

---

---

## IN MEMORIAM

---

---

Article received on March 31<sup>st</sup> 2024

Article accepted on May 21<sup>st</sup> 2024

UDC 78.071.1:929 Ерић 3.

***Tatjana Milošević Mijanović\****

University of Arts in Belgrade  
Faculty of Music  
Department of Composition

**ZORAN ERIĆ**

(October 6, 1950 – January 20, 2024)

*There are and there have been people in our lives who always were, are, and will always be with us. Wherever you turn, you will notice something that reminds you of them. Whenever you glance at the sky, you will do that knowing that they can see you. Wave your hand and smile, show them that you know that they are up there and with you. However much it means to them, be sure that to you it means even more...*

(Author's commentary about his piece *Seven Glances at the Sky*)

On 20 January 2024 we lost Zoran Erić, a giant of Serbian contemporary music and an esteemed professor emeritus. His untimely departure constitutes an irreplaceable loss for our music community. The void created by his

---

\* The author's contact details: [tackica.tm@gmail.com](mailto:tackica.tm@gmail.com).

physical departure will be hard to fill, because his human, intellectual, creative, and other qualities made Zoran Erić a unique phenomenon. We will remember him not only as an extraordinarily talented artist, whose authenticity, creativity, and ingenuity left a deep mark in the musical world, but also as a professor who raised a large number of pre-eminent artists and pedagogues. He was the true *spiritus movens* of many artistic events, making a major contribution to the promotion of contemporary Serbian music in this country and abroad.

Zoran Erić was born in Belgrade in 1950. He began his music education at an early age by learning to play the piano and violin; later he acquired his B.A. and M.A. degrees in composition at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade, then the Academy of Music, under the supervision of Prof. Stanojlo Rajičić. He pursued further training at the Orff Institute in Salzburg (1976) and Witold Lutosławski's masterclass in Grožnjan (1977). Over the course of his creative life spanning five decades, he composed works in various genres for different ensembles, soloists, with or without electronics, as well as for symphony orchestra, leaving an impressive oeuvre, not only in terms of the sheer number and diversity of his pieces, but also their high artistic accomplishments. His most important works include the following: *Concerto for Orchestra and Soloists*; *Behind the Sun's Gate* for orchestra; *Mirage* for piano, synthesiser, electronic piano, and symphony orchestra; the ballets *Banović Strahinja* and *Jelisaveta*; *Slovo Siluana* for baritone, women's choir, and tape; *Subito* for two bass singers, women's choir, and tape; *Artes Liberales* for mixed choir, timpani, and gong; *Scenario* for two violoncellos; *Off* for double bass and strings; *Cartoon* for strings and harpsichord; and *Talea Konzertstück* for violin and strings. Also, he authored three choreo-dramas that featured prominently in contemporary ballet of the 1990s: *Medea*, *Macbeth*, and *The Trial*. A special place in Erić's oeuvre is occupied by the cycle titled *Images of Chaos*, which comprises seven pieces: *The Great Red Spot of Jupiter* for amplified harpsichord, percussion, and live electronics; *The Abnormal Beats of Dogon* for bass clarinet, piano, percussion, bass harmonica, and live electronics; *Helium in a Small Box* for strings; *I Have Not Spoken* for alto saxophone, bass harmonica, an actor-narrator, and mixed choir; *Oberon Concerto* for flute and instrumental ensemble; *List No. 1* for solo violin; and *List No. 2* for symphony orchestra. The other pieces that Erić composed during his final creative period are *Sonata* for viola and piano; *B'n'R* (Blues & Rhythm) for double bass and piano; *Six Scenes – Commentaries* for three violins and string orchestra; *Who Shot the Seagull?* for 12 violoncellos; *Seven Glances at the Sky*

for string sextet; *Entr'acte* for symphony orchestra; *List No. 3* for trumpet and electronics; and *An Ode to Nature* for flute.

His works have been performed by renowned Serbian and foreign soloists and ensembles, such as *The Strings of St. George*; *Dušan Skovran Belgrade String Orchestra*; *Guildhall Strings*; *Kreisler London Strings*, *Zagreb Soloists*, *12 cellisten der Berliner Philharmoniker*, *Detroit Chamber Orchestra*, *Kremlin String Orchestra*, *Camerata Serbica*, *Banatul Philharmonia*, *Symphony Orchestra of the Serbian Broadcasting Corporation*, *Collegium musicum*, *Belgrade Philharmonic*, *Irish Chamber Orchestra*... He collaborated and worked with some of the most prominent Serbian and foreign performers, including Aleksandar Pavlović, Živojin Zdravković, Kenneth Jean, Pavle Dešpalj, James Judd, Uroš Lajovic, Bojan Sudić, Darinka Matić Marović, Michail Jurowski, Ksenija Janković, Lidija Pilipenko, David Takeno, Bernard Lansky, So-Ock Kim, Malachy Robinson, Ion Bogdan Stefanescu, Marija Špengler, Dejan Mladenović, Aleksandar Madžar, Arisa Fujita, Nebojša Ignjatović, Miloš Petrović, Slobodan Gerić, Emmanuel Pahud, and Ljubiša Jovanović, among others. His pieces have been performed to much acclaim in almost every country of Europe, the US, China, and Australia, at some of the most prestigious venues, such as the Barbican in London, Cankar Hall in Ljubljana, the Atrium of the Rector's Palace in Dubrovnik, Konserthuset Stockholm, Lisinski Hall in Zagreb, Berlin Philharmonic's Chamber Music Hall, St. Sofia Church, Wigmore Hall, De Ijsbreker Music Centre, and the Chamber Music Hall of the Sibelius Academy; at prestigious festivals such as the Dubrovnik Summer Festival, Prague Spring, City of London Festival, BEMUS, World Music Days, Music Biennale Zagreb, etc. One of his most well-known works, *Cartoon* for strings and harpsichord, has been recorded by more than 30 ensembles across the world, including the Detroit Chamber Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, and Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano "Giuseppe Verdi".

Apart from his superb achievements in the field of music composition proper, which have unequivocally placed him among the most well known and influential composers on our music scene, for decades Zoran Erić was also involved in theatre and film, with equal success. He collaborated with some of our most prominent theatre artists, such as Sonja Vukićević, Gorčin Stojanović, Nikita Milivojević, Vida Ognjenović, Nebojša Bradić, Ivana Vujić, Milan Karadžić, Haris Pašović, Dejan Mijač, Boro Drašković, Egon Savin, and others. He wrote incidental music for numerous theatre plays, including *Medea*, *Macbeth*, *The Trial*, *Birds*, *Hamlet*, *King Lear*, *Mother Courage*, *Seven*

*against You, Life is a Dream, A Midsummer's Night Dream, Waiting for Godot, Ubu Roi, Simon the Miracle Man, The Lady of the Camellias, Banović Strahinja, Caroline Neuber, Roots, Ravangrad, Antigone in New York, Maksim Crnojević, Beast on the Moon, Frederick, A Glance at the Sky, The Exhibitionist, The Seagull, The Visitor, A Little Trilogy of Death, Don Krsto, Transylvania, Oedipus Rex, Harold and Maud, The Damned Yard, Villa Sachino, Did the Prince's Supper Really Occur?, Kanjoš Macedonović, The Fortress, My Brother, Migrations, Young Stalin, When Pumpkins Blossomed, The Road to Damascus, The Patriot, Limunacija, Kozocid, The Trojan Women, Boris Pasternak and Marina Tsvetaeva, Arzamas, as well as for feature films, including Premeditated Murder, The Hornet, Shadows of Memories, Nataša...*

Erić won a large number of accolades and awards for his creativity, including, most importantly, the following: an October Prize of the City of Belgrade for his piece *Helium in a Little Box* in 1993; a Silver Medal of the University of Arts in Belgrade, likewise in 1993; a Golden Mimosa at the 1996 Festival of Yugoslav Film in Herceg Novi for best original score, for *Premeditated Murder*, a film by Gorčin Stojanović; an Award in the Design of a Spectacle category at the First Biennial of Stage Design in 1997, for incidental music in the play *Magbet/Ono* produced by the Centre for Cultural Decontamination and directed by Sonja Vukićević; another Golden Mimosa at the 2000 Herceg Novi film festival for best original score, for *Shadows of Memories*, a film by Predrag Velinović; a Special Award at the Third Biennial of Stage Design in 2000 for incidental music in the theatre plays *Caroline Neuber* and *Maksim Crnojević*; a Great Plaque with Charter of the University of Arts in Belgrade in 2005 for making an outstanding contribution to the Faculty of Music and University of Arts in Belgrade; a Sterija Award (shared with V. Pejković) in 2005 for incidental music in the play *Deathly Motor Skills* produced by Atelje 212 and directed by Egon Savin; the 2005 Annual Award of the Belgrade Drama Theatre; an Award at the 2008 Joakimfest in Kragujevac for incidental music in the play *The Fortress*, produced by the city Theatre of Kruševac; another Sterija Award, for incidental music in the play *Oedipus Rex* produced by the National Theatre in Belgrade and directed by Vida Ognjenović in 2008; a Bora Mihajlović Award of the city Theatre of Kruševac for his contribution to the theatre life of Kruševac and Serbia, in 2008; an Award at the 2010 International Theatre Meetings in the District of Brčko in Bosnia and Herzegovina for incidental music in the play *My Brother* produced by the National Theatre of the Bosnian Serb Republic in Banja Luka; an Award at the 2011 Bosnia-Herzegovina Theatre Festival in Jajce for inci-

dental music in the play *My Brother*. He is the only composer to have won our most prestigious prize in the domain of musical creativity, the Mokranjac Award, four times, for the following pieces: *Oberon Concert* for flute and chamber orchestra in 1997; *Six Scenes – Commentaries* for three violins and strings in 2001; *Seven Glances at the Sky* for string sextet in 2009; and *List No. 2* for symphony orchestra in 2017.

Zoran Erić served in numerous capacities at the Faculty of Music and beyond. From 1992 to 1998 he was a vice-dean at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade and from 2000 to 2004 a vice-rector of the University of Arts in Belgrade and chairman of the board of Sokoje, Serbia's organisation for protecting intellectual property in music. From 2007 to 2015 he served as head of the Department of Composition and from 2015 to 2018 as Rector of the University of Arts in Belgrade. He was the selector at the 1987 *Music in Serbia* festival and Third International Composers' Forum in Belgrade (1994), as well as a member of the jury at the International Jeunesses Musicales Competition (1986 and 2007), and the international *Premio Valentino Bucchi* competition in Rome (1990). From 2011 to 2013 he was artistic director of BEMUS and from 2015 to 2018 a member of the Executive Board of ELIA, the European League of Institutes of the Arts in Amsterdam. He was one of the co-founders of the Belgrade Keyboard Sound Studio (1986). Due to his extraordinary expertise, inclusivity, and, above all, positive attitude, he was highly regarded and well-loved by his many collaborators, colleagues, and students.

For many years, Zoran Erić was active as a pedagogue as well. Upon graduating in 1973, he started working as a professor of theoretical subjects at the Mokranjac School of Music, until 1976, when he was appointed an intern teaching assistant at the Department of General Music Pedagogy at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade. Between 1980, when he became a teaching assistant of Prof. Aleksandar Obradović at the Department of Composition and Orchestration, and 2021, when he was made a professor emeritus, he went through all academic ranks. He was a lecturer at international master-classes and seminars at prestigious European conservatories such as Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London in 2000, as well as seminars and lecture series in Serbia: the 2009 Summer School in Sombor, WUS electronic music project, at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade in 2004, etc.

I finished all three levels of studying composition with Prof. Zoran Erić and later became his teaching assistant. As a professor and supervisor, Zoran Erić was always well-meaning, unimposing, and curious. Without exception,

he supported and patiently led all his students through the complex process of creating pieces of music. He never sought to impose anything, but provided so much: the desire to compose, a feeling for creativity and authenticity, the love of unusual, modern, and different works. His advice was always invaluable, not only for a favourable outcome of the composition process, but also for the formation of a young artist's entire personality. He possessed that rare ability to adapt to anyone's character and to get the best out of every student. His creative intelligence, imagination, and creative ability made him well-loved as an author and professor alike. With his enthusiasm and tireless creative energy he showed what it means to be great – personally as well as professionally.

The physical departure of Zoran Erić was deeply distressing for all those who knew him. And there are many of them – in Serbia, in the region, and beyond. We will miss his perspicacity, benevolence, wit, optimism that radiated from him, but his knowledge and wisdom even more.