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## CONVERSATIONS

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### THE JOY OF DISCOVERY AN INTERVIEW WITH ANICA SABO

Anica Sabo is a composer, theorist, and formerly a full professor at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade, retired since 2020. Although the immediate occasion for this interview is her recently published monograph, *Ispoljavanje simetrije u muzičkom toku – metodološka pitanja* (“Manifestations of Symmetry in Musical Flow: Issues of Methodology”, Belgrade, Faculty of Music, 2020), the rich professional biography of Prof. Sabo, bringing together and overlapping three different areas in her work – music theory,



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composing, and pedagogy – provide an additional incentive and inspiration for conducting this interview with her.

Anica Sabo was born in Belgrade in 1954. At the Faculty of Music, she majored in two fields – composition (under the supervision of Stanojlo Rajičić and Srđan Hofman) and wind instruments (bassoon), with Ivan Turšič. She earned her undergraduate and master's degree at the department of composition (1986), and acquired a doctoral degree at the University of Arts in Belgrade, the Department of Art and Media Theory (2014). Sabo's compositional oeuvre comprises complex and extensive orchestral works, such as *Diasonans* for symphony orchestra (1980), *Igre kapi* ("Water Drop Dances") for soprano and symphony orchestra (1982), and *Svetlost* ("Light"), a study for string quartet and symphony orchestra (1986), but her main focus is on chamber music (String Quartet, 1987; *Impresije* / "Impressions" for two pianos, 1989; *Akvareli* / "Water Colours" for wind trio, 1992; *Kazivanja* / "Narrations" for string orchestra, 1993, revised in 2014; *Lutanja* / "Wanderings" for violin and orchestra, 1995, revised in 2011; *Senke* / "Shadows" for violoncello, 1997; *Diantus* for piano four-hands, 2000; *Sanjališće* / "Dream-realm" for narrator, flute, violin, and viola, 2010; *Nasmeh v slovarju* / "A Smile in the Dictionary", 2012). Her work in music theory focuses on issues in musical form, the processuality of musical flow, and transformations of models taken from folk music. Especially significant are her numerous studies of pieces by Serbian authors (Stevan Mokranjac, Josif Marinković, Petar Konjović, Miloje Milojević, Josip Slavenski, Petar Bergamo, Stanojlo Rajičić, Vojislav Vučković, Aleksandar Obradović, Ljubica Marić, Berislav Popović, Mirjana Živković) as well as Slovenian composers who lived and worked in Serbia (Davorin Jenko, Mihovil Logar, Zlatan Vauda). Over the course of a teaching career spanning almost four decades, apart from the Faculty of Arts in Belgrade, she also taught at other institutions of higher education in Serbia and the region (Kragujevac, Novi Sad, Cetinje).

*In your professional biography, from very early on, one may trace a parallel or double trajectory: in high school you did a double major (in music theory and the bassoon), whereas at the faculty you studied composition and the bassoon. Composing is your primary vocation and that line has been a constant presence in your professional activities, but to the wider public, not only in Serbia, but also in the region, you are better known in terms of your work in music theory and analysis, as well as music pedagogy. How did this change of emphasis in your scholarly work come about? How did theory prevail, or what was it about theory that pulled you into its orbit?*

Personally, I don't feel as if theory prevailed. It may have been more visible in my work, but as for me personally, it never really prevailed, but grew equally important as composing. And indeed, it did pull me into its orbit. I spent all my working life at the Department [*Ogceκ*] of Music Theory and I felt that I should establish a relationship with music theory in a professional sense, that it was necessary to understand certain phenomena in music, to look for arguments to corroborate my views about them, in order to reinforce, adjust, or perhaps abandon them. That was my starting decision. And then something else emerged, something that was much more important and made a longer-term impact on my work in music theory, and that was – the joy of discovery. Music theory really offers so much joy! This almost archaeological kind of work, where you spend time (not a little time!) immersing yourself into somebody's piece of music, in this sort of compositional "kitchen", discovering what "spices" the composer used, what procedures she applied – that was very inspiring for me and, of course, brought a lot of joy. I have never perceived composition and theory as two separate fields of activity. One has always assisted the other – when, how, and to what degree, I could not possibly say right now.

While I was still studying with Rajičić and Hofman, we were required to explicate our pieces in verbal presentations. As a former Prague student who finished Josef Suk's Master School, Rajičić maintained that a piece of music should be well ordered, which was open to individual interpretations and everyone could shape it according to their own creative impulses. That is why I am always proud to say that I learned my craft from a master. Professor Hofman (later Emeritus) insisted that our explications of our pieces should be well grounded and thoroughly argued. Even today, when I read some of my writings from those days, I recognize a thread that gravitated toward music theory. Theory may have prevailed later, in that visible dimension, but it always existed alongside this sort of creative impulse, because I truly believe that writing in the field of music theory is as creative as composing itself.

I would also say that my relationship with the bassoon, ever since high school, was something special. I studied with Professor Božidar Tumpelj, who performed with brilliant orchestras, and I learned a lot from his experiences. At *Slavenski* School of Music there was this idea among the professors that those of us who were music theory majors should play an additional instrument and my first choice was the bassoon (in addition to the piano, which I had played since childhood). Everybody was surprised by this (there were not many women bassoonists at the time), but they also accepted it. I really

loved playing the bassoon and I often performed solo and with various ensembles. I consider it a great and important experience. Later I decided to study composition, I was focusing on theory and it wasn't feasible to pursue all of that at once. On the other hand, these were very useful experiences and I think that overall, they helped shape my identity, or at least found a fertile soil in me to grow and thrive.

*Musical form is the main focus of your work in theory and analysis. In this line of work you explore the basic principles of shaping a work's musical flow, while your analytical oeuvre encompasses pieces from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century – pieces espousing various stylistic orientations, different systems and procedures of composition. What is your view regarding the issue of musical form and the notion of a whole [целина] in contemporary music?*

The notion of a whole is really crucial in understanding any work of art. This issue is too complex to unpack in an interview, but here I can express some views that I haven't expressed in writing before and that one should really take as no more than the personal views of someone who has spent a long time addressing the issue of form in music and someone who maintains, as Professor Berislav Popović wrote in his book, that “musical form is the meaning of music”.<sup>1</sup> Without the notion of a whole and without the process of shaping musical contents in a way that might enable one to comprehend that whole, a piece of music, it seems to me, does not exist. Or, it exists in a very limited way, very briefly and inarticulately. I think that syntax is highly important for comprehending a piece as a whole. I can see that syntax takes shape on various levels; that would include extra-musical elements, the lyrics, choreography, a wealth of combinations involving various components of musical expression that have not been exhausted yet, and, last but certainly not least – there is electronics. Electronics offers an abundance of possibilities, but there may be a trap in there as well. It's like in that popular saying: “a good servant, but a bad master”; it is a lot of complex and demanding work for a composer, but it's also alluring in terms of obtaining quick results. In other words, electronics opened a wide range of possibilities, but, in a way, it has also enslaved composers. It is not just a technological turn, but a turn in one's awareness, emotions, in everything that makes a piece of music. I think there is not enough awareness of the importance of syntax, of how to orga-

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<sup>1</sup> Berislav Popović, *Muzička forma ili Smisao u muzici*, Belgrade, Clio, 1998.

nize all the elements, how to tame them, how to handle the material. You may like individual places in a piece, but you always remember the work as a whole. When I say syntax – I mean order, section divisions, contrasts, decelerations, accelerations, the way the material is distributed, because all of that is part of the process. In order to understand the whole, one must understand the musical syntax.

*Your many years of studying the phenomenon of symmetry in music has resulted in the monograph *Ispoljavanje simetrije u muzičkom toku – metodološka pitanja*, published in 2020. You emphasize in the book that it does not offer a new analytical method, but a new line in the development of the traditional method of formal music analysis. What were the theory sources that led you to symmetry as a regulator of the coherence of a musical work?*

The main precept of my conception of symmetry comes from two studies (there are others as well, but I couldn't list them all here), by Adolf Bernhard Marx and Berislav Popović. Marx considered form synonymous with wholeness, whereas Popović spoke of musical flow as a whole that has its directions (without directly relying on Marx), so to me, it seems that the notion of a whole is crucial in dealing with form. In my book, I wrote about 19<sup>th</sup>-century sources that are available to us, then about theorists from the Russian, Hungarian, Bulgarian, and, in general, Slavic school who, like Marx, define musical form as the process of shaping music (Ger. *Formenlehre*). I could not find an adequate term in Serbian, so I used my knowledge of literature in other languages. If we were to speak about forms, it would be, Marx says, a "collection of dead models". That was a valuable insight and therefore I returned to the original principles of the discipline itself. That was the joy of discovery and the moment when theory pulled me inside its orbit. That is why I think it is important to learn about the history of music theory.

In my book, I also used Arnold Schoenberg's *Fundamentals of Musical Composition*, which is practically about form, as well as Rudolph Reti, with his views regarding motives, Boris Asafyev and many other authors, including William Caplin. It is important that we keep re-reading the traditional method and rethinking all those terms that we consider quite familiar. We've remained stuck in the domain of structure, instead of transferring the concept of structure to the phenomenon of musical flow. It seems so simple, but in analysis and interpretations one should be very careful and above all consistent. It is invaluable to confront your own misconceptions and I was fortu-

nate enough to grow through this type of learning. When I read in the preface to Dragutin Gostuški's book *Vreme umetnosti (Time of Art)* that, as he put it himself, the book is the final result of many years spent pondering questions "that will never be exhausted, because they keep coming up in different guises" – I felt relieved. That also applies to form and symmetry.

*The analytical samples in your book comprise works by Bartók from his early and middle creative periods (the First and Second Violin Concerto, the First and Second Piano Concerto). Symmetry in Bartók's works has often been written about. Where do you see the specific contribution of your study in relation to the existing literature? What kind of insights have resulted from establishing a correlation between geometric concepts and the musical flow in these works?*

In my introduction I emphasized that symmetry is something that is inborn to human beings and the world surrounding us, that it is present everywhere, and, therefore, in music as well. I view symmetry in music as the harmony, balance, beauty, and integrity of the musical flow and I broach a series of questions about establishing a methodology for analysing the musical flow that would be in a position to reveal those attributes of the analysed work. When we say that something is beautiful, we usually recognize that it is symmetric, whether explicitly or implicitly. These correlations between geometric concepts and musical flow are extremely complex; it is not so straightforward like we often think and symmetry does not boil down to repetition and quantitative equality. My starting position is that the musical properties of a piece, the way they are externalized in the musical flow, are the key factor in understanding its symmetry, not the other way around. A musical flow should not be reduced to geometry. Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, for example, asserts that the music of Béla Bartók is that of "a precise mechanic, a jeweller", that everything in it is crystal clear, but not at first hearing. When I first began studying the literature about symmetry in 1986, I was attracted to Bartók's string quartets, especially the fourth and fifth. This was a fascination! Then I encountered the same phenomenon of symmetry in the *Second Piano Concerto* and began looking at his other concertos from the middle period and tried to identify the main support of that type of formal organization. I realized it was the motives and motivic material. The literature kept talking about palindromes (including my first paper on the topic, published in 1991, titled "Palindromična simetrija u delima Bele Bartoka" / Palindromic Symmetry in Works by Béla Bartók). However, in my

conversations with Berislav Popović, I realized there was something rather static and inadequate about this, that there were different nuances and that there was an inconsistency: when palindromes are motivically brought together, then they become structurally disorganized, and vice versa. The sections and segments of the form are not always compatible in terms of motivic content. Ernő Lendvai, László Somfai, Vera Lampert, and other prominent authors had also written about this, but I saw a sort of insufficiency there. I was especially troubled by the First Violin Concerto, which demanded a careful analysis of its motivic material. It was all leading toward a realization that there was a single axis that would come out, otherwise completely invisible. In the study titled “Značaj motiva u ostvarenju koherentnosti ciklusa” (The Significance of Motives in Achieving the Coherence of a Cycle), which came out in 1997, for the first time I isolated the motives and tried to present the relationship between the motives and the sections in a coordinate system. I got good results, but something was still missing. It was only when Berislav Popović’s book came out that I found sufficient theoretical support. I made particular use of what the professor had isolated as character variation symmetries and permutation symmetries within dynamic symmetries. On that basis I arrived at a new understanding of that initial spark in Bartók’s concertos, that is, all of those potentials leading toward palindromic symmetry. It is interesting that in his later works – I didn’t write about this in my book – Bartók abandoned this ‘perfection’ of symmetry. It is missing from his other concertos, for instance the *Concerto for Orchestra*, which interested me the most, or his *Viola Concerto* (which was completed by Tibor Serly). Why did he abandon that principle? He achieved what every genius composer achieves – toppling his own monument. The *Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion* (which also exists in a concerto version) already follows a different structure; all that which is the first movement, the third movement is not. In his work Bartók set up an antithesis, in my view, only to synthesize the whole thing in his five-movement *Concerto for Orchestra*. He abandons the idea of thematic links and that kind of recognisability and performs a sort of *salto mortale*. The *Concerto for Orchestra* could be demonstrated as a synthesis of his conception of symmetry and that is what makes it such a work of genius.

*The monograph is furnished not only with notated examples, but also with remarkably precise diagrams, as well as coloured graphics and tables. It is a detailed and yet quite comprehensible analytical rendering of the thematic, structural, and tonal plan of the musical flow of individual movements and*

*entire pieces. How did you arrive at those graphic renderings and are they peculiar to the “Belgrade analytical school” when it comes to form?*

I do think that there is a “Belgrade school” of music analysis. A large number of scholars went through our Faculty and, in my opinion, their contribution is really immense. When it comes to form, one must begin from the textbook, in fact, the great study of Vlastimir Peričić and Dušan Skovran, *Nauka o muzičkim oblicima* (“The Science of Musical Forms”), which went through a number of editions and has taught generations of students. There are various studies of this type in the world, but, if I may say so, I have yet to read a better one. It is a study that talks about the typology of formal models, but also, at the same time, about what that typology is not. There is also the book by Berislav Popović, which is innovative and which, crucially, as I said above, offers a definition of musical flow. I would also mention Dragutin Gostuški, who spoke of artistic geometry, the scaffolding of a musical work, musical morphology (and morphology is indeed the study of form!).

Concerning the status of the examples used in my book, it is the result of many years of reflection. One type of diagram is found in the appendices of the study and this mode of presenting pieces was introduced by Professor Popović when Musical Forms became a three-year course at the Faculty. Later on, that principle of analysis progressed through various levels of work. These are diagrams that show all three levels of the piece and they are globally unique because they use symbols for different phenomena in the musical flow, especially in terms of structure, and this has been handed down for generations. Another type of diagram is provided in the appendix (in colour, although black-and-white can also be used) and shows different types of symmetry (static and dynamic), containing, occasionally, parts of those initial, elementary schemes. This chapter as a whole talks about the symbols that are in use, both the standard ones, which are used for teaching at the Faculty in general, as well as those that relate to symmetry or go beyond those standards (these comprise some specific solutions). Most of my examples are of a hybrid type (except, perhaps, those that relate to motives). For instance, there is an A3-format example that I developed in over a hundred different versions, but when I managed to present a concerto comprising several hundred or thousand bars’ worth of music on a single page, it revealed the crystallization of the axes of symmetry in Bartók’s form. Suddenly, my prose started condensing; what I had written in ten pages I could now express on two pages in better quality prose. This methodology and this ana-



lytical discourse count on diagrams, notated examples, tables, graphs. They are not there to adorn the book, but are an indispensable integral part of the text (Example 1).

*In your own compositional oeuvre, you are closer to chamber music, less expansive forms, more rarefied textures. One gets the impression that composing in your life serves as that necessary intimate oasis of pure pleasure and creativity unburdened by success, prizes, and external rewards. In your instrumental pieces, is there a strong presence of traces and influences of those professors with whom you studied composition and of those Serbian authors whose works you analysed in detail? How do your theoretical-analytical dealings with form shape your composing?*

What you just said about an intimate oasis is correct, I think, although I wasn't even aware of that myself until you formulated it like that. I have had discontinuities in my compositional work, but composing was always a need for me. And it was almost always initiated by dreams and dreaming. What kind of streams of consciousness those were, whether it was me trying to perfect myself – that I really don't know – but dreams invariably gave birth to pieces of music. My pieces have been, I must admit, well received by performers, which is of paramount importance for me. Performers have recognized a certain logic, sense, integrity in them and used that to leave their own mark on them. My studies with Rajičić and Hofman were unique experiences. With Rajičić, we improvised our initial ideas on the piano to find the path to the kind of musical expression we sought. Whereas Hofman taught us orchestration; these were one-on-one tutorials, one of the privileges that students used to enjoy. Thus working with two composers who basically followed different vocations, I learned a lot. Whether that shows in my pieces is not for me say. Although I was closer to Hofman (who supervised my master's) and attended his lectures on electronic music, I personally, for instance, have never felt a need to use electronics in my works. And that hasn't changed since. One has to be completely honest with oneself and one's work, doing what suits her, rather than follow trends. Of course, one should learn and be familiar with everything, but one should not adopt everything as part of one's own vocation.

It's difficult to say how my dealings with form have specifically influenced my work in composition. I think that everything I've done in the domain of theoretical studies has left a mark in me. I wish that as students we

had spent more time studying works by Serbian composers, who constitute the foundations of Serbian musical culture. Even today, I still remember my first encounter with Miloje Milojević's First String Quartet, which I edited in 1996. That was a big discovery for me. And there was Konjović as well, whom I began studying because of his relationship with Mokranjac, so then I also discovered Mokranjac. Of course, we did sing *Rukoveti* ("Garlands"), but studying the form of those pieces via their musical flow enabled me to understand them better. Theory and composition are not mutually exclusive and, in my case, they produce results. For instance, my favourite composer is Mozart; he was unique and I enjoy listening to his music, but he did not deal with theory. On the other hand, Schoenberg and Hindemith made brilliant theoretical observations, but I prefer listening to Prokofiev, who did not deal with theory. If one is a composer, that does not necessarily mean that one is a good theorist and vice versa. Theory recognizes certain phenomena, entails a given methodology, whereas a composer has the freedom and right to choose according to her own taste and beliefs. If, on top of that, she is "blessed" with an ability to present that... that's how great works and great names are made. Bartók was one of them.

*Poetry is a special source of inspiration for you. What is it about Slovene poetry that you find so attractive and how do you shape your sounds to match the verses? Do you focus on the melodic qualities of the Slovene language, the semantic meaning of the text, the rhythm of the words and lines, or the conceptual-reflective aspect of the poems?*

All of those aspects you mentioned – melodic qualities, meaning, inflections of the words and verses – all of those things are inseparable. Sometimes one thing prevails, sometimes another, that's precisely what I love about composing music with words. As for why I turned to the Slovene language, that was purely circumstantial. It wasn't intended. I came to the Slovene language via prose, not poetry. Maja Đukanović, a full professor at the Faculty of Philology, translated in 2005 the trilogy of Bojan Meserko; the titles of the three books are *Sanjalište* ("Dreamrealm"), *Sanjaonica* ("Dreamroom"), and *Sanjači* ("Dreamers"). I had Slovene in me as the spoken language of my childhood; I have never studied it, although I later began discovering some of its specificities that I found interesting. At a presentation of Meserko's books in Belgrade, a member of the Slovenian Society, Janko Brezovar, read out parts from the books in a phenomenal way. At that point I knew that, sooner

or later, those texts would find a place in a piece of mine, which finally happened five years later. The texts present convoluted streams of human consciousness, the main protagonist's existence in parallel worlds, which causes him to alternate between lucid and completely lost states, with frequent headaches... That seemed so close to me. There is no punctuation in the protagonist's speech, the word order is subject to change, syllables are permuted, and I found these language games, semantic games, and the protagonist's condition highly interesting. I didn't use the translation, but the original Slovene text.

Similarly peculiar was the way my piece *Nasmeh v slovarju* came to be. I was supposed to compose something for the book launch of the Serbian translation of the *Anthology of Contemporary Slovene Literature*, but for a long time I couldn't find a suitable text in that anthology. And then, on my way back from Cetinje, I was browsing through the book and suddenly identified two poems, which I combined right there and then. Both of them flirt with positive and negative emotions; one of them is called "Reč strah ne postoji više u rečniku" (The Word Fear is No Longer in the Dictionary) and the other is "Osmeh u tami" (A Smile in Darkness). The way I conceived the piece is that the violist should both play and recite, which brings it closer to instrumental theatre. Right there, at the airport, waiting for my flight, I already had in my mind both the lyrics and the sound; inspiration came out of the blue, at leisure, and leisure always lures you to go "somewhere else". Anyway, I am really happy about my excursions into composition and the Slovene language.

*You have often asserted that you see yourself primarily as a pedagogue. The accomplishments of your professional pedagogical work are impressive, in terms of the number of final dissertations you have supervised on all levels of study, in terms of articulating the Methodology of Teaching Music Theory as a course, offering seminars for high-school teachers, as well as working at other institutions of higher education in the region. How do you view the balance of theory, analysis, composition, and pedagogy in your career?*

For me personally, that term, "balance", is not entirely pertinent. Sometimes it's also an imbalance. Taking a long-term perspective, it is still a sort of partnership. It is difficult to achieve a balance in all the areas you mentioned by quantifying. Besides, what's wrong with a nice bit of imbalance? If we're aware of it, it can only help us to balance things out. Whatever I'm currently work-

ing on, I put all I have in it, as best I can. I do not feel obliged to add a “pinch” of this or a “pinch” of that merely to keep everything balanced.

In Novi Sad I worked a full 15 years, and then also in Kragujevac and Cetinje. It was a great pleasure for me, but I also considered myself obliged to take part in workshops for professors and high-school students. I was impressed and confounded by the level of enthusiasm shown by the students who, in the middle of January, battling snow, came all the way from remote places, even from neighbouring states. I would also single out the competition of high schools organized by the *Kornelije* society. Also, the Centre for Career Development at the University of Arts organized workshops on two occasions, on my initiative. I thought it was advisable to use their facilities, that this environment might act as a stimulus for investing in education. Sadly, this too was discontinued after the second workshop. With a lot of enthusiasm I took part in every initiative reaching out to high schools, because I am first and foremost a pedagogue and I’ve learnt the most by working with my students (paraphrasing that famous and true Schoenberg line!). But I did not wait for them to come to me, to the Faculty; I went wherever I was invited, because I wanted to meet professors and students. My support and model was Professor Mirjana Živković, who always advocated cooperation with high schools. When I retired, I retired from everything. I’m bothered by the absence of a systemic approach, because it would be good and useful for both sides, faculty professors and high-school teachers alike, if there were regular contacts.

*Alongside your devoted work in theoretical research and pedagogy, you were also a forceful advocate of and an active participant in the shaping of the Music Theory academic study programme, which was finally accredited at the Faculty in 2009. You witnessed and participated in many changes in the organization of teaching the theoretical subjects. How did this study programme, which is now unique in the region, come to be?*

When I joined the Faculty in 1982, I was confronted with a serious debate involving my professors and colleagues who sought to form a Department of Music Theory. The idea at the time was to put together a group of departments (the so-called seventh department), where 7a would cover musicology, 7b would cover ethnomusicology, and 7c would be the music theory department. At an earlier time, such a department already existed at the Academy of Music (today the Faculty of Music), but it was replaced with the Depart-

ment of General Music Pedagogy, which, in a way, covered the theoretical subjects as well. The subjects of Harmony, Counterpoint, and Musical Forms existed only at the departments of composition, musicology, conducting, ethnomusicology, and organ, whereas the Department of General Music Pedagogy offered integrated subjects: Analysing a Work of Music and Tonal Construction. Only later, in 1992, were Harmony, Counterpoint, and Musical Forms added as subjects to the B.A. curriculum at this department and made into final thesis subjects.

The next attempt came in 1997. The idea was to split the existing department of pedagogy into a and b (one for pedagogy, the other for theory), but that didn't take off either. Meanwhile, the Department of General Music Pedagogy developed a committed engagement with theoretical disciplines. We did not have an undergraduate study programme in music theory, but one could earn a master's or doctoral degree in music theory disciplines. We were building a house from the roof down, not from the foundations up. The introduction of the Bologna process in 2004 saw a rebirth of the idea to form a department of music theory, but once again this failed to materialize because efforts were only made to adjust the existing setup to the new principles. Only in 2009 did the Division [*каџеџа*] of Music Theory finally form this study programme, which is indeed unique throughout the region. So, a lot of time passed between 1982 and 2009 and the department was born in rather complex circumstances. At the time of the Bologna reform, the dean of the Faculty at the time, Milan Mihajlović, and the institution as a whole supported further education for the teaching staff and the enrolment of five professors from the Music Theory Division in the doctoral study programme at the University of Arts, investing thereby into an academic profile that was necessary to make the Department operational in all three levels of study.

Now is the time to introduce organizational, personnel, and technical provisions that would be more favourable to music theory. We have brilliant, excellent individuals, with top-notch references, and I admire them. But we need a broad and high-quality basis, and that is formed in undergraduate and master's study programmes. They would have to be seen as "worthwhile" for students, in terms of making them the first in line to be hired to teach subjects such as Harmony, Counterpoint, and Musical Forms.

*Finally, I would like us to talk about your social activities as well. You are active in the Slovenian Society and the National Council of the Slovenian National Minority in the Republic of Serbia, where you advocate the affirmation*

*and preservation of Slovenian culture and art in Serbia. How would you describe the interaction between the two cultures today and what are your activities in fostering intercultural communication?*

I have pursued those activities with much pleasure, especially promoting the composers Davorin Jenko, Mihovil Logar, and Zlatan Vauda, who had Slovene origins, but lived, worked, and created their works in Serbia. As a composer, theorist, and pedagogue, I considered it my duty to save that from oblivion. My first article was published in the Slovenian journal *Traditiones*, where I presented the work of these three composers to the wider public. Since there were various projects at the Sava Society and the National Council, I always tried to use those occasions to have some of their works performed in public. I took an active part in marking the centenary of Davorin Jenko's death, the author of numerous anthems (Serbia's national anthem, the anthem of the Slovenian army...), which was jointly organized by the National Council, the Musicology Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and the Embassy of the Republic of Slovenia. I've really written a lot of texts about Vauda and staged public performances of his and Logar's chamber works. A notable malady tormenting our country is the poor availability and general state of our archives, not only regarding Slovenian composers. It was difficult to explore Vauda's legacy, to make an inventory of his chamber pieces, to study Jenko's correspondence (interestingly, he used the Cyrillic script to write in the Slovene language), and these are people who belong to this culture, who felt as part of this culture. Nevertheless, a lot was done: a film was made about Vauda, Jenko's centenary was marked with a concert featuring music by Slovenian composers in Serbia, there is a festival of Slovenian cinema, several exhibitions have been mounted to present the work of Slovenian engineers, doctors, professors, and other figures working in Serbia's society and public life. The Society has also supported projects dedicated to celebrating Slovenian holidays with their corresponding customs, and the Society also has its choir, who perform here and in Slovenia. I must also mention the *Slovenika* magazine, founded as a magazine for scholarship, culture, and education, which is a unique periodical among the national minorities of Serbia.

Despite the wars that happened in this part of the world, there has always been a bond between the two cultures. I think that bond remains strong today, but could be stronger still. Like everything else, it depends on marketing; the better the marketing, the better the circulation of artists, works, per-

formers, writers. A lot still hinges on individual initiatives. I sincerely hope that they will make a film about Logar, that we'll make an inventory of Jenko's archive, and that we'll make the oeuvres of Slovene authors from Serbia accessible in Slovenia. We must invest in memory culture and therefore I have an optimistic view of this cooperation and cultural exchange.

