music (2000-2015). Viktor got his Secondary Schools Music Specialist PGCE from University of Greenwich and Trinity College of Music. He was nominated and elected twice for Equalities and minorities, Live performance and Education committees at the Musicians Union. Viktor became a member of the Royal Society of Musicians of Great Britain (2012), where he now serves his second term as a member of the Courts of Assistants.

### **Marina Petrov**

[www.marinapetrov.co.uk](http://www.marinapetrov.co.uk)



Marina Petrov, MAM, is an award-winning concert pianist, piano pedagogue, adjudicator, and author. Marina specialises in preventing occupational injuries in pianists and teaching various piano techniques to improve their performance. She has conducted seminars, masterclasses, and workshops on these subjects at universities, music colleges, and other educational institutions in London and Cork.

Marina was raised in Belgrade as a child prodigy and won many national piano competitions in former Yugoslavia. She went on tours and made media appearances, including TV and Radio Belgrade shows. In 1979, she was awarded a federal grant to study further at the famous Moscow Tchaikovsky State Conservatoire. Since settling in London in 1989, Marina has performed solo recitals and chamber music and played with notable opera singers and instrumentalists in major concert halls across the UK and London, including Regent Hall, St John's Smith Square, and other well-known music venues.

Apart from her performing and teaching career, Marina is also the Co-Founder and Managing Director of Around the Globe Music & Arts and Around the Globe International Music Festival. She is also the Executive Editor of the annual Around the Globe Music Magazine. Her contribution to EPTA and ISSTIP journals is prominent, and she regularly writes publications for AGMA. Marina's talents are renowned in the British press, including The Times, and is listed in the International Who's Who in Music and British and International Music Yearbook since 1994.

### **Rastko Rašić**



Rastko Rašić is a Serbian born London based drummer and percussionist. He is a graduate of Berklee College of Music, USA. He has performed and recorded with groups, such as Balkanatics, Forty Thieves Orkestar, Round Coloured Note, Damian Draghici, Theodossii Spassov, Arun Ghosh and Polly Paulusma. Rastko is a founding member of the group Paprika. His live performances have included BBC Radio 3, Glastonbury Festival, The South Bank Centre, The Barbican, Ronnie Scotts and has appeared with The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra at Cadogan Hall. He maintains a busy schedule as an educator.



### **Milena Simović**



Equally at home as a violinist and violist, Serbian Milena Simović is enjoying an illustrious international career of concerto, recital and chamber music performances.

Acclaimed for her work in Europe, Asia and America, Milena appears as a soloist in Russia, China, Italy, United Kingdom, Norway, France, Portugal, and through the countries of former Yugoslavia, performing alongside some of the most established personalities of today's music scene.

Milena's chamber music partners include Ivry Gitlis, Vadim Repin, Leonidas Kavakos, Antonio Meneses, Yuja Wang, Denis Kozhukhin, Vadim Kholodenko, Konstantin Lifschitz, Beatrice Rana, Boris Andrianov, Itamar Golan, Julian Rachlin, Roman Simović, Gordan Nikolitch, Tim Hugh and many others.

Milena's concerts have been broadcasted live on BBC Radio 3, Medici TV, Rai Uno in Italy, Arte etc. and her performances praised as "...exceptionally delivered performance, charged with brilliant combination of operatic quality, which was jaw-dropping at times", "seductive and exciting...with rare artistic sensibility" in the press. Milena holds a professorship at the Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in London and is a resident viola and a chamber music coach at the Culture Festival in Sardinian town of Santulussurgiu, taking place in August every year, which enjoys versatility of students from all continents.

Milena Simović received Bachelor and Masters of Music in violin from the Belgrade University of Arts and Music, and Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. After this Milena continued her further studies with viola and has completed another Masters degree at the Zurich University of Arts under Lawrence Power.

Milena Simović plays a Giovanni Battista Rogeri violin ca. 1680, and Paolo Antonio Testore viola from 1740.

### **Božidar Smiljanić**

*Bass-Baritone*



Born and raised Londoner, Božidar Smiljanić, has been a member of the solo ensemble at Oper Frankfurt since 2018, where he has performed a wide selection of roles including the title roles in 'Le nozze di Figaro' and 'Don Pasquale' as well as Garibaldo in 'Rodelinda', Ariodate in 'Xerxes', Eumée in 'Pénélope', Sprecher in 'Die Zauberflöte' and many more. Roles at Oper Frankfurt in the 2023-24 season will include Achilla in a new staging of Handel's 'Giulio Cesare in Egitto', among others. Božidar also performs as a guest internationally, most recently as Figaro for Opera Ballet Vlaanderen in Antwerp and Ghent, Belgium. Božidar studied at the Royal Academy of Music in London, on a full scholarship, where he received the Principal's Prize for exceptional all-round studentship. Upon graduating, Božidar debuted at several major UK companies including Scottish Opera, Glyndebourne, Garsington Opera and the Mozartists. As a Harewood Artist of English National Opera, Božidar performed the roles of The Marquis ('La Traviata') and Schaunard ('La Bohème') and sung the title role in the opening night of the 2020 production of 'The Marriage of Figaro' to critical acclaim, before the production had to close due to the Covid pandemic. Božidar has a particularly extensive concert repertoire and is a regular on the concert platform, having already developed relationships with a number of key conductors including Masaki Suzuki, Nathalie Stutzmann, John Wilson, Ed Gardner, Jakub Hrůša, Hervé Niquet, Trevor Pinnock, Sakari Oramo and Thomas Søndegård.

### **Ljubica Stojanović**



Ljubica Stojanović started to play piano at the age of 6. She graduated with a Masters from Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London, studying with Prof. Caroline Palmer, and subsequently studied on the fellowship programme, with Professor Ronan O'Hora. Her studies were generously funded by the Leverhulme Trust and Guildhall School of Music and Drama's scholarship fund.

Ljubica is a 1st prize-winner of over 20 national and international competitions. She is a very active musician who performs regularly as a soloist as well as with European chamber ensembles. Ljubica has performed in the Royal Festival Hall, Barbican Hall, Wigmore Hall, St. James's Piccadilly, St. Martin in the Fields, Mozarteum University Hall in Salzburg, Philharmonia Hall in Ljubljana, Slovenia, Thonex hall in Geneva, and in Kolarac Hall in Serbia. She has collaborated with the Witold Lutoslawski Philharmonia from Wroclaw, soloists from Philharmonia Orchestra in London, Serbian Radio Television Orchestra, National Symphony Orchestra, Belgrade, and with Nicholas Daniel and Andrew Marriner. In 2015 Ljubica became an artist for the KNS Classical record label in Spain. Ljubica would like to thank Ronan O'Hora, Henning Kraggerud and Christian Petersen for their guidance, inspiration and support.



### **Branco Stoysin**

Branco Stoysin, guitarist/composer/arranger/tutor/photographer and the rest; From his birth place of Novi Sad town to growing up place of Frogville ((Žabalj) village, back to Novi Sad..., and via Greece to London, with one guitar and small rucksack, following his dream, ...whispers from Sun flow into music... to forming his Sun Recordings label that self-produced and released 9 acclaimed CD albums, 1 live DVD and two music books, total of 103 tunes, of those 78 original. Branco being a life long aficionado of Nikola Tesla, promoting the knowledge of the Man, dedicating the tunes, albums and books to Tesla, as well as promoting enthralling true trad folk music of Serbia/-former Yugoslavia. 2023 marks the 25th anniversary of the label with the release of Branco's new solo-guitar album "Whispers From The Sun".

*"One of the most lyrical acoustic guitarists around today. His ear for an affecting melody is faultless. His albums are an unalloyed treat throughout."* Chris Parker

<https://www.brancostoysin.co.uk>



### **Aleksandra Timarov**

Aleksandra Timarov graduated in piano performance (Bachelor and Masters degree) from the University of Arts in Belgrade, Serbia. Aleksandra also has a post-masters qualification 'diplôme de virtuosité' from Geneva. Aleksandra has won many top prizes in numerous piano competitions in Serbia, Italy and France. She has performed in Serbia, Germany, Italy, France, Switzerland and England as a soloist and with orchestras. Her concerts were transmitted live on the Radio Suisse Romande. Aleksandra has also a passion for teaching. She implements a broad foundation of music history and theory in her lessons. Her teaching methods are playful, energized, inventive and appealing to children of different ages.

### **Ana Torbica**



Ana Torbica is a multi-talented musician with an impressive scholarly career. She received Master of Arts degree in baroque viola and singing at the Historical Performance Department of the Royal Academy of Music in London, where she was a recipient of the Christopher Hogwood Scholarship, the Royal Academy of Music Scholarship, as well as the Award of the Johnathan Julian Fund. Her teachers included renowned artists such as baroque violist Jane Rogers, violinist Nicolette Moonen, and countertenor Michael Chance. In addition, she received the LRAM teaching diploma. Ana's interest in early music came through the Belgrade and Austria Baroque Academies and the International Summer School in Dartington. She has performed in Serbia, the UK, USA and Europe with famous musicians such as Trevor Pinnock, Philippe Herreweghe, John Butt, Florian Deuter, Ilia Korol, Rachel Podger, Bojan Čičić and Predrag Gosta, and ensembles such as New Trinity Baroque, Eboracum Baroque, Musica Poetica, Savaria Baroque Orchestra, Ensemble OrQuesta and Musica Antiqua Neoplatensis. Winner of several chamber music and singing competitions, she also received grants from the Makris Music Society and the Macfarlane Walker Trust, which allowed her to obtain a baroque viola by Jan Pawlikowski, one of the best string instrument builders in Europe. Ana is also an alumna of the University of Arts in Niš. She is an active pedagogue and masterclass presenter, and is a member of the Serbian Association of Musicians from which she received the annual Best Young Artist Award for 2020. In 2023 Ana has joined the British Viola Society and the Royal Society of Musicians.

### **Silva Vučković McQueen**



Soprano Silva Vučković McQueen has toured throughout Europe with Die Münchener Operabühne, and is a regular soloist with the Victorian and Edwardian group The Bold Balladiers, with whom she performs extensively throughout the UK. Other engagements have included solo soprano in Mozart's Requiem Mass, Mozart's Coronation Mass, Villa Lobos's Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5 and Haydn's Pauken Messe, as well as solo recitals at St. Martin in the Fields, St. James's Piccadilly, St. Paul's Church in London, SANU, Guarnerius in Belgrade, NIMUS Festival in Nis and the Serbian Cultural Centre in Paris. She also enjoys performing with Philharmonia Chorus - which she joined in 2011.

### **Tamara Živadinović**



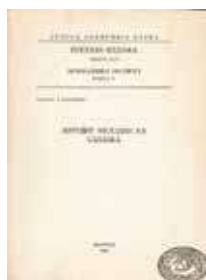
Tamara Živadinović is Serbian born and London based soprano, who has received Bachelor's degree (HONS) in vocal studies from Faculty of the Music Arts, Belgrade, and very shortly after, she has obtained Master degree at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, London. Tamara is also alumni of Sir George Solti Academy, Italy. As a student she has performed operatic roles like Suor Genovieffa in the "Suor Angelica" (Faculty of Music Arts and Slavija Theatre, Belgrade), Pamina in The Magic Flute (British Youth Opera). In 2012 she has been offered a place for the Opera Works Course/Young Artist Programme at the English National Opera. She has performed several pieces written by BAFTA award winning composer James Hannigan at Royal Albert Hall, London. Tamara was a finalist of the Les Azuriales Opera Competition, Nice, Haverhill Sinfonia Soloists Competition and Susan Longfield prize, London. She is trying to maintain a busy schedule as a singing teacher in London.

# The History of Serbian Folk Music

## Musical Folklore as an Expression of the 'Folk Soul': Songs from the District of Raška by Vera Milanković

Vera Milanković (b. 1953), a Serbian composer, pianist and university professor, is one of those authors who affirm their commitment to their national idiom by treating musical folklore as an inexhaustible source of inspiration. The eloquence and highly suggestive quality of musical expression in her pieces stem from her creative approach to Serbian folk tradition and her extraordinary familiarity with folk material. An example of this transposition of folk musical heritage in her creative oeuvre is the song cycle 'Songs from the District of Raška' (*Pesme iz Raške oblasti*) for soprano, flute, violoncello and piano. Created in 2000, it is based on the transcriptions of the Serbian ethnomusicologist and music pedagogue Miodrag Vasiljević (1903–1963) from his collection of 'Folk Melodies from Sandžak' (*Narodne melodije Sandžaka*).

The district of Raška (Sandžak), today administratively divided between Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina, boasts a wealth of folkloric forms (folk songs, dances, customs, rituals, musical instruments, costumes). Between 1947 and 1949, shortly after the end of World War II, Miodrag Vasiljević visited many rural and urban areas and wrote down folk songs he heard from the local population. His collection of 'Folk Songs from Sandžak', published in 1953, comprises a treasure trove of over 400 songs in different genres (love songs, wedding songs, *slava* [saint's day feast] songs, *kolo* [circle-dance] songs, etc.). These songs were played at weddings, celebrations, feasts, as well as times of pain and mourning.



Front cover of the collection *Narodne melodije iz Sandžaka* by Miodrag Vasiljević  
(Muzikološki institut SANU, Belgrade, 1953)

Vera Milanković selected 16 songs from Vasiljević's collection for her own work. Their poetry and music convey the wisdom of folk experience, the history of everyday human life and the many layers of religions and beliefs found in the Raška district. In terms of her treatment of its folk material, her own song cycle takes its cue from the folk song arrangements, which took shape in Serbian music during the mid-19th century, with representatives among prominent Serbian composers such as Kornelije Stanković, Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac, Josif Marinković and Miloje Milojević.

Judging from her selection of songs, you might think that Milanković was most attracted to the love songs that Vasiljević encountered in Sjenica, around Nova Varoš, Pljevlja and Bijelo Polje. These songs extoll the beauty of the beloved and longing for them. They are also coloured by the geography and traditions from where they come (e.g. 'Oh Dark Mountain, Full of Shade You Are' *Čarna goro, puna ti si lada* and 'I Shall Marry, Mother, as Soon as Friday Comes' *Udaću se, majko, prvi petak da dođe*). It is believed that the reason such topics and feelings appeared in this type of lyric poetry is because these songs were sung and shared by women undertaking their daily chores. They were also sung at so-called sitting parties (*sedeljke*), which involved spinning wool or hemp or other handicrafts. Typically, these handicraft songs were performed by two best friends, whose voices produced a nice blend. The most popular songs were romantic and typically revealed who was in love with whom. 'I Shall Marry, Mother' recounts the fate of many single girls who longed to get married, even if it involved marrying a man of lower status and being subjected to him.

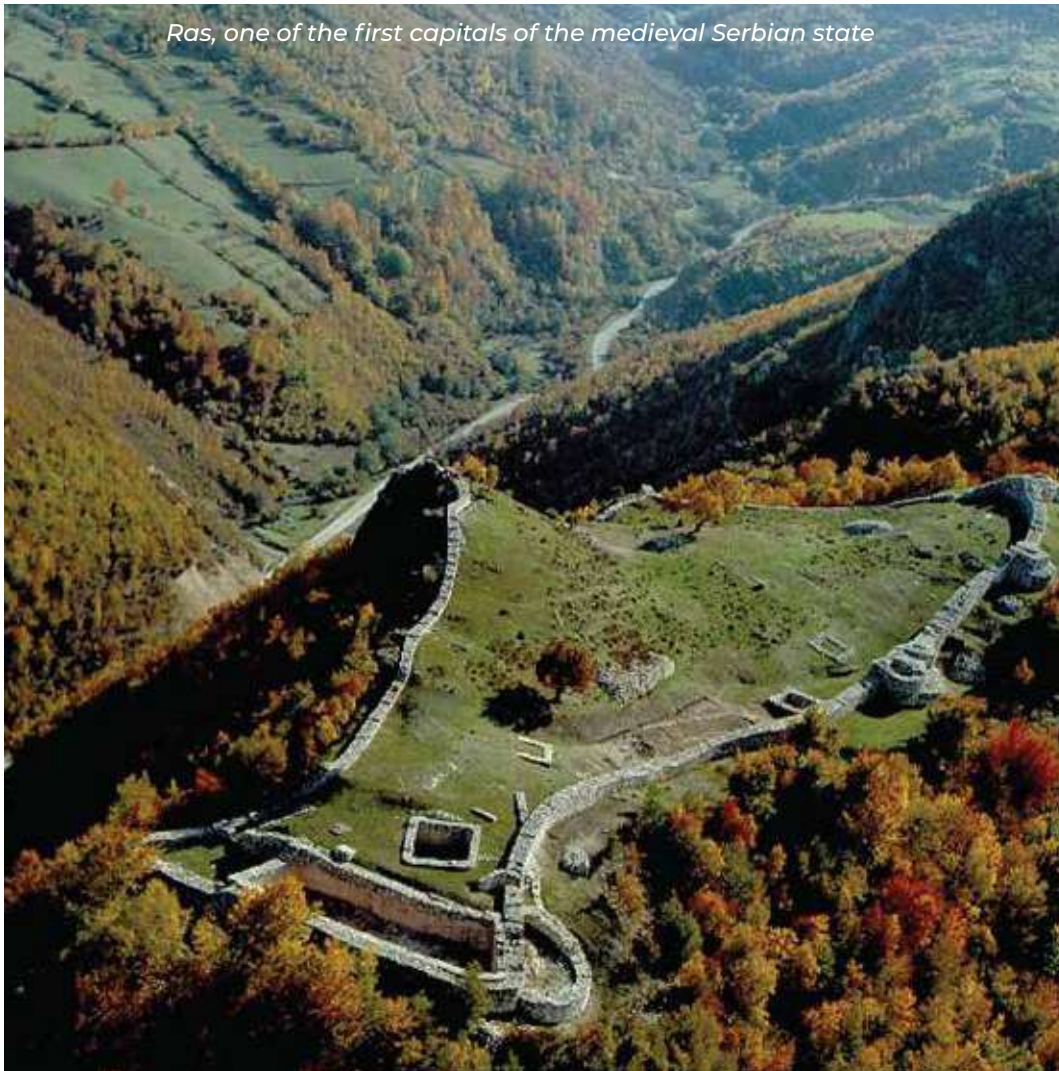
Another ideal opportunity to sing love songs were at village feasts (*sijela* or *vašari*). The local population would gather to dance, play instruments and sing. Circle dancing, i.e. dancing in a *kolo*, so-called *kolanje*, was also an opportunity for girls and young men to woo each other, secretly squeezing each other's hands. The song 'Tiny Pebbles One by One' (*Sitan kamen do kamena*), which accompanied circle dancing, is especially interesting. It provides a glimpse into former rituals. Mentioned in the song, is the picking of a certain kind of wild plant and placing it into the bosom of a young girl. It describes this ancient custom and belief that certain kinds of plants possess a magic power to foretell the future. On certain days during the year, on the eve of the Epiphany (*Bogojavljenje*) or St Vitus Day (*Vidovdan*), young girls would place these plants under their pillow or in their bosoms, hoping to learn whether they would get married that year and what kind of husband fate had in store for them. This is why in this song flowers are begging not to be given to married women, but to young, unmarried girls.

Some of the songs in the cycle stand out as belonging to the so-called *sevdalinka* type with its strong influence from the east, chiefly in terms of melodic structure and vocal technique. The essence of a *sevdalinka* is describing love as an incurable pain. The song traditionally accompanies women dancing, with much more focus on how they move, the swinging of their hips and *dimiye* (Turkish trousers), than the dance itself. How they danced mirrored the character of these songs replete with melancholy and amorous longing. This applies to the song 'What a Long Winter It Was' (*Kolika je duga zima bila*). Young people were often unable to enjoy close relationships, hence the presence of an elegiac note in these songs, reflecting internal crises and juvenile restlessness.

The most innocent forms of love songs are shepherd songs (*čobanske pesme*; e.g. 'Light Rain in the Meadow' *Na livadi sitna kiša*). Minding sheep was also an opportunity to engage in singing competitions. These songs often featured declarations of love couched in metaphors, for instance, in 'Oh Girl, My Sweet Little Lamb' (*Oj devojko, jagnje mlado*). When he asks: 'Is your white flock grazing well?' (*Pase li ti bijelo stado?*), the young male singer actually expects an amorous response from the girl, who answers in a similar fashion. She confesses her love by responding that the normally clear water that her flock drinks has gone murky; in other words, that he has provoked unrest and confusion in her heart.

Apart from the numerous love songs in this collection, one should also mention the humorous ones, such as 'The Wedding of Rice Pilav' (*Kad se ženi pirinč-pilav*). This song stands out by virtue of its fresh and intriguing lyrics and its link with real life. The song is a miniature folk cookbook, transmitted through oral tradition and combining, by way of wittily alluding to a wedding ceremony and family relations, Serbian and Turkish specialties: barley bread (*ječmenica*), sweet pie (*razvaruša*), boiled meat pie (*potopljika*), rice pudding (*sutlijaš*) as well as typical Turkish delights such as *halva* and *baklava*.

In her 'Songs from the District of Raška', Vera Milanković transposed a body of folk material into chamber music, preserving its folk core. It honours the specificities of these folk songs that vary from declamatory songs with small vocal ranges to richly elaborate melismatic songs. The delicate instrumental accompaniments elaborate on the melodies through texture and harmony, as well as the intricate lines of the instrumental introductions, and facilitate the interpretation of the songs' melodic and poetic contents, tone painting, and evocation of specific atmospheres. This type of approach affirms Milanković's ongoing fascination with musical folklore and her profound understanding of it. We should also mention that the author selected several songs from this cycle for *Musical Map of Serbia*, an album of piano miniatures inspired by Serbian folk songs.



In the description of his journey through the Raška district, published in 1531, the Slovenian diplomat Benedikt Kuripečič (or Kuripešić) wrote that on a bright and clear day he took his horse to the top of a big hill overlooking the river Uvac near Novi Pazar. From there he could see clearly both Dubrovnik and Constantinople, Smederevo and Bosnia. Although his account of seeing the entire Balkan Peninsula is hardly plausible, a more insightful reader will not miss its allusion to the unique geographical position of Old Ras (Stari Ras), the cradle of Serbian culture. It occupied a highly important geographical, historical and cultural crossroads, leaving its mark on local folk songs, which perhaps offer us the best way to discover the character of the entire people.

Dr Ivana Miladinović Prica  
Faculty of Music, University of Arts in Belgrade  
Translated by Žarko Cvejić

#### LINKS



*Udacu se majko prvi petak dodje ('I Will Marry the Next Friday')* by Vera Milanković  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L\\_BpjNkro1A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L_BpjNkro1A)



*Na livadi sitna kisa ('Light Rain on the Meadow')* by Vera Milanković  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BcjJwEDkXwo>  
Silva McQueen, soprano & Maya Jordan, piano



*Izvor voda izvirala ('Water Spring')* composed and performed by Vera Milanković.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ADrpCavQf0>

## New Sound International Journal of Music

Full Issue available for FREE at: <https://ojs.newsound.org.rs/index.php/NS>

## Ukroćeni virtuoz Žarko Cvejić

<https://knjige.fmk.edu.rs/product/ukroceni-virtuoz/>



# Serbian folk music

By Vera Milanković



Serbian folk music is rich and varied, based on ancient 'scales' whose range rarely reached an octave. Simply speaking, the shorter the range, the older the song. Therefore, we can trace many different layers by simply measuring the melodic range. Likewise, rhythm is also uniquely based on the rhythm (accents) of the Serbian language. Another interesting fact is that there are some folk songs conceived from a melody as a framework varying in lyrics depending on the territory, as well as those where the lyrics are the same and the melody different.

Serbian folklore is both secular and spiritual. My interest is that of a composer and music educator. From that point of view, it is challenging both historically and territorially. For many years I have carefully studied both secular songs and spiritual chanting for two reasons: one following a scholarly pursuit dealing with varieties of measure and rhythm and their mutual hierarchy as well as harmonisation which would respond to their melodic beauty; the other as an incentive for composing music ranging from Lieder songs, and various chamber ensembles with or without the vocal part to piano concertos and cantatas.

This resulted in my 'Music Map of Serbia', a collection of piano miniatures based on songs I chose from the collections of the famous Serbian music folklorist Miodrag Vasiljevic and spiritual chanting from the collection by Nenad Baracki. I performed them for the first time in the USA at Montgomery College where I ran several workshops on Serbian rhythm and gave a lecture on Serbian music folklore rhythmic hierarchy at Cornell University.

As already mentioned, there are two streams: secular singing and spiritual chanting. Secular singing has its own history: starting from rituals (Sitan kamen do kamena – One Tiny Stone by the Other) through to traditional practice (Goranine ćafanine – Goran the Canyon Man) to pastoral love songs (Na livadi sitna kiša – Light Rain on the Medlow) and humour (Stole mi se oženi – Marriage of Stole), leading to extremely popular and well known 'town' songs (starogradske pesme) created in the late XVIII and XIX centuries, influenced by Sephardic, Mediterranean and Levant melodies. They are mainly associated with amateur performances at popular gatherings such as weddings, etc. They unfortunately suffered the injustice of often being performed below their level. I have therefore strived to produce a piano accompaniment for them which can not only be heard in the Lieder songs of Schuman and Schubert, but also obliges the singer to give a high-quality interpretation. They have been recently published by 'Čarobna frula'.

<https://www.carobnafrula.com/ci/proizvodi/udzbenici/tamo-daleko>

Spiritual chanting originates from the oldest layers of folklore merging with Byzantine Orthodox chanting, resulting in the Osmoglasnik, a particular system of 'scales'. These scales are a series of tones with strict melodic formulas which determine the ending of phrases (verses). Between the formulas, the cantor is free to improvise. Osmoglasnik was passed on orally from generation to generation. There are two main written collections of Osmoglasnik chanting: one by Stevan Mokranac, and the other by Nenad Baracki, both from the XIX century. They can be understood as scanned improvisations which at that time were the best to be heard. The scores are not measured rhythmically. To my taste the Baracki collection is melodically richer. I used his score of the main Orthodox festivities (troparia) as a framework for my 'Serbian Divine Calendar'. In order to prepare them for performance in an ensemble, I had to intervene metrically. As a result, a cantata for soprano, baritone, mixed choir, child choir and orchestra was conceived and performed in 2002. I also produced arrangements for piano solo, Lied and choir a capella. The Lied arrangement with texts about main features of the Calendar as well as the Osmoglasnik system, the troparia and the verse, were published by Clío in Serbian and English.

[https://clio.rs/proizvodi/notna-izdanja/srpski-duhovni-kalendar-dvd\\_3881](https://clio.rs/proizvodi/notna-izdanja/srpski-duhovni-kalendar-dvd_3881)



For this Serbian Month I concentrate on folk tunes from the 'Music Map of Serbia', songs which have not only passed the test of time, but have also been performed as piano miniatures after their premiere in the States by many pianists. These piano pieces feature a wide range of songs from old layers to urban tradition of the XIX century, including spiritual chanting.

Having in mind that the language is Serbian, and the melodic line often beyond major/minor frames, I offer a survey of metric varieties regarding: regular pulse, irregular pulse and many varieties and combinations of both.

The first large group are the folk melodies.  
They are grouped in the following order:

## A: regular pulse regularly

### 1 From the Other Side of Danube

С оне стране Дунава  
Чурут  
З.М.Василевић, Српско музичко биро, стр. 44

С ђе же стра-же Ду-жа-ка И-на ју-ва хо-ле-ба У ко-ле-ба се - на га-ра-на па ле - на

Dance - poskocica, for children. Boys from one side of Danube calling girls from the other to join in the pleasure of picking fruit



dyad pulse a simple 2/4 measure can be associated with a March  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oaxwfnaylDs>

### 3 Upon the Blossoming Garden

Градином цвеће цветало  
околина Ниса  
З.М.Василевић, Српско музичко биро, стр. 135

Гра - дином цве - ће цве-та - ло гра - дином дра - го 'о - ди - - - ло Ај  
це - лемо - - - је ша-ре-мо бу - ди ми ср - цу де - се - - - ло

Love song, an old urban song from the vicinity of Nis, about a sacrifice flowers are ready to be thread upon by the horse bringing the love one



dyad pulse a 3/4 measure can be associated with a Minuet  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZDB8ChHEUg>

### 5 Borianko Borianke

Борјанко Борјанке  
околина Крагујевац  
Милошар Васиљевић,  
Југославенске народне фолклор II сесии стр. 127

Бор-јан-ко Бор-јан-ке сол-ти-ли си мо-ма Бор-јан-ко Бор-јан-ке сол-ти-жаш да не јеш

This song praises the Borjanka's singing abilities which inspire instruments to play

This is a unique song. A combination of dyad and tripartite pulse. Namely it changes time signature from 6/8 to 3/4. The reason why I included this song was a metric similarity with 'America', the famous number from West Side Story. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_e2igZexpMs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_e2igZexpMs)

## B: regular pulse irregularly

### 7 One Tiny Stone by the Other

Ситан камен до камена  
Пљешча  
З.М.Василевић, Српско музичко биро, стр. 55

Си - тан ка - мен до ка - мен ка - мен до ка - мен ка - мен  
де - лек здр - вас до ко - ље - на де - лек здр - вас до ко - ље - на

A ritual song from pagan spring festivity of promenade round the household collecting gifts

dyad pulse a combination of 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4

## C: Irregular pulse regularly

### 9 Neda Neda, White Neda

Недо Недо бела Недо  
Косовска Митровица

З.М.Васильевић, Српско музичко блага, стр. 110

An old patriotic song during Turkish occupation



This 7/8 meter is typical for the majority of folk songs from south Serbia and North Macedonia. The metric scheme is 322.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BmT7vd56Gxs&t=2s>

## D: irregular pulse irregularly

### 13 Oh, My Precious One

Оф датим злато златено  
Вранс

З.М.Васильевић, Српско музичко блага, стр.153

Dance - Cocek, and a love song, by warning the girl not to be wane, impertinent, admiring all her abilities



The scheme of this song is 2223 which is typical for the folk dance Čoček, popular in south Serbia. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=eaB64f2hlyc>

## E: a combination of regular and irregular pulse

### 16 Dense Wood full of Shadow

Чарна горо пуна ти си лада  
Бијело поље

Милоше Васиљевић Народне мелодије из Србије, стр. 262

Love song about a girl feeling lonely not having or a sister, mother and the love one far away



Combination of 6/8 and 8/8 the scheme being 233 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B\\_dYx8kJrcQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_dYx8kJrcQ)

The following songs belong to the spiritual Serbian folk chanting, which I have transcribed metrically so that it can be arranged for various chamber ensembles as well as orchestra. The metric picture seems at first glance complicated, but when following the poetic text, it matches perfectly with the written rhythm.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xPDg8KO8-8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EP9rAyYnV2I>

#### 21 Transfiguration

Преображење Господње



#### 22 St. George

Свети великомученик Георгије





# FOLKLORE

## *Serbian Traditional Dancing*

UNESCO Inscribed in 2017 (I2.COM)  
on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

Kolo is a traditional, collective folk dance performed by dancers who are interlinked to form a chain, usually moving in a circular line holding hands with their arms down. It is performed to the accompaniment of music at private and public gatherings and involves all members of the local community. Cultural-artistic societies and folk dance troupes are also important bearers and practitioners of the element. Kolo has an important integrative social function, fostering collective identities at different levels in the communities. It is a symbol of national identity and bears the hallmark of local and regional communal identities. Performances during celebrations of the most important events in individuals' and communities' lives make this element very present and sustainable at all levels. Bearers and local communities ensure its visibility by organizing local, regional and national fairs, festivals and competitions, and the sustainability of the practice is also ensured by cultural and artistic societies. Learning through direct participation is the most common way of transmitting the skills and skilled dancers motivate other players, awakening in them a desire to learn and improve their own performance. Knowledge is also acquired through the regular education system and in ballet and music schools.

### First video of our community released by BBC



Britić:

<https://www.britic.co.uk/2019/01/14/earliest-community-video-released-by-bbc/>

1950: News: Serbian Christmas in Suffolk:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2212375528781908>

## What is folklore?

*A short discussion on the research and presentation of traditional dances of Serbia*

### *Where does folklore even come from? Studying folklore in Serbia*

The study of folklore began primarily in Germany in the 19th century and arose out of the wave of romanticism and nationalism on the one hand, and the growing interest in anthropology on the other. Slovenian and Scandinavian philosophers also began to research written and spoken folklore to strengthen their peoples' national consciousness, characteristics and identity. In Serbia, Vuk Karadžić had similar aims, especially striving to 'choose a worthy place for a new national language' with the help of Serbian folk songs (Kokjara 1984, 334).

Folklore should not be understood in a narrow sense – as something old that lived once upon a time and today exists only as a survival of the past. Folklore should be understood as a dynamic phenomenon that has always existed in human culture: it changes, disappears and is created again. Folklore exists both in the countryside and in the city. Today the internet is another place where we can learn a lot about folklore, and new folklore is created – for example, the folklore of specific groups on Facebook.

## **Research of traditional dances under the folkloristics influence in Serbia**

The interest in studying traditional Serbian dances began in the second half of the 19th century, along with the growing nationalist movements and romantic intentions to study rural life. The traditional music and dances of the rural population were collected, transcribed and archived, intending to preserve them 'from oblivion' for future generations. Given that there was no way to record the songs, only the names of traditional dances from different geographical regions were initially documented.

The first information about traditional dances in Serbia can be found in the travel notes of Milan Đ. Milićević. In his publications 'Principality of Serbia' (1876) and 'Kingdom of Serbia' (1884), he describes the geography and culture of different regions of Serbia. He also includes the names of dances that were popular in Serbia at the time of his research. Although it only refers to the names of dances, it is important and helpful for comparisons.

The first professional study of traditional dances is by Tihomir Đorđević in 1907, 'Serbian folk dances'. To distinguish between dances and other forms of physical activity such as games, Đorđević coined the term 'orske igre' (chain dance). He introduced the concept of 'chain dance' and divided them into religious and secular dances.

In the 1930s, two sisters, Ljubica and Danica Janković, continued the study of traditional dances devoting their research to collecting, recording and analysing traditional dances from villages. They used the term 'narodne igre' (folk dances) and published their first book in 1934. As well as describing the individual dances and including sheet music of melodies and dance songs, the books contain interesting discussions and descriptions about the context in which the dances were performed. The Janković sisters devised a notation system to record the 'oldest village dances'.

The next generation of researchers included highly educated ethnologists and ethnomusicologists, Slobodan Zečević, Olivera Mladenović and Milica Ilijin. They continued to record rural traditional dances using the notation of the Janković sisters and other advances.

From the 1970s, two female ethnochoreologists, Prof. Dr Olivera Vasić, and one of her former students, Prof. Dr Selena Rakočević, continued the research in traditional dances. *Ethnochoreology* is the study of dance through disciplines such as anthropology, musicology, ethnomusicology, and ethnography. Olivera Vasić established a new way of recording traditional dances, using the symbols of Laban's kinetography – Labanotation. Through the activities of the Centre for the Research of Traditional Dances of Serbia, she organised a series of seminars for the managers of folklore groups and educated many amateurs who would later become prominent choreographers in Serbia and the Serbian Diaspora.

Selena Rakočević is a world-renowned ethnochoreologist who has significantly improved Serbian ethnochoreology, placing it at the heart of world science.

## **Legacy of the serbian ethnochoreologists**

Our long tradition of researching a small area of interest, such as traditional dances, is not found in many other European countries. Serbia has benefited from the dedication of generations of researchers in this field.

This heritage is significant for several reasons, primarily due to the records of dances from all over Serbia, which not only serve as an archive for the protection of cultural heritage but as material for the recreation of dances for the many cultural and artistic societies in Serbia and among the Serbian Diaspora.

Cultural and artistic societies were increasingly founded in Serbia after the Second World War to present so-called 'folk art', making it accessible to everyone so that even non-professionals can participate in its creation. Folklore societies were increasingly formed throughout the Serbian Diaspora, basing themselves on the work of the ensembles from the mother country with similar programmes. Prof. Dr Olivera Vasić conducted intensive field research throughout Serbia while at the same time educating many amateurs-enthusiasts not only in terms of sharing knowledge from the field but also in terms of training them to research traditional dances and music in the field independently. Thanks to this work, we now know that Serbia is divided into five ethnochoreological zones, each with its own specific local dance repertoire.

The first ethnochoreological area is central Serbia, covering: okolina Beograda, Kosmaj, Kačer, Gruža, Gornja i Donja Jasenica, Lepenica, Levač, Temnić, Belica, Pomoravlje, Resava, Kruševačka župa, Rasina, Šumadijska Kolubara, Takovo and Rudničko Pomoravlje. The typical repertoire of central Serbia consists of the following dances: *šetnja*, *devojačko kolo*, *kolo u tri ili kolo u šest*, *stara vlaina*, *osmica*, *trojanac*, *đurđevka*, *pop-Marinkovo kolo*, *retko kolo i četvorka*. These dances occur throughout these areas and under other, locally specific names. As Olivera Vasić points out, 'Nowhere in our area is dance as decorated and beautified as in central Serbia'.

The second ethnochoreological area is western Serbia, made up of smaller regional districts: Mačva, Jadar, Rađevina, Azbukovica, Tamnaca, Pocerina, Valjevska Kolubara, Podgorina, Užička Crna Gora, Rača, Požeška kotlina, Zlatiborsko-kremanska površ, Stari Vlah, Moravica, Raška, Ibarski Kolašin, Peštersko-sjениčka visoravan, Štavica, Podgor, Metohija, Podrima, Prekoruplje, Rukovo, Gora, Opolje and part of Sredačka župa. The typical dance repertoire of western Serbia consists of the following dances: *povod*, *četvorak*, *trojak*, *kola u tri*, *sremica*, *sakajdo*, *pauna*, *sitan tanac*, *trojanac*, *kukunješ*, *devojačko kolo*, *šareno kolo*, *učiteljsko*, *doktorsko kolo*, *demokratsko kolo*, *šumatovac*, *bakićevac*, *sedma nebeska*, *teško oro*, *Cveto*, *mori Cveto* and others. The dance style is characterised by strong dancing, with the whole foot on the ground with the knees bent.

The third ethnochoreological area is southeastern Serbia, which consists of smaller districts: Banja, Aleksinačko Pomoravlje, Zaglavak, Budžak, Nišava, Pirotsko polje, Lužnica, Visok, Krajište, Vlasina, Leskovačka Morava, Vranjsko Pomoravlje, Pčinja, Gornja Morava, Izmornik, Kosovo polje, Sirinička župa, deo Sredačke župe, Jablanica, Pusta Reka, Veternica, Dobrič, Toplica and part of Kopaonička župa. Their typical dance repertoire includes: *suva or kratka ora*, *čačak*, *jednostranka*, *osamputka*, *četvorka*, *selsko oro*, *samački*, *trojanac*, *polomka*, *vlasinka*, *bugarka* and *šestorka*. The dancing is very strong, with the whole foot on the ground, and while little space is covered, it is performed with great feeling.

The fourth ethnochoreological region is Vojvodina, which consists of Srem, Banat and Bačka. Due to its location and history, Vojvodina has a diverse and unique dance repertoire with strong Western European influences. It consists of: *kola (veliko and malo kolo)*, *podvoje*, *dances under city influences (majstorsko, trgovačko, pančevačko, zrenjaninsko, vidino kolo i dr.)*, *cigančica*, *mađarac*, *keleruj*, *zurka*, *erdeljanka*, *sirotica*, *todore*, *tandrčak* and others. The style of dancing here is very interesting. It's characterised by the dominant improvisation of the male soloists while the other dancers are constantly bouncing (vertical pulsation motion) and shaking their whole bodies.

The fifth ethnochoreological region is northeastern Serbia, which consists of: Crnorečje, Resava, deo Timočke Krajine, Negotinska Krajina, Homolje, Kučaj, Poreč, Zvižd, Stig, Braničevo, Mlava i Ključ. This area is characterised by the coexistence of Serbian and Wallachian populations, who influenced each other in dance. The typical dance repertoire consists of: *valajna*, *ora de patru*, *četvorka*, *keser*, *kiseru*, *polomka*, *s'tnga*, *pros'tnga*, *pop Marinkovo kolo*, *šokčili*, *patulu*, *todorka*, *đurdesku*, *levakinja*, *arabao*, *zaplet*, *zapetka*, *ružmarin*, *ružmaljinka* and others. This region's Serbian and Vlah communities dance strongly without significant interplay. At the same time, the dancing pattern is decorated with jumps, fluttering and 'ropota' – hitting the free leg on the ground.

Thanks to these professional ethnochoreologists and passionate amateurs, we have a rich record of dances from all parts of Serbia. Using this material, today's choreographers create the most diverse works using the traditional dances of Serbia performing them at home and abroad at various festivals and folklore competitions.

Perhaps more important than competing in festivals, is the preservation of our cultural heritage, using traditional dances to express cultural or ethnic identities. This plays a vital role among the Serbian Diaspora in sharing the history, traditions and culture of their ancestors' homeland among younger generations. Many cultural and artistic societies and folklore ensembles throughout the European and American Diaspora teach Serbian dance and music. Not only does this contribute to the preservation of our cultural heritage, but it also improves their knowledge of the Serbian language. In order to master certain songs, it is necessary to learn Serbian words and expressions. This raises awareness about the origin of Serbs living outside the motherland, and contributes to the survival of Serbian communities abroad.

This is why it is so important to support the work of folklore with continuing co-finance and support from Serbia. Dance experts should continue to provide their expertise and relevant materials to enable Serbs in the Diaspora to continue dancing for as long as possible.

**Miloš Rašić, PhD**

Research associate

The Institute of Ethnography of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts



# OPLENAC



The folklore Group Oplenac was formed in 1954 at the first regular general assembly in London of The Royal Yugoslav Army Combatant's Association 'Draža Mihailović' (*Udruženje Boraca KJV 'Draža Mihailović'*). After the hardship of WWII and being displaced in a foreign country the members of the association were aware that in exile the national spirit could only be maintained by traditional, cultural, and religious events and experiences. Hence folklore, theatre and choir groups were created, and this was replicated in every country where Udruženje was present, this included the: USA, Canada, Germany, France, Australia, Switzerland & Italy.

In that same year during a visit by the SFRJ 'Kolo' Ensemble, married couple Nikola and Vikica Pužić, part of Kolo ensemble defected and chose to remain in the UK. This professional input gave Oplenac a strong boost. The first folklore leader was K. Kužović, who was followed by Moma Radovanović, who was part of the theatre section, and who continued to teach the group for 45 years.

Under the guidance of Čika Moma Radovanović, Oplenac performed the length and breadth of the UK, from London to Stoke-on-Trent, Peterborough to Halifax and Leeds at all the major saint's days, Sveti Sava, Vidovdan and in particular for the Udruženje celebration of 'Dan Ravne Gore' in May in London.

Many generations have passed through Oplenac over the years, and it has a rich history as one of the longest running groups, performing continuously for nearly 70 years. Oplenac was first established in Halifax, with practices taking place at Pavle's club, just a few hundred yards away from the church. One of the first groups to start outside of the Halifax/Bradford area was in Bedford in 1968, which consisted of 10 girls who combined with 6 boys from Halifax to perform in Peterborough for Sveti Sava in 1972. This was the start of the Peterborough branch of Oplenac with children joining from Letchworth and in 1982 from Leicester.

The rich Oplenac repertoire is as diverse as the country with dances from Šumadija, Vojvodina, Vlaška and Macedonia, Oplenac became famous for its 'tour de force' performance of the Šopsko Kolo. The Oplenac generation 2000 – the sons and daughters of the 1960's generation of dancers added many new splets (dances), including the Pirot and Pčinje splets, the choreography and intricate steps reaching a new level.



1950



1960



1972



80s

Oplenac has been able to continue with the support of all the parents and grandparents, of the dancers, the church together with the sponsorship of The Royal Yugoslav Army Combatant's Association 'Draža Mihailović', thus succeeding in preserving Serbian traditions and culture for new generations.

In 2023 we started a new 'youth' group of Oplenac, based in Peterborough, aged between 8 -16, their first show was at Smotra in Corby, and the next will be for Sveti Sava on Saturday 3rd February in Peterborough, more details on Facebook. [https://www.facebook.com/FolklornaGrupaOplenacUK/?locale=en\\_GB](https://www.facebook.com/FolklornaGrupaOplenacUK/?locale=en_GB)  
Anyone interested in joining is welcome!

•Vidovdan & Dan Ravne Gore 1985 - FG Oplenac Halifax – Šopsko – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yFY7FcXJOsA>



•Karadjordjevdan 2015 - Folklorna Grupa Oplenac UK <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHk34wpNjk8>

•Smotra Srpskog Folkora 2023 - FG Oplenac Podmladak <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofLamPhcyE8>



90s



2002

42



2018



# FOLKLORE ENSEMBLE RASTKO

The folklore ensemble Rastko was founded in 1983 and based at St Sava's church in London, with the aim of bringing our young people together in a structured way to nurture and preserve our folklore, our traditions and our rich national treasures. Since its beginnings, Rastko has achieved great success in Britain as well as in Europe, Canada, America and Australia, performing at various celebrations and festivals.

It is important that young people outside the homeland come together through dancing and singing, because in this way they develop a love and feeling for their national heritage, and get closer to their roots, homeland and own people. It is important not to lose sight of the meaning of traditional folk songs and dances, which have their deep roots in the nation's past. They come from the nation's soul and need to be nurtured.

Traditional folk songs and dances bear witness to our daily life, through which people can capture its most beautiful and important moments.

The folklore ensemble Rastko has been active for 40 years and many young boys and girls have passed through its ranks. Over 30 years ago, the Ensemble 'Nemanja' was established, for 'veteran' dancers to allow both older and younger people to work together to preserve and nurture Serbian folklore. Rastko has had great success both in Britain and abroad, participating in all the major religious and national celebrations in all our Serbian centres.

The ensemble often hosts and works with many other cultural organisations. Rastko has hosted and participated in festivals in Germany, Switzerland, America, Sweden, Australia, and most importantly, Serbia and Republika Srpska. The ensemble has a rich and diverse artistic programme and over the past 40 years it has accumulated many national costumes for its performances. The ensemble has received a lot of support from St Sava's, from its priests and the Church Council, the Circle of Serbian Sisters 'Kosovo Devojka' and parents.

However, above all, Rastko owes its success to its choreographer and director Mrs Nada Grkinić who has led the ensemble for the 40 years of its existence. Wherever it performs, Rastko is warmly welcomed and greeted enthusiastically by all audiences.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCjiTr1FYcOLOuOVKVxyAZTw>



Vladimir Vranić was born in 1987 in Priština, Kosovo and Metohija. He is married and the father of two children. He joined Rastko 24 years ago. "For me, folklore is more than just performing and dancing, it is about nurturing tradition and preserving the cultural heritage of the Serbian people from the different regions of the Republic of Serbia, Republika Srpska and other regions where Serbs are settled. I believe that my children will continue this family tradition and carry on dancing, singing and socialising in the Rastko ensemble. The thing that moulds all us members into one community is love: it is the key to the longevity of Rastko. My favourite dances are from Kosovo's Pomoravlje."



"I am Luka Lukić and one of the oldest active members of Rastko. I joined in 1996, when I was only eight years old and have been an active member ever since. Initially, I joined because my parents wanted me to have a better connection to my own history and heritage. I enjoy the opportunities that the ensemble provides for travel and to meet new folklore groups and people from across the globe. My most memorable trip was to California in 2007. It was my first trip out of Europe and special because I had opportunity to celebrate my birthday in San Diego."



“My name is Dušan. I have been dancing folklore since I was ten years old (with a few breaks). I started because of the insistence of my parents, for which I am grateful and happy; through folklore and dancing I met the love of my life. She is now my wife and we have two children. Dances from Leskovac and Šumadija are my favourites. Serbian traditions, customs, the feeling of belonging, hanging out with friends and a good workout are the reasons why I love folklore.”



“My name is Andreja and I have been dancing folklore for five years. I consider folklore, along with the Serbian language and Orthodox faith, as a fundamental part of our tradition. Folklore, through dances, songs and costumes shows the richness of Serbian heritage and teaches us about fundamental values of the Serbian people. The diversity of Serbian folklore and customs is visible through the variety of folk customs and folk dances which originate from all parts of Serbian countries. I would like to single out dances from the south of Serbia; my favourites are folk dances from Ponišavlje (Niš area).”



“I was named after the knight who killed Murat, Sultan of the Ottoman Empire during the battle of Kosovo. Yes, my name is Lazar, and I am from near Čačak. I have been dancing folklore for the last 22 years (since I was five years old). I am now 27. Folk dancing is a great experience and has become an important part of my life. It has provided me with opportunities to make friendships from across the globe. I would like to single out the most beautiful dances from Kosovo's Pomoravlje, because of their unique costumes, music and authenticity.”



“I am Katarina Ivanović, by origin from Lazarevac in Šumadija. I have been dancing folklore with all these wonderful people from the ensemble for 16 years. I started dancing when I was seven years old. The rehearsals and dance practice have been teaching me more about various national costumes, diverse dances and, above all, how to nurture Serbian culture and heritage. My favourite dances are from Vranje's Field (Vranjsko Polje), and my favourite national costumes are from Kosovo.”



“I am Tamara Ležaić, and I have been dancing for 20 years with a few small breaks. I started dancing folklore because I admire our folk music and dances. When I was a small girl, I watched my older sister and brother dancing. My favourite trip, which I will never forget, is the one to Banja Luka where we met over 40 folk groups from all over Europe. It was an unforgettable event and experience!”



“I am Maria Vranić originally from Priština, Kosovo. I have been dancing folklore since December 1999, with a short break when I was starting my family. For me, folklore is more than just dance. It is art and a never-ending circle which brings past, present and future generations of Serbian people together. I come from a family with a musical background. I grew up listening to my dad playing folk and traditional music on the accordion while I was forever hopping and skipping. Thanks to folklore I have visited different countries, from the USA to countries in Europe and Serbia itself. I forged many new friendships. My favourite costumes and dances are from Prizren. I have danced folklore all my life with a smile, and now my daughter is following in my footsteps.”



Ana and Predrag Nikić from Birmingham. “We went to the Lazarica church celebration of Vidovdan one year (we can't remember the exact one). We were in the audience which greeted the folklore ensemble Rastko from London with loud applause. The beautiful smiling faces of the folklorists, their vivid costumes and the beautiful melodies and rhythm sounds of the dance 'Šumadija' awoke in us the desire and hope that we could also become members of Rastko. Our parents dedicated every Sunday afternoon to their love for us and folklore. They wanted us to feel as if we belonged to Serbia and to celebrate its traditions. Time went by, seasons changed. Be it rain or shine we didn't stop crossing the miles from Northampton to London to fill our hearts and souls with love, along with the sounds and dance steps of our homeland. We were little when our Aunt Nada took us under her wing and taught us how to dance, how to get into kolo... and since then we haven't stopped dancing or enjoying ourselves!”



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"My name is Marija Bazić. I was born in London where I started dancing folklore 14 years ago. I joined Rastko because I have always loved music and I was especially attracted to the beautiful colours of our national costumes. I dance in the ensemble and I like it because we can hang out together and have opportunities to travel and meet other folklore groups from various countries. Up to now I have the most beautiful memories from our trip to Malmö. It is difficult to pick out a favourite dance because there are so many interesting dances from the different regions of Serbia. I enjoy equally every performance, big or small, whether in London or elsewhere."



"My name is Valentina Vidak and by origin I am from Serbia and Macedonia. I have been in the folklore ensemble for the last 15 years and what I am most grateful for is that through dance, music and songs, I have had the opportunity to forge friendships in the ensemble and across the world. As for the most beautiful dances, I would single out those from Kosovo's Pomoravlje."



"My name is Miljan Adžić, and I started folklore when I was seven years old and I regularly attend rehearsals and enjoy the songs and music. Folklore has brought us closer to our country. We learn from the traditions we uphold where we came from and who we are. Thanks to our tireless teacher Nada Grkinić, I can say with great pride and honour that Rastko contributes to the preservation of our traditional dances and songs here in London."



"My name is Mima Marinković. I have been a member of the folklore group in London since I was six years old. My love of music and dance has kept me a faithful member over the last 16 years. It has contributed to my desire to preserve my Serbian identity and Serbian culture and traditions. Travel and performances abroad and across Britain have provided me with opportunities to get to know Serbian young people in the Diaspora with whom I can share experiences and new ideas. I am also glad that my folklore skills allow me to easily join in with other folklore groups from across the Balkans. I would like to continue to expand and improve my dancing skills; it's a unique gift that I can hand on to my descendants."

# CRKVENA FOLKLORNA GRUPA SV. ANDREJA



Crkvena Folklorna Grupa Sv. Andreja, in Bedford is an organisation formed by the Serbian Orthodox Church parish of Sv. Andreja, to teach children and young adults to dance traditional Serbian dances pertaining to various regions of the former Yugoslavia. The group seeks to retain this aspect of the Serbian heritage in this country as an important aspect of the Serbian identity.

The group was formed in early 2014 and has been active continuously since then except for a prolonged break during the Covid Pandemic. The group functions annually from September through to June and holds "probe" sessions on Sunday at the Church House in Bedford, 62 Kimbolton Road. The group is divided into two sub groups with the ages ranging roughly from 6 - 12 years old in the younger group and 13 plus in the older group. The group seeks to perform their prepared dances both locally and when invited further afield as and when they learn a dance and group numbers are such that they can perform.

Since 2015 Marina Ivanović from London has been the groups teacher / choreographer. Marina has been dancing Serbian folklore for more than 20 years and has also taught other groups. She brings a wealth of experience to every session along with a spirit of fun helping the children and young adults derive a sense of achievement with their newly learned skills.

Over the years the group has performed on many occasions the length and breadth of the country and one of the highlights was when the group travelled and performed in Belgrade, Serbia in 2018. If you are local and would like to come along and see if you may be interested in joining in, please initially email us on [alekssimic@aol.com](mailto:alekssimic@aol.com)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/SvAndrejaFolklor>







# FOLKLORE ENSEMBLE ST. ELIAH CORBY

The folklore ensemble 'St. Eliah' Corby gathers all those who are interested in nurturing Serbian customs and traditions, therefore enabling the development of creativity in the field of art and culture. Over the years we have performed in many towns here in England, including Serbian events as well as taking part in charity and competition events here in Corby. Also our groups have performed in Disneyland Paris and in Thessaloniki Greece where they had a great and unforgettable experience. On November 4th, 2023, the ensemble celebrated its 10th anniversary. Anyone interested, of any age is welcome to join us.

We also opened a web page with Local Giving for gift aid donations to our organisation  
<http://www.localgiving.com/serbiandance>



## FOLKLORNA GRUPA AVALA

The folkore group Avala in Corby was formed in September 2015 and recruits members from as young as five. Avala's first debut performance in June 2016 was a success and resulted in more sign ups in the months that followed. Initially taught by Angelina Radjenović, Lulu Radjenović, her sister took over in 2016, supported by their mother Angela Radjenović and leader of the group, Elizabeth Tulum. Avala is funded by the Pokret srpskih četnika Ravne Gore in the UK and is grateful for their continued support.

Avala has continued to grow and this has led to the group being split into three, to accommodate the 50 strong members. Members commit to attending weekly rehearsals and have performed at a number of slavas and events around the UK. Being part of Avala, the members learn the Serbian traditions and culture of folklore and most importantly form friendships for life. Avala has attracted members from outside the Serbian community too (Russian, Lithuanian and English) and some have even returned after university in their mid-20s. Avala will always welcome anyone who would like to join. Avala are excited to continue their journey performing for the Serbian community around the UK and abroad and look forward to celebrating their ninth anniversary in 2024!

Facebook page: Folklorna Grupa Avala



## HILANDAR FOLK GROUP

Our group has existed for more than 30 years and is the only Serbian dance group in the north of England. We enjoy travelling around England and meeting new people. It is a great opportunity for children to learn more about their heritage and make new friends. Children love to dress up in national costumes and travel from all over to join in, including Manchester and Wakefield. This year we had many performances and we all enjoy connecting with Serbian music and socialising together.



**Serbian  
Month**  
in Great Britain

# Artists in the UK Dance

## *Djordje Tanasijević*

Djordje Tanasijević is an award-winning Professional Latin dancer (British a Djordje, originally from Serbia, started dancing from the age 9. From the age of 10, he began to travel to many competitions abroad representing his country. Later, Djordje moved to Slovenia to train with some of the best coaches in the world, and following this Djordje has been involved with TV and films such as Children in Need, Cuban Fury, Comic relief and many more. He has also been part of the team who bring the BBC's Strictly Come Dancing to P&O cruises, and had the honour to dance for the Queen at Britannia's naming ceremony. Djordje has taught from the age of 15 in his home country and abroad. His teaching credentials are impressive and include a wide range of well-known dance schools in the UK and abroad. Also he was a 2012 and 2013 ISTD Congress Lecturer, and 2014 IDTA Congress Lecturer.



## *Milica (Mil) Vuković Smart*

Milica (Mil) Vuković Smart is a London-based dance and performance artist, writer and choreographer. Born in Novi Sad, Milica holds a BA in Philosophy from Belgrade University, an MA in Modern European Philosophy from Middlesex University, an MRes in Choreography and Performance (with distinction) from Roehampton University, and is a PhD researcher in choreography and spatial design at Chelsea College of Arts. In parallel, Milica has a career in advocacy and fundraising in arts, health and heritage sectors, and is Head of Development at Studio Wayne McGregor.



**Serbian  
Month**  
in Great Britain

# Young British Serbs

## Lara Medić

Culture is a rich tapestry, woven from the threads of tradition, history and heritage. Growing up Serbian in London, I always knew there was something quite unique about me, and to this day I could not be prouder of my heritage – something that shone through during my school's first ever 'culture day'.

Wearing Serbian traditional attire is a reflection of our country's rich history and diversity. For girls, a typical Serbian costume may consist of a 'nošnja' (folk costume) with a vividly embroidered blouse, a colourful apron and a long, flowing skirt. The outfit is often completed with intricate hairpieces and ornaments, showcasing the meticulous craftsmanship that goes into every detail. For boys, traditional Serbian attire includes a 'gunj' or 'jelek' (vest), worn over a white shirt, along with loose fitting trousers, and a distinctive 'ojada' (belt). Both boys and girls can accessorise with handwoven woollen socks and leather footwear, known as 'opanci'.

Aside from donning Serbian traditional wear for culture day, I also speak Serbian fluently, study the language in biweekly classes, and love to cook traditional Serbian dishes at home, such as 'punjene paprike' (stuffed peppers) and 'pasulj' (white bean stew). For me, staying in touch with my roots is not just about carrying on the traditions within my daily life, but a big part of it is also acting as an ambassador for my nation in the best way and as much as possible. I very much enjoy teaching my friends about our intricate and often undiscussed history, the incredible nature, teaching them phrases in our language and more generally promoting the true beauty and cultural richness of Serbia that is so often overlooked, especially in London.

Being part of the Serbian community in London is something very special – it is a vibrant and close-knit group that contributes so very much to the city's cultural diversity. It comprises both first-generation immigrants, second-generation and even third-generation Serbians, who actively maintain their cultural traditions, organising cultural events, celebrating Serbian holidays and always offering a warm, welcoming environment for newcomers, creating a strong sense of belonging in the bustling metropolis.

Though my roots contrast with being raised in London my whole life, as a young person I recognise my generation is the next to lead the world, therefore I want to carry on being a voice for others like me in the Diaspora, and to show as many people as I can that thriving in your own identity is one of the most special things there is.

## Angelina Vuletić

For my entire life, I have lived in the north-east of England alongside my Serbian parents and older brother. We have a community of Serbs who we meet with for celebrations and Church, although it is quite small. Growing up as a foreigner in England presented considerable challenges, particularly during my earlier years. The desire to fit in, which I believe many individuals of diverse ethnic backgrounds can empathise with, overshadowed any sense of pride I had for my own heritage. Consequently, I nearly rejected my Serbian background, refraining from speaking the language around others, avoiding the traditional cuisine, and abstaining from discussing it, all out of fear of potential judgement or bullying, which unfortunately did occur at times. My parents did make efforts to get me to indulge in my culture by reading books in Serbian or watching shows with me, but I still tried to hide away and distance myself. In my household, we still celebrate our Slava, as well as other religious events which I really enjoyed, even during this time of distancing.

Nonetheless, throughout those years, I noticed that I experienced genuine happiness whenever I communicated in Serbian, whether in Serbia or among Serbian people. I deeply regret the length of time it took me to realise and accept this, but with that realisation, new struggles emerged. While being in the company of other Serbs provided a sense of acceptance and belonging, my heart ached. I was unfamiliar with the songs and dances at parties, unable to understand the jokes or references, and even incapable of reading Cyrillic script. Initially, I felt like an outsider among my classmates, and at that point I felt like an outsider around my own people. This gave me a huge urge to learn and develop my understanding of my culture, which is a road I'm still on to this day.

A couple of years ago, I dedicated myself to learning Cyrillic script. Although my reading skills may not be flawless, I take pride in the progress I have made. Moreover, the Serbian course I enrolled in with Azbukum has exposed me to metaphors and idioms which I have never heard of before, allowing me to learn and see the language from an academic perspective. Each of these small steps, whether it be exploring the Orthodox religion, appreciating Serbian music, or indulging in traditional cuisine, has brought me closer to my culture and fostered a stronger sense of connection.

I want to finish by reiterating to whomever may be experiencing any kind of shame about their ethnicity: I want you to know that you do not have to worry. The desire to fit in is normal, but so is having a unique culture and ethnicity. Make the most of your cultural background and share it whenever you can, as it is such a beautiful thing to be blessed with.





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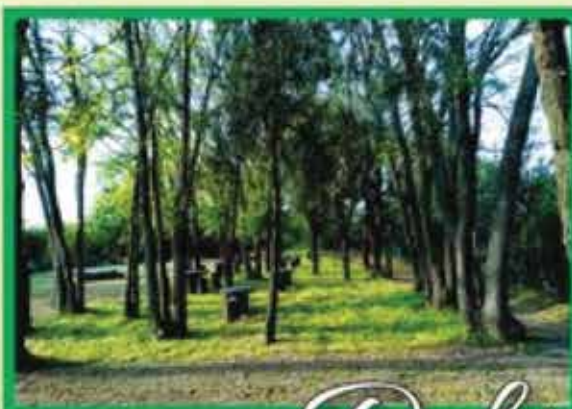


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### **SADRŽAJ:**

- Bašta ruža - mini zoo vrt - šatori za odmor - mini golf - ljuđaške za decu i druge igre -  
- biblioteka - botačnička bašta - likovni sadržaji ...
- Za rođitelje, školsku decu, decu ometenu u razvoju - sprave za vežbanje u prirodi i puno toga još u planu...
- Mesto za rođendane - mini koncerte dečijeg sadržaja - DJ - letnji bioskop - fontana zdravlja -  
- parking - klupe - suvenirnica - sokovi - čaj - kafa - sladoled...
- Besplatno druženje u prirodi na samo 4 kilometra od Sremskih Karlovaca na vrhu Banstola -

*- Škole i rođitelji sa decom - Vaša ideja sadržine je i naša -*



*Dobrodošli!!!*





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Dobrodošli !!!

Škole i roditelji sa decom - Vaša ideja sadržine je i naša - besplatno druženje u prirodi na samo 4 kilometara od Sremskih Karlovaca vrh Banstoila.

Pod pokroviteljstvom SPC- REAL UK  
Krajevske Porodice Karadjordjević.

Kontakt: [noblemen33@gmail.com](mailto:noblemen33@gmail.com)  
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## Novi Sad Sremski Karlovci



## Indija Beograd

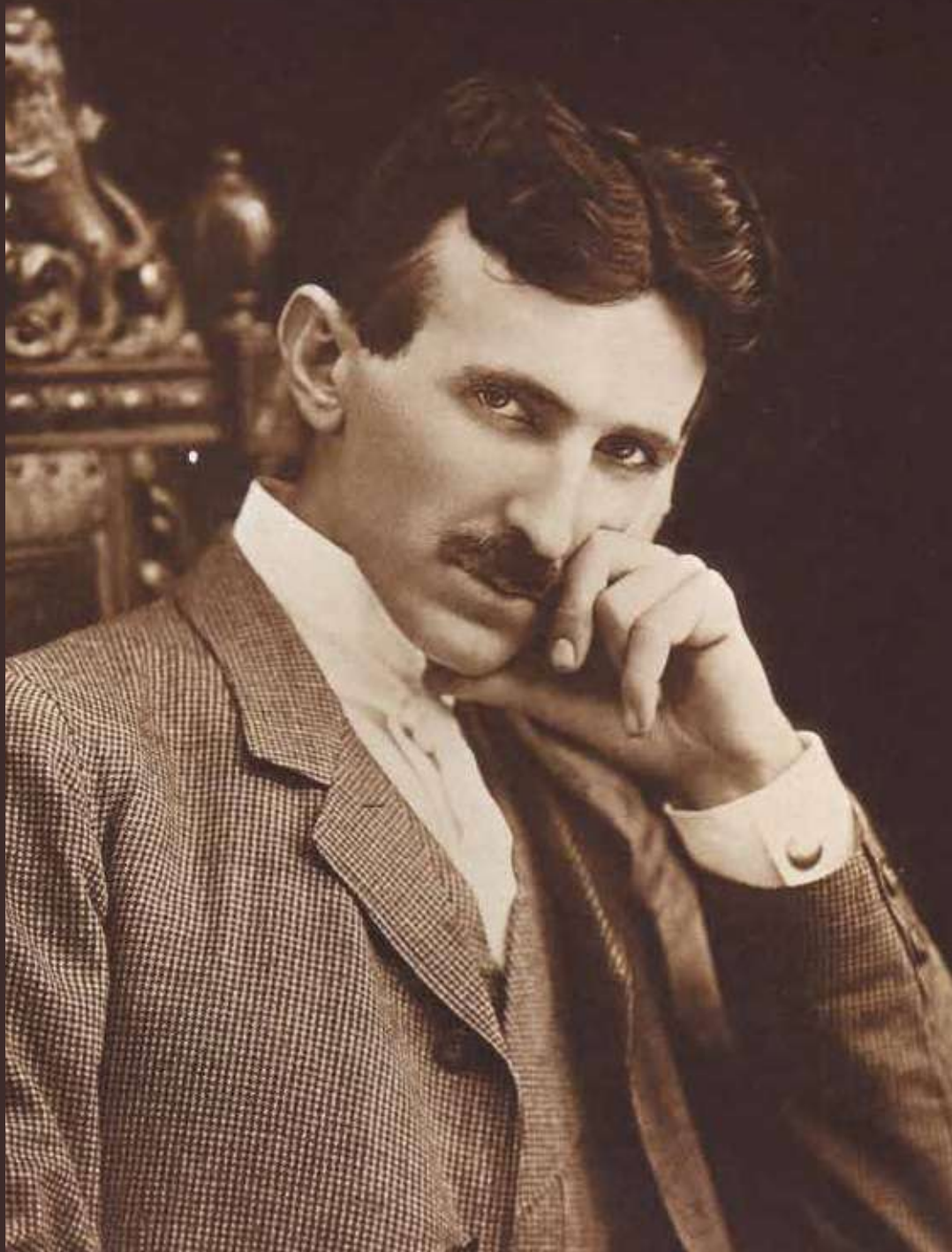


# Nikola Tesla in the UK

*Avram Balabanović, 2023*

2023 was the 80th anniversary of the death of Nikola Tesla (1856-1943). We associate Tesla with brilliant inventions such as the brushless induction motor, electrical power distribution systems based on multiphase alternating currents, fluorescent and neon lights, wireless communication, remote control and robotics (which he called 'teleautomatics').

**Serbian  
Month**  
in Great Britain



In June 1891, as an already established scientist in the USA with a number of registered patents, Tesla came upon an article by Prof. J.J. Thompson, a British scientist whose work would later be rewarded with a Nobel Prize for the discovery of the electron. A vigorous exchange between the two men led to an invitation in January 1892 to visit the UK. After a ten-day boat trip, Tesla arrived in London. After a few days of convivial company and sightseeing, on 3 February 1892, Tesla gave a lecture entitled 'Experiments with Alternate Currents of High Potential and High Frequency' at the Royal Society.

For a full two hours, in front of the top scientists of the day: J.J. Thompson, Oliver Heaviside, Silvanus P. Thompson, Joseph Swan, Sir John Ambrose Fleming, Sir James Dewar, Sir William Preece, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir William Crookes and Lord Kelvin, Tesla kept his audience spellbound with his experiments. At the end of the lecture Tesla tantalisingly informed the listeners that they had seen only a third of what he was working on. The audience remained in their seats, unwilling to disperse, insisting upon more.

Sir James Dewar, a member of the board, set himself the task of persuading Tesla to give another lecture the following day because many dignitaries, especially Lord Rayleigh, had missed the main event. Tesla later recalled: "The great Scotchman pushed me into Faraday's chair and poured out half a glass of wonderful brown fluid which sparkled in all sorts of iridescent colours and tasted like nectar." The next evening, he delivered a second lecture along with demonstrations before the Royal Institution. At the end, Tesla concluded: "It has been my chief aim in presenting these results to point out phenomena or features of novelty and to advance ideas which I am hopeful will serve as starting points of new departures ... your applause, so frequently and generously accorded, has told me that I have succeeded."

Nikola Tesla was born at the stroke of midnight between 9 and 10 July in 1856 to father Rev. Milutin Tesla and mother Djuka (nee Mandić) in Smiljan, then an Austro-Hungarian province of Lika. His father was a pastor of the Serbian Orthodox Church and his parish embraced some forty homes. Nikola's mother, although unable to read or write, was nevertheless an intellectually brilliant woman and influential in Tesla's upbringing.

The Tesla surname dates back more than three centuries. Before that, the family name was Draginić. The word 'tesla' originates from the woodworking tool (adze) for cutting large tree trunks.

## Early days

After school, his father enrolled him in the polytechnic in Graz (Styria), one of the most advanced schools in the region. Tesla plunged himself into his work, studying upwards of twenty hours a day. He changed his major from arithmetic and geometry to engineering and extended his curriculum to study other languages, achieving a working knowledge of nine. He read the works of Descartes, Goethe, Spencer, Shakespeare and Voltaire – many of which he knew by heart. Returning home to Gospić with excellent results, he expected praise. Instead, his father Milutin wanted him to stay, worried about his health. The Military Frontier Authority had also been abolished and the scholarship worth 420 guilders per month was no longer available.

However, Tesla went to Prague for further studies and after his father's death needed to earn his own keep. His uncle Pajo Mandić suggested that he move to Hungary where in 1881, through military friends of the family, he started working for the American Telephone Exchange. It was there in 1882 that he discovered the **rotating magnetic field with polyphase currents**. On the advice of family friend Ferenc Puskas he moved to Paris to join Compagnie Continental Edison. The company was run by Charles Batchelor and after Tesla successfully completed several projects, he wrote a note introducing Tesla to Edison in America, "I know two great men and you are one of them; the other is this young man."

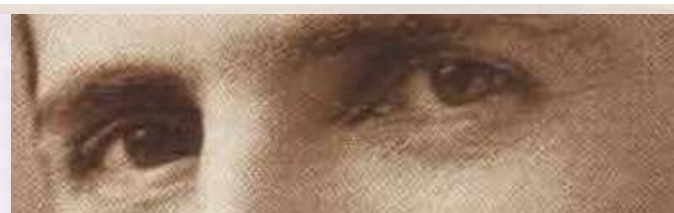
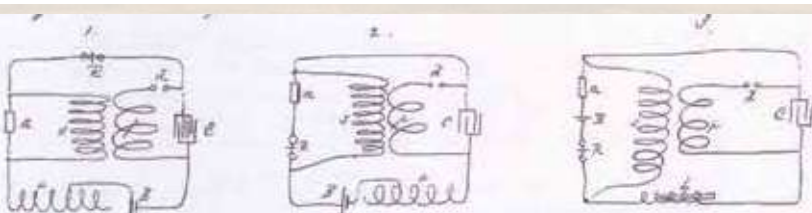
In the spring of 1884, Tesla sailed to America. Thomas Alva Edison was well known for the production of incandescent bulbs which had begun illuminating New York. Edison used direct current (DC) and when Tesla joined his laboratory, he failed to convince Edison of the advantages of his alternating current (AC). Instead, he was asked to repair and redesign prevailing DC machinery. According to Tesla, "The Manager has promised me \$50,000 on completion of this task" and so he set himself to work, "experimenting day and night, holidays not excepted". The project was finished successfully. When Tesla demanded his reward, Edison merely laughed it off: "When you become a full-fledged American, you will appreciate an American joke." At which point, Tesla left the company to set out on his own.

## Success and money

Tesla was struggling with money in 1886/7 when he met Alfred S. Brown, a prominent engineer who already had patents on arc lamps. He became very interested in Tesla's work and contacted Charles F. Peck a distinguished lawyer to provide extra funding. Peck was not that interested until Tesla told him about the 'Egg of Columbus'. The story goes that at a certain dinner Columbus asked some of the doubters of his project to balance an egg on its end. They tried in vain. Columbus then cracked the shell slightly and made it stand upright. This may be a myth, but the fact is that he was granted an audience by Isabella, Queen of Spain, and won her support for future explorations. Peck was intrigued when Tesla told him he could do the same with the use of his polyphase circuits and agreed to support him if the experiment was successful. Tesla rushed to the local blacksmith and made an egg of cast iron and brass. He constructed a circular enclosure with polyphase circuits along the perimeter, placed the egg in the centre. He turned on the current. The egg started to spin and as the current increased, the wobbling ceased, and it stood on its end. The principles behind the idea of his **rotating magnetic field** were proved. In April 1887, Brown, Peck and Tesla established the Tesla Electric Company. The working replica of the brass egg and the dish can be seen in the Nikola Tesla Museum in Belgrade. This funding allowed Tesla to open his first laboratory at 89 Liberty Street, New York.

On 15 May 1888, Tesla appeared before the American Institute of Electrical Engineers to present his landmark paper, 'A New Alternating Current Motor'. He had already filed fourteen fundamental patents on the AC system and was ready to approach Westinghouse who by then had a turnover of \$3 million and was working on AC in competition to Edison's DC motors. In 1888 Westinghouse offered Tesla a complex contract which over 15 years earned Tesla \$75,000 in initial outlays and \$180,000 in royalty payments – a total of \$225,000. Tesla managed to change the royalty option from dollars per motor sold, to an audacious figure of \$2.50 per watt of the units sold, thus capitalising on the sale of bigger motors.

Tesla owned four-ninths of his company with Peck and Brown owning the rest. In 1890, bad press coverage regarding electric chairs used for executions caused concern amongst Westinghouse investors. Tesla proposed a re-design of the motors at lower frequencies but Westinghouse (who lacked funds) demanded the removal of the royalty of \$2.50 per watt. As Tesla was keen to pursue his design, he accepted. Had he insisted on the original deal, he would have been some \$12million richer but pursuing his idea was more important to him. Tesla's AC current motors are now used in Elon Musk's Tesla cars. Perhaps if the DC system had prevailed, maybe they would be Edison cars?



In 1895, Tesla approached John Jacob Astor III, one of the wealthiest men on the planet with assets close to \$100 million. Tesla used all his powers to convince Astor to invest in his oscillator and cold (fluorescent) light. Finally, on 10 January 1899, Astor gave Tesla \$100,000 for five hundred shares in the Tesla Electric Company. Tesla then moved into Astor's Waldorf Astoria hotel – one assumes on a rent-free basis.

In that same year, the first turbines based on Tesla's design were installed by Westinghouse at Niagara Falls. By 1896 the transmission lines were already feeding high voltage electricity to the nearby town of Buffalo.

But Tesla's mind didn't rest. His big idea was the wireless transmission of light, information and power across vast distances. "I ... firmly believe that it is practicable to disturb by means of powerful machines the electrostatic conditions of the earth and thus transmit intelligible signals and perhaps power." To prove this, in May 1899 he moved out to Colorado Springs to construct an experimental wireless laboratory. A massive power source was designed on a 60m radio tower creating ball lightning and thunderbolts 20m in length which lit light bulbs stuck in wet ground 12 miles away (as seen in the film *Prestige*). He tracked thunderstorms some six hundred miles away and picked up weak signals. Thus the possibility of *wireless transmission* was confirmed. During the Colorado Springs experiments, Tesla was generating over four million volts, whereas only about one million volts are required to separate electrons from the nucleus of the atom. Tesla was disintegrating atoms, but in an entirely different way to that postulated by Einstein or the quantum physicists: Tesla did not destroy the nucleus. No atomic explosion could ever occur with this type of apparatus.

During the Christmas season of 1900, Tesla was invited to the home of J. Pierpont Morgan (JPM) a multimillionaire who made money in creating a steel trust, US Steel. He was also funding Edison. Tesla was looking for investment in his wireless transmission idea. "My plan requires two transmitting towers, one to transmit across the Atlantic and the other across the Pacific. The former would require expenditure of approximately one hundred thousand dollars. The latter about a quarter of a million," said Tesla. "Let's talk about one ocean at a time," Morgan responded. "I do not have a good impression of you. You abound in controversy, you are boastful and, aside your deal with Westinghouse, you have yet to show a profit on any other creation. On the other hand, I appreciate your talents – how much do you want? But ask once and do not ask for more in future." Tesla asked for US \$100,000. JPM responded: "Here is \$150,000 but in exchange for 50% of the rights." Very pleased, Tesla replied: "Let it be 51:49 for you." "You are a strange man..." a surprised JPM replied. Then his craftiness kicked in. When the contract was sent to Tesla for signature, it actually specified that JPM receive 51% of everything, including all patents, rather than just for the wireless. Tesla tried to extract the lighting patents from this deal for which Astor was already sponsoring him. He then tried to get more money from Astor but without success. Tesla swallowed the deal with JPM because he had no other option if he wanted to pursue his big idea. This was the seed funding for the famous Wardencllyffe Tower on Rhode Island, the first World Telegraph Centre.

Tesla's idea for the 'world system' was the arrangement of global open and secured channels of communication between subscribers around the whole world; building hubs of commutators and services; versatility of channels for transmitting telegraph and telephone messages as well as images and music, news, pay receipts, photographs ... Sound familiar?

On 30 October 2010, I was invited to the official re-opening of the J. P. Morgan Library and Museum at 225 Madison Avenue, New York. Most of the librarians in this amazing building with its thousands of books were clueless about Nikola Tesla. Eventually amongst the documents, I found a small note stating that 'in 1901 J.P. Morgan gave Nikola Tesla \$150,000 and that Tesla asked for a further \$75,000 a few years later. This was declined because the transmission experiment at Rhode Island did not succeed. Morgan's son Jack gave an extra \$25,000 to Tesla after JPM died...'

J.P. Morgan's daughter Anne (Ana to Tesla), was the only woman Tesla ever admitted he was in love with. The other relationship in his life was platonic (for all we know) with Katharine Johnson, wife of life-long friend Robert Underwood Johnson. Katharine was fascinated by Tesla and had many private meetings with him.



## Adversaries: Stanley, Marconi and Pupin

William Stanley, the first American to successfully install an alternative current (AC) system in the USA, a head engineer at Westinghouse, split from Westinghouse in 1892/3 to sell his own polyphase motors. His design was a clear patent infringement on the Tesla system. This was confirmed by the courts a few years later and Stanley was forced to purchase the Tesla motors from Westinghouse.

Tesla suspected that Guglielmo Marconi who was working with Lloyds of London on ship-to-shore experiments was using equipment which Tesla patented in 1897. The principle of Tesla's oscillator and coil were infringed. Tesla's famous lectures in 1891-93 had been published in many languages and the term 'Tesla Oscillator' had become a household word on both continents. Tesla decided he would sue infringements in every country he could. In the highest court in France, the inventor achieved a resounding success. It resulted in Telefunken, through its US subsidiary Atlantic Communications Company, paying royalties of \$1,500 per month to Tesla instead of Marconi.

The case was still to be heard in the USA and was originally paused due to the outbreak of the First World War. While Tesla was progressing with his worldwide wireless communications with Wardencllyffe Tower, Marconi Wireless Co was selling small wireless stations mainly to the US Navy, making some \$1.2 million. Tesla continued to pursue his legal battles against Marconi and finally in June 1943, several months after Tesla's death, the US Supreme Court ruled in Tesla's favour annulling Marconi patent(s). Tesla had always considered himself a discoverer or creator rather than a 'mere' inventor.



Mihajlo Pupin immigrated to America in 1874 and after several menial jobs entered Columbia College in New York in 1879, graduating with honours in 1884. In 1889 he became an instructor at Columbia College. At that time, he was an admirer of Tesla's work. But soon problems arose when Pupin got involved in the controversy as to who was the real inventor of the AC polyphase system. Tesla believed that Pupin made a mistake by befriending the wrong people. In 1891, in one of his lectures on polyphase systems, Pupin tried to brush aside that this was Tesla's patent. Tesla wrote to him and asked that he should read his patent first, before speaking untruths. Many years later, in his Pulitzer-winning autobiography, *From Immigrant to Inventor*, Pupin wrote extensively on alternating currents without mentioning that Tesla was the inventor. 'Pupinisation' in telecommunication cables became a norm based on Pupin's patent for loading coils. The application for this patent was, however, declined many times because of being blatantly based on the 'Tesla oscillator'. When Pupin first submitted his application on 10 February 1894, the US Patent Office rejected it saying that Pupin had merely 'multiplied Mr Tesla's electric light circuits ... which in no way was a new invention'. Pupin began a long campaign against the US Patent Office to bulldoze his way onto a legal foothold. By studying each rejection notice, he kept refining the language of his patent to push it through. It took him six years until he succeeded. When Tesla heard of Pupin's final success, he just shrugged his shoulders and said with resignation, "Let him be".

In April 1915, the famous court case *Tesla v. Marconi* (regarding the invention of the wireless communication) took place. (It was subsequently paused because of the First World War.) Pupin, who was financially tied to Marconi, was a witness for the defence against Tesla. For years afterwards, Tesla refused to talk to Pupin who attempted to make amends. When Pupin became ill in 1935, he asked his secretary to go and see Tesla and "plead with him to visit Pupin in the hospital. He wanted to make peace before he passed away". Tesla was initially taken aback by the request and said he needed to sleep on the matter. He went to the hospital the following day, approached the sick man, held his hand and said, "How are you, my old friend?" Pupin was speechless with emotion. The others left the room to leave the two men alone. Tesla was able to talk to Pupin eye to eye. When leaving he was heard to say (testimony from our then ambassador in USA, Stanko Stojiljković): "We should meet again in the Science Clubrooms and converse as before...". Soon after Tesla's visit, Pupin passed away. Tesla attended the funeral. These arguments with Pupin were never published in communist Yugoslavia; instead Pupin's battles with the US patent office were described as an "interest of capitalist forces to subdue him..."

Tesla had written in 1900: "These men are extremely shrewd, calculating, practical men. Edison is shrewd, Marconi shrewder. Pupin could lead them both thirsty over the Rhine."

## Tesla's 'death ray' project, the Russian connection and the UK

Tesla's reputation in the UK was greatly enhanced during his first visit and lectures in 1892. In 1914, the British War Office offered a reward of £25,000 for anyone who could come up with an invention that could search out and destroy incoming zeppelins. Although Tesla had already worked on such a device, a gun filled with minute bullets moving at terrific speed and power, he did not respond to this invitation.

Much later, in 1935 Tesla made an agreement with Russian Amtorg Trading Corporation to supply plans "...for producing voltages up to fifty million volts, for producing very small particles in a tube ... and by increasing the charge of the particles ... projecting them to distances of a hundred miles or more". This invention "will bring down aeroplanes and stop tanks". For this he was paid \$25,000 in advance (\$500,000 in today's money).

On 28 August 1936, Tesla wrote to the Principal Secretary of State for the War Office in London with a similar proposal but for much more money: a £15,000 advance, £500,000 to produce the particle beam weapon and, if it worked, a final payment of £10 million. Tesla was obviously after one last big enterprise. Extensive discussions ensued involving the Canadian National Research Council as mediators. The stumbling block was that Tesla did not want to show anything until the advance was paid. Tesla at the age of 82 was still brilliant and of clear mind. "He had conceived a weapon that, similar to a laser, would direct a pencil-thin stream of charged microscopic particles travelling at terrific speed and being able to bring down zeppelins or aeroplanes and ultimately protect England from a possible invasion." However, with the Second World War on the horizon, together with the frailty of Tesla's health and general reluctance of the British War Office to truly commit resources, the project stalled.

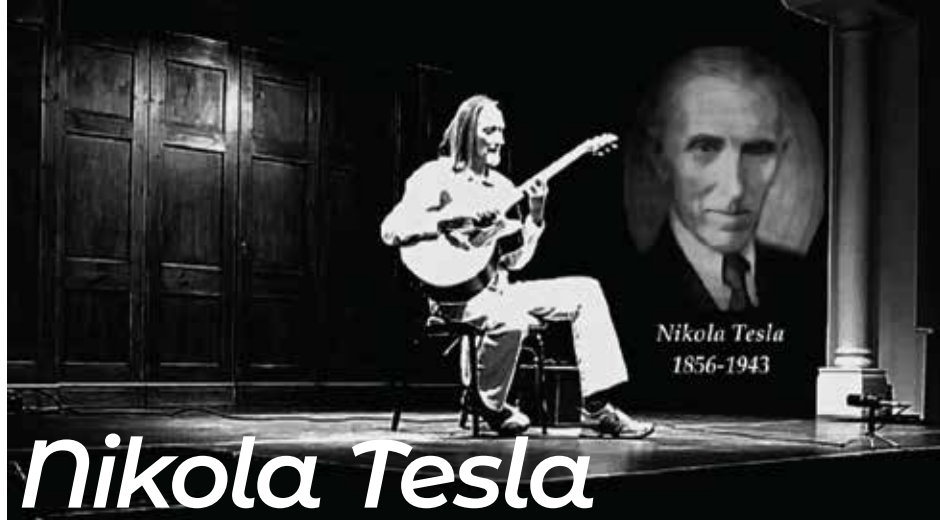
Tesla died alone from a coronary thrombosis on 7 January 1943 in the 86th year of his life in room 3327 of the New Yorker Hotel. On 10 January, a speech in honour of Tesla was broadcast live on Radio New York by the mayor of New York City. The funeral service was conducted on 12 January in the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in Manhattan. The introductory and concluding prayers were in English and the funeral service in Serbian in the name of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Some 2,000 people attended. Tesla's casket was draped with US and Yugoslav flags and the pallbearers were Nobel prize winners. Telegrams of condolence were received from many notables including the first lady, Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt and Vice-President Henry A. Wallace. Tesla's body was cremated and his ashes taken to Belgrade in 1957 and placed in the Nikola Tesla Museum in Belgrade.

At the General Conference on Weights and Measures in 1960, Tesla (T) was adopted as a unit of magnetic flux density, 1 T = Webber/sq.m.

Tesla's archive included in the UNESCO's Memory of the World Register comprises over 150 000 items of materials most of which remain unexplored to this day. A huge collection is also at the Nikola Tesla museum in Belgrade.

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And finally, thanks to Prof. Jovan Surutka who taught me the principles of Electromagnetism at my alma mater Belgrade University, Faculty for Electronic Engineering 1970



# Nikola Tesla

**Alone** adj. adv. **1. apart from another or others; solitary. 2. without anyone or anything else. 3. without equal; unique.**

There was a school excursion, a long time ago, when we were taken to Belgrade and the Nikola Tesla Museum. I was around 10 years old. Seeing Tesla's AC motor and the metal egg spinning in his Rotating Magnetic Field apparatus and the Tesla Coil Transformer with all the sparks, I was simply mesmerized. Since then, I've been a life-long Tesla aficionado.

In my early teens, I made my own Tesla Coil Transformer model and it worked! I saw the sparks and the lighting up of small neon lights wirelessly. Sadly, this model was lost in all my life's many moves.

Since I came to the UK in the early 90s, I have viewed Tesla, as a beautiful, solitary man. A man whose sheer endurance – despite everything and everyone who wanted to steal and thwart his work – has remained my inspirational and driving force. Several of my CD albums and compositions have been dedicated to Tesla – along with the tunes and short talks I give about him at my recitals. All the information is available from my website, which also has a special page dedicated to Tesla: <https://www.brancostoysin.co.uk/nikola-tesla-page>

In between my artistic endeavours here in the UK, I have carried out a one-man crusade against the media and other platforms for snubbing and excluding Tesla from their 'educational' TV programmes and other events. This has often led me to being denounced and rejected from venues.

I don't know how it is in other parts of the world, but here in the UK indifference and ignorance seem 'comical'. Tesla remains unknown and not taught in schools. One of my favourite lines for all those who don't know about Tesla, or rather don't want to know, is: "For you to comprehend what would your life be like without Tesla, I can think of only one place in which to plug in all your electrical stuff. Try and see if it works..."

Tesla's inspiration was also the Sun. Indeed, the Sun *whispered* to Tesla how to create his Rotating Magnetic Field and AC motor. It is also the Sun that inspires my music, hence the latest album release, titled *Whispers From The Sun*. That sums it all up. Thank you Sun! Thank you Tesla!

I still find it shocking that Tesla has never received the Nobel Prize.

Nothing is more taken for granted than the power of electricity: the sole force behind all the rolling world around us. And the beautiful genius who granted it to us.

As a finale, a line from the music book *Alone*:  
 "Every pylon, everywhere around the world, carries Tesla's blood, the electricity, to lighten your existence."

© B. Stoysin



Album "Alone" released 2012 marked 70 years of passing of Tesla, with two compositions on the album for him, "Alone" and "Aurora Tesla"  
 Video for the album: <https://youtu.be/6Bf5Zfz07iU>

The music notation book "Alone", published in 2016, marked 160 years since birth of Tesla, and 120 years since the birth of 20th century (Tesla's AC power system on Niagara Falls)  
 Video for the book: <https://youtu.be/pR3ewqz-8Pk>



Two Radio interviews for World In London programme feature talk about Tesla:

(<https://youtu.be/s0XmI9aTcHc>)



([https://youtu.be/GU4HOgYc\\_8E](https://youtu.be/GU4HOgYc_8E))

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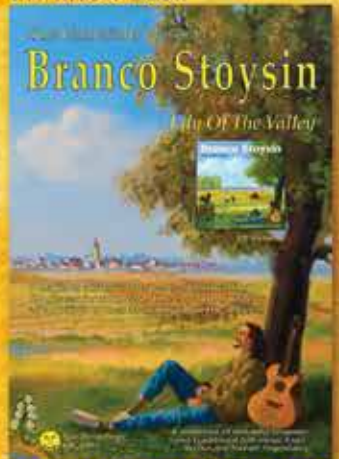
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Alone



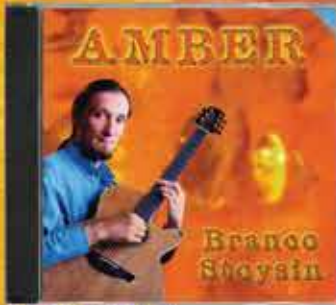
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# *Visit to Serbia to honour my great-grandfather Lance Corporal Thomas Bexton, Dr Elsie Inglis and the women who served in the Scottish Women's Hospitals*



When I was 12 years old my grandma showed me photographs of her father Lance Corporal Thomas Bexton M2/076388 – M.T.COY – Royal Army Service Corps. When WW1 ended, he volunteered to help Serbian refugees across a river, caught typhus fever and died on 24 February 1919. Two days after his wife's birthday and two days before he was due to come home. Tragically his nurse, Agnes Kerr Earl of the Scottish Women's Hospital, cut her finger, developed sepsis and died on 19 March 1919. She was buried in the grave next to my great-grandfather. My grandma had wanted to put flowers on his grave but never had the chance. I promised I would one day lay flowers for her. In June 2015, 40 years on, I honoured that promise when I visited Chela Kula Military Cemetery, Niš, Serbia. I realised great-grandfather had been moved as there was no longer a nurse buried next to him.

When I came back to the UK, I did some research and found great-grandfather had died in Vranje, Serbia. I wanted to go back and complete my journey to honour him and thank Agnes. Nottingham Women's History Group forwarded an email from Fiona in Edinburgh enquiring if anyone wanted to go to Serbia to honour Dr Elsie Inglis, suffragist and founder of the Scottish Women's Hospitals. I jumped at the chance. I completed my journey to honour Thomas and say thank you to his nurse Agnes on 13 September 2023, the fourth anniversary of my mother's death. It was already a very emotional day for me, but it felt right I could honour my mum, grandma and her father Thomas.

I discovered the hospital where my great-grandfather died was still there. In 1919 it was a deserted army barracks and I assumed, wrongly, it was wooden and had long since been pulled down. When Nick Ilić informed me it was still standing and was again an army barracks, I had goosebumps all down my arms and back! When we arrived in Vranje on 13 September and I saw the building where Thomas Bexton died, I became very emotional. He had given his life for strangers because he was a good, kind, honourable man. This had a devastating effect on his whole family. Afterwards Snežana, our guide, announced we had to go to the Dr Isabel Emslie Hutton Teaching Hospital in Vranje to plant a tree! I was thrilled as she was an amazing woman and doctor, in charge of the American Unit (USA funded) where Thomas died. For once in my life, I was almost speechless. We arrived to find reporters and cameras, though none of us knew this was happening! I was deeply honoured to lay a wreath with three of the medical students in front of Dr Isabel Emslie Hutton's memorial and bow my head as a mark of respect. I then spoke to the director of the hospital and much hugging and kissing ensued (the three-cheek Serbian kiss as I call it!). I cannot emphasise enough how important these brave women still are to the Serbian people. Afterwards we walked round a corner and I was stopped in my tracks. The entire medical school was outside, three or four deep, to welcome us. I chatted to the students with Nick interpreting. We then had speeches from students and the assistant mayor. A beautifully dressed choir sang WW1 songs followed by refreshments. Nick, Fiona, and I were interviewed by Serbian National TV and I was able to express the genuine love I had started to feel for the Serbian people. One of the doctors remembered we needed to plant the tree! Once this was completed, we said our goodbyes and thanked the staff. I felt like the whole day was for Thomas, Sister Agnes and Dr Isabel. We got back on the minibus and headed for Niš.

I had butterflies in my stomach when we crossed the railway line on the outskirts of Niš as I knew Čele Kula cemetery was just round the corner. The gate to the cemetery was already open which surprised me. I rushed up to great-granddad's grave, closely followed by Dr Iram. She slipped a microphone on and asked me how I felt. I told Thomas that his granddaughter had died four years earlier on that very day, and that his daughter had never got over his death and how proud I was of him and them (crying the majority of the time). I then moved to Agnes's grave and thanked her for looking after him. I know she would have given him the best care because of the way the Tommies and Serbs regarded her. Mary Green remarked, "She had done heroic work in the typhus ward, never sparing herself in any way, a handsome girl, tall and strong and with a splendid character." The Serbs were very sad at the news and rich and poor came bringing flowers. Vast crowds lined the streets for her funeral. British Tommies formed the firing party and sounded the last post. A monument was erected for her by the Serbs as she was a favourite with them all. Before Dr Isabel Emslie Hutton left Serbia, she marked all the graves of the nurses for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to find. She went to Agnes's grave last, but she was easy to find as the Serbs had been caring for the grave for the past ten years.

I then became aware of a man I did not know talking to Nick. I saw he had something in his hand and I rushed up to him as I recognised the laminated photograph and information about my previous trip that I had placed on great-grandfather's grave eight years earlier. He was the man who looked after the war graves and had kept the laminated photograph. He told me it was the first picture he had ever seen of anyone in the graveyard. His father had the job before him and told him, "You must protect the five nurses buried here." I thanked him for keeping the graves immaculate and asked if I could give him the three-cheek kiss. He agreed and I had a photograph with him. Nick laid a wreath of poppies on the monument, and I spontaneously sang Amazing Grace. Then our wonderful Serbian friends sang Tamo Daleko, a WW1 song. It was very haunting and will stay with me always.

I could go on and on, but the thing that struck me most was that I felt such an affinity with the Serbian people. After all they have endured, they are kind, friendly and emotional. I cannot thank them enough for giving me the best experience of my life. I would like to thank Zvezdana Popović, in particular, for leading the annual memorial service for Elsie Inglis and the SWH in London, which is where key members of our tour initially met.

*Carole Ann Powell*



## *‘The Serbian Mother from Scotland’*

In September 2023, a group of 13 women from Scotland and England, travelled to Serbia for a special tour. Their mission was to honour the memory of Dr Elsie Inglis, (The Serbian Mother from Scotland) and the pioneering women who served with her in the Scottish Women’s Hospitals for Foreign Service (SWH), which she founded in 1914.

The first Serbian Unit arrived in early 1915, in the midst of a very serious typhus epidemic, with Elsie Inglis herself following soon after to take charge of the unit in Kragujevac. While other SWH staff made the perilous retreat over the mountains to the coast in the winter of 1915, she remained in Serbia, working under the invading German occupation until her repatriation in 1916.

She led another SWH mission to Romania and Russia in 1917, to support Serbian troops there. Caught up in the 1917 Russian revolution, they all retreated to Archangel where she refused to leave until the British Government agreed safe passage for the Serbians. Fortunately, a British destroyer was able to leave Archangel before the port froze over and bring them all safely to Newcastle. After disembarking there she sadly died two days later. Her last report to the SWH London Committee implored them to take care of her “beloved Serbians”. This formidable, brave lady is still honoured in Serbia, but sadly much forgotten elsewhere.

This small group trip was devised by local guide, Snežana Marinković, Ivanka Tasić, Serbian travel company, Panacomp Wonderland Travel, Colonel Nick Ilić, former military attaché in Belgrade and Fiona Garwood from Elsie Inglis’ home city of Edinburgh. The aim was to visit the former WW1 hospital sites in Serbia and the memorials to these brave women, especially those who gave their lives in the ultimate sacrifice there.

The highlights were many. These include:

The warm welcome we received from everyone we met during our week in Serbia.

Experiencing firsthand how the memory of the contribution made by Dr Inglis and SWH is cherished and commemorated in Serbia and the press coverage it generates.

Learning of the extent of the support Britain gave to Serbia in WW1 and the role Dr Elsie Inglis played in this.

Being part of the annual commemoration and wreath laying at the Elsie Inglis Memorial Fountain in Mladenovac, built as a thanks to her by Serbian soldiers in 1915.

Visiting the Memorial Hospitals for Dr Elsie Inglis in Belgrade and for Dr Isobel Emslie Hutton, a fellow doctor from Edinburgh, in Vranje, where we met staff and students before planting a tree, to mark the visit.

Learning so much of the WW1 and SWH history from Nick Ilić as we approached each site and hearing extracts from Elsie Inglis’ letters, detailing her experiences in Serbia.

Being received by Dr Nevena Bogdanović, the Red Cross in Kragujevac to lay a wreath on the graves of Dr Elizabeth Ross, Mabel Dearmer and Lorna Ferris, and see their historic historical collection (not to mention the delicious lunch laid on for us).

Wreath laying at other significant sites: the Šumarice WW2 Memorial for the tragic shooting of students there, and at the Chela Kula military cemetery in Niš, where we laid flowers for the five SWH nurses who died of typhus. They are buried there alongside Lance Corporal Thomas Bexton, great-grandfather of one of the group, who also tragically succumbed to the disease.

Receiving a special portrait of Elsie Inglis from the Red Cross on behalf of the British Ambassador, as a gift for the Residence in Belgrade and presenting it to Their Excellencies at the Crkvenac Memorial Fountain, Mladenovac.

Being at the Valjevo Historical Archive and National Museum, to learn more about the SWH, both in documents and photographs.

Visiting the Tekeriš Monument commemorating the Cer Battle in 1914, and the guided tour by Ana Pavlović, followed by the St Demetrius Church memorial crypt.

We were most honoured to be invited for afternoon tea with Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Alexander and Crown Princess Katherine, before a private tour of the magnificent Royal Palace, followed by a reception for us and other invited guests, held by the British Ambassador, at his Residence The Elsie Inglis House.

Our farewell dinner at Mali Vrabac restaurant, Skadarlija.

Each day of the trip was packed full of memorable visits. We met so many fascinating people with such wonderful and varied information to share with us. Apart from the first two nights in Belgrade, we were on the move the other five days. Maybe it wasn't surprising that two of the group overslept on the last day and had to be wakened as the bus was about to leave the hotel. Tiring yes; but so well worth it, especially with comfortable travel in a luxury minibus, complete with USB points.

The group bonded very well, making lasting friendships. It was enhanced by having Snežana our local guide, Nick Ilić as our expert and excellent historical guide and our two British Serbian women, who helped us out in so many ways, especially with the language. It was a trip, which we all enjoyed so much and provided wonderful memories. Thanks to our youngest member, Hareem Quershi, we have a great photographic record and the promise of a documentary and a future film about Elsie Inglis with her award-winning film director mother, Iram Quershi.

**Fiona Garwood**  
October 2023



*Afternoon tea with Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Alexander and Crown Princess Katherine, Royal Palace in Belgrade*



*The British Ambassador, receiving a special portrait of Elsie Inglis from the Red Cross at the Crkvenac Memorial Fountain, Mladenovac*



# NATO's War in Yugoslavia

Misha Gavrilović

2024 marks the 25th Anniversary of NATO's war against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which was illegal since it was not authorised by the UN Security Council. For 78 days, from 24 March to 10 June 1999 NATO bombed Yugoslavia without interruption. This involved 38,400 sorties, 10,484 strike sorties and the use of 31,000 depleted uranium bombs. The bombing damaged or destroyed bridges, industrial plants, hospitals, schools, private businesses as well as military targets and barracks. It resulted in an immediate official death toll of 2,500 people including civilians and members of the Yugoslav security forces. However, the use of depleted uranium in these operations and the nature of many of the targets chosen meant that the death toll has continued to rise. As of May 2019, 366 Italian soldiers who participated in NATO's military operations had died of cancer, 7,500 were suffering from illness and over 1,000 cancer sufferers in Serbia had launched a lawsuit against NATO member states participating in the war. The final death toll will be hard to ascertain.

This was the most difficult time for the Serbian community in Britain which felt that Serbs, be they in the motherland or Britain, were being demonised by the British establishment and media. In response, organisations were formed to counteract this one-sided view of events and to put forward the Serbian position, supported by several UK organisations and high-profile individuals.

On this, the 25th Anniversary, we would like to remember those organisations and individuals and thank them for what they did.

## Serbian Information Centre, London:

The Serbian Information Centre (SIC) was formed in July 1991. At the time, Yugoslavia was going through major turmoil that subsequently resulted in secessions of four of its six republics. War interventions by NATO states were to take place in both Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in Serbia. The British and international media provided significant coverage of these events for most of the 1990s' decade. There was considerable one-sided media reporting resulting in unprecedented accusations and demonisation directed at the Serbian people generally. The SIC responded to these with balanced factual information that challenged the one-sided and biased reporting in the UK and other English-speaking countries.

The Centre was initially led by an Executive Committee consisting of Djordje Čekerevac as the first chairman with responsibility for relations within the Serbian Diaspora in the London Area, Rastko Marčetić who then took over as chairman for several years, Misha Simić responsible for relations in the rest of the UK, and Olga Desnica as editor of the SIC Bulletin. This was regularly published and distributed in the British Parliament to several hundred MPs and, Misha Gavrilović who later became media spokesman.

The principal objective of the SIC was to place itself and the Serbian community on the UK's media and information map and to question the official version of events. This was achieved via regular dinners at which MPs and journalists were speaking. In addition, lobbying events and presentations by SIC members took place at various institutions such as universities and at Westminster. Notable were the many TV and radio appearances by media spokesman Misha Gavrilović, who was later joined in this function by SIC member Marko Gašić. Marko's appearances were especially prominent in 1999 during the NATO bombing of Serbia. The SIC had a significant impact also in other western countries.

The Centre stopped its operations in 2001.



## British Serbian Alliance for Peace:

As the danger of a NATO war against Serbia grew imminent, Gavrilović and Gašić formed the British Serbian Alliance for Peace (BSA) as its co-chairmen in October 1998 following a briefing at the Embassy of FR Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) regarding the threats being made. The immediate task of the BSA was to organise a demonstration in Whitehall against the threatened war.

The organisers had sufficient time to discuss the general approach and the type of messages to be conveyed to the media and the general public. The first demonstration, held on 13 October 1998, lasted approximately five hours and was to prove a very good preparation for the much larger demonstration that followed five months later and took place within hours of NATO's bombing on 24 March 1999. The demonstration continued for the whole 78-day bombing period to 10 June. After the first two weeks, thanks to efforts by Stan Gasparovski, the demonstration was extended throughout the night. Hence there was a 24-hour Serbian presence in Whitehall opposite the Prime Minister's residence at No. 10 Downing Street. So great was the mobilisation of the Serbian community members that many wanted the demonstration to continue. As a result, it was extended to last another 11 days. Some people continued to meet regularly in Whitehall even six months later!

## Committee for Peace in the Balkans (CPB):

The CPB was a group of British MPs who opposed British military involvement in former Yugoslavia and did so clearly and openly, providing facts and arguments in the British Parliament. The group consisted of approximately ten Labour Party MPs. The most active of these were:

**Alice Mahon** the chairperson of the group and the first person from Western Europe to visit Yugoslavia during the NATO bombardment in 1999.

**Tony Benn** was the highest profile anti-war MP in the UK.

**Tam Dalyell** was best known in the anti-war movement since opposing the Falklands War.

**Bob Wareing** had been involved with Yugoslavia well before the 1990s.

**Mike Gapes** was not an anti-war MP but strongly opposed NATO's war against the Republika Srpska and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

**Bob Marshall-Andrews** took active part in many CPB-organised events.

Numerous other MPs such as **Alan Clark**, **John Randall**, **George Galloway** and **Jeremy Corbyn** supported the CPB and spoke at many of its events.

The CPB was strongly linked to anti-war movements in the UK. Following on from the BSA demonstration, it would include other members of UK's Serbian community. The CPB organised major demonstrations in Trafalgar Square, the Imperial War Museum area and Hyde Park. They also organised two major International Conferences in 1999 and 2000, dealing specifically with NATO's war against Yugoslavia.

Regular and well-attended meetings took place in the Westminster Parliament building with MPs, international observers, members of anti-war movements and Serbian community members. Of special note were the annual Remembrance events, devoted to NATO's war versus Serbia/FR Yugoslavia, held during the week incorporating 24 March, the date when the bombing started. All meetings began with a minute's silence for the victims; they took place every year during the 2000-2009 decade. Misha Gavrilović spoke at all of these and organised the last four of the commemorations.

## Campaign for Media Accuracy and Free Speech on War:

Organised a public rally in Westminster Central Hall by **John Foster General secretary, NUJ, John Pilger, Victoria Brittain, John Rees, Julian Petley and Andrew White General Secretary, International Federation of Journalists**.

### Individuals

Many individuals, both British and British Serbs, provided an alternative account of events in the former Yugoslavia in this period. They are too numerous to name but foremost amongst them were **Sir Alfred Sherman, Harold Pinter, Nora Beloff and Michael Lees**.

## Nedaist International Serbian Diaspora Group:

The Nedaist group was formed in 2003 following the first Serbian Diaspora demonstration in The Hague directed at the Tribunal and in support for the accused Serbs being tried there. Nedaist is an abbreviation of 'Nedamo Istoriju' which derived from the leading 'Nedovolimo Agresoru da nam piše Istoriju' slogan ('We must not allow the Aggressor to write our history for us'). It was then used at the subsequent three Hague demonstrations.

This slogan uniquely unified all demonstration participants. It was not only directed at the Tribunal but was also a message to Serbs to defend their own minds against the demonisation and stigmatisation directed against them as a nation. The group encouraged others to call themselves 'Nedaists'. The Nedaist group held several events in Germany and the Netherlands.

The most active group members were:

**Ljiljana Verner** (Germany)

**Misha Gavrilović** (UK)

**Ruža Despotović** (the Netherlands)

**Branka Obradović** (Austria)

**Sima Mraović** (France)

The Nedaist group will hold a Commemoration Event in Belgrade next March.



Tony Benn



Alice Mahon



Harold Pinter



# Great British Serbs

## Ognjen Bogdanović

Ognjen Bogdanović was born in 1965 in Belgrade, former Yugoslavia. His parents were acclaimed journalists but owing to their extensive record collection, which was a handpicked mix of classical, jazz, film soundtracks, rock and pop, he was surrounded by music from the earliest age and it soon became evident that music, above all, would be his vocation in life.

Sprinting through his music education at the "Mokranjac" Music High School, he went on to graduate with the highest marks in composition and orchestration under Vlastimir Trajković at the University of Arts, Faculty of Music in Belgrade. Most of his small but well known (and ever since regularly performed) oeuvre originated in this period, which also saw Bogdanović receive wide media exposure both on his own and through his participation in the "Magnificent Seven" circle of young composers made up of his student colleagues (the great late Isidora Žebeljan being a fellow member). All set up and already with a degree of acclaim in the country, he was to embark on what probably would have become a prolific, if perhaps slightly routine academic career were it not for the events of the early 1990s and the disintegration of Yugoslavia. In 1991, as the war raged on and the cultural and social climate deteriorated, Bogdanović decided to abandon his position as a junior lecturer at the Faculty, and settle abroad in a quieter environment that would also be more receptive to a broader range of artistic expressions. He chose London, where he moved in October of that year, and instantly became immersed in what was one of the best nightclub scenes in the world at the time. That twist in events was not perhaps completely unexpected given that during his final years in Belgrade, he had already begun pursuing a parallel career as an electronic dance music producer, more specifically underground house music (which he has always considered another, if slightly peculiar form of repetitive minimalism, thus essentially not that far from the likes of Philip Glass, for instance). A key component of house music is beatmixing house vinyl records (later on, digital tracks) into a seamless, musically logical, personally meaningful, potentially endless mix, creating an improvisational "performance" in the process (not that different from a regular concert performance) so Bogdanović taught himself the craft of club DJing and in 1996 he started actively working as a DJ in the London club scene, eventually gaining his beloved residence at Substation South in Brixton, where he remained for nearly a decade. Never satisfied by just playing other people's music, he sought to perfect his own producing craft in the following period and gradually focused on just making the music in his small home studio in South London, eventually reducing DJ appearances to a one-off here and there.

30 years later, Bogdanović still finds himself doing his thing, so to speak. Often on the move between London and Belgrade, he has a proven track record as a house music producer and is well-regarded and loved among his peers. He would return to his classical roots only twice in this century, having had his work commissioned by acclaimed Serbian musicians such as the violoncellist Nemanja Stanković, for instance. Currently, Bogdanović is toying with the idea of releasing a synth-pop album in Serbian—which would funnily be his debut in that field—and remains responsive to his own urges and impulses to express himself creatively in whatever genre takes his fancy.

Main works:

RUN, music for 12 strings (1985)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sceasazTv4U>

MEMORABILIA for piano solo (1985)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtFABSSf1ZA>

FADE for an electro-acousting ensemble (1985)

STIGMATA for clarinet, string quintet, piano and percussion (1986)

LA LUNA for symphony orchestra and mixed choir (1987)

PARAMOUR, music for harp and strings (2012)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kKB4j67g0EE>

BALADA (ZA VLASTU) for violoncello and piano (2017)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVi\\_glyfCSQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVi_glyfCSQ)



## OGGIE B

[https://www.traxsource.com/artist/156204/oggie-b?cn=tracks&ipp=100&ob=r\\_date&so=desc](https://www.traxsource.com/artist/156204/oggie-b?cn=tracks&ipp=100&ob=r_date&so=desc)





*Nada Grkinić*  
*Teacher and choreographer of Serbian national dances – folklore*

Nada was born in Republika Srpska near the town of Banja Luka and from a very early age learnt the steps of Serbian folk dances. Her interest in national dance – folklore and choreography - led her to study the subject by attending seminars in Serbia.

When she came to Britain, she met Rajko Grkinić, they fell in love, married and had two lovely children Ljiljana and Filip who became the regular members of the ensemble Rastko. Family life did not diminish her interest in Serbian folklore and in 1983 she suggested to the Reverend Milun Kostić that she was willing to form a Serbian dance – folklore group within the Sveti Sava church in London. This was warmly welcomed and given blessings by the church management. She took her responsibility seriously and for forty years has tirelessly led the folklore ensemble Rastko, with great success.

The children of Serbs in London were happy to be taught by her and to attend rehearsals on a regular basis. They were later followed by young men and women who were eager to learn the dances and songs that connected them to the fatherland of their parents and grandparents. The church was keen to encourage this and the large church hall was always available to Nada to use for rehearsals without charge.

Over time the children improved their dancing skills and the children started to perform in public, first in London as part of church and national celebrations and then in celebrations throughout Great Britain.

Following the success of the ensemble Rastko a number of parents also wanted to learn to dance and asked Nada to form a folklore group for parents and other adults which Nada was very glad to do and she formed a group for adults called Nemanja. The membership of these folklore ensembles grew rapidly requiring more groups to be formed, organised by ability and age. Rehearsals were more frequent and regular for younger groups. Nada's dedication to the development of folklore ensembles was a real labour of love.

Thanks to Nada and Miloš Vranić and Ljubisa Denić, the musicians who provided musical accompaniment for the ensemble, Rastko became very popular and their performances enriched church and national celebrations. The warm and enthusiastic applause which accompanied every appearance was proof of how much their performance was appreciated.

Donations made by the church, parents, the Circle of Serbian Sisters 'Kosovka Devojka' and many others helped with the purchase of national costumes from Serbia needed for performing dances from all parts of former Yugoslavia.

Thanks to Nada's dedication and skills as a teacher and choreographer, the ensemble Rastko became famous not only in London and Great Britain but also worldwide. As a result, Rastko received invitations from America and Australia to participate in their different celebrations. Thanks to these gatherings, the young people got to know each other and made lasting friendships which sometimes resulted in marriages both within the group Rastko itself and with members of folklore groups from other countries.

The best proof of the popularity of Rastko, and Nada's success, can be seen in the number of visits they have made to other countries and the number of groups they themselves have hosted. Rastko has performed twice in Switzerland, three times in Sweden, four times in the USA and Germany, twice in Canada and Australia, four times in Serbia and three times in Republika Srpska.

Parents of the members of Rastko and other parishioners welcomed and hosted folklore groups from different towns and countries who performed together with Rastko at many celebrations. They were hosts to Srbija from Hanover, Abrašević from Vrnjačka Banja, Morava from San Diego, Veselin Masleša from Banja Luka, Abrašević from Kraljevo, Gradac from Šabac, Rastko from Stockholm, Smilje from Kragujevac, 14 Oktobar from Kruševac, Sindjelić from Gothenburg, Semberija from Bjelina, Kraljevska Riznica from Kraljevo, Mladost from Paris, Vuk Karadžić from Switzerland, Šarana from Stockholm, Karanovac from Kraljevo, Sitan Vez from Malmo, Alat from Trebinje, Jugoš from Munich, Gračanica from Boston, some of which visited several times.

Nada's husband Rajko Grkinić and Neven Ležajić took the lead in organising and supporting the visiting folklore groups, which included meeting them at the airport, arranging their accommodation and seeing them off. They were supported in this by parishioners and the mothers of group members: Anica Vranić, Renata Stojanović, Ljiljana Ivanović and other women.

The fortieth anniversary of the ensemble Rastko provided an opportunity to celebrate their success and acknowledge the immense contribution made to folklore in Britain by their teacher and choreographer Nada. The celebrations were held on 11 November in a packed Bishop Nikolaj Hall where the Rastko and Nemanja ensembles were joined by Sindjelić from Gothenburg with their choreographer Aleksandar Jelačić, and Avala from Corby with choreographer Aleksandar Radjenović, the groups Rastko and Nemanja together with the ensemble Paprika.

At the end of the programme Nada was showered with well-deserved praise, thanks, flowers and gifts. All present wished Nada and the group Rastko further success for a long time to come and to keep the unbreakable bond with the Fatherland whose dances and songs they promote through the whole world.



**Dušan Puvačić**  
(1936–2017)

*No one is finally dead until the ripples they cause in the world die away*, wrote Sir Terry Pratchett. The ripples Puvačić created during his 'life well-spent' are still strong, expressed in his many published books and translations as well as in his ability to create long-lasting friendships. Puvačić was a natural educator, natural writer, natural translator, natural friend.

In my Britic Obituary I wrote:

*Dušan was an idealist as well as a realist. He viewed idleness of the mind with passionate dislike. He presented his arguments with clarity and veracity. He read the work of many young writers, including my own, offering sharp and constructive criticism. He was not easily pleased, high praise was not often given. However, even the harshest observations were delivered with grace and respect for the process of writing, and for us as writers, that we all listened and mostly took his advice. One didn't give one's texts to Puvačić, of all people, to be patted on the head, ego-stroked and lied to. For that one went elsewhere.*

Puvačić was born in Banja Luka where he attended primary and grammar school. At school he met Nikola Koljević who became a lifelong friend and literary collaborator. Dušan moved to Belgrade to study World Literature, meeting again Koljević and making new friends in Bogdan A Popović and Predrag Protić. Upon finishing his studies he worked as a sub-editor for *Književne Novine*, whose editor in chief was Predrag Palavestra. Predrag also became a life-long friend. During his time at *Književne Novine*, Dušan translated many texts from English into Serbian, which appeared in various magazines. His first translated book, *The Wind Cannot Read* by Richard Mason, was published by *Svetlost* in 1962. That same year Dušan married Mazalta (Tilda) Finci.

Having translated, written and published several books, he became the editor of *Savremenik* from 1970 to 1973 and Secretary of the Serbian PEN Centre from 1967 to 1973. During the same period, he was a literary critic for *NIN*.

In 1973 Puvačić and his family moved to the UK. First, to teach at the University of Lancaster and then to the School of Slavonic and East European Studies (SSEES), University of London from 1984 to 1989. During his long academic career, Puvačić wrote, translated and published several books and travelled extensively, lecturing on our literature and our language. By his translations he was responsible for introducing Serbian readers to many authors unknown to them, most notably Norman MacCaig, a Scottish poet for whom he had the greatest respect. For many years Dušan was President of The Association of Serbian Writers and Artists (ASWA) where he edited five books in translation from Serbian into English.

Puvačić published some dozen books and numerous articles and criticisms. That remains in the ripples which have, I believe, secured his immortality. However, in my opinion the most valuable of Puvačić's achievements were his educational skills, followed closely by his generosity and his ability to create many lasting friendships.

Because of his diverse interests and the variety of themes in his books and lectures, Dušan's educational skills always promised discussions resembling a flight on a magical carpet. I, and many of his students and colleagues, left Puvačić's company enriched, inspired to learn and inspired to write.

Puvačić's generosity was expressed by helping (financially and in other ways) members of his family and his many friends; by being one of the main financial supporters of ASWA; by being always willing to read and edit our sometimes mediocre writing; best of all, by being a good listener and a wise counsel.

Puvačić had a striking social warmth. This was evident in his and Tilda's house parties, full of buzzing conversations, music (he was an excellent musician) and great food. These gatherings were for many years instrumental in confirming that diverse ex-Yugoslavs can indeed enjoy each other's company: Serbs, Jews, Muslims, Croats and Brits were delighted to celebrate their inclusion, to sing and affirm Puvačić's inspired humanity.

Puvačić was a remarkable man of vision and goodness. I, and many, many others are proud to have been his friends.

*Sonja Besford*

Visit the website dedicated to Dušan Puvačić: <https://www.dusanpuvacic.com/>



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**Professor Srboľjub Źivanović**  
1933-2024



Srboľjub Źivanović, the eminent Serbian professor of anatomy was born in 1933 in Sarajevo to the family of a railway official. The Źivanović family were made refugees in WW2 and moved to as many as eight cities of the former Yugoslavia, before finally settling in Belgrade. In 1948, he passed the lower grades of high school and the Junior High School in the First Boys' Gimnazija in Belgrade, and the higher grades of high school in the First Mixed Gimnazija in Zemun. He graduated from the Medical Faculty of the University of Belgrade in 1959 as one of the best students. In 1964, he became one of the youngest doctors of science in the former Yugoslavia. He devoted his professional career to anatomy, paleo-pathology and bio-anthropology.

His discoveries in the field of anatomy were included in the famous medical textbook Grey's Anatomy in 1972. He was elected a full member of the Royal Anthropological Society of Great Britain, as well as a member of the Royal Society of Medicine. He was a member of numerous international professional associations, as well as a member of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Serbia.

Professor Źivanović spent most of his working life as a full professor at one of the oldest medical schools in the world, Saint Bartholomew Hospital, University of London (Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry, University of London), where he was also on the Board of Trustees of the hospital. He was a visiting professor at several universities around the world, including the University of Oxford and universities in Uganda, Zimbabwe and Papua New Guinea.

He was the author of over thirty books, of which his seminal book Ancient Diseases has become a manual in the field of bio-anthropology around the world. He published over one hundred and fifty scientific papers in professional and academic journals, including the renowned journal Nature with a paper on the Djerdap skeletal series.

Professor Źivanović received many national and international awards for his work. Patriarch German, of the Serbian Orthodox Church honoured him with the Order of St. Sava for anthropological research in the Koporin Monastery. In 1995 he was elected as a full member of the International Slavonic Academy of Science, Culture, Education and the Arts. For his life's work in the advancement of science in the field of medicine, he was awarded the prestigious Marquis Award of **Who's Who in the World** in 2020.

Whilst it is simply impossible to list all his charitable work, the Serbian Diaspora will remember him as being a President of Yugoslavian Club, Trustee of the Serbian Weekend School, Trustee of the International East European Studies charity, Honourable President of the International Slavonic Academy of Science, Culture, Education and the Arts for Great Britain and Northern Ireland as well as the Trustee of the European Institute for Early Slavonic Studies.

Professor Źivanović will be remembered by the Serbian people as a member of the forensic team that excavated mass graves in the Jasenovac system of Croatian concentration camps for the extermination of Serbs, Jews and Roma people in 1964 together with his tireless efforts to establish the facts related to the genocide committed against the Serbs during the Second World War on the territory of the Independent State of Croatia. Amongst the honours he received for his efforts was the **Rastko Petrović Award** for the book Jasenovac. He also held several memorial plaques and awards from the Association of Child Inmates of Jasenovac from Serbia and Republika Srpska. The most notable role he held was the President of the International Commission for the truth on Jasenovac, whose Declaration on the genocide of Serbs, Jews and Roma in Independent state of Croatia was adopted by the National Assembly of Republika Srpska in 2015.

Something less well known about Professor Źivanović is that he helped many Serbian students finish their studies in the UK and numerous people who came from Serbia and Republika Srpska to the UK to access life-saving medical treatments. He was an active member of the Serbian community and the Serbian Orthodox Church in London both as an individual and as part of community organizations. He was also the Chair of the Jasenovac and Holocaust Memorial Foundation, the only UK registered charity raising awareness about the genocide committed in the Independent State of Croatia during WW2.

Despite all these numerous achievements, his humility was legendary, and will be remembered as the kindest of gentlemen by all those who had the privilege of knowing and meeting him.

He died after a short illness on 1 January 2024 and his funeral took place in Serbian Orthodox Church of St. Sava and he is buried in the Serbian Orthodox cemetery in Brookwood.

*Dragana Tomašević*



Misha Gavrilović



Mihailo (Misha) Gavrilovic was born in Belgrade in August 1941, some four months after the bombing of the capital of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia by Adolf Hitler's Luftwaffe starting on 6th April 1941. Belgrade had become a ruined capital under direct German military occupation. Misha was not to see his father, Dimitrije, for the next eleven years. Dimitrije Gavrilovic worked in the diplomatic services of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. He answered the Kingdom's army mobilisation call at the end of March 1941 and fought against the German Wehrmacht in Bosnia. When Yugoslavia was forced to capitulate, he became a prisoner of war and was to spend the next four years in captivity at Osnabrueck Germany. He, together with some 6,000 Serbian officers, was liberated by the British Army of the Rhine in early 1945.

Misha's grandfather Mihailo was a historian and diplomat and is still today regarded as Serbia's First historian due to his extensive research of Serbian nineteenth-century history. He was appointed Director of the Serbian State Archives in Belgrade and greatly contributed to its organisation as a modern archival institution. After the Yugoslav unification, following the end of World War One, Dr Gavrilovic was appointed as Envoy of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes to London. He died there in 1924. A street in Belgrade's Vračar area today bears his name.

Misha's father Dimitrije studied at Oxford University's Balliol College at the time of his father's death. He was a good athlete and in 1927 became a record holder of the 110 metres hurdles discipline in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. He was later to serve as a diplomat and aide to Prince Paul of Yugoslavia.

Dimitrije could not return back to Yugoslavia after the war as Marshall Tito and his communists had come to power there. He was now on the wrong side of the new masters in Belgrade. As a result, he with approximately half the Serbian officer POWs, decided to stay in Germany. Misha's mother Varvara left Yugoslavia in 1948 to join her husband. The authorities in Belgrade would not allow her to leave with her son. It took 5 more years before Misha was able to join his parents in Braunschweig in 1953.

The family of three lived in Germany for the next six years before they got an opportunity to emigrate to the United Kingdom. Misha who had attended school in Germany was to go to the University of Glasgow where he obtained a degree in Electrical Engineering. He would probably have chosen history as a study area, but having seen how his father was not able to follow his diplomatic profession outside his country, he decided to take a more practical subject which could be practised anywhere in the world.

Following the University period he joined IBM, the International Business Machines world company, where he worked for the next 26 years in Cardiff, Birmingham, Paris, Duesseldorf and London. He retired from the company in 1990 under favourable conditions just as the situation in Yugoslavia was heating up and led to civil wars, with Western countries involvements, including military interventions.

Misha was a keen chess player and during his period in Cardiff became Welsh Chess champion. In 1972 he represented Wales at the Chess Olympics in Skopje. In his private time, Misha a WW2 child, took a strong interest in WW2 history. This involved, apart from events dealing with former Yugoslavia, also the roles of Germany and Britain. Being a fluent speaker in Serbian, German and English this enabled him to place himself in the roles and positions experienced by Serbs and Yugoslavs, Germans and the British. Of particular interest was the different collective memories that the different nations had of the world conflict. He regarded himself as generally better informed due to having lived in different countries and amongst the people whose languages he understood and practised. He also followed events in other conflict areas like Vietnam, Middle East, Northern Ireland but did so passively. All this was to change in 1991 when conflicts in Yugoslavia began.

What made him become more active in the Yugoslav Wars of Secession was the unprecedented level of disinformation and defamation of Serbs as a nation, produced by the Western media and Academia.

In mid-1991 he joined the Serbian Information Centre in London and became their media spokesman. He was soon to achieve a major breakthrough on the British and International Radio and TV programs with the primary purpose of fighting against the one-sided media presentations. In the decade 1991-2000 he was to appear over 800 times on the British and International media. In addition to this he gave numerous presentations at academic institutions such Oxford and Cambridge, Birmingham, Bristol and Warwick universities.

During the NATO bombing of Serbia in 1999, Misha Gavrilović and colleague Marko Gašić were co-chairmen of a group who staged the 78-day and night demonstrations in Whitehall directed against the bombing. Misha subsequently became very active with the Committee for Peace in Balkans, a parliamentary group with MPs Alice Mahon, Tony Benn, Tam Dalyell, Bob Wareing, Bob Marshall-Andrews and others. The Committee was closely linked with the anti-war movement in the UK and there were several major demonstrations and events organised by the Committee in which he took part and spoke.

In addition to this Misha took a special interest in the trials carried out by The Hague Tribunal, also known as the ICTY. With Alice Mahon, MP, he visited the Tribunal's Chief Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte and her team. Later, he also led four demonstrations by the European wide Serbian Diaspora in The Hague. The key slogan of the demonstrations was "Ne dozvolimo Agresoru da nam piše Istoriju!" ("We must not allow Aggressors to write our history for us"). At the 20th Anniversary Event, commemorating the NATO bombing of Serbia and organised by the Belgrade Forum in March 2019, students at a well-attended meeting at the Belgrade Law Faculty (Pravni Fakultet), greeted the slogan with a standing ovation.



*Dobrila Kostić*  
*Serbian language teacher*

Dobrila Kostić, née Simić, was born in Zaglavak near Užice, where she attended elementary school. She completed her teacher training in Užice in 1970. In the same year, she married theologian Milun Kostić, and they started their life together after five years of courtship.

In January 1971, Father Milun and Dobrila were sent to Australia by the Serbian Orthodox Church to serve the large number of Serbs who had gone to Australia as economic workers. When her husband Milun began his priestly duties in Melbourne, Dobrila was always by his side, eager to help him. Both young and full of energy, they dedicated themselves to the church, the Serbian community, and especially the education of young people, whose parents had arrived in the country with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Preserving one's language and religion in a far-off land and unfamiliar surroundings posed a challenge. Dobrila made every effort to speak and teach Serbian, even in difficult circumstances. The enthusiasm of the couple brought success and endeared them to all generations of immigrants.

During her stay in Melbourne and later in London, her success in teaching the Serbian language was evident. In Melbourne she worked as a teacher at the School of Modern Languages, part of the University of Melbourne. Her students came from all over the world, including a Serbian student born in Chile who eventually mastered the Serbian language. She also taught diplomats at Monash University.

At that time, there was no Serbian Church in Melbourne, except for a small church held by a group of schismatics. Therefore, they conducted services in the spacious Saint Mark's Anglican Church, where Dobrila also held Serbian language classes. At one point there were 183 students enrolled. It was much easier for both the Church and the Serbian language school to carry out their work after the purchase of a former Anglican monastery, dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Satisfied with their success, they organised various church, school, and national celebrations with fantastic programmes in Serbian. Parents, students, the community and teachers were all delighted with the results.

In May 1977, Dobrila and her husband moved to London with their two children and settled in the parish of the Church of St Sava, where later they had their third child. There was already a Sunday school established there, and Dobrila continued to teach the Serbian language at the school. The school experienced an increase in the number of students and teachers.

At that time, it was possible to take Serbian as a foreign language in British schools. For many years, Dobrila prepared Serbian children for O and A levels. This enabled several generations of students to take the exams and the qualification they received increased the number of points for admission to university.

Today, former students bring their children to the church school to learn Serbian, which is heartwarming. In addition to teaching Serbian in the church school, Dobrila also taught Serbian to British diplomats preparing to go to Yugoslavia, and actively participated in church life by singing in the choir, helping the Circle of Serbian Sisters, and performing in folklore dances.

In the early 1990s the Serbian O and A level qualifications were abolished, along with many other minority languages. This continues to be the case today. Dobrila played a key role in addressing this by becoming an active member of the Round Table Working Group on the Serbian Language, which was established in 2011 to promote the teaching of the Serbian Language in Britain, standardise the way it is taught and provide courses for the 12 to 17-year age group for which there was no provision. She helped design and teach the Round Table's model GCSE course which was delivered from 2012 to 2019. Although not a recognised qualification, it provided a certificate which students could include in their portfolios when applying for university or employment. Since 2019 she has taught on the courses at beginner GCSE and A Level, that the Round Table deliver in partnership with the Azbukum Centre. These qualifications are accredited by the Serbian Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development and are recognised across Europe and beyond.

Dobrila's commitment to teaching the Serbian language in the Diaspora is unparalleled and has ensured that over the years young British Serbs have learnt Serbian. This has helped them retain their links with Serbia and their relatives in Serbia and ensure that they have not lost their Serbian heritage but are proud to celebrate it. As Dobrila has said, "Believing that I was constantly guided by God's providence, nothing was ever difficult for me. The love for the Serbian language and our people in the Diaspora was the strongest driving force."

*Jelena Stanojlović*

# Serbian Month

in Great Britain



**Boško Stanojlović Wing Commander**  
(1907-1985)

When my family and I arrived from Australia at London's Heathrow airport back in 1977, we were greeted by His Eminence Bishop Lavrentije, Priest Miloje Nikolić, and Mr Boško Stanojlović, who was then serving as vice-president of the Serbian Orthodox Church parish of London.

He was born in Belgrade in 1907, the son of General Radisav Stanojlović, founder of the Yugoslav Airforce and Danica Stanojlović. Having completed his elementary education, he enrolled in a military school and studied in Belgrade and the Ecole Militaire in Paris. At both Academies he excelled at his studies and graduated as the top student in his year. He then became an active officer in the Yugoslav Army, a position he held from 1927 to 1942. He became General Staff Major - Pilot. He wrote several important articles about aviation before the beginning of WWII in Yugoslavia: *Guynemer*, 1933; *Fonck*, 1933; *Boelcke*, 1933; *Richthofen*, 1934; *Of French Aviation and Of English Aviation*, 1937; *History of Yugoslav Wings*, 1938; *War in the Air*, 1939; *Three Decades Ago*, 1940.

At the start of WWII, Bosko worked as a deputy to the military attaché of the Yugoslav Embassy in Moscow, Colonel Popović. After Germany declared war on Yugoslavia in April 1941, the embassy was forced to relocate from Moscow to Cairo, Egypt where he subsequently rose through the ranks to become the Chief of Staff of the Aviation Command in the Middle East. In 1943, he joined the British Royal Air Force and became a Wing Commander. His work there resulted in protocols that significantly reduced the number of aircraft accidents caused by human error, in recognition of which he was awarded an OBE (the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire). Eventually, he became a division chief within the Air Ministry in London.

In 1950, he married Vera Popović, daughter of priest Čedomir and teacher Darinka from Lazarevac. Vera moved to England as a displaced person from Italy in 1948, along with her sister Danka and brother-in-law, and worked as a nurse at a hospital in East London. After a brief courtship, Bosko and Vera were married by Bishop Dr Irinej Djordjević on 11 June 1950.

Soon afterwards, Boško was assigned to work on aviation accidents in Singapore. He and Vera spent two and a half years there, during which time their first daughter Jelena was born. In 1954, they welcomed their second daughter Olga, who was born in a military hospital in Tidworth, Wiltshire. After their time in Wiltshire, the family returned to London in 1955, where Boško continued working at the War Office until his retirement in 1958. However, from 1959 to 1971, he served as the representative for Europe, Asia and Africa for the Guggenheim Aviation Center, based at Cornell University.

Boško and Vera were prominent members of the Serbian community in London, especially during the 1960s and 1970s, when it became larger and more established. The Anglican Church of St Columba was given to the Serbian Church, which the Serbs magnificently renovated and adorned with frescoes and an iconostasis, dedicating it to St Sava, the first Serbian Archbishop. The church was later consecrated by Bishop Nikolai Velimirović. Subsequently the Bishop Nikolai House was built next to the Church on Lancaster Road.

Boško and Vera were both actively involved in the work related to the Church and the Serbian community, not only in London but throughout Britain. Boško served as the vice-president of the St Sava Church Administration and provided assistance not only to the priest Miloje Nikolić, but also to others involved in the Church activities. Vera, on the other hand, was the secretary of the Circle of Serbian Sisters for many years. During the Church rift that started in America in 1963, Bosko began writing, editing and publishing the journal called *Indivisible Church*. He disagreed with the rift and it caused him a lot of grief.

Boško was an honorary president of the Serbian Chetniks of Ravna Gora in Great Britain. He also served as the secretary of King Peter the Second, albeit for a short period. Over a span of 30 years, Boško wrote for, edited and printed a highly influential journal, *Aviation Gazette*. He regularly sent the journal to aviators and other interested parties and it was well received. After Boško's death on January 12, 1985, his wife Vera continued to publish the *Aviation Gazette* for many years. He regularly edited the 52 Class letter of the Lower School of the Military Academy. He was a full member of the *Serbian Writers and Artists Abroad* and organised numerous outstanding lectures from various fields.

When the Church in London bought the land for the Serbian cemetery at Brookwood, Boško took on the responsibility of maintaining it with great enthusiasm. It's worth noting that he was also the first to be buried there in January 1985. It was very evident at his funeral how highly esteemed he was in the Serbian community, as well as among his numerous aviation colleagues in Britain and beyond.

Boško was an exceptional man – an expert in his field and a true gentleman. There are many more commendable things that could be said about him. Let us hold this memory of him as a reminder of his goodness, honesty and hard work. Boško made tremendous contributions to the Serbian Church and the Serbian community in Great Britain. He will always live on in our hearts and minds, serving as an example of a good man and a role model for the younger generations.

*Fr Milun S. Kostić*

# British Friends of Serbia

## Earl Of Lauderdale, Friend Of Serbs

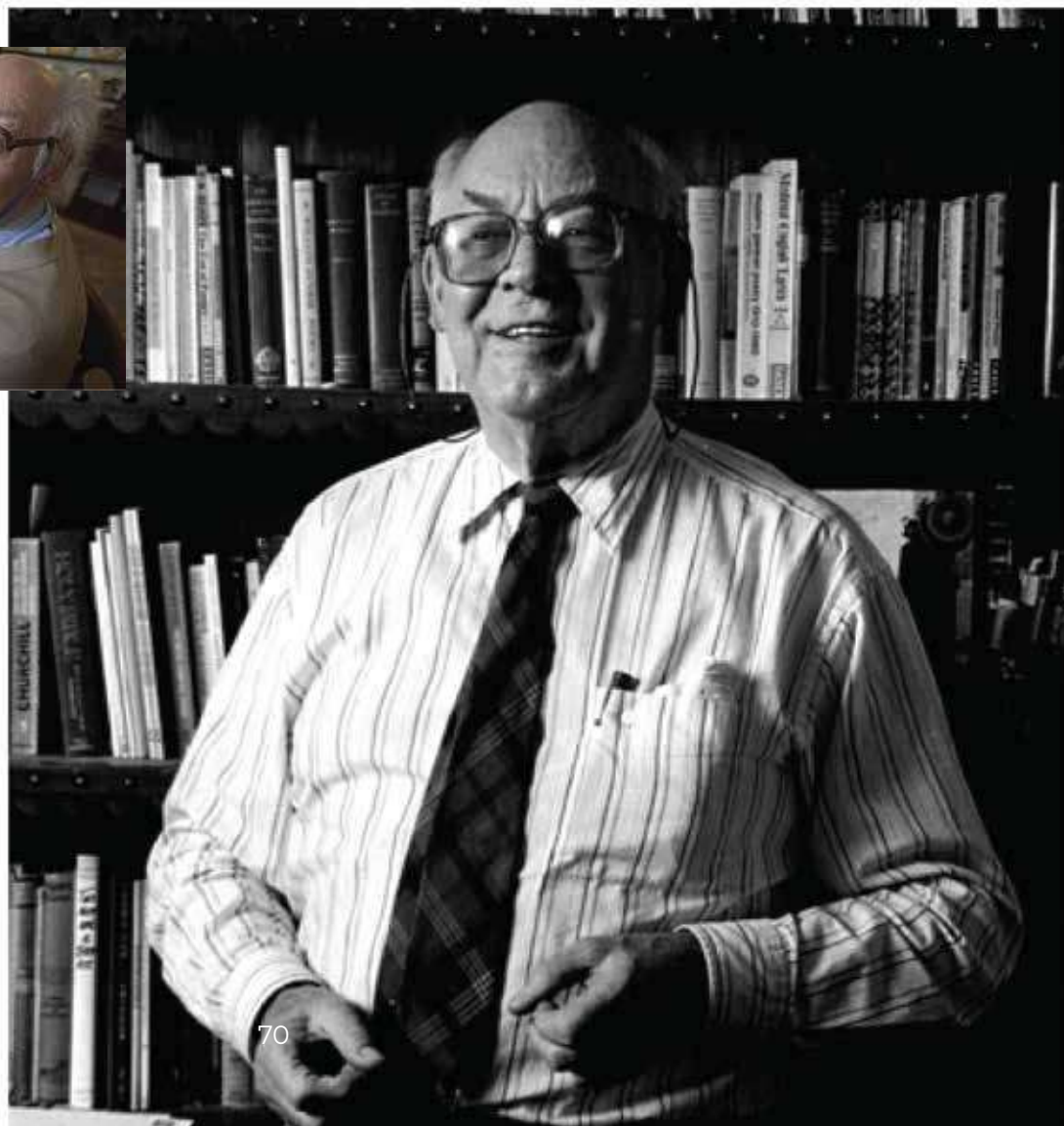
Patrick Maitland, who died on 2 December 2008 aged 97, led a distinguished career as a Balkan journalist, former Conservative MP, clan chief and the 17th Earl of Lauderdale. The youngest son of an Anglican minister (himself the youngest son), his accession to the earldom was quite unanticipated, and happened in later life at the age of 57. He had no great fortune when he attended Brasenose College, Oxford, where he met and fell in love with Stanka Lozanitch, whose father was a Belgrade professor and mother a lady-in-waiting to Princess Olga of Yugoslavia. Stanka's father forbade the match on the grounds of his heterodoxy. Maitland started his lifelong study and love of the Orthodox Church under the instruction of Patrijarh srpski Varnava. (Maitland also embraced traditional Anglicanism and Anglo-Catholicism throughout his life.) At a chance meeting, the Patrijarh prevailed upon the professor who finally gave his consent, and the couple were married in 1936 in a Serbian Orthodox temple. Whilst in Oxford he also started a lifelong friendship with Knez Pavle of Yugoslavia. He always contended countries loyal to the Orthodox Church formed an integral part of Europe.

He started a career as a foreign correspondent for Fleet Street, which included his capture in WWII Belgrade. He determined never to speak of politics until he had become expert – "Indeed he became fluent in six languages. Thus at 40 he stood and won as Conservative MP in Lanark. His anti-American imperialist views were hardly socialist but traditionalist" – lamenting the waning influence of the British Empire. He proposed, for example, that Greece should join the Commonwealth as a means to solving the Cyprus problem. He famously supported the Suez rebels in the 1950s. In the House of Lords he teamed up with his daughter, Conservative MP Lady Olga Maitland, to lead the campaign "Let's not be too beastly to the Serbs". Indeed, he was an active supporter of the Serb cause in the 1990s, both politically and boosting the morale of pro-Serb activists in this country. He attended the Saint Sava Church in London regularly. Indeed, his excellent links within the Church of England were instrumental in securing the site of Saint Sava in London.

Stanka died in 2003. He is survived by their two daughters and two sons.

By marrying Stanka he embraced Yugoslav and Serbian culture and was able to lend his support to the Serbian cause. As he had many contacts within the political and religious (Church of England) establishments, he was able to exert some influence – for example, the purchase of Sveti Sava Church and later helping to tone down some of the anti-Serb rhetoric in the UK.

<http://www.britic.co.uk/2008/12/02/earl-of-lauderdale-friend-of-serbs/>





# The Round Table

The Round Table network was established some years ago to encourage cooperation and collaboration between Serbian community groups and organisations across the UK and Ireland (UK&I) and to provide a forum to discuss issues of interests and importance to the Serbian community in UK&I. Over the years the main priorities of the Round Table have been the promotion of the teaching and learning of the Serbian language and Serbian Month, which is now in its sixteenth year and is recognised as being one of the most significant festivals of Serbian arts and culture in the Serbian Diaspora. Other issues the Round Table has addressed include commemoration the 20th Anniversary of NATO's war on Yugoslavia, using the census to help identify the number of Serbs living in the UK, submitting proposals to the Serbian Government for the use of the proposed Creative Embassy in London, protesting against the disenfranchisement of Serbian voters in Britain in the elections in Serbia and hosting a visit in 2022 by representatives of the Serbian Office for Cooperation with the Diaspora and Serbs in the Region.

The Round Table organised the election of two people to represent the UK&I Serbian community at the Diaspora Assembly, when it was in operation, and was one of the few communities to establish a democratic process for the choice of representatives. The Round Table has continued this practice so that the Serbian community in Britain has elected representatives to speak on its behalf to British and Serbian institutions and organisations. In 2023 The Round Table met and elected Dragana Tomašević and Lazar Vuković to represent British Serbs at the Vidovdan Assembly and it endorsed several other candidates and agreed the priorities and policies that should be put forward at the Assembly.

The Round Table set up a website several years ago to promote its work and a You Tube Channel for Serbian Month events. For further information contact the Round Table Steering Group on [rtsteering-group@google.com](mailto:rtsteering-group@google.com) or visit the Round Table website <http://www.serbianrt.com>

## Organisations, schools, networks and associations

### St Sava Church School

Founded in 1962

Located at the parish of the Serbian Orthodox Church in London, St Sava Church School is a vibrant, friendly school which has been teaching Serbian language, culture and fundamentals of Orthodox Christianity for 62 years. It offers classroom and online Serbian lessons to 100+ children between five and twelve years old, spread across age and ability categories, primarily on Sundays with a midweek catch-up to make sure new learning isn't forgotten! The School also coordinates classroom teaching of Serbian across Britain and Ireland.

All class-based lessons take place in purpose-built classrooms at 89 Lancaster Road, London, W11 1QQ. Parents bringing their children can relax in the parish or enjoy a coffee nearby in the popular Portobello Road area whilst their children are taught to master Cyrillic and other key aspects of Serbian culture and history.

St Sava Church School's curriculum is rich and broad. It builds on programmes developed in Serbia and accredited by the Serbian Ministry of Education. The programs are interactive and also provide a platform for children to independently practice their Serbian at home. In addition, the School is fortunate to have teachers that have qualified in both the UK and Serbia. With their collective experience, knowledge, and understanding of child development and language acquisition, the teaching staff supports the diverse needs of pupils from five years onwards, whatever their level of Serbian. All pupils are taught the Cyrillic script, in a style adapted to meet their individual needs. The School also offers lessons for adults.

Central to the St Sava School ethos is the continued building and development of our Serbian and extended community in the UK. Friendships are broadened and solidified by school outings as well as by performances highlighting the children which happen on special days such as St Sava and Vidovdan in the lovely new church hall. Furthermore, the school is supported by an active and motivated Parents Association whose great work in organising hugely successful cake sales is contributing to the development of already good classroom facilities.

The school's goal is to expand teaching and learning of Serbian language, religion and culture in all parishes across Britain and Ireland and to work with other related initiatives to offer the best possible educational experience to pupils and their parents.

Parents can enrol their children and get more information about the School by emailing [info@spclondon.org.uk](mailto:info@spclondon.org.uk) or by calling the church office at 020 7727 8367. School web page: <https://spclondon.org.uk/en/school/news>.



# The Round Table Working Group on the Serbian Language and the Azbukum Centre's Serbian Language courses

The Round Table Working Group was set up to promote the teaching and learning of the Serbian language in Britain, to standardise the way it is taught and to obtain a recognised qualification in Serbian at GCSE and A Level. Serbian Language courses delivered in partnership with the Azbukum Centre for Serbian Language and Culture The Working Group has focused on the provision of courses for the 12 to 17-year-old age group for whom there was no provision after the Serbo-Croatian GCSE and A Level had been withdrawn in the early 1990s. In 2019 it entered a partnership with the Azbukum Centre for Serbian Language and Culture in Serbia to deliver their Serbian language courses at beginner, GCSE and A Level. The courses offer qualifications which are accredited by the Serbian Ministry of Education and are recognised across Europe and beyond. Students on the courses receive a Certificate of Knowledge of the Serbian Language and Confirmation of Attendance, official documents, which can be used for registration at universities in Serbia, or used to show knowledge of Serbian when applying for British universities or employment. The approach is that of learning Serbian as a non-native or second language and is designed for students of Serbian heritage aged between 12 and 17 living in the Diaspora.

Courses are delivered online and so can accept students from across the UK and Ireland. The courses are delivered over three or four terms, depending on the level of the course. For further information contact [olga.stanojlovic@btinternet.com](mailto:olga.stanojlovic@btinternet.com)

The landscape for the teaching and learning of Serbian in Britain has changed significantly since the Working Group was set up with the establishment of the Dopunska Škola, the resurgence of church Sunday schools teaching Serbian and the emergence of an initiative by the Serbian Ministry of Education to recognise appropriately qualified existing teachers in the diaspora as 'honorary teachers'. In view of these developments the Working Group will be reviewing its strategy.

Round Table & Azbukum

No matter where you live in the UK or Ireland, this Serbian language programme has been tailored just for you!

Contact: [olga.stanojlovic@btinternet.com](mailto:olga.stanojlovic@btinternet.com)

Learn and cherish your Serbian!

The best programmes for children and young adults in diaspora.

Beginners (A1)  
Low-Intermediate (A2) GCSE foundation  
Upper Intermediate (B1) GCSE higher  
Advanced (B2) A level

Round Table & Azbukum

## Dopunska škola

Thanks to the Ministry of Education, the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at the request of parents of children living and working in the United Kingdom, educational work in the Serbian language has been carried out by the Dopunska Skola for a fifth year. There are currently 255 students in following cities: Corby, Bedford, Leicester, London, New Castle, Oxford, Birmingham, Redhill and Surrey, and five online groups. The school is free for all students. The classes are taught by three teachers - Vida Milojković, Biljana Dinić Spencer and Sladjana Stevanović.

Among numerous activities, the highlights were participating in the Smotra (fair) of the folklore ensembles 'Sveti Ilija' and 'Avala' and the get together of all the groups of the Dopunska skola in the UK to mark Children's Week.

We hosted Princess Ljubica Karadjordjević, and over a hundred students had the chance to find out how princesses live today, what their priorities are and whether they know how to prepare 'sarma'!

A small reward for the great effort of our students from Corby was an unforgettable trip to Zlatibor, which included socializing, competitions and learning about Serbian history and culture.

We joined those who know that reading is a treasure to which we are entitled, and listening a skill to conquer. We read aloud. Every year, we revive our oldest Slavic alphabet at a workshop 'We write in Glagolitic script', paying tribute to our own cultural and national identity.

The schools also cooperate with the Raymond Nicolet Trust charity. We often organize joint activities for parents and students. Our students are also actors, so we mark significant dates with participation in performances and frequent guest appearances. Recognizing the difficulties parents face in these turbulent times, we have enabled them to attend professional lectures with the aim of better understanding children and understanding the reasons for their actions, and providing parenting support.

As part of the "Summer in the Homeland" festival, which was organized for the first time two years ago by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Serbia, a group of children from Serbian language schools abroad had the opportunity to visit their homeland for free. The festival was held at the Scientific and Educational Cultural Center "Vuk Karadžić" in Tršić and was designed as an educational camp with a focus on the Serbian language, culture and tradition. The goal was to get to know Serbia, to renew and acquire new knowledge about the homeland, as well as to acquire new long-lasting friendships.

Teachers:  
*Vida Milojković, Biljana Dinić Spencer and Sladjana Stevanović.*



## Srpskaonica School in Reading



"Srpskaonica" is a Serbian language school for children from Berkshire or nearby areas. The school was established in 2013 and classes are held in Reading. It was founded, first and foremost, to meet the growing need for children of the Serbian community in Berkshire to learn as much as possible about the language, culture and tradition of their native country. This goes hand in hand with the wish to work together to contribute to the preservation of our national identity in the UK. Children attending the school are usually between the ages of 5-16. Classes are held free of charge within the Dopunska skola and are mainly based on the age of the children. Lessons were taught online during the pandemic and this continues to be the case for some groups but others are now being taught face to face.

For more information about the school and its day-to-day activities, please follow us on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/srpskaonica>



We offer tuition sessions in Serbian via Zoom to all age groups. Teaching is planned, prepared and conducted by a qualified and experienced teacher both in Serbia and UK. Biljana Dinić Spencer graduated Serbian Language and Literature at the Belgrade University in Serbia.

Contact details:

Email: [info@azbookaeducationcentre.com](mailto:info@azbookaeducationcentre.com) or [biljanadinic@hotmail.com](mailto:biljanadinic@hotmail.com)

Phone number: 07815901156

Find out more, including examples of our lessons for different levels at the website below or use the contact page to get in touch: AZBOOKA | Education Centre (<https://azbookaeducationcentre.com>)

*Let's learn Serbian!*

## Beginners and intermediate courses for adults by the Serbian Society London

Our online group courses are for everyone who wants to learn everyday spoken Serbian independently and without losing the feeling of being part of the group. The courses take place in virtual classrooms on Zoom, every week in the evening. Our experienced, qualified teachers are all native Serbian speakers. They will take you on the journey through Serbia where you will learn the skills needed for understanding and using the Serbian language in everyday situations and while travelling. You will develop your reading and listening skills and learn to speak and write in Serbian.

Our courses will give you the perfect opportunity to learn or improve on how to use the Serbian grammar, ćirilica, and you will also gain some fascinating insights into Serbian culture and the cultural diversity of Serbia.

For more information, please email us at [office@serbiansociety.org.uk](mailto:office@serbiansociety.org.uk)



*Let's learn*  
**SERBIAN**

Online courses of spoken  
Serbian language for adults

SCAN ME

## *The Circle of Serbian Sisters Kosovo Maiden – London*

The Circle of Serbian Sisters, in London, works with dedication and selfless nobility to fulfill its mission, inspired by benevolence and selfless giving. We work relentlessly and diligently to encourage the good in people. Through our charitable work, over the last fifty years, we have raised significant funds for various worthwhile causes – our people in Serbia, the Republika Srpska, Kosovo and Metohija, our children, the old and helpless, also our Church, Church school, folklore group 'Rastko' as well as the people of our Diocese.

Guided by respect for our national traditions, language, customs, and national identity, we have spread our orthodox faith and spirit among the population through support for other churches and monasteries, especially the Saint Sava Cathedral, Vračar, where the name of our Circle is carved on the endowment plaque. The Circle now has around fifty members, most of whom are elderly retired ladies. We would like to encourage younger ladies to join and continue with this worthwhile charitable work.



The Circle of Serbian Sisters is keen to build 'bridges' with other Serbian organisations and societies to work together on shared initiatives for the benefit of the Serbian people. This will enable us to attract new and younger members. This joint cooperation would do much to promote all our organisations and societies through sharing experiences. This would do much to safeguard our traditions and address the strategic issues facing our community in the UK.

*For further information contact us and write to [kss@spclondon.org.uk](mailto:kss@spclondon.org.uk).*

## **Srpska Biblioteka u Londonu** *The Serbian Library in London*

Since 2011 our collection of books in the Serbian language has been an integral part of the International Collection of books at the Fulham Library; it has now been enriched with new books from Narodna biblioteka u Beogradu and the complete collection of Harry Potter books in the Serbian language, a gift from the J.K. Rowling's office.

Our events and face to face activities have been restricted since the Covid pandemic started, but we have held online presentations and Zoom meetings which are available to be watched on the website:

[www.theserbianlibraryinlondon.co.uk](http://www.theserbianlibraryinlondon.co.uk). These include videos of talks about The Serbian Written Cultural Heritage Through Centuries, also discussions with authors at the Mini Book Fair last year and some other events. We invite all people interested in our literature to contact us [serbianlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:serbianlibrary@gmail.com).

Srpska biblioteka u Londonu je osnovana 2010. godine a 13. januara 2015. godine je registrovana kao neprofitna organizacija (9386650). Sedište biblioteke kao stalne kolekcije srpskih knjiga i dela iz srpske književnosti je u Fulham biblioteci i čini deo svetske literature biblioteka sa opštine Hammersmith i Fulham. Vlasnik knjiga je Srpska Biblioteka u Londonu a administracija, izdavanje i prijem knjiga su obaveza LBHF biblioteka. Ova saradnja je uspešna i predstavlja jedinstven dogovor između LBHF biblioteka i jedne lokalne organizacije Srpske biblioteke u Londonu.

Vesna Petković, osnivač i Olga Gaković ko-osnivač su bile prvi direktori i odbor Srpske biblioteke u Londonu. Olga Gaković (+2018), advokat iz Beograda je bila i pisac i pesnik. Srpska biblioteka organizuje godišnji mini sajam knjiga svake poslednje subote u februaru i dodeljuje nagrade pobednicima godišnjeg konkursa za Poeziju i Prozu. Gosti sajma su renomirani pisci i pesnici.

Serbian Library London

# Tenth Annual Memorial Service for Women in Foreign Medical Missions in Serbia during the Great War

It is my pleasure to proudly announce that on 2 March 2024 we are organising the Tenth Annual Memorial Service for Women in Foreign Medical Missions in Serbia during the Great War.

Since 2014 we have been organising annual commemorations at St Sava Church, followed by talks and exhibitions. I will mention only a few guest-speakers who supported these unique events in Britain. Louise Miller spoke about Flora Sandes, Alan Cumming talked about Scottish Women's Hospitals in Serbia. Ailsa Clarke, dressed in an exact replica of Dr Elsie Inglis' uniform, talked about Scottish women who risked and sacrificed their lives in Serbia and other fronts during the Great War. Natasha Stojsavljević talked about soldiers Jo Whitehead, Milunka Savić and Serbian women soldiers. Nick Ilić talked about WWI and the various foreign medical missions in Serbia and the important contribution they made.

In 2022, the Serbian Society London, in collaboration with the Serbian Council of Great Britain, organised a monodrama *Milunka*, performed by Vesna Stanković, about Milunka Savić, the Serbian war hero who fought in the Balkan Wars and in WWI. She was the most-decorated female combatant in the recorded history of warfare.

In 2015, the exhibition opened in the Serbian House, honouring the life of Mabel Stobart, the Dorset war heroine who formed a medical corps to aid Serbia in the nation's darkest hour. The exhibition entitled *Heroines of the Great War: Mabel Stobart & The Retreat from Serbia in 1915*, was lent by Dorset County Museum and curated by Dušanka Marsenić.

The Serbian community will never forget the bravery and sacrifice of these unsung heroines.

In their desire to help the war effort and prove their worthiness, thousands of British women, undeterred by the government's decision to keep them far from the front line, joined the British Red Cross, Royal Army Medical Corps, Scottish Women's Hospitals, V.A.D.s, Mabel Stobart's units, St John's Ambulance units and other organisations. They found themselves in the middle of the worst war tragedies and many died. Memorials and graves scattered across Europe (particularly in Serbia) are a constant reminder of their heroism and determination.

Our work has enabled us to develop valuable partnerships with Serbian and British institutions, organisations and individuals with an interest in this area. These include the Imperial War Museum, the Women's Library and the Salonika Front Association. In 2023 it resulted in two British Serbs joining a group of women from Britain to visit the locations of the Scottish Women's Hospitals in Serbia in WWI, the graves of the women who died in Serbia, and to attend the annual commemoration of Dr Elsie Inglis and the Scottish Women's Hospitals, held in Mladenovac on 15 September 2023.

We remember those women who sacrificed their lives during the Great War, those buried in Kragujevac, Valjevo, Niš, Bajina Bašta... and those who continued to support the Serbs after the war ended, like Katherine MacPhail, Evelina Haverfield, Isabel Emslie Hutton and Lady Paget.

We also think of the Serbian women who put themselves in harm's way for their country and to ease the suffering of its people. Soldiers, like Milunka Savić, Vasilija Vukotić or Sofija Jovanović, who fought together with Flora Sandes; doctors and nurses, like famous painter Nadežda Petrović, who died of typhus in Valjevo in 1915 or Draginja Babić, one of the first Serbian women doctors, who died in Valjevo in February 1915, almost on the same day as Dr Elizabeth Ross and Madge Neil Fraser.

The histories of these brave, determined and altruistic women from Britain and Serbia are woven closely together. We will always remember them.

Zvezdana Popović



## Мала библиотека

Мала библиотека је мала веб страница која развија и садржи звучне књиге, песме, игрице и филмове за децу. Циљ Мале библиотеке је да се подстакне љубав за српски језик кроз несметану, невину и паметну игру. Жеља је да се на тај начин помогне деци у расејању са откривањем језичке културе родитеља и домовине. Када се развије љубав за језик и знање се са лакоћом гради.

Мала библиотека је необичан оглед у српском језичком простору. Заснована на чланарини, Мала библиотека је мали и изразито некомерцијалан садржај. Мала библиотека не садржи рекламе нити сакупља личне податке корисника. Награђена је Змајевом наградом 2010. године за посебан допринос ширењу језика и књижевности. Објавили смо бројне првенце на српском језику, укључујући прве електронске и интерактивне књиге.

Мала библиотека је настала на основу претходног рада када су исти добровољци при цркви Свети Сава у Лондону, почетком две хиљадитих, градили праву физичку библиотеку за децу. Од покретања веб странице Мала библиотека је прошла неколико обрта и веб облика. Још увек истражујемо и мењамо се. Тренутно сарађујемо са библиотеком за слепе Милан Будимир из Београда, у приређивању њихових радова (нпр. Библија у 365 прича). Радимо на подухвату приређивања српске гусларске епске песме у савремено рухо.

Током 2023. године Мала библиотека је приредила и одржала јавно такмичење „Најбоља нова српска реч“. Повод је било неумерено коришћење страних речи, посебно англицизама, у јавном говору у Србији. Такмичење је било веома успешно и створило веома повољан одјек у целокупној српској јавности. Испоставило се да српска јавност жели да разговара о језику. Језик нам је знатно ближе срцу од уобичајених тешких политичких разговора који преовлађују. Такмичење је показало да независним умним чињењем, чак из Британије, можемо усмерити јавни разговор на начин који је повољан и користан за наше целокупно друштво.

Намера Мале библиотеке је да настави са огледним радом у пољу развоја занимљивих садржаја. Наше тржиште је мало те је развој захтевних садржаја отежан. Међутим и сам чин и покушај стварања је драгоцен као користан путоказ и језику и друштву.

rec@malabiblioteka.net  
www.malabiblioteka.net



ФОНД ПРЕСТОЛОНАСЛЕДНИКА  
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Тросличје: Молитва.  
Ликовни слог: Игор Петровић.

МАЛА  
БИБЛИОТЕКА

## The Serbian Society

The Serbian Society is a member organisation based in Fulham, registered as a charity on 21 September 1995.

The aim of the Society is to work for the wellbeing and advancement of the Serbian community in London and the wider UK, and to enhance the pride of being Serbian in our multi-ethnic society.

The objective is also to present our community, its intellectual and other achievements and culture, to encourage a better understanding of the Serbian national minority.

We organise events which promote Serbian culture and art, and we participate and contribute to social gatherings and events organised by other communities. Amongst our long-term projects is Serbian language course for adults (for people with Serbian partners, those who would like to be able to communicate better with their Serbian relatives or, those who would like to improve their day-to-day communication when travelling to Serbia) and, the very popular, Serbian book-club.

We welcome any new ideas that you might have and would be very happy to make them happen. We also welcome any new members, volunteers and donations to help us with our future work.

For further information about the Serbian Society contact [office@serbiansociety.org.uk](mailto:office@serbiansociety.org.uk) or visit [www.serbiansociety.org.uk](http://www.serbiansociety.org.uk)

Committee Members  
The Serbian Society London



# The Serbian Council of Great Britain



The Serbian Council of Great Britain (SCGB) was founded in 2004 as an independent, not for profit and non-political organisation to promote the interests of the Serbian community in Great Britain by:

- Co-operating with other Serbian diaspora organisations in Great Britain and worldwide.
- Representing and promoting the interests of the Serbian community in Britain to governmental and non-governmental organisations in Serbia and in Britain.
- Assisting members of the Serbian community to maintain and develop ties with Serbia and other territories with Serbian historical and cultural heritage.
- Promoting good relations between the Serbian community and wider British society.
- Raising awareness of Serbian culture, history and heritage within the Serbian community and amongst the wider British public.

We have focused our efforts on projects which deliver these aims and objectives. We have played a significant role in establishing and maintaining the Round Table which encourages cooperation between Serbian community organisations in Britain for the benefit of the Serbian community. Through the Round Table Working Group on the Serbian Language, we have played a major role in promoting the teaching and learning of the Serbian language in Britain and manage the partnership with the Azbukum Centre for Serbian Language and Culture in Serbia. This partnership allows us to offer online courses, with recognised qualifications, for students from across the UK at beginner, GCSE and A level. In collaboration with the Serbian Society and Serbian City Club we started Serbian Month which is now in its sixteenth year and has grown into the largest festival of Serbian culture in the Serbian Diaspora. We initiated the idea of a Serbian Month Catalogue to accompany the festival to provide a history of the Serbs in Britain, to explore the historical relationship between Britain and Serbia, to celebrate the contribution that British Serbs make to Britain and Serbia and to promote a better understanding of all aspects of Serbian culture in Britain.

**For further information about SCGB contact:** [info@serbiancouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@serbiancouncil.org.uk) or visit [www.serbiancouncil.org.uk](http://www.serbiancouncil.org.uk)  
Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/SRBoGB>

## YouTube channels:

Serbian Council of Great Britain: <https://www.youtube.com/@serbiancouncilofgreatbrita22> and  
Serbian Month - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmFirlwVyVgDP7PrXmsgVbw/videos>

## Serbian City Club

**Team /** *Ivan Miletić, Miloš Stefanović, Jelena Krzanicki, Slavjana Ulph, Nataša Kočiš*



The Serbian City Club is a not-for-profit apolitical organisation established to promote interests of Serbian professionals in the UK, Serbia and worldwide through networking and speaker events.

The Serbian City Club was founded in the late 1990's by a handful of enthusiastic Serbs working in London's financial institutions. Their idea was to bring to life an informal club that would gather young Serbian professionals who live and work in the UK. Since 2004, our membership base has increased steadily and today the Club is over 2000 strong.

Our members are mainly London-based and work in all walks of professional life as scientists, doctors, bankers, engineers, lecturers, civil servants, etc. in renowned British and global institutions. A typical Club member is characterised by a high level of education and cultural awareness which, tied with their linguistic skills, ensures their seamless integration into British society. Whilst retaining strong links with their families and friends in Serbia, with a view of transferring their knowledge, skills and experience, they strengthen Serbia's European identity and its key role in the Balkans.

With this in mind, our main project is one of 'circular migration' through which we are enabling Serbian professionals to return to Serbia. We provide professional career guidance and we aim to match the needs of the employers in Serbia with the potential candidates in our database in the UK and around the world. Finally, we also offer specialised advocacy services on a variety of issues relating to our members. The Serbian City Club regularly organises networking events in London and in Belgrade thus enabling continued contact amongst the existing members and an opportunity to welcome new ones. Since 2020, Club has created a stream of live and recorded Zoom events in order to keep the membership base engaged.

[www.serbiancityclub.org/](http://www.serbiancityclub.org/)



# The British Serbian Chamber of Commerce



The British Serbian Chamber of Commerce (BSCC) has promoted and facilitated trade and investment between the United Kingdom and Serbia and represented the views of the business communities in both countries for over a decade. While the past year has been a challenging one, it has also been a period of great productivity at the BSCC. It has been very encouraging to see the BSCC membership grow, as both Serbian and British businesses look to take advantage of future opportunities. We have welcomed several new members this year, British and Serbian, large and small, and we are now in our strongest position for many years. In 2024, we hope to see more new members, but equally ensure that all members recognise the benefits of being part of the Chamber.

Alongside membership growth, we have focussed on providing our members with all the information we can regarding Brexit and its impact on UK-Serbian trade. Through webinars and events, we have endeavoured to help businesses remain as productive, secure and efficient as possible. In addition, we have been involved in schemes such as the UK TechProsperity Bridge Competition in partnership with the UK Department for International Trade. The scheme helps start-up companies through providing seminars, events and (for the winners of the competition) assistance in entering the UK market.

We look forward to continuing this productivity in 2024, with further growth and revitalisation of economic activity. If you are interested in learning more about our organisation go to: BSCC ([www.britserbcham.com](http://www.britserbcham.com)). For membership enquiries go to <https://www.britserbcham.com/en/become-a-member/>, or for general enquiries go to BSCC Contact Us ([www.britserbcham.com](http://www.britserbcham.com)). For regular updates on the BSCC go to our LinkedIn or our Twitter and subscribe to our fortnightly newsletter.



## Irish-Serbian Chamber of Commerce - Background

From history to business, Ireland and Serbia have a surprising amount tying them together, and the Irish-Serbian Chamber of Commerce seeks to expand on what unites these two proud nations.

The Irish-Serbian Chamber of Commerce was established by Chairman Frank Hannigan and launched on May 26, 2021, at an online event attended by nearly 100 participants who were addressed by keynote speakers H.E. Aleksandra Joksimović, Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia to Ireland, and Simon Coveney, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland.

The aim of the Irish-Serbian Chamber of Commerce is to promote and facilitate trade and investment between Ireland and Serbia, and to represent the views of the business communities in both countries. The objectives of the Irish-Serbian Chamber of Commerce are:

- To facilitate trade between The Republic of Ireland and The Republic of Serbia;
- To provide focussed networking opportunities for its members;
- To provide relevant and timely information about doing business in Ireland and Serbia;
- To notify its members about current and emerging business opportunities;
- To encourage and develop the next generation of entrepreneurs;
- To create a greater understanding of both cultures and heritage.



Since the launch the Irish – Serbian Chamber of Commerce has held several events to promote Irish-Serbian relations, the latest being a business development lunch held in Dublin, attended by Ambassador Joksimović, ISCC members and companies with a strategic interest in developing commercial ties with Serbia, including Kingspan, CRH, and Aer Rianta. For further information: <https://www.serbia.ie>

# British -Serbian Medical Association



Originally founded as the British-Yugoslav Medical Association, the first meeting was held on 16/12/2000. The Association was initiated by a group of Serbian doctors in the aftermath of the tragic civil war years in former Yugoslavia, and the subsequent sanctions and NATO military campaign against Serbia.

The Association goals were to help medical professionals in Serbia and Montenegro to re-establish their positions in the world medical community and to facilitate exchange of knowledge and experience between medical professionals in Serbia and the UK.

Achievements by the Association over the years include multiple exchange of doctors and nurses between Serbia and the UK, bursaries for young doctors and nurses for educational study in the UK, sponsoring renowned UK lecturers for participation in medical meetings in Serbia, sending medical journals and medical equipment to hospitals in Serbia, organising charity events and other similar projects.

The strength of the Association grew over many years and the number of active members rose to between 50 and 100. Its members were not only doctors and nurses but also allied medical professionals – psychologists, dentists, pharmacists, and biologists. We have a few distinguished members-Witness Experts in their respective fields (D. Lilić, M. Abinun), Professors (R. Djukanović, S. Savić) and young PhD Researchers (S. Stanković) The Association continues to be open to medical professionals from all over former Yugoslavia with no boundaries.

However, as the political climate changed, so did the name of the Association, becoming Medicus, and most recently the British-Serbian Medical Association in the last decade.

The BSMA, celebrating its 20th anniversary in 2020 is actively collaborating with other Serbian organisations in the UK and strives to be a valuable part of Serbian diaspora in this country.



## JASENOVAC AND HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

The Jasenovac & Holocaust Memorial Foundation is a UK registered charity which promotes the culture of remembrance of genocides committed in Independent State of Croatia during WW2 against Serbian, Jewish and Roma people. Our annual event, Holocaust Memorial Day is the opportunity for people from all walks of life to reflect & remember those people who lost their lives; as well as to challenge prejudice, discrimination and hatred in our communities today. We have successfully delivered lectures to various high schools and universities in the UK and abroad and held lectures in the UK Parliament and US Senate.

If you would like to join us or support our work by sponsoring the Charity, please get in touch with us today.

Email [info@jhmf.org.uk](mailto:info@jhmf.org.uk)

Tel: 07912 170 866

<http://www.jhmf.org.uk>

The Movement of patriots from Serbia and the Diaspora- ROD was initiated by a group of former Diaspora Assembly delegates and Serbian patriots from a number of countries worldwide and within Serbia. The goal of the Movement is to make a difference in the relations between Serbia and Diaspora, in line with the Serbian government's Declaration which states that such relations are in Serbia's highest national interest. 4-5 million Serbs living outside Serbia must have their voice heard in the countries where they live and within Serbia. Our knowledge, experience and financial abilities can and must contribute to all matters of importance to Serbia as a country operating in the global environment. The Diaspora must be involved in Serbia's political, economic, social, legal, cultural and educational life, as well as national defence strategies. The Diaspora is a strong factor in keeping Serbian traditions alive and representing Serbia at the highest level in the countries where we live. The Diaspora is the best ambassador for Serbia.

**Contact:** Zeljko Vranes, CEO Movement ROD, London +44 (0) 7950385217

## Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association

The link between Norwich and Novi Sad was set up almost 60 years ago. In 1960 Norwich was invited to the Yugoslavian Embassy to agree upon a City with which it could be twinned and Novi Sad was chosen. This was a Foreign Office initiative and done through Norwich City Council who were represented by the City Clerk and City Engineer. Student exchanges followed in the late 1960's. Further student visits followed again in the 1970's.

It was felt that twinning between the two countries would flourish more if an Association, based on friendship, was formed. The Norfolk and Norwich Novi Sad Association was then formed in 1985. The Association initially had some members who had been part of the former British Yugoslav Society.

The Honorary President of the Association is always the Lord Mayor of Norwich. Doug Underwood has been the Chairman of the Association since 2008. The Association has been very active in providing a programme of talks, outings, concerts, and other events. There have been several successful holidays based in Novi Sad. Our aim is to promote informal links between people and organisations in Norwich, Norfolk and in Novi Sad and Vojvodina.

Every January there is a concert organised in Norwich, the proceeds of which go to help the Milan Petrovic School for children and young adults with special needs in Novi Sad. The performers for the concert often come from Novi Sad and the surrounding area.

Like Novi Sad, Norwich has many important Churches; two Cathedrals; University of the Arts; the University of East Anglia; Medical School; Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital and many Museums and Art Galleries. Norwich also has many Theatres such as the Theatre Royal, the Maddermarket Theatre, the Norwich Playhouse and the Puppet Theatre.

In recognition of the friendship links between the two Cities a bridge was constructed over the River Wensum named the "Novi Sad Friendship Bridge".





## The Association of Serbian Writers and Artists Abroad (ASWA)

Udruženje Srpskih Pisaca i Umetnika u Inostranstvu

e-mail: ASWA1951@zen.co.uk

Formed by: Slobodan Jovanović, London 1951

First President: Miloš Crnjanski Current President: Sonja Besford

During 72 years of ASWA's existence we have organised many seminars, lectures, literary evenings and interviews by/with invited Serbian writers. Among many others our guests were: David Albahari, Milan Danojlić, Matija Bečković, Slobodan Selenić, Ivan Lalić, Vida Ognjenović, Vladislav Bajac, Mihajlo Pantić, Predrag Marković... We honoured and commemorated Borislav Pekić's, Miloš Crnjanski and Dusan Puvačić's lives and work. Lately, we interviewed Predrag Slijepčević and Verica Vincent-Cole.

ASWA has published five books in translation from Serbian into English and has assisted in promoting many works published by Serbian writers abroad. Three Serbian writers have blue plaques/memorial stones in London: Dositej Obradovic, 27 Clemen's Lane, London EC3; Slobodan Jovanovic, junction of Queen's Gate and Cromwell Road, London SW7; Milos Crnjanski, 155 Queen's Court, W2.

We welcome new members, Serbian writers and artists. ASWA has no membership or subscription fees and it is entirely non-profit, private-donation based, organisation.



London  
Sports  
Society



## The London Sports Society

The London Sports Society (LSS) was founded in 2010 and is a UK registered not-for-profit organisation with a charitable status.

Through sport, our objective is to create and support a variety of sport associations, clubs and a range of events taking place within the community. LSS also aims to be the focal point for up-to-date sports related information within the community.

We work to bring together as many people from the Western Balkans and other local communities as we can in order to encourage their physical activity in the UK, particularly in London. The plan is to offer an extensive sports programme.

For all information visit <https://www.facebook.com/LondonSportsSociety>

# Liberating Cinema

<http://www.liberatingcinema.org.uk/>

Liberating Cinema is a non-profit charitable organisation committed to the representation, restoration, and exhibition of world cinema heritage. Liberating Cinema runs a regular masterclass series and organises international workshops, conferences, seminars, and symposia. The Liberating Cinema Film Series, present at British Universities since 2015, provides a platform for premiering films and bringing in dialogue filmmakers, industry and academia through a variety of discursive panels and interactive events. On 23 October 2021 Liberating Cinema hosted His Royal Highness Crown Prince Aleksandar of Serbia for *Karadžorđe: The 110th Anniversary of The First Serbian Feature Film*. The organisation has hosted first-time retrospectives and special programmes on Serbian and Yugoslav cinema and is developing original restoration projects for preserving film heritage.

Our charitable purposes are:

**1)** The advancement of the arts, heritage, culture or science through the representation, restoration and exhibition of world cinema heritage by 1) sustainably sourcing, selecting and obtaining films of world cinema for cultural representation in the UK and beyond; 2) initiating, organising and conducting film restoration projects for the purposes of repairing and preserving cinematic works of cultural importance for world heritage; 3) disseminating the films via programming in local, national and international film series, festivals, museums, national picture houses and theatres, and encouraging distribution through digital, and DVD/Blu-ray platforms.

**2)** The advancement of education by providing an educational platform for premiering films and bringing in dialogue filmmakers, industry and academia with the public through a variety of masterclasses, discursive panels, film festivals, and/or interactive events. The Liberating Cinema Film Series is designated the organisation's major and immediate platform for showcasing the films in Higher Education Institutions.

**3)** The advancement of environmental protection or improvement through the restoration and preservation of the films by appropriating proper environmental conditions for and storage of the films respectively. Liberating Cinema is a charitable body, registered in Scotland, with the charitable number SC049680. The organisation was founded by and is directed by Mina Radović.

## Black Wave to White Ray Yugoslav Film of the 1960s

Sep 7-21, 2023  
MoMA



# The Serbian Heritage Foundation

## Petar II Petrović Njegoš

### Trustees:

The Chair of Trustees: Dr Dejan Maraš MD PhD FESC Cardiology Consultant

- Ms Slavica Popović Operational Director Recruitment Agency
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**NJEGOS**  
**FOUNDATION**  
**L O N D O N**

The aim of the Foundation is the prevention and relief of poverty for public benefit in Serbia, Kosovo and Metohija, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia by providing grants, items and services to individuals in need and/or organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty. <https://njegosfoundation.org/>

Trustees aim to run two humanitarian events per year under the umbrella of our charity.  
<https://njegosfoundation.org/> email [admin@shfnjegos.org](mailto:admin@shfnjegos.org).

As a traditional event we would like to run a Svetosavski Ball every year on the first Saturday of each February.

### Your invitation to St Sava's Ball 2024

As trustees of The Njegoš Foundation London, we organise the glittering St Sava's Ball in the heart of London. This unique tradition brings our community together in an exquisite setting. It's also an opportunity to raise funds to help those in need in Serbia, Kosovo and Metohija, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia.

With your help, last year we raised £16,000 for these truly worthy causes. In September, the Chair of the trustees, Dr Dejan Maraš MD PhD FESC Cardiology Consultant, presented gifts to fifty families in Kosovo and Metohija, each with four or more children whose mothers had received the Order of the Mother of Jugović.

We warmly extend an invitation to St Sava's Ball 2024 being held at the Copthorne Tara Hotel in Kensington on Saturday 3rd February. We are honoured to announce that this year's patron is the Hilandar Monastery, the most significant seat of Serbian Orthodox spirituality. This elite event will be held in the presence of Archimandrite Methodius and His Eminence Joanikije, Metropolitan of Montenegro.

Among the performers are maestro folk singer Ana Bekuta and band, including virtuosos Milan Mitrovic and Nikola Mijajlović, and soprano Tamara Radjenović who also holds the position of ambassador for the Council of Europe. A sumptuous three-course meal, drinks, beers and wines will be included plus a sampling of wines from Hilandar. Other performers to be announced in what will represent one of our community's most rewarding cultural evenings of 2024.

The foundation is registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales, number 1198147. Among our trustees are prominent British Serbian individuals, directors and consultants, in the spheres of business, medicine, governance, law, accounting and telecommunications.

Read more about our charity at <https://njegosfoundation.org> where you can buy tickets and donate.



# Lifeline Humanitarian Organization



Despite the fact that Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Alexander and Crown Princesses Katherine lived in exile for many years, Crown Princess Katherine always had her country in her heart.

During these difficult years, Crown Princess Katherine provided a very large amount of humanitarian aid that was distributed throughout the former Yugoslavia. The Crown Princess believes that there are no borders in suffering, since race and ethnicity do not matter.

In 1993 Crown Princess Katherine founded the Lifeline Humanitarian Organization with offices in the United States (Chicago and New York), Canada (Toronto), United Kingdom (London) and Greece (Athens).

When Their Royal Highnesses returned to Belgrade in July 2001 it was natural for the scope of their humanitarian activities to expand. At the beginning of August 2001, the Foundation of Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Katherine was established.

The Foundation of HRH Crown Princess Katherine's daily work includes contacts with the following ministries that have a crucial role in the development of projects: the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economics and Regional Development; the Ministry of Privatisation, the Ministry of Labour and Employment; the Ministry of Education; the Ministry of Health and Environment; and the Ministry of Trade and Tourism.

Activities have been expanded to cultural institutions, schools and universities by including scholarships and improving communication between students and experts from foreign countries.

Other important activities include raising money for medical equipment that has been delivered to numerous hospitals.

Thousands of children from orphanages throughout the country are guests at the Royal Palace every Christmas and Easter when they receive presents. Help is also provided to many refugees in Serbia.

"We work for the benefit of all those in need, regardless of ethnicity or religion since we believe that there are no borders in suffering."

Lifeline Humanitarian Organization was founded in 1993 and HRH Crown Princess Katherine Humanitarian Foundation was founded in 2001 with the aim of helping: Children / Sick / disadvantaged children / Refugees / IDP's / The Elderly

With the intense cooperation of all relevant ministries, we provide aid for medical institutions in the form of: New equipment / The implementation of reconstruction projects and extension of capacities / Medicine and medical equipment / Beds and covers to those in need We also facilitate material and medical equipment for:

Mentally and physically disabled children / Children with special needs / Orphans / Children of internally displaced parents / Help for abused children We help people who are socially endangered and in a state of poverty. We supply refugee camps with: Clothes / Food / Provide help to old and disabled people

We cooperate with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education, embassies, international organizations, international health care institutions / hospitals / universities as well as and many other entities.

[www.lifelineuk.co.uk](http://www.lifelineuk.co.uk)

[info@lifelineuk.co.uk](mailto:info@lifelineuk.co.uk)

# The British Serbian Benevolent Trust



The British Serbian Benevolent Trust is a British charity, registered with the Charity Commission, established in January 1997. It is built on the legacy of the Serbian Red Cross Society in Great Britain, established in August 1914 and which operated until its dissolution in 1924 to provide much needed aid to Serbia during the Great War.

The violent breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s resulted in a significant crisis with refugees and displaced persons and The Serbian Benevolent Society was established to alleviate this problem in January 1997 thanks in the main to the efforts of Dr Rebecca Beaconsfield and Mrs Zora Payne. It was based on the principles of the Serbian Red Cross Society of Great Britain and utilised the residual funds from that organisation and governed by the Charity Commission.

On the advice of the Charity Commission the name was changed to The British Serbian Benevolent Trust. The Trust gives financial support to projects from organisations involving children who are resident in Serbia. In particular the Trust is pleased to support projects which:

- bringing relief to children who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress
- who are sick, convalescent, disabled, handicapped or infirm
- promote the education (including social education and physical training) of children

Typical funding levels approved by the Trust are usually in the region of £2,000 to £10,000. Larger sums are occasionally approved. The Trust is sympathetic to projects which purchase equipment for institutions and/or provide for the building infrastructure of institutions.

For further information or applications please contact Mr Nik Babić on [nic.babic@gmail.com](mailto:nic.babic@gmail.com)



**Serbian  
Month**  
in Great Britain

# The Raymond Nicolet Trust

The Raymond Nicolet Trust is a UK registered charity that supports education and childhood in Serbia with different teams principally in the UK and Serbia, but also in France, Greece, Bulgaria and Canada.

Its website <https://www.raymondnicolettrust.com/> provides access to news of its various activities, such as the E-shop, the Podcast platform, E-learning, Living while Giving, and also a monthly newsletter and the current projects. Famous Trust patrons include Serbian footballers Nemanja Matić and Aleksandar Mitrović, Serbian violinist Nemanja Radulović, Serbian basketball player Nikola Jokić and Chemistry Nobel Prize winner Professor Sir John Ernest Walker.

Despite the difficult economic situation in 2023, the charity was able to donate £2,570 to the *Jovan Arandjelović* primary school in Crvena Reka, located near the southeastern border of Serbia, in order to renovate the school toilet facilities. Indeed, with the support of the Raymond Nicolet Trust, the plumbing was replaced and the toilets were completely overhauled and furnished in a contemporary way with new ceramic furniture, new doors and new tiles on the walls and floor. Power supply and a new water heater will soon be installed to complete the work.

In 2023, The Raymond Nicolet Trust also financed the renovation of several classrooms at the *Jovan Jovanović Zmaj* primary school in Pančevo. The £3,000 collected allowed the school to repair and repaint all the walls and buy new furniture.

The charity also recently shipped a brand new child care simulator worth £1,200 for students at the College of Professional Studies for Preschool Teachers and Sports Coaches in Subotica in Serbia. In exchange, the teachers organized various seminars in different schools in Serbia. On October 23, at the *Branko Radičević* primary school in Aleksandrovo, Ms. Zeljka Popov gave four educational lectures on the topic of smoking prevention. On the same day, Mr. Valentin Puskas led a conference on healthy eating at *Kokai Imre* primary school in Temerin, Novi Sad. On November 14, Ms. Zeljka Popov organized a conference at the Faculty of Medicine in Zrenjanin and on November 22, Prof. Hajnalka Pozar led a workshop at the *Svetozar Marković* College in cooperation with teacher Adrijana Tesić.

Since the creation of the charity, Dr. Christine-Fort Hilcenko, the charity chairman, has broadened its scope by bringing together numerous Serbian academics, such as Prof. Dragan Savić, CEO of the KWR Research Institute, Dr. Ana Mijić, Co-Director of the Center for Engineering and Innovation, Prof. Bojan Aleksov, Prof. at the UCL School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies in London, Dr. Predrag Slijepčević from the Brunel University in London, Prof. Dejan Djokić, Prof. in Modern and Contemporary History from the Goldsmith University of London, Dr. Aleksandra Vancevska from the Francis Crick Institute in London, Dr. Olivera Petrovich from the University of Oxford, and many others.

Christine also visited several Rotary clubs across the UK in St Albans, St Neots, Putney, Ely and Littleport to talk about the association's aims and projects.

"It is important to raise awareness among our donors about the situation in Serbia, and to explain to everyone the goal and objectives of our association, as well as some of the achievements to date," emphasizes Christine. "Also, explain why the charity supports education in Serbia and the efforts needed to close the gap with ambitions."

The charity organized a gala dinner in the magnificent Old's Hall at Queens' College, Cambridge, last June, in the presence of the Serbian Ambassador to London, Her Excellency Mrs. Aleksandra Joksimović, who came from London with her husband to attend the ceremony. "The ambassador has always faithfully supported us since the beginning of our history and we are very grateful to her" underlines Christine. "More than 60 people were present, all very enthusiastic about the work the association is doing in Serbia and many offered their help and support to the association in the future. We had the honor of receiving Prof. Vesna Goldsworthy who spoke about being a writer in a foreign language," continues Christine. Award-winning Russian pianist and patron of the charity, Victor Maslov, delighted the audience with performances of Rachmaninoff – *6 Études Peintures Op.33* and *Stravinsky/Agosti – Firebird*. The evening was sponsored by L'Alliance Française of Cambridge, Davidov London Jewellery, MHL Transport Ltd, Lavishly Appointed Ltd and Žubor sa Kablara.

The association also organizes a dinner every year at the Serbian Center located near the Orthodox Church in London thanks to the kindness of Mr Marko Gasić. £2000 were collected during the evening last September.

In 2022, The Trust donated £2,500 to the *Jovan Arandjelović* in Crvena Reka, near the South Eastern border of Serbia, to refurbish the school library. The new library has greatly impacted the quality of the lives of the students and brought many happy moments to all.

The charity also purchased for £3,700 of sports equipment for the poorly-equipped school playground of the Sveti Sava school in Bajina Bašta that the children use for their sports activities. Children spend a lot of time in the schoolyard before being picked up in the evening by their parents, and the sports equipment brought happiness to all the school children.

In 2021, despite the pandemic, the charity has successfully raised £10,337 which was matched by the EBRD Community Initiative.

In 2021, the Raymond Nicolet Trust financed the purchase of a £10,000 near new van to replace the *Vuk Karadžić Center's* existing one that was 20 years old and highly unreliable. The van is essential for the transportation of children and meals between the school's two main locations and to external sporting events. The Trust had previously made a donation of £2,000 to the Vuk Karadžić Center in Sombor to renew some of its outdated IT equipment and shipped also some toys and clothes to them.



The Trust also financed the refurbishment of the library at the *Jovan Jovanović Zmaj* School in Pančevo. The £4,000 raised has allowed the school to restore the wooden floor to its former glory, repair and paint all walls. Some furniture has also been bought to complete the stunning look of the rejuvenated library.

In 2021, the charity installed some sports and play equipment for the *Children and Youth Centre Miroslav Mika-Antić* in Sombor. The £4,000 raised has bought slides, swings, carousels and benches to refurbish the poorly-equipped school playground that the children use for their outdoor activities. Most of the children live at the Centre's premises all year round and the playground is the only external facility they have for leisure time, activities and sport.

The Trust also shipped a brand-new patient care simulator for the students of the College of Vocation Studies for Preschool Teachers and Sports Trainers (Nurses and Dietitians) from Subotica.

The Trust is always glad to act as a channel for donations, and also to receive an expression of interest from people of any nationality who might be interested in volunteering, especially if they have some spare time and relevant practical skills (eg. teaching, administration, translation, previous fund-raising, event management, data management). The Trust also welcomes association with sponsoring companies, including those which may be prepared to put a donation link (eg. for a small percentage of sale prices) into their commercial websites.

info@raymondnicoletrust.com  
twitter: @NICOLETTRUST  
<https://www.facebook.com/raymondnicoletrust/>  
[https://www.instagram.com/rn\\_trust/](https://www.instagram.com/rn_trust/)  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/the-raymond-nicolet-trust-aaba241a5/>



*From left to right : Prof. Vesna Goldsworthy, Dr. Christine Fort-Hilcenko, Her Excellency Mrs Aleksandra Joksimović.*



**The Raymond Nicolet Trust**

Support Childhood in Serbia

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

[info@raymondnicoletrust.com](mailto:info@raymondnicoletrust.com)

# Hospices of Hope in support of BELhospice



Hospices of Hope is the only UK charity dedicated to supporting the development of palliative and end of life care in South and East Europe. Their vision is for all patients suffering from terminal or life-limiting illnesses to have access to specialist hospice care services, free of charge – because everyone deserves to live and die with dignity and without pain.

BELhospice in Belgrade, Serbia became their hospice partner in 2006. Serbia has the highest cancer mortality rate in Europe but BELhospice is still the only NGO in Serbia offering free of charge specialist palliative care.

It is difficult for medical charities to receive state funding and authorisation in Serbia. In 2017 BELhospice's home care service was officially recognised by the Government and that service is now licensed. This is a major step and acknowledged the international standard of the services provided by the team.

BELhospice offers home-care services in Belgrade and in 2018 a hospice care centre was opened and a palliative day-care service was added – the first in the country.

Services in the day care centre include health check-ups, medication advice, psycho-social therapies, creative art workshops, and hair and beauty treatments. These services are very important for oncology patients as they bring them a better quality of life and they feel accepted and cared for by the community. It is also helpful for their families as they can take a break from everyday care of the patients.

Usually in Serbia, when a patient's treatment is completed, they are left to go home to their families who would then care for them until the end of their life, with no support from the health or social care system. BELhospice is working to change this.

From 2022, BELhospice began a children's project, making it the only organisation in Serbia to provide palliative care services at home for children.

To support their vital work, Hospices of Hope holds numerous exciting fundraising events throughout the year in the UK – more details can be found on their website [www.hospicesofhope.co.uk](http://www.hospicesofhope.co.uk)



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# Academics



**Dr Bojan Aleksov** is an associate professor (senior lecturer) in Balkan history at the University College London School of Slavonic and East European Studies, where he also regularly organises events on Serbian/Yugoslav/Balkan topics. In his research Aleksov explores historical factors, causality and agency that led to the identification of confessional affiliation and national identity among almost all Balkan nations in the wake of the demise of two Empires (Ottoman and Habsburg), which ruled the region over centuries. Among his many publications there are articles on Dositej Obradović, Jovan Jovanović Zmaj, British women in Serbia and St. Sava Cathedral on Vračar. His book *Jewish Refugees in the Balkans, 1933-1945* came out in 2023 with Brill.



**Dr Predrag Bjelogrić** is a Senior Lecturer and a Clinical skills lead at the University of St Andrews, School of Medicine. His MD qualification was awarded from the Faculty of Medicine, University of Belgrade (1992), and his MSc in Histopathology degree from the Royal Postgraduate Medical School University of London (1996).

His main area of expertise is the medical education and clinical assessment in the undergraduate curricula.

During 25 years of experience working at the oldest Scottish - University of St Andrews, he educated over 3500 medical students.

Email: pb10@st-andrews.ac.uk



**Dr Tijana Blanuša** obtained her BSc and MSc degrees in Crop Science and Plant Physiology at the Faculty of Agriculture, University of Belgrade before moving to the UK to complete her PhD in Plant Physiology and Biochemistry between Lancaster University and East Malling Research. This led to a postdoc at the UK's largest horticultural charity, Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), where she now holds a position of a Principal Horticultural Scientist. Her post is based at the University of Reading (School of Agriculture, Policy and Development) where she conducts most of her research and also teaches and supervises undergraduate, masters and PhD students. Tijana leads and delivers RHS research on the environmental benefits of gardens and urban green infrastructure. She is particularly interested in the contribution of plants to urban cooling, rainfall mitigation and air quality improvement. She and her colleagues are working to understand what underlying plant traits are most successful at this so that these plants can be harnessed to deliver multiple benefits.



**Dr Aleksandar Brkić** is a Senior Lecturer and Director of the MA in Arts Administration and Cultural Policy at the Institute for Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship (ICCE), at Goldsmiths, University of London. He is a scholar in the field of cultural/arts management and cultural policy, with significant experience as a creative producer and arts manager, working in the intersections of performing arts, visual arts, and design. Prior to joining Goldsmiths in 2016, he was teaching at LASALLE College of the Arts in Singapore and the University of Arts in Belgrade. He is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (FHEA) and a guest lecturer at the University of Arts in Belgrade, Ben M'Sik, Hassan II University, Casablanca and Sibelius Academy, University of Arts, Helsinki. Dr Brkić is a series editor of 'Routledge Focus on Global Creative Economy' published by Taylor&Francis, Associate Editor of The European Journal of Cultural Management and Policy and a creative producer of LP Duo (Sonja Lončar and Andrija Pavlović), piano duo based in Belgrade and Amsterdam.



**Dr Djurdj Budimir** received the Dipl. Ing. and M. Sc. degrees in electronic engineering from the University of Belgrade, Belgrade, Serbia, and the Ph.D. degree in electronic and electrical engineering from the University of Leeds, Leeds, U.K. In March 1994, he joined the Department of Electronic and Electrical Engineering at Kings College London, University of London, UK. Since January 1997, he has been with the School of Computer Science and Engineering, University of Westminster, London, UK, where he is now a Reader of wireless communications and leads the Wireless Communications Research Group. He is also a Visiting Professor with the School of Electrical Engineering, University of Belgrade. He has published more than 374 papers in refereed journals and conference proceedings, five books/book chapters and software's, 22 Invited papers/lectures, and keynote presentations. He serves as an Associate Editor for IET Electronic Letters (Oct. 2015 - Jan. 2020), and an associate guest editor for IET\_MAP (Special Issue on: Applications of short-range waves in IoT applications, April 2022). He was a local co-chair of European Microwave Week Conference (EuMW2016)/European Antenna and Propagation Conference (EuCAP2018), will be a General TPC co-chair and a local arrangement chair of European Microwave Week Conference (EuMW2021)/ and member of the TPC of several conferences. He is a Member of the EPSRC Peer Review College, a senior Member of IEEE, a Member of IET and a Chartered Engineer. He has supervised 22 PhD/4 MRes/over 100 MSc theses through to completion and currently supervising 4 PhD theses as the main supervisor.



**Professor Dejan Djokić** joined Maynooth University as Full Professor of History in June 2023. Previously, he held a Chair in Modern and Contemporary History at Goldsmiths, University of London, which he had joined as a lecturer in 2007 and where in 2009 he founded Centre for the Study of the Balkans, an interdisciplinary research centre which brings together UK-based and international scholars working on the region. Early on in his career, Dejan held lectureships at Birkbeck, University of London (2002/03) and The University of Nottingham (2003-2007; this was a permanent post). He has also held visiting (Columbia University, 2010) and guest (Humboldt University of Berlin, since 2020) professorships. He received a PhD in History from University College London (School of Slavonic and East European Studies) in 2004 and was a postdoctoral research fellow at Columbia University, New York in Spring that year.

Dejan is the author of three monographs and four edited volumes. His latest book, *A Concise History of Serbia*, published by Cambridge in January 2023, has already received praise in media and lengthy reviews in Croatian and Serbian scholarly journals. He regularly provides expertise to media on historical and current affairs and engages with non-academic audiences. He has contributed to the Arte TV, BBC, *Guardian*, *Independent*, *New Statesman*, *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, *The Telegraph*, *Times Higher Education*, *Times Literary Supplement*, and has frequently spoken at public events.



**Dr Jasna Dragović-Soso** is Professor of International Politics and History and a former Head of Department of Politics and International Relations (2017-2020) at Goldsmiths, University of London. She is the author of *'Saviours of the Nation': Serbia's Intellectual Opposition and the Revival of Nationalism* (Hurst and McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002/03) and the co-editor of *State Collapse in South-Eastern Europe: New Perspectives on Yugoslavia's Dissolution* with Professor Lenard J. Cohen (Purdue University Press, 2008), as well as many articles and book chapters on Yugoslav history and politics. She is currently working on memory and transitional justice processes in relation to the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. Her teaching at Goldsmiths includes an MA course on 'Memory and Justice in Post-Conflict Societies'.



**Dr Adela Kondić** (also published as Drozdibob) joined Sussex University Business School in January 2023 and is a Lecturer in Operations and Supply Chain Management.

Dr Kondić has environmental engineering education from the University of Novi Sad (Serbia), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT, MA, USA), and Skolkovo Institute of Science and Technology (SkolTech, Moscow, Russia), and a PhD in Management from Monash University Business School (VIC, Australia).

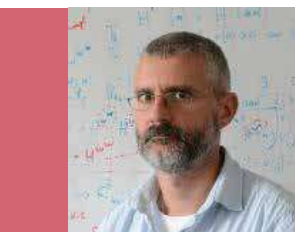
In addition to academic work in Australia, Asia, the USA, and the United Kingdom, Kondić has industry experience in Europe, the USA, and Australia. Her work on research and education builds on industry experience to focus on business operations, supply chain management, resilience building in the context of disasters, and the role of relationships in these business operations. In this research, Kondić closely cooperates with industry and NGOs to ensure the practicality and applicability of research findings. Her latest research also investigates academic career advancement on the global level. Kondić's research has been presented and published at global conferences and in highly-ranked academic journals. She holds several teaching excellence awards, and her research has been supported by multiple funds.

Dr Kondić has made significant contributions to Serbian society and businesses in Australia through her role as the Head of the Education Division at the Australian Serbian Commerce Chamber.

Cooperation between higher education institutions and diplomatic offices in Australia and Serbia was initiated and advanced during her mandate at the chamber.



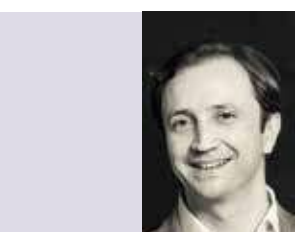
**Dr Željka Krpetić** is a Lecturer in Nanoscience and Bionanotechnology and Deputy Postgraduate Research Director – Training and Development in the School of Science, Engineering and Environment at the University of Salford, Manchester. She is also acting as Associate Editor of the Springer-Nature's *Cancer Nanotechnology Journal*, Principal Investigator and research group leader of Salford's NanoLAB ([www.zknanolab.com](http://www.zknanolab.com)). Dr Krpetić is an expert in nanomedicine research designing gold nanoparticles with multifunctional custom surface features and advancing the field of nanoparticle characterisation in situ in biological media enabling novel nanotechnology-based medicines for applications in cancer treatment and treatment against antimicrobial resistant pathogens. She is an author of over 30 peer reviewed articles, a book chapter, and lead editor for special collections of articles in Springer-Nature's 'Cancer Nanotechnology' and 'Frontiers: Research Topic' journals. She is a co-editor of the 'Biological and Environmental Nanotechnology' book currently in preparation for publishing in Taylor & Francis CRC Press in 2024. Awarded the Royal Society of Chemistry 'Missing Elements' EDI grant Dr Krpetić coordinates a consortium across 3 UK-based Universities (University of Salford, University of Kent and University of York) aiming to provide wider research opportunities to students from Black and BAME-background, and collaborates internationally advancing her research in the field of nanomedicine.



**Dr Ranko Lazić** was born (1975) in Belgrade, Serbia, where he attended Matematička gimnazija and Petnica, and was a member of Arhimedes. From 1992, he spent 8 years at Oxford University, obtaining a BA in Mathematics and Computation (1994) and a DPhil in Computing (1999), and as a Junior Research Fellow. During that time, his colleges were University College, Merton College and Christ Church. At Warwick University, he has been a Lecturer (since 2001), Associate Professor (2006), Reader (2015), and Professor (2018).



**Dr Jasna Martinović** is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Edinburgh. Prior to taking up a position in Edinburgh, she spent 10 years at the University of Aberdeen. Dr Martinović received her first degree (Dipl. Psychol.) from the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Belgrade, Serbia in 2001, followed by an MSc in Neuroscience from the University of Liverpool, UK in 2003 and a PhD in Experimental Psychology from the University of Leipzig, Germany in 2007. Her main area of expertise is colour perception and cognition, but her research also concerns perceptual organisation and attention, as well as the ageing of the human visual system. She is the author of 34 peer-reviewed articles in international journals, 1 book and 2 entries in the Encyclopedia of Colour Science and Technology. Her work has been funded by the DAAD, British Academy, Leverhulme Trust, ESRC, EPSRC and BBSRC.



**Prof Goran Mashanovich** is a Professor of Group IV Photonics and a former Royal Society Research Fellow (2008-2016) at the Optoelectronics Research Centre (ORC), Faculty of Engineering and Physical Sciences, University of Southampton. He received Dipl. Ing. and MSc in Optoelectronics from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Belgrade, Serbia, and PhD in Silicon Photonics and MSc in innovative teaching from the University of Surrey, UK. He is head of the ORC Mid-infrared silicon photonics group. His research interests include both passive and active devices in Si and Ge and their integration for communication and sensing applications. Prof. Mashanovich is author of 450 publications in the field of Silicon Photonics, and he is currently investigator on grants totalling £20 million, awarded by EPSRC and industry. Goran is also a visiting professor at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, University of Belgrade, Serbia. He has won several teaching prizes. Email: g.mashanovich@soton.ac.uk.



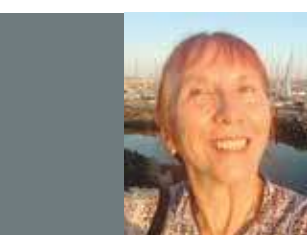
**Dr Nina Milosavljević** is currently a Lecturer in Neuroscience at the University of Manchester. She was born in Belgrade where she finished a 5-year MSc programme in Molecular Biology and Physiology at the University of Belgrade in 2009. During her undergraduate studies, she was awarded a prestigious USAID (United States Agency for International Development) scholarship for a one-year exchange programme for upper-division courses in biology at Georgia State University, in Atlanta, USA. She was also awarded a DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) stipend for an internship at the University of Göttingen, Institute for Human Genetics, in Göttingen, Germany, and the Erasmus Tempus funding for an internship at the University of Nice Sophia Antipolis in Nice, France. In 2012, Nina received her PhD in Molecular and Cellular Interactions, with "highest honours" ("très honorable") from the University of Nice Sophia Antipolis, in Nice, France for which she was awarded a prestigious Erasmus Mundus PhD scholarship. For her postdoc, Nina moved to the University of Manchester in 2013, to work in visual neuroscience. In 2018, she successfully obtained an Early Career Fellowship Award funded by the biggest eye charity in the UK and USA, Fight for Sight and in November 2021 she was awarded a Lectureship in Neuroscience at the University of Manchester.



**Prof Zoran Milutinović** is Professor of South Slav Literature and Modern Literary Theory at University College London, Member of Academia Europaea, Honorary Research Associate of the Graduiertenschule für Ost- und Südosteuropastudien of the University of Regensburg and Ludwig-Maximilians-University in München, and Distinguished Research Fellow of the Balkan Studies Center, Beijing Foreign Studies University. He taught at University of Belgrade and held visiting appointments at University of Nottingham, Wesleyan University, University of Wisconsin-Madison and Graduiertenschule in Regensburg. His publications include *Phantom in the Library: Is there a Serbian Nationalist Discourse on Ivo Andrić?* (2022), *Bitka za prošlost. Ivo Andrić i bošnjački nacionalizam* (2018), *Getting Over Europe, The Construction of Europe in Serbian Culture* (2011), *Susret na trećem mestu* (2006), *Metateatralnost, Imanentna poetika u drami dvadesetog veka* (1994) and *Negativna i pozitivna poetika* (1992). Milutinović is a member of editorial boards of *Slavonic and East European Review*, *New Are Studies and Balkanica*, and co-editor of Brill's book series *Balkan Studies Library*.



**Dr Ivona Z. Mitrović** is a Reader in sustainable nanoenergy and the Head of BioMEMS, Organic & Silicon Electronics Group at the Department of Electrical Engineering and Electronics at the University of Liverpool. She received the B.Eng. degree in microelectronics from the University of Niš, Niš, Serbia, in 1997, the M.Sc. degree in materials science from the University of Belgrade, Belgrade, Serbia, in 2002, and the Ph.D. degree in electronic engineering from the University of Liverpool, Liverpool, UK, in 2007. Her core research activity has largely been focused on fundamental understanding of materials on nanoscale, in particular oxides, relevant to CMOS applications and, more recently alternative energy technologies. She has been leading research activity through a number of projects, mainly funded by the EPSRC with a contribution of ~£1.5 million. For her professional standing and significant achievements in the engineering profession Dr Mitrović received Senior Member of IEEE status in 2014. She is a member of European SINANO Network of Excellence and has recently been appointed to the Steering Committee of the eFutures2.0 EPSRC funded network that aims at strengthening the UK electronics research. Dr Mitrović has authored over 130 scientific papers in refereed journals and conference proceedings and has delivered over 20 talks at premier international conferences in Europe and the USA. As electronics engineer, she is passionate about a sustainable, more electric future and has recently chaired the forum on materials and nanodevices within the UKRI Series “Electronics for Sustainable Societies”. E-mail: ivona@liverpool.ac.uk



**Prof Dubravka Pokrajac** is Professor of Engineering at the University of Aberdeen. She has received BSc, MSc and PhD from the Faculty of Civil Engineering, University of Belgrade, where she also initially worked. In 1998 she joined the School of Engineering, University of Aberdeen as a Lecturer. Dubravka does research in Fluid Mechanics with the focus on boundary layer flows over rough and permeable boundaries such as gravel beds of natural streams, and gravel beaches. She combines theoretical, experimental, and numerical methods to study small scale phenomena that occur at fluid-porous interface. Dubravka has published over seventy journal papers, co-edited a book (“Advanced simulation and modelling for urban groundwater management – UGROW”, Urban Water Series, UNESCO), and supervised twenty PhD projects. She is an Associate Editor for two academic journals.



**Dr Jelena Ponoćko** is a Lecturer in the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering at The University of Manchester. She received her BSc and MSc degrees from the University of Belgrade, School of Electrical Engineering, and PhD from The University of Manchester. Her research focuses on demand-side management in power systems. Jelena has authored or co-authored over 40 research papers and technical reports and spoken at numerous conferences around the world. Jelena is the IEEE Power and Energy Society (PES) Women in Power representative for Region 8 (Europe, Middle East and Africa), supporting gender equality in the power and energy domain.



**Prof Nebojša Radić** is Associate-Professor at the University of Cambridge Language Centre and Director of the university-wide world languages programme. He is member of the University Technology Enabled Learning, Teaching and Assessment (TELTA) group that advises the General Board and he also Chaired (2022 – 2022) the School of Arts and Humanities TELTA group. Dr Radić is also a Senior University Examination Officer. He is Member at Darwin where he participates in the work of the College Research and Education Committee and organises Humanities research seminars. Dr Radić is or has been visiting and/or honorary professor at the universities of Roma III, Cagliari and Pavia (Italy), Belgrade, Novi Sad and ECPD (Serbia) and RUDN in Moscow, Russia. His research interests range from methodology of language teaching in blended and online, remote environment, bilingualism, intercultural competence, to creative writing and literary self-translation. Dr Radić has a PhD in creative writing and literary translation (UEA, Norwich), an Honorary MA from Cambridge, and further MAs from the universities of British Columbia (Vancouver, Canada) and Auckland (New Zealand). He has published fiction in Serbian, English and Italian and is foreign correspondent of the Serbian current affairs weekly Pečat.



**Dr Predrag Slijepčević** is a geneticist and philosopher. Predrag's research interests include genetics of ageing and cancer, philosophy of evolution and philosophy of science. After completing a PhD in Radiation Biology at Sarajevo University in 1991, he was awarded three post-doctoral scholarships simultaneously: a Fulbright scholarship to study at the University of California, San Francisco, a British Council award to study at St Andrews University and an EU Tempus scholarship for Leiden University, Holland. He decided to remain in Europe. After completing studies at St Andrews and Leiden, Predrag moved to Cambridge University, to work with Sir Bruce Ponder, the world leading authority on cancer genetics. Since 1998 Predrag is employed by Brunel University London. His research is funded by various British and European research agencies. Predrag published over seventy research papers, edited a book Telomeres & Telomerase (Karger), and participated in several patents. He is the author of The Saint and the Sinner and Re-Minding the Earth (Akademska knjiga) in Serbian. He writes philosophical essays for Serbian and British media. Predrag's biography was included in the Marquis edition Who's Who in the World for 1998.



**Prof Endre Süli** FRS (also, Endre Šili) is a mathematician. He is a Professor of Numerical Analysis in the Mathematical Institute, University of Oxford, and Fellow and Tutor in Mathematics at Worcester College, Oxford. He was educated at the University of Belgrade and, as a British Council Visiting Student, at the University of Reading and St Catherine's College, Oxford. His research is concerned with the mathematical analysis of numerical algorithms for nonlinear partial differential equations. He is a Foreign Member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (2009), Fellow of the European Academy of Sciences (2010), Fellow of the Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (2016), a Member of the Academia Europaea (2020), and a Fellow of the Royal Society (2021). His other honours include: Fellow of the Institute of Mathematics and its Applications (2007), Charlemagne Distinguished Lecture (2011), IMA Service Award (2011), Professor Hospitus Universitatis Carolinae Pragensis, Charles University in Prague (2012–), Distinguished Visiting Chair Professor Shanghai Jiao Tong University (2013), President, SIAM United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland Section (2013–2015), London Mathematical Society/New Zealand Mathematical Society Forder Lectureship (2015), Aziz Lecture (2015), BIMOS Distinguished Lecture (2016), John von Neumann Lecture (2016), Sibe Mardešić Lecture (2018), London Mathematical Society Naylor Prize and Lectureship (2021). Endre grew up in Subotica and is a recipient of the Pro Urbe Prize of the City of Subotica (2021). He is the father of Sterija Award-winning Serbian playwright and dramatist Fedor Šili.



**Dr Vladimir Unkovski-Korica** is Senior Lecturer in Central and East European Studies at the University of Glasgow. He is the author of 'The Economic Struggle for Power in Tito's Yugoslavia, From World War II to Non-Alignment' and co-editor with Saša Vejzagić of a forthcoming special issue of the journal *Business History* entitled 'Socialist entrepreneurs? The business histories of the GDR and Yugoslavia'. His current research focuses on the British left and Yugoslavia from the Second World War to the Kosovo War. Vladimir teaches courses on Yugoslav, Balkan, East European and Russian history. He engages with non-academic audiences through contributions to the media on historical and current affairs, as well as by co-editing a variety of online journals like *LeftEast*.  
Further info: <https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/socialpolitical/staff/vladimirunkovski-korica/>



**Dr Vladimir Zorić** (1977) was born and lived in Belgrade before moving with his family to Pančevo (1985) where he completed his primary and high school (gimnazija) education. In 1996 he returned to live in Belgrade and studied comparative literature and literary theory at the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade. Upon obtaining his BA degree (2001), he moved to the United Kingdom to pursue postgraduate study at the University of Nottingham and graduated with MA (by Research) in 2003 and with PhD in 2006. He is now an Associate Professor in Russian and Slavonic Studies at the University of Nottingham and teaches South Slavonic literature, Balkan history, and Serbian/Croatian language. He wrote a monograph on Yugoslav writer Danilo Kiš (*Kiš, legenda i priča*, 2005), a study of literature in exile (*The Rhetoric of Exile: Duress and the Imagining of Force*, 2016), and is now working on a book about the representation of Central Europe and the Habsburg Monarchy in Yugoslav literature. He lives in Nottingham but also spends time in Belgrade and Berlin. In his free time, when not in one of these cities, he is likely to be found somewhere between Donaueschingen (Germany) and Sulina (Romania) exploring the riverscapes and human settlements of the Danube.

## Academics and Artists



**Dr Aleksandar Sasha Dundjerović** is born in Belgrade. He is a full Professor of Performing Arts at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, Birmingham City University. Dundjerović is the founder and executive director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Performative Arts and Associate Director of Research in Performing Arts. He holds PhD from Royal Holloway, University of London, MA from The University of Oklahoma, USA and a BA in Theatre Directing from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts, Belgrade, Serbia. Dundjerović is a professional award-winning theatre director, performance deviser and published author with international experience working in the UK, Ireland, Canada, Serbia, Romania, Iran, Russia, Colombia, and Brazil. He is visiting professor at the University of São Paulo (Brazil), and the University of Arts, Interdisciplinary Arts Doctoral studies, Belgrade (Serbia). Over the years he published several books and articles on the performing arts, contemporary theatre directing, theatre and film practice of Robert Lepage, interdisciplinary and collaborative theatre and performing arts in Brazil and on the creative practice of Canadian theatre and film. His most recent books include *Brazilian Collaborative Theater* (2017); *Brazilian Performing Arts* (2019); and *Robert Lepage – Rutledge Performance Practitioners* (2 ed., 2019); and chapter in a book edited by Jonathan Harris *Terrorism and the Arts*, (Routledge, March 2021) titled 'Harold Pinter and State Terrorism'. He is working on a new book *Live Digital Theatre: Creative Performance Pedagogies* contracted by prestigious publisher Routledge based in London and New York, with the manuscript expected to be published end of 2022.



A Serbian-British academic and writer, **Lazar Džamić** is an ex-journalist, contributor to The Guardian, former agency strategist and a former Head of Brand Planning in Google's creative think tank ZOO in London. He is an Associate Professor in Business School Lausanne (BSL), Associate Lecturer at Goldsmiths University in London, teaches at the MBA programme for the School of Business and Economics in Ljubljana, the PwC's Mini MBA Academy in CEE and at the Faculty for Media and Communications in Belgrade. Serbian audiences know him for his best-selling books 'The Flowerhop in the House of Flowers' (exploring the phenomenon of the bizarre success of the 'Alan Ford' comic book in former Yugoslavia) and 'Damson Tea' (a comparative phenomenology of everyday life in London and the Balkans). His latest book of essays 'Paths Among the Signs' was published in 2020 by FMK Books. He lives in London. The books could be purchased in all better Serbian bookshops.



**Dr Lina Džuverović** is Lecturer in Arts Policy and Management at the Department for Film, Media and Cultural Studies, an independent curator and founding director of Electra, a London-based contemporary arts organisation. Her research focuses on feminist art histories and contemporary art as a site of solidarity and community-building. Lina founded the Decolonial Feminist Forum at Birkbeck in 2019. Previously Lina was Artistic Director of Calvert 22 Foundation, Media Arts Curator at ICA, London, Education Curator at Lux Centre and has taught fine art at University of Reading and Institute for Contemporary Art, TU Graz, Austria. Selected exhibitions include: "Monuments Should Not Be Trusted" (Nottingham Contemporary, 2016), "Sanja Iveković – Unknown Heroine" (South London Gallery and Calvert 22 Foundation, 2012), "27 Senses" (Chisenhale Gallery, London; Kunstmuseet KUBE, Norway, 2009/10), "Favoured Nations" (5th Nordic Biennial of Contemporary Art, 2009), "Her Noise" (South London Gallery, 2005). Prior to completing her PhD at the Critical Writing in Art & Design Department, Royal College of Art and Tate (CDA AHRC), Lina studied at The London Consortium (Birkbeck College), Central Saint Martin's College of Art and Design and Chelsea College of Art and Design.



**Dr Nela Milić** is an artist and an academic working in media and arts. She is a Senior Lecturer at London College of Communication, UAL. Nela has delivered creative projects for the Royal Opera House, Barbican, Arts Council England, John Lewis, Al Jazeera, Oxo Tower, LIFT... She created many multi-media projects where she's dealt with memory, narrative, mapping, archives and participation. She is a recipient of the ECF Artistic grant for the project Wedding Bellas after years of engagement with refugees and asylum seekers and Southwark community arts award for her project Here Comes Everybody. Her PhD 'Balkanising Taxonomy' dealt with the city as a site of spectacle and the culture of protest. She continues working in Belgrade through Kulturklammer, centre for cultural interactions. Nela evaluates EU COST network applications in humanities and is a consultant for the Science Fund of Republic of Serbia. She is a Senior Fellow of Higher Education Academy and a member of Space and Place and Design Activism research hubs at LCC. Nela is on the editorial board of the Journal of Arts and Communities. She is Co-Investigator of the AHRC's Peace and Conflict Cultural Network and part of Arts and Reconciliation research project. She heads post-socialist arts platform at University of the Arts, London, funded by the BSA. Nela is writing a book about Serbian sculptor Olga Jevrić with the support of UK Association for Arts Historians.



**Dr Duška Radosavljević** is a writer, dramaturg and Professorial Research Fellow at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London. As a dramaturg Duška has worked for Northern Stage, New Writing North, Dancecity, NSDF, West Yorkshire Playhouse, Circomedia, Accidental Collective and with Robert Icke on his Oliver Award-winning production of Oresteia at the Almeida / West End. She has also worked in the education department of the RSC and, for thirteen years, as a member of the Stage Newspaper's Edinburgh reviewing team and panel of judges for the Stage Awards in Acting Excellence. She is the author of Aural/Oral Dramaturgies: Theatre in the Digital Age (Routledge 2023) and Theatre-Making: Text and Performance in the 21st Century (Palgrave, 2013). Her edited collections include The Contemporary Ensemble (Routledge, 2013) and Theatre Criticism: Changing Landscapes (Bloomsbury Methuen, 2016). Her research was funded four times by the Arts and Humanities Research Council and she has received significant recognition for her writing and research, including most recently two awards in the United States for her website [www.auralia.space](http://www.auralia.space): the Elliot Hayes Award for Outstanding Contribution to Dramaturgy and the ASTR-ATHE Award for Excellence in Digital Scholarship.





**Mina Radović** is a doctoral researcher and for the past year associate lecturer at Goldsmiths, University of London. He holds a Master of Arts in Film Studies and German Language, Literature and Linguistics from the University of St Andrews, with placements at the University of Vienna and University of Heidelberg. His areas of expertise include the study of language, film history and historiography, archiving and restoration, Serbian cinema and Yugoslav cinema, early cinema and culture, and the study of totalitarian ideologies through language and film (PhD Framing Totalitarianism: Language and Film in 1930s Nazi Germany). A FIAF-trained archivist, curator, historian, and filmmaker, Mina runs Liberating Cinema, a non-profit charitable organisation committed to the representation, restoration and exhibition of world cinema heritage. He runs masterclasses, workshops, symposia, and a regular Film Series. Mina has curated on all periods of film history and an expansive range of world cinema, including first time retrospectives of Serbian and Yugoslav cinema in the Anglophone world, programmes on cinemas from around the world, and special sections on film animation, silent cinema, avant-garde and experimental cinema as well as the work of influential directors. He regularly contributes to international peer-reviewed journals and has given lectures in St Andrews, Oxford, Venice, Amsterdam, and London. Mina also works on film festivals, curating the programme for the St Andrews Film Festival and the selection committee for the Austin Film Festival (Texas, USA). He serves on Film Juries, most recently as Member of the Ecumenical Jury at the 69th International Film Festival Mannheim-Heidelberg.

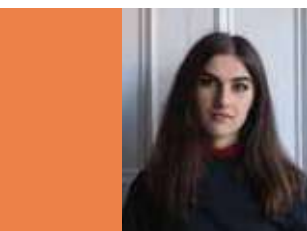


**Dr Tijana Stevanović** is an architect, educator, and artist, working as a Lecturer in Architectural History and Theory at the University College London. She was previously a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Architecture at the Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm. In the past decade Tijana taught architectural design and architectural history and theory at Newcastle University, University for the Creative Arts, and the University of East London. Her work has been published and presented internationally. As a part of her interdisciplinary practice, Tijana regularly initiates, and collaborates in art and curatorial projects in GB, Serbia, and Sweden; she exhibited her work at international exhibitions such as the Venice Architecture Biennale and in art galleries across Europe: Baltic (Newcastle), Grad (Belgrade), Tenderpixel (London), District (Berlin), KTH (Stockholm), etc. Tijana started her academic career at the University of Belgrade, Faculty of Architecture, while still studying for her degree. She then worked in architectural practice in Austria, and was awarded an OSI/FCO Chevening Scholarship for MA cultural studies at the University College London, School of Slavonic and East European Studies. She received her PhD from Newcastle University, with the thesis titled: 'Incorporating Self-management: Architectural Production in New Belgrade'.

## Journalists & Writers



**Mary Novakovich** is an award-winning journalist, travel writer and author based in Hertfordshire. She has spent most of the past 20 years writing regularly for British publications including the Times, Guardian, Telegraph, Independent and CNN Travel, among many others, and also broadcasts reports for BBC Radio 4's From Our Own Correspondent. Her travelogue/memoir, *My Family and Other Enemies: Life and Travels in Croatia's Hinterland*, won the 2023 British Guild of Travel Writers Adele Evans Award for Best Travel Narrative Book of the Year, and it was also shortlisted for the 2023 Stanford Travel Book of the Year. Born to Serbian parents from the Croatian region of Lika, Mary focuses much of her writing on the countries of the former Yugoslavia. As well as writing about Serbia, Croatia, Bosnia and Montenegro, she writes extensively about France, Italy and other European destinations. She has also written and contributed to numerous guidebooks on Croatia and France for publishers including Insight Guides and Frommer's.



**Jelena Sofronijevic** (@jelsofron) is a producer, writer, and researcher based in London. They make content at the intersections of cultural history, politics, and the arts. Published by the Political Studies Association, their undergraduate dissertation uses contemporary political satires to uniquely unpack Tito's socialist Yugoslavia. They have presented an episode of BBC Radio 4's Four Thought on modern Yugoslav diasporic identity, later selected for BBC Radio 4's Pick of the Week and featured on BBC Radio Shropshire. They were interviewed about Yugonostalgia and food for Vittles, and co-produced a podcast on third culture children in diasporas with Remembering Yugoslavia. They also report on contemporary politics in the Balkans, for the likes of The Bunker and Media Storm. Beyond their works in print, they produce podcasts and audio documentaries including EMPIRE LINES, historicity, INDIAscussion, and Cross Examination.



**Sonja Batinić-Besford** is a Serbian writer born in Belgrade. She has fifteen books published, the latest published in 2021 by KoV, To and Fro/Tamo-Amo. She is the author of many short stories, poems and reviews of contemporary literature published in various magazines in UK, USA, Serbia, France etc. Some of her work has been translated into various languages. Sonja is the president of the Association of Serbian Writers and Artists abroad. She is married to a dentist and lives in London.



**Nikola Čobić** was born in Belgrade (Serbia), but for quite a long time he has been living and working in London (UK). He is a writer of poetry and short stories, and until recently the editor of UK based poetry magazine *The Wolf*. His work has been awarded a number of poetry prizes in Serbia, United Kingdom, France and Germany. Nikola writes in Serbian, but translates his work into English. His works are being published in numerous anthologies and periodicals.



**Vesna Goldsworthy** (Belgrade, 1961) is an internationally bestselling and prize-winning writer, academic and broadcaster. In 2021 she was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, becoming the first Serbian member in this august Society's long history. She is Professor in Creative Writing and English Literature at the Universities of Exeter and East Anglia. Goldsworthy writes in English, her third language. Her books include *Chernobyl Strawberries* (a memoir) and *Gorsky* (a novel) both of which have been serialised by the BBC; *Inventing Ruritania: the Imperialism of the Imagination*, a study of Balkan representations which remains a set text at universities worldwide, and a Crashaw-prize winning poetry collection, *The Angel of Salonika*, which was one of the Times' Best Poetry Books of the Year. Vesna Goldsworthy's new novel, *Iron Curtain*, was published in February 2022 by Chatto & Windus in the UK to great critical success. The Momo Kapor Prize winning Serbian edition with *Geopoetika* has been a bestseller since its publication, while the North American edition with WW Norton was published in February 2023.



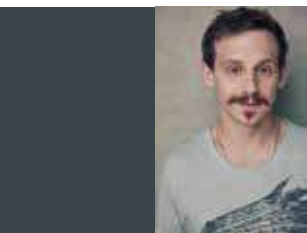
**Dr Jelena Nolan-Roll**, currently living in Bristol, grew up in the New Belgrade blocks in the nineties (*Kakav brate Bruklin brate blok je brate zakon*). She is a violence prevention expert, a creative writer, coach and amateur kickboxer. She is a psychologist by profession (University of Belgrade) with a doctorate in education (University of Bristol). She is interested in human and social stories, as well as the power they give us - or the power we give to them as the society or as individuals. In violence prevention domain, she has led expert teams and participated in global projects, with participants from Silicon Valley to India. Her story about a woman leaving an abusive relationship "*Nesreća*" won first place in the competition of the Association of Independent Writers of Serbia 2021 (<http://www.casopiskvaka.com.hr/2021/03/jelena-nolan-roll-nesreca.html>). Her novel "*Blokovi se pričaju*" is published in December 22. As a coach, she works with clients from various domains, from teachers to Olympians ([drnolanroll.com](http://drnolanroll.com)). She is a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu white belt.

## Drama and Film



**Maya Barcot** is a bi-lingual (Serbian-British) actress based in London. Maya trained at LAMDA (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts) and since graduating she has worked extensively in Theatre and TV in the UK and has also performed in Serbian theatre. Maya has completed Shakespearean workshops with Cicely Berry and has a good knowledge of performing classical Shakespearean text. She is also a workshop leader and an acting teacher. Theatres Maya has worked in include: The Royal Shakespeare Company, The Arcola Theatre, The Print Room, Battersea Arts Centre, Wilton's Music Hall, Hull Truck, Nuffield Theatre Southampton and Vuk Karadžić Theatre in Belgrade. Television credits include: BBC TV (*Happy Valley*, *Doctors*, *Eastenders*), Sky TV (*Critical*, *Fortitude*, *Cobra*), ITV (*Emmerdale*, *The Widow*). Film credits include: *In The Cloud*. Radio credits include: BBC Radio 4 (*The Archers*, *Wives and Daughters*).

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**Djordje (George) Jovanović**, is a Serbian born actor, who grew up in London. He studied Drama (BA Hons) at the University of Exeter and continued his training at The Oxford School of Drama. Djordje's career has been focussed on film and television, with his most notable performances in Johnny Depp's directorial debut "MODI," Netflix's "Luther: The Fallen Sun" and "Kiss Me First." (Channel4 TV Series). Beyond his on-screen presence, Djordje's creative talents also extend to writing and is set to shoot his latest script in Zlatibor, Serbia in 2024. <https://app.spotlight.com/4610-4504-1862>

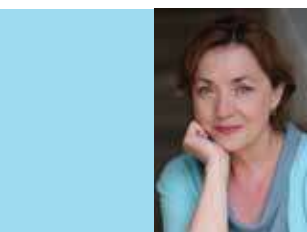


**Ivan Lazić** is a TV Director, Producer and Edit Producer based in London, although his story doesn't start here. Ivan was born in Italy in 1986 and moved to Belgrade a year later, where his parents are from. Leaving Belgrade in 1989, he moved to the UK where he has spent most of his life, with stints living in Germany and Italy. As with many other who have had the luck and privilege of living in different places, such a nomadic lifestyle has given him a strong and vivid appreciation for different peoples and cultures and it's something that he has tried to capture in the films he has worked on, wherever possible. Ivan's career has taken him to places as far as the Grand Canyon in the US, deep into the Arctic Circle in Norway, the Fargoesque plains of wintery Minnesota - and now Serbia.

'The Europe from Above' episode on Serbia is his first film on his country of origin and Ivan was not only ecstatic, but deeply honoured, to be given the opportunity to make it. Some might say it's impossible to capture the essence of a country in 45 minutes, but he hopes to have given a new perspective of our beautiful country not only to those who don't know it at all, but also to those who know it very well. 'If I have managed to succeed at least a little in that, then my job is done' Ivan says.



**Maria Pavlovich (Allport)** studied at Westminster University with a major in film production followed by acting at The Drama Studio London. She was involved in British film and TV productions behind and in front of the camera, including a support character in *The Bill*, the drama *Lady Audley's Secret* and *James Bond*. As a member of the children's Drama Group Radio and TV Belgrade she was in a popular series *Bolji Život (Better Life)*. Maria has been regularly invited to read poetry and prose in both Serbian and English at book promotions including events at the Serbian Embassy in London, Serbian Library as well as working closely with Vesna Petković (Pro Art & Co) and pianist Maya Jordan. Maria is also a voice over artist



**Vesna Stanojević**, actress in Theatre, Film and TV <http://www.spotlight.com/9410-7869-7507>. Also Head of Acting at the BA Acting MT course at the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama <https://www.cssd.ac.uk/staff/vesna-stanojevic-ba>.

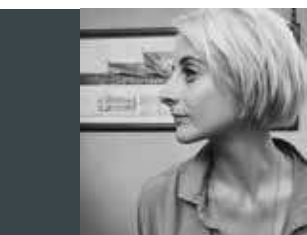
As a Senior Lecturer, she has developed her own acting methodology, combining the two very different acting techniques: Stanislavsky Acting Method and the Acting Technique of Étienne Decroux, called '*The Space Between The Lines*'. Vesna's professional acting work is informing her teaching and her alumni are working internationally.



**Maja Milatović-Ovadia** is a theatre director, facilitator and visiting lecturer. She had directed numerous productions for the principal national theatres of Serbia, Montenegro and Slovenia as well as for various theatre companies in the UK, working in a range of context including devised work, classic and contemporary text-based theatre, music theatre, experimental opera and community theatre. Further aspects of her work have resulted in the developing socially engaged art projects, focuses on the use of comedy and humour within collaborative theatre practice, that support process of reconciliation. She studied Directing at the University of Belgrade (BA), obtained MA in Advanced Theatre Practice from Royal School of Speech and Drama and further trained at the National Theatre Studio in London and Directors Lab West in Los Angeles. Maja is currently PhD researcher at RCSSD in London. Her articles on theatre making were published in several theatre and peacebuilding journals. <https://majamilatovicovadia.wordpress.com/>



**Ella Dorman-Gajić** is a writer, performer, and creative producer working across theatre, screen, audio drama and poetry. Her work has been described as "impassioned" by the Guardian. Her 5-star stage play *Trade* premiered at Omnibus Theatre, supported by Arts Council England, when it was awarded an OffComm. It went onto a UK tour in 2023, starting with a sell-out at *The Pleasance*, and finishing with another sell-out show at Norwich Arts Centre. The tour achieved multiple 4 and 5-star reviews. *Trade* is published by Salamander Street and can be purchased online. Her theatrical work has also been staged at Drama Centre London, Exeter Phoenix, Brighton Theatre Royal, The Old Red Lion, The Arcola and more. Her debut short film as a screenwriter, *Back of the Net* was executive produced by Depot Cinema and has just been selected for a number of Bifa-accredited film festivals. As an actor, she plays Tam in the Radio 4 Drama series *Song of the Reed*. She has starred in 2 multi-award-winning short films, including *The Boy with a Camera for a Face*, which was screened at film festivals around the UK and on Channel 4. She's performed her poetry sets around the country, written numerous poetry commissions and co-hosts/produces *Off The Chest*, a sell-out London poetry night supported by Arts Council England.



**Sasha Milavic Davies** works as a director, choreographer, and dramaturg. She was a founding member and inaugural Artistic Associate of the Yard Theatre. She was awarded the Muci Draškić award for best director in Serbia in 2018. Her dance show for 200 women Everything that rises must dance is touring international festivals. She is an Associate at Complicite. Recent work as a choreographer includes The Murder of Halit Yozgat (Hannover, Germany), Shoelady (Royal Court), The Antipodes (National Theatre), Touching the Void (Duke of York, West End). As choreographer/movement director, theatre includes: Murder of Halit Yozgat (Hannover Staatsoper), Shoelady (Royal Court), The Antipodes (National Theatre), Touching the Void (Bristol Old Vic/ Duke of York), Our Town (Regents Park OAT), Merry Wives of Windsor (Shakespeare's Globe), Berberian Sound Studio (Donmar Warehouse), Pity (Royal Court); The Writer (Almeida), Jubilee (Royal Exchange, Manchester/Lyric, Hammersmith), The Suppliant Women (Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh/Actors Touring Company/Young Vic). As director, theatre includes: Language of Kindness (Wayward Productions), She Ventures and He Wins (Young Vic), Pet Života Pretužnog Milutina, Moja Ti, Constellations (Atelje 212, Serbia) One Side to the Other [installation] (Akram Khan Company/The Lowry). As choreographer and associate director, dramaturg - dance & opera includes: upcoming Wozzeck (Aix-en-Provence), upcoming Overflow (Sadler's Wells), Weimar Nightfall (LA Philharmonia), Everything That Rises Must Dance (Dance Umbrella/Complicité), La Bianca Notte (Hamburg Opera), Von Heute Auf Morgen, Sancta Susana (Opera de Lyon).

## Comedy

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**Gordana Mičić** MBA MENG CENG MIET MAPM is an engineer, nuclear physicist, pilot, producer, dancer, host, business change leader, mother. Gordana mentors professionals & youth from career coaching for school leavers, mentoring engineers and project professionals to chartered qualifications & as performance coach enables them to bust limiting beliefs and remove barriers to success. Groovie Comedy is an award winning indie production company showcasing variety of talent including stand up comedy, improv, musical, dance, character, drama as well as coaching & wellbeing professionals and coaches. Winner of most socially responsible newcomer SME in 2023 and best newcomer comedy club. Groovie Bunch support mental & holistic health initiatives as well as holding contracts with NHS, key workers and National Rail Days Out enabling good value and continuous support to mitigate against low mood and rise those vibrational states in community & numerous corporate partners. Small business but mighty with their audacious goals in making a difference in this world!

## Visual Art

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**Vladimir Lalić** was born in 1983 in Belgrade, where he graduated at the Faculty of Applied Arts (FPU), University of Belgrade in 2008. From 2008 to 2012, he worked as an expert-assistant at the same university in the printmaking department. He enrolled MFA Fine arts in 2022 at Goldsmiths University of London. He currently lives and works in London, UK.

Lalić had 32 solo exhibitions and participated in over 80 group exhibitions, domestic and international (New York, Singapore, Paris, London, Trieste, Bristol...). He was the youngest artist to exhibit solo at Museum of Belgrade, Serbia in 2020.

He has won six awards for his visual works, including the Paul Louis Weller Prize, awarded by the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France. He was also one of the finalists for the Antoine Marin award for painting in Paris, France, as well as a special award at LYNX ART in Trieste, Italy, all in 2017. Lalić's works are in private and public collections around the world.

Vladimir Lalić also has a career as a vocal performer and a musician. He played the main role of Nemorino in the opera L'elisir d'amore, the role of Giles in the musical Rebecca, and as a member of ensemble in the musical Les Miserables, all from 2013. He was a member and a soloist of a choir Viva Vox where he performed on more than 150 concerts world-wide including the stage of United Nations in New York, USA and The Great Hall of people in Beijing, China. He has 2 LP releases that he composed, 3 LP releases featuring his appearance, 2 live albums and as a guest appearance on 25 full length albums.



Serbian born photographer **Nenad Obradović** is based in Notting Hill, London. His passion for photography started at the end of secondary school when he got his first digital camera. Although he loved to snap pretty much everything around, portraits were always something that stood out and he enjoyed it the most. Since opening his first photographic studio and shop in 2001 in Serbia, Nenad's growing successful business gave him a good reputation.

After moving to the UK in 2007, Nenad continued as a freelance photographer covering numerous events such as presidential and royal visits, diplomatic events, high religious events, gala dinners, corporate events, concerts, theatre plays and festivals.

Nenad's photos have been featured on numerous websites such as Songlines, BBC, Daily Post, Wales Online, Metro, Radio Television Serbia, Blic, Serbian Royal family website, Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra etc. Along with photography, Nenad developed a successful carpentry and decorating business. Over many years of experience Nenad became an expert in his craft with an eye for precision and a consistently good finish. Currently, he is more focused on this side of the business.

You can see his work at [www.obradovic.co.uk](http://www.obradovic.co.uk) or you can follow him on Instagram @obradovicskills to stay up to date with everything that he does.



**Dr Đorđe Perendia**: Starting in '70's as a conceptual artist with exhibitions of graphic works such as ones based on the 1976 music performance "Einstein on the Beach" by Philip Glass, Đorđe gained a Fine Art degree in 1984. His metaphysical sculptural work has been greatly inspired by the contrast between contemporary technology and the arts of ancient Mediterranean cultures and memorial sculptural art, steles. His recent works include memorials dedicated to victims of recent wars and graphic works based on contemporary music (Sono-logies). Đorđe also gained a masters in Computer Graphics modelling of Cubist art, studied Sociology and read on linguistics and its applications in art and design. Inspired by his own art work of 1980s and 1990s based on chaos of natural phenomena and unpredictable behaviour of humans, he recently gained masters of science and a doctorate degrees on stochastic modelling and human behaviour in economics. He also writes essays on culture, language, philosophy of science, sustainability and design. Recent Exhibitions: Le Salon des Arts, Paris (Dec. 2015); Exeter Phoenix, 1st – 27th December 2005; London Foundry, March 2005.

Texts: <https://wsimag.com/authors/475-george-perendia> Art: <http://www.perendia.co.uk>



**Dragana Perišić** is a self-declared creative, who by chance, happened to express herself through fashion design. While studying economics at Belgrade University, she had made a short trip to London to find a part for her motorbike. Upon arrival, she quickly fell in love with the city and made it her permanent home. After graduating from London College of Fashion, Dragana was noticed by buyers and sold her college collection to a few shops in the UK and abroad. With this, she immediately launched her own, self-funded brand, and she has remained independent ever since. In 2006, she opened her first shop in East London, where she still lives, works, teaches, collaborates and learns. Dragana is an occasional visiting lecturer and has trained many students. Her brand's distinctive style has evolved over the years, but it has always been an unmistakable blend of her two homes - Serbia and Britain. [www.draganaperisic.com](http://www.draganaperisic.com)



**Slavica Plemić** is a London based artist, focused on crucial aspects of human existence and survival in a world where a human being is SIMULTANEOUSLY an individual and an inseparable part of the society, of nature, of the universe. Conceptualist and anti-globalist. Her main interests remain religion, history and philosophy, while her means of artistic expression are essays, painting, sculpture.

As a graduate economist (Sarajevo, ex-Yugoslavia), she attended the London School of Technology and Artistic Glass Processing. A longtime member of the Brent Artist Register (BAR), she has had many solo and group exhibitions in London. Also exhibited in New York, San Francisco and Miami (USA), as well as in Monaco. Blog: [www.artglassphilosophy.blogspot.com](http://www.artglassphilosophy.blogspot.com)



**Vlastimir Zerić** from Kruševac is a Serbian jeweller, designer and sculptor based in London. He works with precious metals, silver and gold, joining past and present time, people, customs and different cultures. Vlastimir's work is inspired by women and their beauty. His work Sterling silver dress was selected by invited artist Chris Orr, The Royal Society of British Artists to be exhibited at their Annual Exhibition 2020 at Mall Galleries, St. James's. Apart from his love for art, Vlastimir is also a passionate dancer of tango, salsa and waltz. More details: [www.facebook.com/vlado.batica](http://www.facebook.com/vlado.batica)

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