

Katyusha

Written by bluelover

Monday, 04 July 2016 22:17 - Last Updated Monday, 04 July 2016 22:38

Katyusha

One of the most famous melodies from the musical propaganda of the Soviet Union is undoubtedly the song “**Katyusha**.” Many people - including Russians - think this song is from the old Russian folklore, but nothing is farther from the truth. The tune was written in 1938 as part of the propaganda machine of the Soviet Union which, in that time, was running at full capacity. The word Katyusha is a tender nickname derived from the Russian name Ekaterina (Catherine). The name is fondly thought of by Russians for two main reasons, both emerging from the darkest days of the 20th century.

Katyusha

In 1938, as the light of peace was being extinguished across Europe once again, two Russians, composer **Matvey Blanter** and his poet friend **Mikhail Isakovsky**, wrote the score and words for a song. Katyusha tells the story of a peasant girl who longs for her beloved, who is serving far away on the border. The song evokes three themes central to the Russian psyche: the loyal girl pining for her love, the heroic soldier and the Motherland. The tune is upbeat and rousing, but the themes of love, national pride and the impending sense of war are all present. Little perhaps did the song's creators know how Katyusha's prophetic elements would be played out, just three years later.



Matvey Blanter

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In 1936, the Committee for Artistic Affairs made the decision to establish the State Jazz Orchestra of the USSR. Conductor Viktor Nikolaevich Knushevitsky (1906-1972) was assigned to the function of musical director. The goal was to canalize the so-called mass song in the direction desired by the regime. On November 27, 1938, the Orchestra had its first performance. It was in the Colonnade of the House of Unions, parodied by Bulgakov in Chapter 5 of "The Master and Margarita" as the Coliseum. And immediately the band made its social mission true. For the occasion, Blanter had written the song "Katyusha" on a text by the poet Isakovsky. It was sung by Valentina Batishcheva that evening, and it was an instant success.



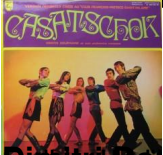
Mikhail Isakovsky

In July 1941, the Soviet Union had already become a state full of hapless Katyushas as German armies killed or captured millions of Russian and Ukrainian soldiers. It was then, at this critical moment that female students from an industrial school in Moscow sang the song to the men marching past them to the front. The song deeply touched the soldiers and became popular throughout the USSR and Poland, a call to fight off the German Nazis.

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Shooting Katyusha rockets from the Katyusha launchers

Katyusha rocket launcher, the movie "Bella Ciao" entitled "Fascist puppet" to the

the book "fischia il vento" (the wind whistles) the book "fischia il vento" (the wind whistles)

making "Casatschok" the some of the lyrics changed to the "Katyusha"

Boris Rubaschkin, the author of the "Katyusha" song, in 1945, with the lyrics "Katyusha"

Katyusha (the woman in the white dress) is the symbol of the "Katyusha" song

the book "fischia il vento" (the wind whistles) the book "fischia il vento" (the wind whistles)

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