

**Plyve Kacha**  
**A Ukrainian folk lament**

**Arranged for**  
**carillon**  
**by**

**Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra & Jet Schouten**  
**A Collaborative Investigative Composition**



©Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra, 2022. All rights reserved.

When more than one hundred unarmed Ukrainian protestors were killed by snipers in Maidan (Independence) Square on February 18 and 20, 2014, “Plyve Kacha” was used in the mass funeral on February 21, 2014, and has since become a requiem for Ukrainians. The protestors disagreed with President Yanukovich’s decision not to sign an Association Agreement that could have led to Ukraine joining the European Union. Instead, Yanukovich sought a loan from Russia. After the Maidan Square massacre, Yanukovich fled to Russia. When Ukraine was destabilized due to civil unrest, Vladimir Putin annexed Crimea to Russia, and the conflict in Donbass arose.

“Plyve Kacha” is a mournful Ukrainian folk song originating (in various versions) in the western regions of Trans-Carpathia or Lemkivshchyna (in the Carpathian Mountains). The title translates to “the duckling swims.” The song lyrics, however, refer to a conversation between a mother and her son, who is going off to war. BBC’s Irena Taranyuk translated two lines:

“My dear mother, what will happen to me if I die in a foreign land?”

“Well, my dearest, you will be buried by other people.”

Dutch journalist Jet Schouten and I met at the University of Michigan, where she received a Knight-Wallace fellowship in journalism 2019–2020. When I gave a storytelling on the carillon demonstration for the fellows, Jet and Venezuelan journalist Marielba Núñez approached me about taking carillon lessons and collaborating in journalistic storytelling on the carillon. Thus, Collaborative Investigative Composing (CIC) was born.

Before our academic year concluded, however, the pandemic struck. On March 19, 2020, we received word that campus would close the next day. Jet asked me to meet in the tower one last time. She wanted us to create a CIC in response to the pandemic. She suggested that this melancholic Ukrainian folk tune offered the affect for such a grave world crisis. We wrote “Healing Bells,” and featured our arrangement of “Plyve Kacha” in that composition. In response to the unwarranted 2022 invasion of Ukraine, we offer an expanded arrangement solely of “Plyve Kacha.” See <https://pamelaruiterfeenstra.com/compositions> for all four versions: carillon; choir or organ; choir or organ abbreviated; violin, cello, and organ, and for “Healing Bells.”

---

For information on “Plyve Kacha,” see <https://www.pri.org/node/65044/popout> and listen to the wonderful six-voice *a cappella* ensemble Pikkardiyska Tertsia sing the folk tune: [https://youtu.be/-KNHAXbH\\_nY](https://youtu.be/-KNHAXbH_nY), and see more about the ensemble here:

<https://www.ukraine.com/blog/pikkardiyska-tertsiya-the-power-of-the-human-voice/>.

The Ukrainian folk song “Plyve Kacha” was widely used in another crisis in 2014, after more than 100 protestors were killed by snipers in Kiev’s Maidan (Independence Square). See Andrea Crossan’s report for *The World*, April 16, 2014, “An old Ukrainian folk song takes on new meaning in the current crisis:”

<https://www.pri.org/stories/2014-04-16/old-ukrainian-folk-song-takes-new-meaning-current-crisis>.

See also Nataliya Bezborodova, “Nebesna Sotnia: Formation of a New Narrative from Protest Lore to Institutionalized Commemorative Practice.” *Ethnologies*, Vol. 40, no. 1, 2018.

[https://www.academia.edu/48392208/Nebesna\\_Sotnia](https://www.academia.edu/48392208/Nebesna_Sotnia)

# Plyve Kacha for Carillon

Ukrainian folk lament

arr. Pamela Ruiter-Feenstra & Jet Schouten

Grave, with singing rubato (♩ = ca. 60)

5

*mp*

5

*mp* *f*

Plyve Kacha

12

Call (improvisatory)

*f* *p*

tenor melody

drone

17

*p* *f* *p*

tenor melody

22

Response

*mp* *f* *mp*

tenor melody

28

Musical score for measures 28-34. The piece is in B-flat major (two flats). Measure 28: Treble clef has a half note B-flat (mp), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (f). Measure 29: Treble clef has a whole rest, Bass clef has a half note B-flat. Measure 30: Treble clef has a whole rest, Bass clef has a half note B-flat. Measure 31: Treble clef has a half note D (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 32: Treble clef has a half note E (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 33: Treble clef has a half note F (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 34: Treble clef has a half note G (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). A slur covers measures 31-34 in the treble staff.

35

*Response*

Musical score for measures 35-40. Measure 35: Treble clef has a half note B-flat (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 36: Treble clef has a half note D (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 37: Treble clef has a half note E (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 38: Treble clef has a half note F (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 39: Treble clef has a half note G (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 40: Treble clef has a half note A (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). A slur covers measures 35-40 in the treble staff. A dashed line connects the 'f' dynamic in measure 38 of the treble staff to the 'f' dynamic in measure 38 of the bass staff.

41

Musical score for measures 41-47. Measure 41: Treble clef has a half note B-flat (mp), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (f). Measure 42: Treble clef has a whole rest, Bass clef has a half note B-flat. Measure 43: Treble clef has a whole rest, Bass clef has a half note B-flat. Measure 44: Treble clef has a half note D (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 45: Treble clef has a half note E (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 46: Treble clef has a half note F (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 47: Treble clef has a half note G (f), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). A slur covers measures 44-47 in the treble staff.

48

Musical score for measures 48-51. Measure 48: Treble clef has a half note B-flat (mf), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 49: Treble clef has a half note D (mf), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 50: Treble clef has a half note E (mf), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 51: Treble clef has a half note F (mf), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). A slur covers measures 48-51 in the treble staff.

52

Musical score for measures 52-55. Measure 52: Treble clef has a half note G (mf), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 53: Treble clef has a half note A (mf), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 54: Treble clef has a half note B (mf), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). Measure 55: Treble clef has a half note C (mf), Bass clef has a half note B-flat (mp). A slur covers measures 52-55 in the treble staff.

56

*f*

*mp*

62

*mf*

*pp*

*mf*

*pp*

66

bring out outer voices

*f*

3

3

3

71

*p*

*mf*

76

*mp* allargando

*mf*