



## Yuri Bohdan Turchyn

June 16, 1950 - April 14, 2024

Yuri Bohdan Turchyn, 73, was not just a musician but a man who lived and breathed music. He departed this world on Sunday, April 14, 2024, peacefully in the arms of his wife, Christina. Born on June 16, 1950, in Trenton, New Jersey, he was a cherished member of a small but close-knit Ukrainian diaspora community where he served as an altar boy at St. Josaphat's Ukrainian Catholic Church and was an active member of the Ukrainian scouting organization Plast.

His musical journey began at the tender age of six when he started playing the violin under the guidance of Professor Trytiak. His talent was evident when he won the Mercer County String Competition in high school. This early success paved the way for his exploration of other musical instruments and genres, such as the guitar, harmonies, and songwriting. The camaraderie he experienced at the Ukrainian scouting organization Plast and the scout camps left an indelible mark on him as a Ukrainian American performer.

Yuri graduated from Rutgers College, New Brunswick, in 1972 with a B.A. in International Studies. Despite the opportunity to pursue graduate studies in Edinburgh, he chose a different path. He moved back into a campus dorm and co-founded the country rock band Kinderhook Creek, where his original songwriting skills shined. He also honed his classical voice techniques under the tutelage of Tom Rexdale, a prominent ragtime piano player and vocal coach known as the "Professor of Singing" out of Julliard. This diverse musical journey led to becoming arguably one of the most popular bands in New

Jersey during the 1970s.

In the following decades, he explored and challenged himself as he delved into jazz influences with Now, Voyager. This was a precursor to his most notable project, Yuri Turchyn+GRUPO YURI (YTGy), a fusion of Latin, Jazz, and World Beat rhythms. The band's performances at A-list jazz festivals and clubs were a testament to Yuri's versatility and adaptability. As a lifelong working musician, he excelled in various roles, including singer-songwriter, arranger, session player, recording producer, and sound sculptor. His contributions to Jersey Shore's music history are undeniable, leaving a lasting imprint on the local music scene.

Yuri leaves his wife, Christina Kotlar, in great sadness; his sister, Luba Turchyn, in Virginia; and cousins, Antoinette and Natalie Shilkevich, in New Jersey. He also leaves extended Shilkevich-Turchyn family in Ukraine, Poland, and Trinidad and Tobago. A memorial liturgy will be held at 8 a.m. on Saturday, May 25, 2024, at St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church, 212 President Street, Passaic, New Jersey. Family and friends are welcome to celebrate his life at the brunch repast following the liturgy. Like a warrior, Yuri battled for his life.

An In Memoriam Donations for amputees and traumatic brain injury therapy: Veteran Coalition International (VCI), <https://www.vetcoa.org/>, is a registered US public charity (IRS 501[c]3 organization) with partners around the world. West Point to Ukraine: The Journey of Colonel Hartwell.

Memorial contributions may be made to the Arts that are Healing: Yara Arts Group <https://www.justgiving.com/yaraartsgroupinc>

Bruce Springsteen Archives & Center for American Music at Monmouth University is a registered 501c(3) charity whose mission includes preserving historical music-related materials. <https://springsteenarchives.org/give/>

# Previous Events

## Memorial Liturgy

MAY **25**. 8:00 AM (ET)

St. Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church  
212 President St  
Passaic, NJ 07055

# Tribute Wall



“ I will never forget how Yuri graced me with his God-given talent one night before the clock struck twelve in 2017. I was so touched that he took the time to sing Mnohaya Lita, a cappella, to me on my birthday...a new Ukrainian friend he and Christina had only recently made on the Jersey Shore. Yuri’s angelic voice, and kindness, broke through the darkness from the stage, and brought tears to my eyes.  
I know I will never hear it sung that way again.



My heartfelt condolences to you, Christina,  
and the Turchyn family.  
Sadly,  
Maruscha

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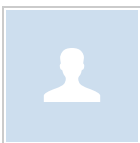
**Maria Chrystyna** - May 24, 2024 at 03:27 PM



“ Natalie Korsheniuk Pollock planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Yuri Bohdan Turchyn.

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**Natalie Korsheniuk Pollock** - May 17, 2024 at 11:54 AM



“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Yuri Bohdan Turchyn.



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May 17, 2024 at 11:54 AM

GS

“ George and Sarah purchased the *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* for the family of Yuri Bohdan Turchyn.



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**George and Sarah** - May 15, 2024 at 02:56 PM

IK

“ I considered Yuri a good friend. I serviced his violins and bows and we always had great conversations on music, violins and life in general. We would spend hours chatting and I will miss our periodic get togethers and exchanges of ideas. My deepest condolences to Christina and Yuri's family. He was a true colleague.

*Ira Kraemer*

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**Ira Kraemer** - May 01, 2024 at 06:59 PM



“ I had the extreme pleasure of producing Yuri on a *Jersey Shore* album. His talent was sparkling.

*My sympathies to his family*

*Jay Stone (Fiorentino)*

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**John Fiorentino** - April 21, 2024 at 07:14 PM



GN

*I only knew Yuri through his devoted wife Christina who fought like a tigress to support him every day in every way in his battle to survive the constant and bizarre assaults on his once healthy body that eventually defeated them both. The irony of a man with such vitality and talent through a long life struggling at the end through such inexplicable medical challenges seemed so unfair to both as they fought together.*

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**George Nilson** - April 27, 2024 at 09:05 AM

AM

*I don't know you, George, but I sadly agree, it was criminal and still is. (I knew Yuri for over 35 years, and was a performing musical partner of his for nearly 20 years.)* Andrea Migliaccio

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**Andrea Migliaccio** - May 26, 2024 at 04:19 PM

LR

*This is a note to wife Christina whom I met Friday evening, Sept 6, 2024 at the Mainstay in Rock Hall, Md. I'm sorry that I did not switch gears faster when I saw your eyes get glassy at first mention of your husband Yuri. I should have dropped the topic rather than ask you questions. I see on this site that his loss was very recent and the service just 4 months ago. Of course you would get emotional in a musical setting that he would have enjoyed sharing with you. I'm thinking and praying for you as you go through grief for this amazing-sounding man.* Linda Weimer

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**Linda G. Weimer, Mainstay regular** - September 07, 2024 at 02:31 PM