

THE DEVELOPMENT OF DOIRA PERFORMANCE: THE SCHOOL OF MASTER USTA OLIM KOMILOV AND THE CONTINUITY OF GENERATIONS**Xaitkulov Muzaffar Sattarovich**

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Annotation

The article explores the historical development of doira performance, from its origins as a traditional ceremonial instrument to its status as a professional stage art. The social and aesthetic significance of the doira is analyzed within the framework of Eastern musical thought, particularly the ideas of Abu Nasr Muhammad Farabi. The legacy of Master Usta Olim Komilov and his disciples is recognized as a key factor in the formation of doira performance as an independent art form.

Keywords

Doira performance, master–apprentice tradition, school of masters, beat, rhythm, master–apprentice practices, integrity of music education, children’s music and art schools, national instrument performance.

Historical sources indicate that the doira is one of the most widespread percussion instruments among Central Asian and Eastern peoples, known in various regions by names such as “dapp,” “childirma,” and “chirmanda.” The diversity of these names reflects the instrument’s deep integration into the life of the people. In ancient times, the sounds of the doira accompanied public celebrations, seasonal festivals, and mass ceremonies. This suggests that the doira functioned not merely as a musical instrument, but also as a socio-communicative medium, serving as a symbolic tool that awakened collective consciousness and united communities. In Eastern musical thought, rhythm is considered the musical expression of the order of existence. This idea is reflected in Abu Nasr Muhammad Farabi’s *“Great Book on Music”*, where musical performance is interpreted in connection with human spirituality and cosmic harmony. The doira, in its simplicity, effectively embodies this harmony. The indeterminate pitch of its sound (as an instrument with non-fixed tones) also has philosophical significance: it does not conform to rigid patterns, but resonates according to the performer’s inner state, sense of rhythm, and spiritual experience. Consequently, doira performance has always retained a unique and unrepeatable character.

In Uzbek national musical culture, doira performance has developed over centuries through the master–apprentice tradition, transmitted orally and practically from generation to generation. It evolved not only as a rhythmic accompanying instrument but also as an independent performance school, nurtured by the work of masters. In traditional doira schools, the role of the master is paramount, as they teach not only technical performance techniques but also the sense of rhythm,

musical thinking, national style, and stage etiquette. The complexity of doira rhythms and techniques was acquired not merely from written sources but directly from the master's example.

The continuity of doira performance over the centuries has been largely ensured by the master-apprentice tradition. In particular, the creative and pedagogical legacy of Usta Olim Komilov played a crucial role in elevating the art of doira to the level of professional stage performance. His contributions to the professionalization of doira are unparalleled. For more than a quarter of a century, he trained doira performers and established a strong school of national percussion artistry. Usta Olim Komilov transformed the doira from a simple accompanying instrument into an independent artistic medium, earning recognition as a great master. Although he passed away in 1953, his performance and pedagogical legacy has continued uninterrupted through his disciples. One of his distinguished students, To'ychi Inog'omov, thoroughly mastered his teacher's theoretical and practical approaches, enriched them in the oral tradition, and transmitted them to the next generation. Another talented disciple, G'ofur Azimov, systematized the techniques of the Komilov school and transcribed them into written notation, thus taking an important step toward scientific study and teaching of doira performance. This process became a vivid example of the synthesis of oral tradition and written musical culture.

The scholarly work of Ilyos Akbarov was instrumental in introducing the legacy of Usta Olim Komilov and his students to the academic community and broader public. His research and publications serve as critical resources for understanding the historical significance of the Komilov school. The school established by Usta Olim Komilov is not only a historical phenomenon but also a significant methodological and cultural resource for modern musical education. Its principles, transmitted through the master-apprentice system, ensure the continuity of Uzbek national musical culture.

In his style, the doira became not only a rhythmical accompaniment instrument but an independent means of artistic expression. Subsequent generations of doira performers created etudes, compositions, and anthologies, helping systematize doira performance into written notation. This process represents the integration of oral tradition with written culture.

The rich legacy of Usta Olim Komilov continues to serve as a major educational foundation for new generations. Renowned doira performers such as *G'ofur Azimov*, *G'ofur Inog'omov*, *Rahim Isaxo'jayev*, *Eyner Barayev*, *Qahramon Dadayev*, *Ravshan Akbarbekov*, *Odil Kamolxo'jayev*, *Dadaxo'ja Sottixo'jayev*, and *To'ychi Inog'omov* have preserved and extended his traditions. Additionally, A. Kh. Liviyev (Tashkent State Conservatory) created a collection of "Etudes for Doira"; Y. Haqqulov (SamDU, Faculty of Music) compiled a "Collection of Doira Pieces"; Asliddin Sirojev (Senior Lecturer, SamDSBY) composed "Doira Pieces," and A. Ashrafkhoyayev wrote "Doira Class Anthology."

The doira itself is a simple circular instrument, approximately 400 mm in diameter. Traditionally, its frame was made from grapevine, but later from bent wood or smaller segments joined together. The membrane is covered with calf, fish, or occasionally sheep skin. Over forty small rings are attached to the frame, producing additional resonance when the doira is played. These small rings, called *shing'iroq* or *shilshila*, are made of copper or iron.

The doira produces two main sounds: the low “bum” (called “gup” in Khorezm) and the high “bak” (called “toq” in Khorezm). Two successive short sounds are called “bakko” or “bakka” (tak-tak), or “bak-bak” / “taka.” Historically, a bum corresponded to a quarter note, and a **bak** also to a quarter note. “Bak-bak” equaled two quarter notes, while “bakka” equaled two eighth notes. Pauses between measures were marked as “Ist.” After the 1930s, doira methods were standardized by writing bum below and bak above the staff, developed by A. Eychgorn, V. Leysok, N. Mironov, and V. Uspenskiy.

Doira tones vary depending on the tension of its membrane; the same note may differ in pitch. Performance technique depends on the right and left hands, where the doira is struck—center, edge, or slightly off-center—producing distinct sounds. Sometimes metal rings are attached to the fingers for additional effects. In the 1950s–1960s, A. I. Petrosyans modified doira playing methods at the Tashkent Experimental Laboratory. A four-line staff system was introduced and remains in use today, with separate notation for right and left hand sounds. Ensuring continuity across generations requires a coherent curriculum at every level, aligned repertoire policies, and collaboration among qualified specialists. Post-independence reforms in Uzbekistan created new opportunities for preserving and developing the heritage of doira performance. Music schools, specialized art schools, and higher education institutions now include doira as an academic subject, supporting systematic transmission of master traditions.

Nevertheless, in some institutions, gradual mastery, progression of complexity, and integration of oral methods with notation are not always adequately applied, potentially causing disruptions in continuity, repertoire, and technical level. The master–apprentice tradition remains the central factor in maintaining the integrity of doira art. Today, doira is taught from primary music schools to higher education, but gaps between educational stages can lead to interruptions in the tradition, affecting repertoire and performance complexity.

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