



Ambassador's Blog: Songs of Hope at Spaso House, in Memory of Boris Pavlovich Buryachenko



Spaso House, the U.S. Ambassador's Residence in Moscow, has long been the site of events that serve to highlight the strong ties between our two countries. Few have been as moving as the concert we held on February 7 featuring the incomparable Tamara Gverdtsiteli and the Moscow Male Jewish Capella, directed by Alexander Tsaliuk.

Planned many months ago, this concert became all the more poignant when we learned that a member of the Moscow Male Jewish Capella—23-year-old Boris Pavlovich Buryachenko, who was also a member of the Alexandrov Ensemble of the Russian Armed Forces—was among the 92 souls who perished in the tragic events of December 25 last year. I am told that Boris was a wonderful musician, a great friend, and a thoughtful and loving son. Those who knew him well called him a bright light for everyone he ever met.

It was a great honor to host Boris Pavlovich's parents, Pavel Borisovich and Anna Yefimovna, at the concert, which the performers dedicated to the memory of their departed friend.

Throughout an evening of incredible music, the performers shared their memories of Boris and spoke of what music meant to him.

As they always do, Tamara and the choir held the audience in rapture, moving us all from laughter to tears and back again. To see an audience of people from many nations united through the power of music was a powerful reminder that, deep down, we are all the same. Whether Russian or American, Christian or Jewish, we are all first and foremost human beings who know the same love, the same laughter, the same grief as our neighbors.

After the show, the great Alexander Levenbuk shared his hope with the audience that music like this can bring us closer together and inspire us to create a better world. “Today, our people want more than good relations with the United States; they want friendship. Together, our countries can do a great deal of good for the whole world. If Jewish folk music, Tamara, Sasha, our artist friends, and you, too, ladies and gentlemen, can play some role in that, then our hopes will become that much more real.”

Tamara herself perhaps best expressed what all of us were feeling after the show: “All this greatness—the music that surrounds us—it gives us the strength to believe in the future—that our children will be happy, and we will never again see war. What a true artist does—an artist in a large sense of the word—is call for peace, for good, for love. An artist connects us to this feeling of beauty, when you can hear and see all the good that surrounds us—that there are no boundaries, no barriers, that all of this is open to us. I want people to live with these thoughts, so we will not be afraid of tomorrow.”

To truly bring people together—to help them realize everything that they value in common, and inspire them to work together, rather than against one another—is a lot to ask of anyone, whether artist or diplomat. But it remains our great hope, just as it was the hope of Boris Buryachenko—one more reason it was a great honor to dedicate this incredible evening of music to him.

Playlists with all songs performed at the concert can be found on our page on VKontakte: [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#). You can also watch a [video of the entire concert](#) recorded live on our Facebook page. For more great music from Spaso House, follow us on [Facebook](#) and [VK](#).