
REVIEWS

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**Zorica Premate (Ed.), *Tribine Novi
zvučni prostori, Zbornik, Beograd,
Centar za muzičku akciju, RTS
izdavaštvo, 2019; 470 pp.
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Bearing in mind the shortage of space planned for music criticism of recent musical achievements, and contemporary music in general, the Center for Music Action launched a series of conferences in 2014 under the heading *New Sound Spaces*. With cooperation from the Association of Composers of Serbia and Radio Belgrade's Third Program, these conferences were aimed at maintaining the continuity of contributing to the promotion

of contemporary art music. The conferences were conceptualized in the form of analytical expositions and expositions by the performers and the composers themselves... In that sense, a single musical piece was approached in different ways, from a variety of angles, illuminating the multi-layered nature of each score. With the dedicated moderator, musicologist Zorica Premate, the audience had the opportunity to become acquainted with numerous works of varied poetic frameworks. Some of the audience had the opportunity to watch the presentations live, while others could access them through recordings broadcast on Radio Belgrade. In this way, the contents of the conversations were offered to a potentially wider group of music connoisseurs, to inform them about new compositions, enabling them to enrich their understanding of music and their listening approach.

The organizers decided in 2019 to publish the presentations from the conferences in the form of a special monograph. Richly equipped, on 470 pages with photos, this collection contains texts on 34 works by 25 composers. They represent some of the most important names on the Serbian music composition scene, distant generations and divergent aes-

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thetics. This wide range of creative expression is another significant conceptual element of the conference program, which included domestic authors who do not currently live in Serbia, and it is important to mention that it was a place where the work of academician Vlastimir Trajković was discussed posthumously. In this sense, the topicality of a single work or an entire *oeuvre* was always taken into account, and New Sound Spaces have so far been a platform for discussing recent and important achievements for our milieu.

The collection in question contains texts on the following works: *Beyond Zero*, for string quartet and tape, by Aleksandra Vrebalov; *Ascetic Sermon*, for mezzo-soprano and chamber ensemble, by Đuro Živković; *Medial 623, Rondo*, for symphony orchestra, by Vladimir Tošić; the chamber opera *Petrograd* and *Music of the South*, for the Branka Popović Chamber Ensemble; *Two Romantic Songs*, for mezzo-soprano and chamber orchestra, and *Ballad of the Field*, for Mirjana Živković's violin and chamber orchestra; *Looking at the Anish Kapoor's "Mirrors"* for two amplified Harps and Logic Pro software Plug-ins, *Through Sound Boxes 1*, for violin, clarinet, piano and electronics, and *Through Sound Boxes 2*, for piano and electronics, by Srđan Hofman; *Melancholy*, for oboe/flute, string trio and piano and *Revolt (Rebellion)*, for horn, string trio and piano, by Milan Mihajlović; *Captured*, for female choir and electronics, by Svetlana Savić; the symphonic fantasy *The Universe*, by Jugoslav Bošnjak; *She Might Be Sleeping*, for soprano and chamber orchestra, by Rajko Maksimović; *Sideral*,

for four-part mixed choir, string orchestra and piano, by Vladan Radovanović; the surrealist fairy tale for an octet *Nail Soup*, by Isidora Žebeljan; *A Cinque*, for wind quintet, and the comic opera in two acts *Pop Ćira and Pop Spira*, by Dejan Despić; *Spanish Suite/Memories from Childhood*, for flute and 15 strings, by Vlastimir Trajković; *Dirty Thoughts*, for instrumental ensemble and electronics, by Svetlana Maraš; *List No. 1*, for viola solo, and *List No. 2*, for symphony orchestra, by Zoran Erić; *A Drop*, for bassoon and electronics, by Katarina Miljković; *Rust*, for chamber ensemble, by Milica Đorđević; *Grand Stone*, a radio poem by Ivana Stefanović; *Noise in Inner Silence*, for flute, oboe, clarinet, percussion and piano, by Miloš Zatkalik; compositions for the instrument *Velikon* by Jasna Veličković; *Train Remix*, for audio installation, and *For Nada*, for piano, by Miša Savić; *Absolutio*, postlude for symphony orchestra, by Marko Nikodijević; concert for saxophone and orchestra *Love!* by Ivan Brkljačić; and *Lonesome Skyscraper*, for symphony orchestra and electronics, by Ivana Ognjanović.

Almost 70 speakers took part in talking about these works (we will not list all of them due to limited space). As stated in the preface: "musicologists, music writers, culturologists, theorists, literary historians, producers, sound designers and performers, conductors, pianists, singers..."²

What really makes up this extensive and informative collection are the many

2 Zorica Premate (Ed.), *Tribine Novi zvučni prostori, Zbornik*, Belgrade, Centar za muzičku akciju, RTS izdavaštvo, 2019, 10.

different readings of the works and their analysis, which represents a useful source and a starting point for further studies.

Also, autopoetic expressions, which are always valuable, further contribute to understanding the creative core of these compositions, the initial composers' impulses, and the primary authorial thoughts on the origin and creation of the work. They reveal the stream of the artist's thoughts and the ramifications of inspiration, which often disperse in unexpected ways.

Also, the collection contains various 'indicative' 'little' stories which inform us of seemingly secondary factors in the creation of compositions, or during preparations for premiere performances: all of which illuminates in a specific way the whole world of events, perhaps crucial for the existence of a particular work.

Another special value of this project lies in the participation of performers, who from their own interpretive perspective often reveal a personal and artistic relationship with the work and the composer, i.e. the technical and artistic difficulties they may have faced during the preparation of the repertoire or even their intimate impressions of the premier performance. This point-of-view of the performer, which reaches some levels that often remain obscured, is important for drawing the most precise and comprehensive picture of a certain work, and the interpretative feat.

The collection reveals specific interrelations between musicians and composers, which are often extremely prolific and artistically rich, sometimes being a basic driving force for authorial creation. The participation of musicologists on the

other hand, each with their own approach and discourse, provides us with a deeper analytical insight into individual achievements. Diverse discourses, ways of presentation and the structuring of analytical insights, as well as the methodological diversity, presents a wide range of interpretations and musicological interpretations, which gives this book a certain scientific seriousness and relevance.

In that sense this collection can be considered an imprint of time, a historical document about the development of Serbian music, and a source of diverse, valuable information. It contains a cross-section of the most significant works, and it testifies to the creative presence of different generations and languages which find their way to their own audiences. As mentioned before, given the limited space for the promotion and presentation of contemporary music in the domestic context, the *New Sound Spaces* conferences have provided an important niche for conversation over the years, as well as a gathering place for people involved professionally in different ways in the existence of contemporary Serbian music. This collection summarizes in one place the years of work on maintaining the quality of the conferences, and shows the great effort by the organizers, who in these uncertain times have still managed to maintain the tradition of speaking about music, as an important segment of music's existence.