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Ivana Petković Lozo*
University of Arts in Belgrade
Faculty of Music
Department of Musicology

MUSICOLOGY AS AN UNBOUNDED MUSICAL AND LIVED SPACE-TIME

A CONVERSATION WITH TIJANA POPOVIĆ MLADJENOVIĆ

In an original and authentic way, by virtue of the breadth and depth of her scholarly endeavours and their resulting scholarly accomplishments, Tijana Popović Mladjenović, a major Serbian musicologist and university professor, has made and is still making a significant contribution to contemporary musicological thought in Serbia and abroad.

She earned her bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees at the Musicology Department of the Faculty of Music at the University of Arts in Bel-

* Contact details: ivanarpetkovic@gmail.com

grade. She pursued further education in contemporary French music at Université Paris IV – Sorbonne, as well as during her study residencies in Boston and Cambridge – at Boston University, MIT and Harvard University – as well as in Oxford, at the University of Oxford (New College, Magdalen College, Music Faculty). Her entire academic career so far has taken place at the Musicology Department of the Faculty of Music in Belgrade, where she was first hired in 1989, progressing through all academic ranks, from teaching assistant to full professor. Since 2019 she has served as Chair of the Department of Musicology. As a visiting professor, she has taught at the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, Lithuanian Academy for Music and Theatre in Vilnius, Department of Musicology at the Faculty of Philosophy in Ljubljana, Academy of Music at the University of Sarajevo, Music Academy at the University of Montenegro, as well as the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad and the Faculty of Philology and Arts in Kragujevac, Serbia.

Her fields of scholarly interest include music of the *fin de siècle* period, 20th- and 21st-century poetics of music, aesthetics and philosophy of music, issues pertaining to musical thinking and musical time, as well as music's relationship with other arts. In her scholarly work, which she has pursued with almost equal intensity in every domain of her musicological interests and activities, Tijana Popović Mladjenović has accomplished results that qualify her as one of the most authoritative representatives of contemporary musicology in Serbia and beyond. She has authored five book-length studies: *Muzičko pismo* ("Musical Writing"), Clio, 1996 [second edition: Faculty of Music (*Tempus project InMusWB*), 2015]; *E lucevan le stelle* (Milprom, 1997); *Клод Дебиси и његово доба* ("Claude Debussy and His Age", Музичка омладина Србије, 2008); *Procesi panstilističkog muzičkog mišljenja* ("The Processes of Pan-stylistic Musical Thinking", Fakultet muzičke umetnosti, 2009); *Interdisciplinary Approach to Music: Listening, Performing, Composing* (as the primary author; co-authored with Blanka Bogunović and Ivana Perković; Faculty of Music, *Tempus project InMusWB*, 2014); as well as a monograph study *The Musical Text and the Ontology of the Musical Work* (in: *Musical Identities and European Perspective: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, ed. by Ivana Perković & Franco Fabbri, Peter Lang, 2017).

A large number of her scholarly studies, articles, and essays have been published by leading national and international scholarly journals (e.g. the *New Sound*; *Journal of Interdisciplinary Music Studies*; *Acta Semiotica Fennica*; *Musicological Annual*; *Kakanien Revisited*; *Music*; *(Ethno)musicological Yearbook of Southern Croatia*; *Music in Society*; *Современные проблемы*

музыкознания/Contemporary Musicology; *Contemporary Music Review*; IMS-RASMB *Series Musicologica Balcanica*; *Трета програма*; *Матица српска за сценске уметности и музику*; *Звук*; *Мокрањац*; *Музички талас*; *Теорија и пракса*, etc.) and collective scholarly monographs (published by, for example, Taylor & Francis/Routledge; Springer; Peter Lang; Faculty of Music/University of Arts in Belgrade; Clio; Umweb Publications; Oxford University Press; Presses universitaires de Louvain; Bärenreiter; CESEM/ Universidade Nova de Lisboa; University of Sheffield Press; Musica Iagellonica итд.) in Serbian, English, French, and German.

The high quality of her scholarship is also attested to by forewords to her books written by other scholars and their remarks at her book launches, numerous notices and reviews of her books in national and leading international scholarly journals (e.g. *Music & Letters*, *Musicae Scientiae*), daily and periodical press (penned by scholars such as Vlastimir Peričić, Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, Zoran Erić, Vladan Radovanović, Miloš Arsenijević, Zorica Premate, Melita Milin, Ana Kotevska, Marija Masnikosa, Tomislav Sedmak, Miško Šuvaković, Jesper Hohagen, Leon Stefanija, Ivana Perković and Franco Fabbri, Ksenija Radoš, Paulo F. de Castro, Violetta Kostka and William A. Everett, Marija Ćirić, Rūta Stanevičiūtė, Nick Zangwill and Rima Povilionienė, Ivana Petković, etc.), while numerous music editors and scholars (such as Donata Premeru, Milena Miloradović, Zorica Premate, Jasminka Dokmanović, Marija Kovač, Marina Stefanović, Snežana Nikolajević, Marija Ćirić, etc.) have devoted special radio and television broadcasts to the topics and lines of research pursued in her books as well as individual scholarly studies.

Her completely unique musicological *voice* has likewise resonated through her contributions to publications such as the *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, *Grove Music Online*, *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, *Le Grand Larousse Illustré*, *Српска енциклопедија* ("Serbian Encyclopaedia"), and *Лексикон музичких институција у Србији* ("Lexicon of Musical Institutions in Serbia"); co/editing more than 30 collective and individual scholarly monographs; serving on the scientific and programme committees of numerous international and national scholarly conferences; serving on the editorial boards of musicological journals and the *Ars musica* book series (Clio); reviews written for scholarly journals in the fields of musicology, philosophy, literary theory, linguistics, and cultural studies; and her research contributions to a large number of national and international research projects.

The musicological approach pursued by Tijana Popović Mladjenović is, as Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman has asserted, "always innovative, provocative, interpretatively passionate, and accomplished to the highest degree of musicological insight and a broad humanist education. For many years, this readily recognizable principle guiding her personal musicological interpretation has authoritatively represented not only her own scholarly explorations and achievements, but also the musicological school and environment that spawned her, on the European and global stage alike".

Pursuing the highest scholarly as well as pedagogical criteria, Tijana Popović Mladjenović has also become a leading professor of musicology in Serbia, with a notable international reputation as well. This is attested to by her mentoring work (ranging from seminar papers to doctoral dissertations, as well as co-supervising doctoral artistic projects), as well as the best master thesis prize awarded to a musicological study that she supervised at the Seventh International Musicological Student Conference/Contest held in Tbilisi, Georgia, in 2016.

The year 2021 was marked by numerous prizes and awards attesting to the significance of her scholarly activities and overall musicological, pedagogical, and socio-cultural contributions, in Serbia and abroad alike, including the following: the Pavle Stefanović Award; the Great Plaque of the University of Arts with Charter, in acknowledgement of her outstanding services and contribution to the growth of the Faculty of Music and the University of Arts in Belgrade; the publication of her study "The Musical Text as a Polyphonic Trace of Otherness" (co-authored with Leon Stefanija) in the collection of essays *Intertextuality in Music: Dialogic Composition* (Taylor & Francis – Routledge); her re-appointment to the Senate of the University of Arts for a second term; her appointment to the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia; and her admittance to the European Academy of Sciences – *Academia Europaea,* based in London. By invitation, Tijana Popović Mladjenović was made a member of its Musicology and Art History Section, as the first musicologist from Serbia and the second from the region to become a member of this prestigious institution.

I would be interested to hear how you perceive the awards mentioned above, which came in close succession in 2021 and serve here as the immediate occasion for this conversation with you. Do they constitute a high point in your ca-

reer, a stimulus for further professional growth, an opportunity to affirm all aspects of the profession of musicology, to improve the social standing of musicology and the overall profession of music, art, and culture in general, or all of those things combined?

The awards mentioned above, which during that brief period did occur in close succession like fugal statements in a stretta, certainly mean a great deal, but they also present an obligation in a fundamental sense. Not in terms of high points in my professional life and/or life in general, because for me, judged by other, internal criteria, those points are scattered in a different way in my perception of my own professional/lived space-time, but as a sort of condensed fabric from which the *fil rouge* of my underlying musicological/life interest will lead me, I believe – like the unfolding and shaping of a given musical flow in time – to new *pleasures* of discovering (viewed from the perspective of Joseph Addison, the *pleasures of the imagination, senses, and reason*), that is, to new processes of searching, finding, and understanding the sense and meaning of the phenomenon of music.

In fact, in my work so far, as well as in my professional engagements of various sorts, I have never considered prizes and awards of this kind as the reason, stimulus, or aim behind any of my efforts and endeavours. My main concern has always been my personal satisfaction with the results of my work – in line with my own system of values and an uncompromising sense of professional responsibility and rigour in assessing the process of my scholarly research, conclusions, and interpretation, as well as my pedagogical and professional socio-cultural work – followed, to the same extent, by the critical opinions of those colleagues and associates of mine, senior and junior alike, whose professional achievements I value and respect to a very high degree. Whenever these two insights correspond, they have been and remain the most significant recognitions for me.

Therefore, I view the prizes and awards that came in 2021 as a ray of light coming from without and illuminating the scholarly, pedagogical, and professional work of an individual, serving, however, to shed more light on and enhance the affirmation of musicology as a scholarly discipline within the scholarly field of the humanities and, given its subject, inevitably also shedding light on the totality of the art of music, musical creativity, performance and spoken and written word on music, and thereby also art and culture in general.

Taking into account your many commitments and serving on faculty and university bodies, as well as in representative associations and committees in Serbia and abroad, one could almost certainly say that you have witnessed various trends, that you participate in many events, discussions, and, increasingly, "struggles" for culture, art, and science. Given the burning crisis of humanism and the human ethos itself that has engulfed the whole world and, consequently, the humanities as well, how do you see the current hierarchy of values in society and, above all, its approach to education, knowledge, and science?

A complex answer to your question, which would rest on a holistic consideration and understanding of an entire compendium of multiple sources and consequences of a relatively long process that is, I would say, still accelerating today, cannot be comprehensively provided on this occasion. In that regard, I will attempt – at least partly, focusing on a specific current event – to shed light on a particular aspect of the convergence of what you called "a burning crisis of humanism and the human ethos itself that has engulfed the whole world".

Above all, in general terms, my view is that technologies of all sorts are, metaphorically speaking, "moving away" from human beings as their inventors with incredible speed. On the one hand, I would say that in the *current present,* human consciousness – primarily in relation to its constant exposure to the high pace of constant technological change, therefore also its unpreparedness in relation to the predictions of the possible far-reaching consequences of their easy mass availability and a one-sided understanding of their utilitarian functions – cannot keep track with enough agility and understanding of these dominant processes and events amid our contemporary world's idolatry of a technological virtual reality. On the other hand, we are witnessing that scientific breakthroughs and achievements obtained for the most humane reasons in the domain of technological development and/or, for instance, digital media and technologies, artificial intelligence, robotics, genetic engineering, etc., often turn, for some other, directly/pragmatically more "efficient" reasons, with the aid of their "natural" (ab)use and easy manipulation that may be taken for granted, into a tool for a more or less visible, fundamental transformation of human nature itself and/or *lifeworld* (Edmund Husserl).

It seems that over time, the insistence on the simultaneity of that *for*, *"moving away" from*, and *instead of* human and/or *lifeworld* in the context of today's world, leaving no room for differentiating the meaning of an ethos or registering causal relations, has meant that the fundamental property of the human beings – their human nature – would be the first to come under fire, as a sur-plus.

In that regard, this is clearly manifested not only in the turmoil within the humanities themselves, but also in terms of society's overall treatment of the humanities. For a relatively long time, there have been predictions of several disciplines of the humanities – and, symptomatically, it's always the same ones – coming to an end, including the following:

- great critical philosophical systems for studying general and fundamental problems of existence, knowledge, moral judgements, the mind, and language have been replaced by numerous and, increasingly, one-off, conjunctural, and easily exchangeable critical theories, or have been reduced to direct ideological interpretations, none of which, despite their obscuring and obfuscating influence, have managed to extinguish humanity's authentic need for philosophical reflection concerning its own essence;
- history, understood as *the last refuge of searching for the meaning of existence* with regard to *finitude as human destiny* (Fernando Catroga), was predicted to reach an end point in our age, but, although the *systemic colonization of the lifeworld* (Jürgen Habermas) is forcing us to dwell in a continuous present, effecting the waning of the horizon of expectation and getting stuck in a *worshiped present* and *the euphoria of living in real time,* closed off to the past and future alike, we are nonetheless, contrary to expectations, not witnessing the end of history, but, rather, the end of conceptions that dictated the end of history;
- predictions, claims, or the myth of the end of art, its demise, disappearance, or a dramatic depletion of entire domains of artistic creativity are confused with the collapse of the cultural patterns that governed its representation and a given historical situation that tends to belittle the idea of the artistically *new* (both in the sense of "newer" and "something else") as ephemeral and empty – however, it seems that a given historical situation cannot forever thwart humanity's desire to be what it should be and its dissatisfaction, compelling it to lend artistic shape to something that does not yet exist, because the appearance of *the new* is *a lightning strike that shoots out of the tension between memory/heritage and anticipation/expectation, an individual (and thereby also collective) stimulus that destabilizes eternal contemporaneities, proves prophecies and predictions wrong, even when it partly confirms them* (Catroga); therefore, art is not dying, just like our need to create it is not diminishing – what is subject to decay is its concrete representations, which are socially conditioned…

Recently, last spring, society's global "enthusiasm" for collectively witnessing "the end" of philosophy, history, and art announced the end of another discipline in the humanities – this time as a university subject. Namely, the government of Spain proposed to end public support for studying linguistics as a separate and critical discipline at the universities that make up the Spanish system of higher education, whilst keeping philology as a separate discipline. Regarding this Spanish "Proposal for a Royal Decree Establishing the Academic Fields for the Allocation of Jobs to University Teaching Staff" (*Proyecto de Real Decreto por el que se establecen los Ámbitos de Conocimiento a Efectos de la Adscripción de los Puestos de Trabajo del Profesorado Universitario*), Academia Europaea voiced its concern over this proposition by the Spanish government to eliminate linguistics as a fundamental university discipline and sent *A Plea to the Spanish Government to retain Linguistics alongside Philology within the Range of Critical Disciplines*. *Academia Europea*'s position (which was adopted on 3 May 2023 and had been drafted by its Linguistic Studies Committee, Class A1 – Humanities and Arts, which incorporates the Section of Musicology and Art History, where I'm a member) voiced its strong opposition (in six points) to the proposed move with the following arguments: "Linguistics [with its wide range of subfields: phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, historical linguistics, psycholinguistics as the study of language and the mind] has made ground-breaking discoveries about language structure, language change, language acquisition, and language processing, and continues to push the boundaries of our understanding of language and its role in human cognition and behaviour".

Be that as it may, this brazen attack, only the last one in a series of attacks so far, is more than alarming and disturbing, because it constitutes a frontal strike at knowledge about language as a basic means of human communication – at the very possibility of having an awareness of language, where humanity's social, thinking, indeed, human being resides.

Therefore, all of the phenomena I just mentioned unequivocally point to a general trend involving a systematic bid to undermine that which we might call the basic prerequisites for and possibilities of acquiring knowledge about the fundamentally human nature of humanity and, in order to preserve it as such, its meaning and essential needs. In that regard, with perseverance and persistence, the aim is not only to stage an attack on humanity's consciousness of itself and its ethos, but also, in the same context, to attempt a change in the very structure of its consciousness, thereby including its self-awareness.

In that regard, what is the perspective of musicology and young aspiring musicologists in the contemporary Serbian and international "arena"?

Following up on my last answer, I would underscore the fact that human societies without language, as well as human societies without music, have never been discovered. In other words, music is above all a cultural phenomenon, because there is no culture without music and because every human being possesses this, I would say, subtle skill of understanding music, significantly although intuitively. It is likewise a fact that a significant property of music as a cultural phenomenon is its diversity – the sheer multitude, variety, and coexistence of musical identities. By the same token, music is subject to constant change. On account of these few simple facts, it appears that music, much more than language, demands to be seen as a unique human property (Roger Brown). Because, similarly to language, which only occasionally becomes literature, music likewise only occasionally becomes art. In that regard, it is hardly surprising that the first two hybrid disciplines, emerging in the 1950s and '60s, were none other than psycholinguistics and psychomusicology. However, while language is important and useful in every sense, we like music and have a need for it without a visible, obvious reason. As Boethius put it a long time ago, "music is so naturally united with us that we cannot be free from it even if we so desired". We like music (due to our *emotions*?) and we need it (due to its *meaning* and *sense*?), because it is apparently something quite closely related to the experience of life as a whole – because in music the human being finds (*invents*?) itself. Or, as Claude Lévi-Strauss put it, "when I hear music, I listen to myself through it".

Bearing in mind all that I've just said, the perspectives of musicology as the science/thinking/words/knowledge of/on music, in any age, space, and *lifeworld* generation, are boundless, provocative, and exciting, because such is the subject of this science – the very phenomenon of music. Furthermore and above all, discussing *music as an art* forms the core of doing musicology. As its basic object of study, cognition, and, then, scholarly research, understanding, elucidation, and interpretation, artistic music, with its poetic diversity, stratification, compositional and technical complexity, and aesthetic worth, constitutes the essence of the phenomenon of music in general in the most comprehensive way.

Thus, if we considered, for example, the claim that the *law, under which one knows that he/she is alive, has been realized in music in its purest form,* that is, that *music portrays an inner life flow – it is the train of consciousness, or primarily the stream of consciousness* (Anthony Storr), a musicological insight fo-

cused on artistic music would certainly be an indispensable, crucial argument in the process of affirming or rejecting this claim. Namely, as one of many instances where musicological relevance is expected, sought, and demanded, the view that music as an art emblematizes the processes of consciousness brings the musicologist's profession to the epicentre of a complex interdisciplinary field, posited in the broadest way, a deeply focused field of researching and reflecting on as yet undiscovered or newly revealed phenomena.

Therefore, we should resolutely strive, look forward to, and responsibly keep going toward this musicological, as you put it, *arena*, viewed in those terms, whereas I would describe it as essential professional competence and a basic need. In any case, in terms of its subject and topics, it is large, diverse, demanding, serious, and, regardless of current social conditions and hierarchies of values, it is extremely important, even decisive, for understanding the human self.

What is your earliest memory of having a need and desire, and then deciding to pursue music, to think and write about it, that is, to live music? What does doing music mean to you?

As the living, jumping spot, that is, *punctum saliens* of my lived space-time, or, metaphorically speaking, the point around which everything else revolves, music has no beginning. Or, more accurately, I have no recollection of such a beginning. I haven't got a conscious memory of it, the earliest memory of a specific moment in time when I began to *live music.* And it just so happened that I've lived it intensely, since my earliest days. As my parents later told me, since we all shared one and the same living and working space, while still a baby I was already constantly exposed to various kinds of music without any immediately negative reactions to any of them, evidently because each one of them carried a certain value and quality. Apart from children's songs of all kinds and origins, French chansons, jazz, artistic music ranging from Baroque to 20th-century, the space I inhabited, during that time in the early 1960s, mostly resonated with music by the then avant-gardists: Witold Lutosławski, Krzysztof Penderecki, Tadeusz Baird, Kazimierz Serocki, György Ligeti…, because at the time my father was finishing his composition degree and working as a professor of music theory subjects at a secondary school of music.

After that, everything somehow came naturally and spontaneously, like taken for granted. Music was always there – I loved singing, I started playing

the piano, enrolled at a primary school of music; I could hardly wait to play Frederic Chopin and Robert Schumann, with my friends I enjoyed "our music" – The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Queen… – like few other things at the time; I got out of secondary music school already in my first year because I wanted to go to a proper gymnasium (general secondary school), but I continued playing "for myself", I often went to concerts at the "Kolarac Hall" … and in my fourth year of secondary school, unexpectedly and unfathomably for everybody around me, I decided to study musicology. As it turned out, in secondary school, apart from the inner intensity of my (un)conscious *musical being* and its originally all-encompassing needs that were not letting up, my special interests expanded to cover a whole range of subjects, such as art history, philosophy, logics, literature, the classical languages and mythology, psychology, the history of the French civilization and French language (in line with our family's Francophilia, especially that of my mother and my paternal grandfather), confronting me in my fourth year with the by no means easy question of where all those interests and needs of mine might converge, entwine, and permeate each other, so that I could really study something that I would later want to do in my life. One of those days, looking in our family library for something else completely, by accident – if such accidents really do exist – I took from the shelf Dragutin Gostuški's *Time of Art: A Contribution to the Foundation of a General Science of Form,* and when I started reading it, I was plunged into its world, which exposed itself to me as precisely that desired world of possibilities for my potential future professional being. I will never forget that moment when I had this feeling of internal enlightenment triggered by Gostuški's book. Then, in a youthful frenzy, I frantically started looking for other works by the same author and found his study on "Music Scholarship as a Model of the Interdisciplinary Method of Research". That was also the moment when I realized that apparently, musicology was "my destiny". As an already enrolled student of art history, I began studying all the music secondary school subjects that I didn't have at my gymnasium, passed all the exams, and then also the entrance exam at the department of musicology, joined the B.A. programme, and found myself… where I still am today.

Your question was an invitation, so I allowed myself to take this excursus just now into my own past and, to an extent, into the private domain, in order to use this opportunity, perhaps, to gain a clearer picture myself of my own long-term resonance with certain, above all, individual styles, creative directions, and achievements of artistic music, which, apparently, also relates to my unconscious experience of music from the earliest periods of my life. At

the same time, I will allow myself to mark those places where the trajectories of my interests that I just outlined entangled and intertwined, as early as my secondary-school days, in my musicological dealings with art music and, by extension, with certain specific musical phenomena.

Thus, my predilection for 20th and 21st-century art music – itself possibly conditioned by my spontaneous resonating with it already in the earliest part of my childhood, that is, unconditioned by any sort of habit, learning, prejudice, or resistance based on exposure to only a single, say, tonal way of musical thinking – gave rise to a scholarly monograph based on exploring the phenomenon of musical writing and the awareness of musical language with a special consideration of avant-garde music in the second half of the 20th century, as well as a large number of scholarly studies on the creativity and/or specific works of contemporary Serbian and international composers. Reflecting on their poetics and aesthetics was almost always linked to what is for me one of the most provocative issues in music in general – the phenomenon of musical time, that is, the way a musical flow takes shape in time. Based on everything I just said, about a decade ago, a compulsory subject – under the heading of *Music Interpretation and Elements of a Creative Approach to Musical Text* – was added to the doctoral study programme in music performance. My further dealing with these problems resulted in my monograph study titled *The Musical Text and the Ontology of the Musical Work*, which is primarily a discussion of key issues in the philosophy of music. In this context, an especially rewarding moment came for me when Prof. Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, on her retirement, entrusted her course on the *Aesthetics, Poetics, and Stylistics of Contemporary Music,* which she taught in the master's and doctoral programmes in musicology and composition, to me.

On the other hand, the different trajectories (concerning music and its history, the history of art, literature, French civilization, antiquity…) of my youthfully colourful interests that I mentioned above came together already in the music history essay I wrote in my entrance exam at the department of musicology, in which I wrote about impressionism in music and painting, as well as symbolism in poetry. These multipronged interests in late 19th- and 20th-century art centring on music, which manifested themselves relatively early, have remained a permanent preoccupation in my musicological work. On a quite specific occasion, they also gave rise to my monograph titled *Claude Debussy and His Age*, numerous scholarly studies on Debussy's music, his poetics, aesthetics, and the phenomenon of *Debussysme* in the context of and/or parallel with French painting, literature, philosophical thought, the

scientific, cultural, and social developments and turmoil of that historically unique *time of art…* as well as to my discussions of works by Gustav Mahler, Max Reger, Richard Strauss, Maurice Ravel, Igor Stravinsky, Arnold Schoenberg, etc. Among other things, those studies also resulted in the establishment of *Fin-de-siècle Music* as a mandatory course in the B.A. curriculum in musicology. This basically interdisciplinary approach to music, as well as its unique research methodology, then led toward an entirely new challenge and experience, that is, the multi-authorial scholarly monograph titled *Interdisciplinary Approach to Music: Listening, Performing, Composing*, a joint study co-authored by two musicologists and a psychologist of music, focusing on the question of how, in what ways all three of those basic musical activities, each one of them by itself, but above all, all three of them together, as an inseparable whole, follow the complex processes of musical thinking. Owing precisely to this line of "multidirectional" moving in the interdisciplinary field of my research and reflections, not only on music, but also on music in the context of other arts, I also inherited from Prof. Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman her course on the *Modalities of the Interdisciplinary Approach to Art,* which she taught in the doctoral study programme in art and media theory.

And thus I have lived, thought, and dealt with music, in an unbreakable tangle of a lived, scholarly, and professorial time-space.

I would say that this need on the part of your being to live and think music is quite directly linked to the way you write about it. Namely, in almost every scholarly study and monograph you have written, one can detect the moment when the object of your scholarly attention, the way it is elaborated, and the genre that both of them belong to become a unified whole in which the musicological accomplishment becomes part of the object, just as that object becomes part of that accomplishment. In that sense, I would single out your book The Processes of Pan-stylistic Musical Thinking*, which, as Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman asserts in her foreword, constitutes "a lavish and exhaustive piece of research", which, "from an essential musical aspect – the aspect of the pan-dimension of thinking by means of sound – illuminates the phenomenon of musical fantasy as a sort of musical laboratory, whose functional and existential purpose rests on the freedom of creative eruption and transgression", and that the "author's great familiarity with the problems under consideration, meticulousness, analytical reliability, and even the fantasy potentials of her discourse on the fantastic qualify this study as one of those musicological accomplishments in our scholarship that, concerning that which we think we know well,*

re-adjust those centres of projection and perspectives of interpretation that are always 'the same' and seek to establish some new and different ones".

Bearing in mind, among other things, the lines I just cited concerning the fantastic potential of your scholarly discourse on the fantastic in music, is thinking/speaking/writing about music a creative act that one might liken, for instance, to creating a work of music?

In its role of "kindling the spark" of creativity, in art and scholarship alike, fantasy is the ability to "think sideways", the ability to create different methods, the invaluable ability of "swerving", "turning", "jumping to the side", which means venturing beyond the framework of formalised, schematic, stereotypical, and automated processes. The quality of fantasy, as one of the most universal creative potencies, its ability to exist in every shape, whether possible or not, make it a sort of, as Miloš Ilić asserts, universal "spiritual protoplasm" that arbitrarily changes shapes in order to operate with success. Therefore, fantasy has the ability to hide, change, mask, and disguise as need be, so much so that, if necessary, it can even turn into its own opposite – logical thinking (which certainly is a sort of simulacrum). It cannot be strict, logical, or methodologically systematised thinking, but what makes it superior, incomparable, and unique is its operation. What fantasy can do, no other faculty can.

In that regard, if we are talking about fantasy in artistic creativity, for instance, the fantasy principle in music or, more specifically still, the "field", "type", or "form" of musical fantasy, we might say that it implies diverse and hypothetical forms, that it counts on the presence of multiple forms and styles, that it opens the possibility of producing stylistic and formal "experiments" and "new syntheses". Therefore, as a possible domain of novelty, venturing into the future, in many cases a musical fantasy is unburdened by the stereotypes of ruling expressive devices in music, the automatism of norms, in fact, it is not subject to the schemata of standardised formal patterns and the stylistic determinants of a given epoch in which it *de facto* emerged as a work of music.

On the other hand, when, as is the case in the book you mentioned, we are dealing with a scholarly discourse on the phenomenon of the fantasy principle in music and/or musical fantasy, wherein the possibility of searching for the pan-dimension of musical thinking emerged as the most open and direct and, in that regard, when we're dealing with those moments in the research process when strict, verbalized, and conscious thinking faces "ob-

stacles", as it were – then one may notice that, in line with the object of study, the established interdisciplinary musicological method and analytical interpretative model in a specific way *appears to* offer some *poetic licence* regarding the musicological approach itself. In other words, at those and similar moments, the *"as if"* method and model I just mentioned enable a breakthrough of that most universal creative potency, raised to a high level and moving freely in every direction, in its altered and transformed shape depending on the need and context of its operation.

Therefore, examining *post festum* the process of my own musicological approach and work, I would say that the phenomenon and activity of "unconscious intuition" (as opposed to "unconscious automatism") – which Arthur Koestler, in his book *The Act of Creation: A Study of the Conscious and Unconscious in Science and Art*, asserts that it features an "upward surge", that is, mental rise – sometimes, often suddenly, spontaneously, in form of a fantasy potential, informs the discourse of scholarly explorations.

In this sense, the answer to your question is – yes. Scholarly discourse, especially concerning artistic creativity, is undoubtedly a creative act as well, *"as if",* sometimes, acquiring some of the essential, characteristic traits of its own object of reflection. I first encountered this phenomenon when, a long time ago, I had the opportunity to meet one of the doyens of Serbian music and culture, Prof. Petar Bingulac, and study his writings on music. The title of my paper was "Petar Bingulac's Writings on Music as a Fact and an Artistic Experience". Namely, his writings were factually, analytically, and historically well-argued and easily verifiable, but at the same time, they were also poetically shaped in an artistic way. Having read my text about his writings, Bingulac said something that I later heard several times from the mouths of musicologists, composers, performers, philosophers, concerning my own musicological studies of various kinds – which was that I think and write about music *"as if"* creating a work of music. Eventually, thinking about it retroactively, I realized that some of my texts, scattered over time, are titled *an etude, variations, prelude, improvisation…* Be that as it may, that opinion is precisely the kind of tribute that commands a special kind of value for me…

The freedom of creative eruption and transgression is quite naturally inscribed in your pedagogical work as well. Thanks to your immense learning and extraordinary pedagogical gift, you have influenced and you still influence the professional formation of the many students who reach maturity on the foun-

dations of your musicological methodology. Given that your pedagogical practice rests on a special kind of mutuality between the student and professor, you actually encourage your students to find their own way in musicology, which is borne out by the fact that many of them today, with their authentic musicological voices, keep uncovering the phenomenon of music in the most diverse ways.

What does imparting knowledge mean to you, what does it mean to keep discovering the phenomenon of music together with your students and to grow professionally along with generations of young colleagues and future experts?

It means a lot, in a fundamental way, as in, I couldn't even imagine my professional work without that dimension. For, this continual, always open, alive, immediate, intense, multidirectional, never entirely predictable, always excitingly serious in the most beautiful sense of that word, challengingly responsible and never the same *exchange* along the trajectories of professor–student and student–professor harbours in its midst, for all those who participate in that unique process of exchanging knowledge (of providing, relaying, teaching, adopting, discovering, and further disseminating and deepening knowledge), a permanent, originary wonderment before the world of music and the endless expanses of the ways in which it comes to be, exists, is understood and interpreted. At the same time, professional curiosity, openness, and willingness to re-examine, check, and possibly re-posit certain problems on the spot, together with students, form an indispensable part of the process of relaying and acquiring knowledge, which thereby gains in strength and fullness, possibly leading toward new insights.

In that regard, in pedagogy and in my scholarly work alike, I've often had those as yet unmarked or unbeaten paths emerge as potentially valid directions that one should follow. I found that rigidly and exclusively pursuing only a single direction, theory, or specialist "preserve" (however perfect, *à la mode*, or utilitarian) and closing off to all others cannot secure a valid approach to all the fundamental issues that music emanates, nor can it, by extension, provide those necessary, relevant answers. I found out that compartments and pigeon boxes with neat labels on them, in which one often strives to stick, no matter the cost, even those things that do not belong there – and, by the way, most of them are like that – may often fool us, divert us from the right path, and ruin the reliability of our research and conclusions. Regarding student research projects (pursued with various degrees of independence), ranging from their undergraduate seminar papers all the way to doctoral

exam papers and doctoral dissertations themselves, my guiding principle was that shaping their projects "by force", to suit solutions prepared in advance or readymade "models" for "mass distribution", was neither the purpose nor aim of my job as an academic supervisor.

I maintained that, essentially, depending on the specific body of music, specific work of music, specific musical "matter" that one is researching and reflecting on, one must always take a different and unique road. For, it appears that the processes of the pan-dimension of musical thinking rest on those laws that are hidden by definition and hidden from a definition. Namely, the nature of these laws is recognized only *post rem,* only when the process of composition and/or interpretation-perception is complete and when a work of music and/or its existence are posited and realised in sound. This means that these laws that govern the processes whereby a musical flow comes into being are hidden in those processes themselves. That is, while a musical flow is still emerging, these laws do not exist, that is, *do not yet exist.* In that context, the processes of the pan-dimension of musical thinking are those of searching for the laws that regulate them, the laws that act through the final musical pattern as the hidden meaning that governs a unique, individual creative process applied only once, in a concrete, individual musical flow. Therefore, every individual musical flow entails a special, that is, unique approach.

Precisely for those reasons, I have conceived of the world of music and the world of musicology in the *lifeworld* as a boundless space-time, in which I've been moving wherever I thought I would find the freedom of artistic and scholarly thought, creativity, exploration, experience, and interpretation, undoubtedly serving the functions of the essence, meaning, and value of music itself. I have taken my undergraduate and master's students into those regions only gradually and very carefully, only once I've made sure that their knowledge acquired thus far, their musicological "craft" and "tools" would allow them to follow me properly and with confidence, that is, whenever I judged that this kind of approach could further help them reach their own immediate and well-argued conclusions and authentic interpretations.

On the other hand, my pedagogical approach in teaching courses such as *Fantasy and Ballade Principles in Music* and *The Phenomenon of Fantasy in Art* – which I originally devised and have been teaching for many years in the doctoral study programmes at the Faculty of Music and the University of Arts – is somewhat different. Bearing in mind the contents and specificity of the courses themselves, as well as the fact that they're intended for doctoral

students, I would say that my approach, in the context of exchange between a professor and doctoral student, is largely adjusted and/or adapted to the matter at hand. If one were to follow, for example, my lecture on the musical fantasy, *mutatis mutandis,* as a meta-speech about my pedagogical approach to the matter under consideration, then the following fragment of that lecture might serve to illustrate it: "…thus a musical fantasy essentially offers the possibility of transgressing, violating, exceeding the *laws* that govern the musical language of an age and its characteristic tonal systems, techniques, the properties of its elements on the 'phonetic' level, 'grammatical' rules, formalized ways of structuring musical patterns and standardized formal types. Insisting on the experience of *jouissance* in violating these laws and rules that are primarily a matter of style, certain systems, and musical conventions, is based on intensifying the activity of the processes of the pan-dimension of musical thinking that is governed by those other, *hidden laws* that one cannot generalize, that one cannot formulate like general rules…" Having followed, for many years, the achievements of doctoral students in both of those courses, which have also stemmed from adjusting my pedagogical approach to the contents of each course, I was always fascinated anew with the originality and power of their insights, non-stereotypical ways of thinking, arguing, and making conclusions, exceeding the boundaries of existing interpretations, as well as their freedom and authenticity of reflection, all of which came to the fore in provocative discussions and the high quality of their seminar papers and then also, and not infrequently, in their doctoral dissertations and doctoral artistic projects.

In any case, in the process of pedagogical exchange regardless of the degree, the crowning glory, the greatest pleasure, the most sincere joy and source of pride for a professor is the accomplishment of the student. I am very fortunate that in my pedagogical work so far I've really experienced many such moments, which constitute an inalienable part of the fullness of my work in musicology and life in general.

Would you say that speaking from the gravitational field of music is the only true point of departure as well as support for a musicologist? That is, would you agree that de la musique avant toute chose *is the true musicological creed?*

Unequivocally, in every sense, my answer is – yes. That much, I suppose, could be gleaned from my answers to your previous questions as well. At this point, in most general terms, I would add the following:

- music is the object of study of musicology (historical and systematic) as the science of music; if music is not the object of study, but only serves as an incidental occasion for study, then it is a different kind of study;
- in order to address music scientifically, a musicologist must have, given the specificity and degree of abstraction in the medium of music itself, a complex and complete education in music (whose basic precondition is musical literacy and practising music); if music is only an incidental occasion for research, then the researcher does not have to be musically educated;
- in order to support the facts resulting from her study of music with scholarly arguments and then articulate her conclusions and interpretation, whether the context of her research is *mono- multi-, inter-,* or *trans-disciplinary,* a musicologist must, metaphorically speaking, insert her hands deep into the "musical dough" of the score and/or performance, in line with that saying, *il faut mettre les mains dans le pain*; if music is only an incidental occasion for doing research, then there is no reason, and possibly no knowledge either, for implementing the factual-analytical-synthetic process of cognizing a concrete body of music;
- in order to attain fresh scholarly insights and knowledge about the object of her research, a musicologist must, due to the very nature of the researched phenomenon, relate, adapt, and sculpt her analytical-synthetic interpretative rigour with the concrete body of music under consideration, whether or not she also seeks to problematize the complex relations between the musical and the extra-musical; if music is only an incidental occasion for conducting research, no new scholarly insights or knowledge will be attained about the music itself, which does not mean that these other kinds of research, where music is only a pretext for research, cannot yield new insights about their real object of study.

Any confusion as to what is and what isn't a musicological scholarly accomplishment may unlock the door to dilettantism on either side of the debate, with potentially dangerous consequences.

In that regard, when I was studying musicology, there was no hesitation about what basically constitutes a musicological piece of work. A music-historical approach coupled with a music-analytical approach formed the backbone of every musicological consideration. Without that, the consensus ran, everything else would be just so much "idle talk", "watering a stake", "building on a void", retelling and applying narratives second-hand, third-hand,

n^{th}-hand, copying, confabulating, and along the way, if needed, whether consciously or not, a facile but inadmissible and tendentious distortion and manipulation of facts… In a few words, there would be no science of music, or there would be a pseudo-science of music that no one would ever need. Prof. Vlastimir Peričić, a composer, an outstanding music theorist, a polyglot with an encyclopaedic kind of knowledge, also a doyen of Serbian music and culture, who lectured us on the history of Yugoslav music for three years (and who supervised my B.A. and M.A. final theses, before I became his teaching assistant), was the central, main pillar of the analytical approach to music in basic musicological research, which we were expected to master at university. This music-analytical knowledge that we received wasn't presented and practised for its own sake; rather, coupled with music-historical knowledge, it constituted a *conditio sine qua non* for any kind of musicological work. That is how we were taught by, I'll venture to call them, the professorial *magnum quartet* who taught the main subjects in the musicology curriculum at the time, comprising, in addition to Peričić, Profs. Roksanda Pejović, Nadežda Mosusova, and Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman (whose overall approach to music was the most intriguing to me back then, too, and who later supervised my doctoral thesis), showing us in their own scholarship that only if all of those basic preconditions of doing musicology, which I just outlined, have been met, one may produce a musicological achievement that may in turn, only in that case, yield new scholarly insights and knowledge. Namely, if, or, rather, when those foundations have been properly laid down, they would show us how and in what directions, ways, approaches (historiographical, music-theoretical, stylistic, comparative, poetical, aesthetical, philosophical, contextual, multidisciplinary, interdisciplinary…) we could go on and arrive at the final musicological result of a specific line of research.

I've had the opportunity to verify the pertinence of this position and approach countless times, which is likewise borne out by the respected and valued position that Serbian musicology enjoys in the wider world, recognized for the perspicacity of its insights and interpretations.

And thus, paraphrasing Verlaine, *music above all* truly is my inviolable musicological *credo.*

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Biljana Leković*
University of Arts in Belgrade
Faculty of Music, Department for Musicology

Sanela Nikolić**
University of Arts in Belgrade
Faculty of Music
Unit for Complementary Scientific and Professional Disciplines

THE WEB 2.0 SOCIAL MEDIA AS A SPACE FOR THE CREATION OF CLASSICAL MUSIC EXPERIENCES IN THE TIME OF THE PANDEMIC – THE CASE OF THE BELGRADE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA***

Abstract: This paper shows how classical music left its canon-guaranteed spaces of the concert hall and stepped toward a broader community of audience using the virtual sphere of Web 2.0 social media tools, on the example of the work of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra. We analyze how this orchestra uses social media to present and promote its repertoire and work during the period of pandemic measures and

* Contact details: biljana_sreckovic@yahoo.com
** Contact details: saneladnikolic@gmail.com

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restrictions. The analysis indicates that in all its social media activities the orchestra was guided by the preservation of an autonomous aesthetic quality of classical music, as its value must remain present in whatever tools and formats an art institution presents itself. Various tactics of using social media tools were the opportunity to position classical music from the art of performance into a system of mediated and information-distributed culture along with the development of participatory turn as a wider audience engagement in classical music through producing social media user-generated content. The orchestra's use of social media during the time of the pandemic reflects several ways of changing classical music practice: connecting to new audiences in new ways, moving out of the concert hall, redefining the community relevance of a classical music institution, and initiating paths for collaboration between performers and the audiences.

Keywords: Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra, pandemic, Web 2.0 social media, classical music performance, participatory turn, promotional and educational activities

Introduction

The idea of adapting old media and conventional ways of performance to new technological circumstances is a mechanism that we recognize in different periods through history, especially with the expansion of digital technology.[1] Classical music is no exception to these changes. On the contrary, with the development of technology and media through the 20th century, classical music steps forward from the strictly marked spaces of its canon and its 'comfort zone', reaching new contexts and scenes. The musicologist Nicholas Cook explains this clearly with the following words:

> In Beethoven's time, and right through the century, the only music you could hear was live music, whether in a public concert hall or a domestic parlour… But nowadays, it is as if the imaginary museum of music is all around us. We can watch grand opera (or the Balinese 'monkey dance', based on the Ramayana) from the comfort of an armchair.[2]

Electronic mediatization of classical music is becoming an essential basis for its sustainability, and thus its accessibility to a broader audience. As Brian Kavanagh claims:

[1] Cf. Richard Grusin, Jay David Bolter, *Remediation: Understanding New Media*, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 1999.

[2] Nicholas Cook, *Music. A very short introduction*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1998, 40.

> The digital space can surely help break down commonly perceived barriers to classical music, which, as an institutional field, has often epitomized the thorny concept of 'high' art but is now motivated to be more democratic and accessible.[3]

Digital concert halls, live concert broadcasts, and online platforms for music content presentations are just some examples from the Western European context in the last two decades that bring classical music closer to the wider community.

However, such contents were rarer in the Serbian music scene. One of the leading causes is the constant turbulent socio-political circumstances after the 1990s and insufficient investment in culture and art. Even in such conditions, leading national music institutions managed to resist the challenges of that time. One of them is undoubtedly the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra (BPO), the most representative symphony orchestra in Serbia and the region.

The time of the Covid-19 pandemic, as a period of our contemporaneity, has made the issues of crisis and borders – as different kinds of constraints, but also as borders that separate activities in the realm of the physical and digital world – more relevant than ever. In all spheres of life, the speech about borders inevitably imposed the crisis as a central topic of discussion, and this is, of course, reflected in the realm of classical music too. Concert activities felt silent; numerous ensembles and performers stopped working temporarily or permanently; the audience remained outside the concert halls. While the physical world has become unsafe for life and health, the digital world has emerged as a more secure place, full of potential and new opportunities for overcoming emerging barriers in the field of classical music. From mid-March 2020 – when the Covid 19 pandemic was officially announced in our country – digital concerts and online communication with the audience were becoming essential activities. This paper will show how classical music left its canon-guaranteed spaces of the concert hall and stepped toward the broader community of audience using the virtual sphere of Web 2.0 social media tools, on the example of the work of the BPO. We analyze how this orchestra has used social media resources – Facebook, the YouTube channel, Instagram, Twitter, and blogging, to present and promote its repertoire and work during the period of pandemic measures and restrictions.

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[3] Brian Kavanagh, "Reimagining Classical Music Performing Organisations for the Digital Age", in: C. Dromey, J. Haferkorn (Eds), *The Classical Music Industry*, New York – London, Routledge, 2018, 134.

The BPO was founded in 1923. The orchestra's initiator, artistic director, and chief conductor was Stevan Hristić (1885–1958), one of the most significant Serbian composers and conductors. In the years that followed, the Philharmonic gained a reputation as a professional and international orchestra, which performed with the world's most famous soloists. During the Yugoslav war years (since 1994), stagnation and crisis marked the orchestra's work. The new phase in the activities of the BPO followed the breakdown of the socialist government and the arrival of pianist Ivan Tasovac in the position of director, who held that function for 20 years (2001–2021) until his sudden and premature death. During this period, the orchestra's management reformed the concert repertoire, improved the ticket sales system, procured instruments, planned educational activities, and created creative promotional marketing activities to reach the broadest possible audience.[4] Since 2013, a public relations manager, Jelena Milašinović, has been engaged in the work of the BPO to deal with the branding of the orchestra, communication strategies, and development projects of social responsibility. These actions include, among other things, presentations on social media. According to the official statistics of the Philharmonic, this type of promotion is the most represented (the web 855, TV 91, press 99, and radio 19[5]). In this paper, we will try to follow the intensity of these activities since the beginning of the pandemic and see the strategies and mechanisms that the BPO used to overcome the new circumstances of crisis through online presentation strategies.

Theoretical background, aims, and method

In defining our theoretical background for conducting this study, we have started with Boris Groy's thinking about contemporary art as *art in the Internet age*.

> In our days there are basically two channels through which art production is distributed: the art market and the Internet. On the art market the artists function as producers of images and objects – of the artworks. The artists produce the 'content' on the Internet – as so-called 'content providers'.[6]

[4] Danica Maksimović and Asja Radonjić, "About us. History", https://www.bgf.rs/en/about-us/history/, accessed to 22 January 2023.

[5] Darko Krstić, "Izveštaj o radu Beogradske filharmonije u 2021. godini" [Belgrade Philharmonic Annual Report for 2021], https://www.bgf.rs/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Izvestaj-o-radu-BF-2021.pdf, accessed to 22 January 2023.

[6] Boris Groys, "Art in the Internet Age", 2018, https://www.are.na/block/2814007 https://www.are.na/block/2814007, accessed to 22 January 2023.

We question this double orientation of art activities within the Internet space as fallow: the Philharmonic activities on different social media provide a different type of digital content on the primary type of artistic activity of this institution – classical music live concert performance. However, since we are focusing on the ways how this orchestra uses social media tools in the time of the Covid 19 pandemic – when concert activities fell silent – the question also triggers whether there is some specific type of digital content that is participatory-orientated toward the digital practicing of traditional aspects of classical music – live performing – that is, making music performance online, within the new, virtual context of digital space?

Concerning this, the second theoretical background for this research comes from questioning the phenomena of meaningful participatory orientated technology of Web 2.0, that is, the relation between a culture presented on social media and social media users. "Social media are understood to be applications of the Web 2.0 that enable and support communication, interaction, and creating relationships between users."[7] There are a lot of systematizations of different media types. For example, Constatinides and Fountain divide Web 2.0 social media types into five categories: "blogs, social networks, content communities, forums/bulletin boards, and content aggregators".[8] These all have a single common characteristic:

> the user is a vital factor for all categories of Web 2.0 applications, not only as a consumer but mainly as a content contributor. User-Generated Content (UGC) is often used to underline this special attribute of all the above Web 2.0 application categories.[9]

Having in mind these facts, the phenomena of using different social media tools by the BPO – as a representative institution that is the guard or keeper of the artistic music tradition as a highly professional and aesthetically valued practice of creating and performing music – could be understood as a part of the *participatory turn* – as a much broader phenomenon within the

[7] Andrea Hausmann, "Creating 'buzz': opportunities and limitations of social media for arts institutions and their viral marketing", *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 17, 2012, 174.

[8] Efthymios Constantinides and Stefan J. Fountain, "Web 2.0: Conceptual Foundations and Marketing Issues", *Journal of Direct Data and Digital Marketing Practice*, 9/3, 2008, 233.

[9] Ibid.

contemporary, digital culture. The participatory turn has been defined as "fuelled by discourses and rhetoric regarding social media […] and enrolls to some extent then idea of being able to deploy networks to achieve institutional aims".[10] This turn was provoked in the early 2000s by funding cuts in arts and cultural sectors by artists and institutions to "improve the efficiency of their operations, improving their respective audience experience and ultimately increasing audience size and engagement".[11] It is symptomatic that the relevant academic studies on these are predominantly focused on using the marketing potentials of social media to *promote* cultural institutions and reach a wider audience.[12] On the contrary, concepts such as the "participatory turn", "networked public", and "audience engagement" should broaden the focus of critical academic thinking towards the issues of potential and the limitations of social media tools "for audience development and engagement beyond the marketing paradigm".[13]

The situation of government lockdown and social isolation was inevitably a challenge for classical music performers to think 'outside the box' about reaching audiences using digital technology, pushing ensembles to keep current audiences engaged, broadening their audience with interesting materials, and sustaining classical music performance relevant in the time of the pandemic. All these brought to light many examples of innovative activities that are related to the mass media representation of classical music concerts. The digital activities of classical music institutions on the international scene have been present for a long time, but the pandemic, for sure, was the trigger for their rapid development and complexity, and for social media tools to become the primary media through which concert institutions address the audience. That means the breaking down of classical music concert borders. In a very paradoxical way, the Covid-19 pandemic influenced some distances to be established but also abolished. It forced musicians to present classical music through widely available digital tools. This led to the temporary sus-

[10] Garry Crawford, Victoria Gosling, Gaynor Bagnall, Ben Light, "Is there an app for that? A case study of the potentials and limitations of the participatory turn and networked publics for classical music audience engagement", *Information, Communication & Society*, 17/9, 2013, 1072.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Jari Salo, Mikko Lankinen, Matti Mäntymäki, "The Use of Social Media for Artist Marketing: Music Industry Perspectives and Consumer Motivations", *International Journal on Media Management*, 15/1, 2013, 23–41.

[13] Garry Crawford et al., op. cit. 1072.

pension – or, maybe extension – of the classical music concert as a traditional musical event, a unique meeting place for performers and audiences. At the same time, it led to increasing access to classical music within the digital space. Thus, we found ourselves in some new and, in many ways, paradoxical circumstances of experiencing culture during the time of the pandemic. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the dynamics behind classical music practices in the digital space, in the local context, during the time of the pandemic. We intend to rethink several questions, as follows: how the paradigm of the aesthetic experience of classical music concert performance has changed within the time of the pandemic, how the social media were used for creating a new sort of aesthetic experience that needed to substitute the traditional one, what kind of strategy lay behind it, and what the characteristics were of that new, digitally mediated classical music experience?

As for conducting this study in terms of methods, we combined several types of research materials and analysis. We have made a critical crossing and connecting of different materials in making our analysis and conclusions. First, we used a quantitative and a qualitative analysis of the content published by the BPO on different social media – YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and blog – from the first total pandemic lockdown, which started on March 19, 2020. That means successfully navigating through diverse strands of data – recorded video, live video, images, and stories – in textual and visual – formats. To reach this, we did a two-step treatment of the research materials. Firstly, numbering quantifications of content shared were determined by the frequency of posts in a specific period, also by comments and the number of reactions/likes. Secondly, we used content identification and description across different social media in three directions:

1) recordings of music performances as digital presentations of primary music activities
2) *documenting* and *curating* music online, orientated to promoting music but also to creating the situation for a better understanding of classical music concerts and reaching the *educational potential* of social media networking
3) activities concerning audiences' music participation, such as involvement in creative, music engagement activities.

Furthermore, we started this research assuming that the BPO social media activities are strategically planned to compensate for the silence of the sym-

phonic concert hall and preserve the social value of artistic music during the pandemic time. Thus, an important source of data came from the official, publicly available Philharmonic annual working reports for 2020 and 2021.[14] Also, of special importance for us was to get an 'insider' perspective. Therefore, we realized a one-hour interview with the PR of the BPO, Jelena Milašinović. The interview was conducted based on a set of pre-prepared written questions that we designed for the needs of this research, having in mind the specific subject and goal of the research. The questions were an inspiration for Jelena to – in a live dialog with us – tell us an interesting story from the position of a person who is crucial for the conceptualization and organization of digital activities.

Analysis and discussion

The leading institutional aim of the BPO is to keep the high aesthetic value of artistic music, both in pre-pandemic as well during the pandemic period. That means preserving the high-performance quality of sound, especially once the classical music concert goes digitally mediated through social media. Other institutional goals are to promote music, educate the listeners in music, and develop social responsibility, especially during social distancing. Social media networks are strategically deployed to reach all these aims.

The BPO started to use social media networks a decade ago, when using these media was still not a standard of communication and presentation in the local art context. During 2010 and 2011, the orchestra's Facebook and Twitter accounts were launched. The Instagram account was created later, reflecting the difference in the number of followers on these three social media: Facebook – now almost 50,000 followers, Instagram – about 16,300, and Twitter – about 10,000. Spotify was added during the pandemic as a kind of home radio platform, which proved very successful too through analytics and the number of reviews. Recently, a profile was launched on the LinkedIn network. The practice of posting high-quality video recordings of live concert performances on YouTube has been activated since 2013. During the pandemic, different social media came to the fore and became the dominant channels of communication between the Philharmonic and the audience.

[14] Ivan Tasovac, "Izveštaj o radu Beogradske filharmonije u 2020. godini" [Belgrade Philharmonic Annual Report for 2020], https://www.bgf.rs/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Izvestaj-o-radu-za-2020. godinu.pdf, accessed to 22 January 2023; Darko Krstić, op. cit.

To stay responsible and bring online high-quality recorded music performance

The official Report on the work of the BPO for 2020 and 2021 highlights several mechanisms implemented to overcome the pandemic challenges.[15] Primarily, the first approach was to adapt existing programs and events once the total lockdown had been officially declared. As stated in the Report for 2020: "due to the interruption of concert activities, an intensive PR activity was considered, which moved the creative content into virtual space and enabled the audience to enjoy music 'at a distance'." The Report also adds:

> Faced with the challenges of not having a digital concert hall practice, and the need to find a way to be present with the audience, as well as the lack of a budget for any more ambitious planning, the BPO moves all content online and creates a completely new content for digital platforms.[16]

This approach also reflects socially responsible behaviour and the necessity for the orchestra to make a supportive contribution to the whole community to overcome difficult circumstances as soon as possible.[17] In this regard, the BPO redefined the visual presentation and the orchestra's motto, putting a mask on Beethoven's face with the message: "Stay at home and listen to music." "Stay responsible." In addition, an account was activated on the GIPHY platform by placing a set of three stickers with Beethoven with a mask, which was a kind of visual trademark of the concert season. This account gained the greatest popularity during the Covid pandemic.

> During the pandemic, the orchestra received a systemically organized digital department. Knowing that we could not produce live concert performances during the lockdown period, the whole strategy – approach to the promotion and design of content for digital platforms and social networks – has been set to create the effect of a digital concert season. We have made a weekly, fully digital repertoire, where every day has its theme and a different type of content. Everything about music – that the audience was used to on Fridays in the concert hall, through live concerts – was generated through different types of digital forms, throughout the whole week, day by day, through social networks, from week to week […]. The pandemic was a period of planned networking of all the social media that we used until then.[18]

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[15] Ibid.

[16] Ivan Tasovac, op. cit.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Interview with Jelena Milašinović, PR of Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra conducted on April 18, 2022.

Table 1: Weekly plan of the BPO activities on social media during the time of the pandemic

Day	**Social media activities**
Monday	A day to introduce musicians to the audience, mostly in the form of a blog. The musicians wrote a text on a blog or recorded themselves from their homes and referred to a blog that they wrote.
Tuesday	Day of connecting with the regular concert season which was interrupted by the lockdown; broadcasting video messages from guests who were booked to perform with the orchestra – conductors, soloists – they recorded a short video greeting to the audience or a segment of what they were supposed to perform with the orchestra. Thus, contact 'at a distance' was made with that guest performer from the local context or abroad.
Wednesday	Audio day – opening the archive of audio recordings of the BPO concerts and placing the best ones on YouTube.
Thursday	A day for digital video workshops – an educational one – when different instruments were introduced to children – the video recording were made by Philharmonic musicians from their homes.
Friday	A day for a regular concert when the orchestra concert hall was transferred to YouTube. Representative videos were released that were present before or new chamber programs that were visually very attractive.
Weekend	Fun days – sharing fun content from the portal that the orchestra follows (such as Classic FM, with a comical approach to music); sharing interesting fun facts from the world or recommending something attractive for listening to.

During the first months of the pandemic, audio and video recordings were broadcast from the ensemble's archives (14 of them in 2020)[19] on the YouTube channel (Philharmonic Online Season) and SoundCloud platform due to the cancellation of the live concerts. The announcement of these events took place through social media. By enjoying Philharmonic concerts in the traditional term, but in a non-traditional, virtual space – instead of at the Kolarac Concert Hall on the YouTube channel – 'the illusion of normality' was enabled, as the management points out in the Report.[20] While on the one hand, this approach reveals a strategy of adjustment to the specific circum-

[19] Ivan Tasovac, op. cit.
[20] Ibid.

stances, on the other, it represents a strategy to retain the old audience and attract new ones. Hence, it turned out that this newly established and challenging situation for live performances to become recorded yet has significant and unexploited marketing potential. Despite the shortcomings of the video presentation, this method brings advantages. Brian Kavanagh confirms this when he says: "The immediacy of the video is unsurprisingly crucial to many contemporary strategies, despite the needs and expectations of audiences and other stakeholders, varying tremendously across the sector."[21]

The practice of video recording concerts professionally and posting a recording on YouTube existed as a well-established practice from the time before the pandemic. During the lockdown period, such a practice with the entire symphony orchestra on the stage was no longer possible. On the other hand, there was a general tendency to preserve the practice of making music and performing in any way. As a result, the musicians themselves faced the problem of two different aesthetic levels – the high quality of the professional live performance to which they were accustomed, and the average quality of the recording obtained by smartphones or other amateur recording devices. This led to a paradoxical dimension – the tendency of a classical music institution to use social media in such a way that its public appearances 'avoid' formats in which an audio recording made by amateur devices and of poor quality comes to the fore and to appear more frequently on platforms that emphasize the image and the story, such as Instagram and Twitter.

> The Philharmonic is quite *instagramic* – through photography, you offer a world that you do not have the opportunity to see every day – each photo of an instrument or a photo from behind the stage is potentially interesting. I think that Instagram is a platform where the Philharmonic can be represented in the best way, due to short-term story formats that allow the sound quality not to have to be perfect, although it bothers our musicians a lot, but the audience doesn't mind.[22]

After modifying the existing program and the standardized way of thinking during the first months of the pandemic, a new approach emerged in September 2020. Instead of adapting the existing materials, the BPO management created a new season in line with the new reality and the uncertain days ahead. Although live performances were still relevant – for a smaller number of performers and audiences – the concerts needed to become as accessible as possible to consistently preserve musical life regardless of the obstacles,

[21] Brian Kavanagh, op. cit., 134.

[22] Interview with Jelena Milašinović, op. cit.

and keep the musicians in performing form. Following the new requirements and goals, the mostly chamber performances were recorded and broadcast on the YouTube channel and SoundCloud platform, while some were realized remotely. For example, guest conductor Gabriel Feltz and soloists Tijana Milošević and Nemanja Stanković performed the second movement for the violin, cello, and piano of Beethoven's Triple Concerto from different locations – Dortmund and Belgrade, in real-time. This virtual meeting was then edited and broadcast on the YouTube channel.

Thus, we can see that new situations have led to changes in priorities regarding program formation and, especially, not forgetting the priority of quality in sound distribution. As the type of recorded music editing is demanding and expensive, BPO adopted the process of recordings in terms of the decreasing number of musicians and composition time duration. The priority was to stay responsible and, at the same time, provide both the sustainability of the orchestra's music live on the local music scene, as well as the high quality of recorded sound performance.

> We cannot allow ourselves an amateur appearance. Either we simply enter the time of the pandemic with one full production and a clear message or not. The period of the pandemic was quite a fruitful period for those who do not maintain the criteria. During the pandemic, orchestras around the world reacted with different attitudes toward the quality of the recorded sound. We did not want to lower the criteria.[23]

It is obvious that in all its activities the BPO is guided by the preservation of an autonomous aesthetic quality of artistic music, as its value must remain present in whatever tools and formats an art institution presents itself with. This is one permanent criterion that determines the work of the BPO at any time. Paradoxically, concerning the cost of a professionally recorded concert performance, the pandemic made things easier, because there were recordings of mostly chamber pandemic concerts – from three to a maximum of 30 musicians allowed on the scene, which was much easier than the recording of the symphonic orchestra in its full number of musicians on stage. As the PR manager also pointed out, the orchestra intended to keep the practice of recording in the future with more significant investments, bearing in mind the importance of permanent recording as an essential document for the history of an ensemble. This would certainly be the example of a positive view of the pandemic experience. Concerning all these, we could refer here to the

[23] Ibid.

article that presents the experimental work within the project Online Musicking during the 2020 lockdown in the Netherlands, that coped with technical and aesthetical challenges which the musicians encountered when trying to produce classical music videos for online audiences […] and finding a meaningful digital strategy. The experiment shows how difficult it is to shape a digital offer for online audiences when the skills and abilities of those involved in the process are too closely tied to traditional symphonic values.[24]

There was a general, traditional expectation of both musicians and audiences to have a high acoustic and sound quality of classical music concerts even in the time of the pandemic. Naturally, it is impossible to reach this standard with homemade videos on smartphones. Thus, rather than making a product for the traditional aesthetic experience and attentive listening, professional music institutions made different kinds of narratives around music as well as examples of uncommon, fanny-orientated musicians-audiences collaboration in online space.

Narrative on music and around music

As for all the above mentioned, it was an expected step forward for the BPO to introduce other forms of its players' creative practices that bring this institution closer to the community in a more direct and friendly way from the time of the pandemic. An example of this kind is the Philharmonic blog page called Metronome. Until the pandemic, this page contained texts by musicologists, music theorists, journalists, writers, music lovers, fans of the orchestra, and musicians about compositions, their impressions of performances, and statements about their experiences and playing in this ensemble. With the pandemic's beginning, the orchestra players' address received a dose of intimacy and a confessional tone. The blog segment was appropriately renamed with the title The Philharmonic Orchestra in Isolation. Here, we find the musicians' texts written during the isolation period about their everyday routines, inspirations, feelings, and thoughts in the form of a personal diary. On the one hand, such posts are an essential document about the specific time and memory of the performer as the author of the text. On the other, this kind of content allows the audience a whole new look at musicians

[24] Ties van de Werff, Neil Thomas Smith, Stefan Rosu, Peter Peters, "Missing the Audience. Online Musicking in Times of COVID-19 / Missing the Audience. Online Musicking in Times of COVID-19", *Journal of Cultural Management and Cultural Policy / Zeitschrift für Kulturmanagement und Kulturpolitik*, 21, 2021, 147.

and the understanding that they are ordinary people who have their daily routines, family, fears, and worries. For example, violinist Tamara Zivkovic shared with the audience what her days looked like through the quarantine days, what housework she did, what food she prepared, etc., and probably made people laugh with the statement: "Dear diary, today I did a good deed, so to speak, a small step for man and a great one for humanity – I washed my car."[25] The Facebook page announced these contents with the hashtag #OstajemKodKuće [I'm staying at home]. "As for social media, we were the first to start direct, two-way communication with the audience. It was initially about promoting concert activities and then we introduced something called *employer branding* or presenting who our musicians are."[26]

It is certain that the pandemic brought a significant shift in the aesthetic experience of classical music performance concerning the role of digital devices in that experience. The unappropriated situation of using digital devices within concert halls and live music performances from the past time now becomes the preferable one, as a way of experiencing concert music performance in everyday life, in a condition of social distance. All different daily content – narratives about and around music – also had a weight of educational intervention within the audience which was gathered on the digital platforms. The institution systematically presented a work, a composer, a performer with a different kind of narrative – in a way that emphasizes something unusual and atypical. Thus, during the pandemic, the usual educational activities of the BPO dedicated to children also took place online. These activities included children's introduction to instruments from the orchestra from the musicians' homes as well as virtual concerts such as the New Year's Music Fairy Tale project, which was recorded and broadcast on the YouTube channel at Christmas 2021. All children's programs from 2021 have a digital version.

New steps in experiencing music as well as knowing something new about that music were the BPO's social media challenges in which the audiences were invited to participate in performing music by themselves. The pandemic situation in which the orchestra could not hold its New Year's con-

[25] Tamara Živković, "Filharmoničarka u izolaciji" [The performer in isolation], 4 May 2020, https://www.bgf.rs/tamara-zivkovic-filharmonicarka-u-izolaciji/?fbclid=IwAR3qeCi1yBeeSQZEL8n3eLanNsTTOdLp5s4OL2DzhsbOuafzHcnt_jsDLUg, accessed to 22 January 2023.

[26] Interview with Jelena Milašinović, op. cit.

cert – which otherwise has a long-established tradition – led this institution to launch the musical entertaining event, that is based on improvisation – the New Year's Challenge. The musicians invited the audience through social networks to conduct an orchestra New Year's performance from their homes, using concert video recordings.[27] The entertainment events were organized to encourage greater audience participation – the audience almost became a performer. A similar thing was done with the first open-air concert, in 2017, when the audience was invited to create a program they wanted to listen to – engaging an audience to become the curator of their concert. A step further was taken during the pandemic period, when the audience was invited to challenge for the second time, to become a performer of the music they normally listen to. The New Year's 2022 Challenge was a call for making a home video of performing music on everyday objects. The best video won a surprise award ("Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra New Year Challenge"[28]). Thus, the ways of traditional classical music practice and social media have converged to produce unseen and uncommon examples of musicians-audience participatory experimentations.

Conclusion

Online performance statistics during the pandemic were monitored and analyzed by the orchestra's management. The reports on the work of the orchestra state that there was an increased number of visits to the website, the retention time, the number of views on YouTube, the number of followers, and the most significant growth was recorded in interactions on social networks.[29] Thus, Web 2.0 social media were the BPO's tools to bring music closer to everyone and everywhere during the strictly controlled time of social distancing. After the pandemic days, the Philharmonic continued with the same strategy through the project Music Everywhere – #MuzikaSvuda.[30] This project was designed even before the pandemic conditions, but it gained an entirely new meaning with the Covid situation, spreading the message "you

[27] "Radecki mix – izazov 'Pokaži kako diriguješ Beogradskom filharmonijom' [Radecki mix – 'Show how you conduct to Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra' video challenge]", 2 February 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_cyAnLsxsJM, accessed to 22 January 2022.

[28] "Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra New Year Challenge", 2 January 2022, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBRZspiKZFY, accessed to 22 January 2022.

[29] Ivan Tasovac, op. cit.

[30] Ibid.

cannot go to a concert, but the concert will come to you". Within this concept, musicians organized surprise performances in public places – from the main city street to suburban municipalities, in various institutions and companies' locations (such as a bank). These performances were also promoted through videos and announcements on social networks and the YouTube channel.

Before the time of the pandemic, social networking sites were usually used by artists to inform people about upcoming concerts or events. Their news updates usually included links to official websites or other related sites, YouTube links, program notices, performance photos/videos, and short appreciations. In the course of the pandemic, as the case of the BPO shows to us, social media turned to alternative performance stages, serving as an extension of the traditional performance space.

> The emergence of the Internet has erased this difference between the production and the exhibition of art. […] Art production, presentation, and distribution coincide. The artist becomes a blogger. Almost everyone in the contemporary art world acts as a blogger: individual artists, but also art institutions and in fact even museums.[31]

Various tactics of using social media tools were an opportunity to position classical music from the art of performance into a system of mediated and information-distributed culture along with the development of the participatory turn as a wider audience engagement in classical music through producing social media user-generated content. The music repertoire remains a traditional one of highly aesthetical value but the BPO parallelly and strategically offers itself as a 'product' of information due to which the audience wants to stay connected and engaged, even in the circumstances of social distancing and self-isolation. The orchestra's use of social media during the time of the pandemic reflects several ways of changing classical music practice: connecting to new audiences in new ways, moving out of the concert hall, redefining the community relevance of a classical music institution, and initiating paths for collaboration between performers and the audiences.

It is for sure that during the pandemic – but also in the uncertain times that follow – social networks will be successfully used as 'devices' whereby one representative art institution exerts a 'distance' and mediated influence on the community, focusing not just on the musical qualities but on artists'

[31] Boris Groys, "Fiction Defictionalized: Art and Literature on the Internet", 20 November 2014, http://fiktion.cc/boris-groys-2/, accessed to 22 January 2023.

social engagement in critical times. The pandemic and current changing circumstances, situations, and ways of communicating classical music have set challenges and tasks not only to the well-established orchestra institutions but also to the music education institutions to encourage young musicians to question current norms in classical music. We certainly need more musicians who can connect to diverse community groups, by developing their skills from orchestra to community musicians. However, having community musicians on the one hand and orchestra musicians on the other would mean that there is community engagement on the margins while the core remains the same. Therefore, it is the further responsibility of a higher music education institution to transform curricula for musicians and also to transform the very notion of artistic excellence, aesthetic experience, and ways of mediating and communicating classical music to the public to elucidate and strengthen social responsibility and educational sensitivity to the crisis of culture in the times of crisis.

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Summary

In this paper, we analyze how the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra used social media – Facebook, YouTube channel, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and blog – to present and promote its repertoire and work during the period of COVID-19 pandemic measures and restrictions. The situation of government lockdown and social isolation was inevitably a challenge for classical music performers to think 'outside the box'. Thus, we intended to rethink several questions: how the paradigm of the aesthetic experience of classical music concert performance has changed during the time of the pandemic, how social media were used for creating a new sort of aesthetic experience that

need to substitute the traditional one, and what kind of strategy lay behind it? In terms of method, we used identification, description, and analysis of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra digital content across different social media in three directions: 1) recordings of music performances as digital presentations of primary music activities; 2) *documenting* and *curating* music online, oriented on promoting music but also on creating the situation for a better understanding of classical music concerts and reaching the *educational potential* of social media networking; 3) activities concerning audiences' music participation, such as involvement in creative music engagement activities. Before the time of the pandemic, social networking platforms were usually used by artists to inform about upcoming concerts or events generating links to official websites, other related sites, YouTube links, program notices, performance photos/videos, and short appreciations. Within the period of the pandemic, as the case of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra showed, social media have turned to alternative performance stages, serving as an extension of traditional performance space. Various tactics of using social media tools were an opportunity to position classical music from the art of performance into a system of mediated and information-distributed culture along with the development of participatory turn by producing social media user-generated content. The Orchestra's use of social media during the time of pandemic reflects several ways of changing classical music practice: connecting to new audiences in new ways, moving out of the concert hall, redefining community relevance of a classical music institution, and initiating paths for collaboration between performers and the audiences.

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Yuanning Zhang*
Anqing Normal University, Anhui

CHINESE PAINTING THEORY AS AN INSPIRATION: VLADIMIR TRMČIĆ'S TWO MUSIC CREATIONS ON CHINESE PAINTING**

Abstract: This paper examines Serbian composer Vladimir Trmčić's two works inspired by Chinese painting theory during the Southern and Northern Song dynasty. An in-depth analysis of the "Chinese characteristics" expressed or hidden in the composer's works will be conducted in the context of the composer's knowledge on China. Its aims are, firstly, to gain a deeper understanding of "Chinese music" as understood by Serbian composers; secondly, to provide a "blueprint" for motivating the development of music composition on the both sides; and finally, to demonstrate the new way of communication formed in the field of ideology so as to open up the horizons of cross-cultural studies in a wider context.

Keywords: Inspiration, Vladimir Trmčić, Chinese painting theory, cross-cultural studies

Introduction

In recent years, under the implementation of the China-Central and Eastern European Cooperation Policy, the Composers' Forum and their tour to China have activated effective channels for composers from Central and Eastern

* Contact details: yuanningbelgrade@gmail.com

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European countries to get a further understanding of China. This is an initiative undertaken following the active call of national policy to link China with other countries in Central and Eastern Europe with respect to musical and cultural exchanges and cooperation, which has yielded fruitful results –several pieces have been composed on Chinese elements after the composers' first-hand experience of music culture in China.

What should be emphasized, however, is that this is not the first time that Serbian composers have used Chinese material in their work. The earliest attempt, surprisingly, of combining Chinese elements in music composition, was made in 1997 by Miloš Zatkalik (1959), who composed a piece and applied a passage from an ancient Chinese classic to his work.

The Young Serbian composer Vladimir Trmčić has been interested in Chinese painting since his doctoral studies, and has composed two musical works based on it in 2013 and 2016 respectively, the latter of which was the composer's doctoral graduation project. These compositional practices are all in line with the composers' own taste in material for their works, as opposed to the subsequent musical works that were supported by the relevant Chinese state policies.

This paper will consider in detail Vladimir Trmčić's two musical compositions inspired by Chinese painting theory and will explore the Chinese elements presented in these compositions. First of all, the introductory section will give a brief account of the history of China's relations with Serbia (earlier with Yugoslavia), as well as the cultural exchanges between the two sides, in order to form an overview of the general communication. A specific analysis of two musical works will be made to highlight the "Chinese elements" in accordance with Chinese painting theory. Finally, the topic will be placed withinin a wider context, taking into account the current practice of foreign composers using "Chinese elements" as inspiration, so as to restore the overall creative environment and to demonstrate the new way of communication formed in the field of ideology, which opens up, to the greatest extent possible, the horizons of cross-cultural studies in a broader context.

Early diplomatic relations between China and Serbia

The Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (in the aftermath of the Second World War to 1992), situated on the Balkan Peninsula in Southeast and Central Europe, won great popularity in China in the last century with the release

of the war film "Walter Defends Sarajevo".[1] Throughout the history of diplomatic relations between China and Yugoslavia, and later between China and Serbia, their contacts have remained relatively stable in terms of international cooperation, economic development and political position. Particularly in recent years, Serbia, with the implementation of China's national policy – "The Belt and Road" and the "China-Central and Eastern Europe Cooperation", launched under the leadership of Chinese President Xi Jinping, practicing cultural soft power as a key aspect, has been more visible as its representative.

Official diplomatic contacts between China and Serbia were established as early as around 1880: the Serbian monarch sent a friendly diplomatic letter to the Qing emperor through his minister in France, announcing Serbia's independence, which is available in the diary of a diplomat of the late Qing Dynasty, Xue Fucheng (薛福成, 1838–1894)[2] – *Diary of a Mission to Britain, France, Italy, and Belgium*, according to which:

> the country of Serbia[3] [….] as then the League of Nations at the Congress of Berlin settled the issues of Eastern Europe, and publicly proclaimed Serbia as an independent country, Milan Obrenović as king, and Belgrade as the capital city[4] [….] the king was crowned and received the title. I was asked to submit this letter of credence that was presented to our emperor, with all the words in the most respectful manner.[5]

This is the earliest historical record of diplomacy in written form between the two countries.

China's diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia, in modern times, have been somewhat complicated, however, primarily due to the changes in the inter-

[1] Released in 1972, the background track of "Bela Ciao" was adapted into the Chinese language and was sung all over China.

[2] Xue Fucheng: official in Qing Dynasty, diplomat, served as the Chinese ambassador to Britain, France, Italy, and Belgium.

[3] Serbia nowadays in Chinese is pronounced as Sai Er Wei Ya, while in the book Serbia is written as Sai Er Fei Ya.

[4] Belgrade nowadays in Chinese is pronounced as Bei Er Ge Lai De, while in the book is written as Bo La Ge Cheng.

[5] The original text is (in Chinese): 又塞尔斐亚国……于是柏林大会各国同盟底定欧洲东界事务，公立塞尔斐亚为自主之国，立密朗（Milan Obrenović）为国君，都柏拉格城……称其国君已晋加王号，特具国书奏明大皇帝，清为代奏等语，情辞亦极恭顺。参见: 薛福成《出使义比四国日记》 长沙，岳麓书社，1985年，第201页 [Xue Fucheng, *Diary of a Mission to Britain, France, Italy, and Belgium*, Changshan, Yuelu Press, 1985, 201]

national situation. The main theoretical studies in previous years focused on the impact of the Soviet Union's political stance with regard to Sino-Yugoslav relations at the time, arguing that the establishment of diplomatic relations and the subsequent 'frozen' phase between the two sides, was directly caused by the Soviet Union's layout and strategy in international politics. The Serbian researcher Jovan Čavoški, however, added to these views after years of studies, stating that:

> Right from the start, Sino-Yugoslav relations had been continuously influenced by the foreign policy dynamics that existed between Beijing and Moscow, and they were always evolving in the shadow of the bilateral relationship the two communist giants shared. This tendency remained true well into the 1980s. The rise of the Sino-Albanian relationship in the early 1960s was also part of the deteriorating ideological dispute with both Belgrade and Moscow and it had a direct impact on Yugoslavia's security on its southern borders. The beginnings of Sino-Yugoslav relations were not only connected with the ongoing normalization of Soviet-Yugoslav relations, but they were also directly influenced by the inroads both China and Yugoslavia were making towards nations like India, Burma, Indonesia, and Egypt. Therefore, the intense political struggle for trust and influence among these countries was another significant dimension of the Sino-Yugoslav relationship and it put considerable strain on the Third World as a whole.[6]

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[6] Jovan Čavoški, "Between Ideology and Geopolitics: Sino-Yugoslav Relations and the Wider Cold War, 1950–1970s", in: Huang Lifu (黄立茀), Wang Junyi (Hu.王俊逸), Li Rui (李锐) (Eds), *New Sources, New Findings: The Relationships Between China, the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Forum, 2014, 388–391.

For his views on Sino-Yugoslav relations, also see: Jovan Čavoški, *Shaping Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment*; *The Sino-Yugoslav Struggle for Leadership in the Third World during the 1950s and 1960s*, in: Martin Previšić (Ed.), *Breaking Down Bipolarity-Yugoslavia's Foreign Relations During the Cold War*, the series of *Rethinking the Cold War*, Vol. 11, Berlin, De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2021, 81–101; Jovan Čavoški, "Overstepping the Balkan boundaries: The lesser known history of Yugoslavia's early relations with Asian countries (new evidence from Yugoslav/Serbian archives)", Routledge, 7 August, 2011, 1–20; Jovan Čavoški, "*Почеци дипломатских односа Југославије и Кине и успостављање југословенско кинеских дипломатских односа, 1954*–1955" [Beginnings of diplomatic relations of Yugoslavia and China and the establishment of Yugoslav-Chinese diplomatic relations 1954–1955], in: Čedomir Popov, Dragoljub R. Živojinović, Slobodan G. Marković (Eds), *Два века модерне српске дипломатије*, Belgrade, Балканолошки институт САНУ и ИЕС, 2013, 285–301.

The overall trend of Sino-Yugoslav relations, accordingly, was not only due to the influence of the Soviet side, but was also strongly linked to the corporate international political landscape in those days.

Early diplomatic relations between China and Yugoslavia, in over a decade, went through a process of establishing, developing, freezing, and restoring. More specifically, diplomatic relations between China and Yugoslavia were formally established on 2 January 1955, with Wu Xiuquan[7] (1908–1997) as the first Chinese ambassador to Yugoslavia and Vladimir Popović as the first Yugoslavian ambassador to China,[8] after which diplomatic relations were broken off in 1958 in line with the disagreements on the part of the Soviet Union, before gradually being restored after 1968. Returning to the topic of cultural musical communication, the holistic Sino-Yugoslav exchange is strongly influenced by the external political environment and the state of mutual interoperability corresponding to this. That is to say, the early cultural musical exchange between China and Yugoslavia was mainly politically orientated and instantly reacted on the basis of the countries' bilateral relations.

Chinese and Serbian humanistic encounters

The earliest encounters between Chinese civilization and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe were linked to the "Silk Road".[9] The "Silk Road", which endured in history for over 2000 years, has been given a fire-new meaning today. Thousands of years ago, large quantities of silk, tea, porcelain, and other goods symbolizing Chinese civilization were delivered to Europe, effectively connecting the Eastern and Western civilizations.

Economic and trade cooperation, of course, is a vital prerequisite for the interchange between East and West, but what was also left behind this "Silk Road", was a glorious and brilliant civilization: the cultural basis of the "Silk

[7] Wu Xiuquan: a militarist and diplomat of the People's Republic of China, served as the first Chinese ambassador to Yugoslavia from 1955 to 1958.

[8] 伍修权:《回忆与怀念》北京,中央党校出版社, 1991, 第295页 [Wu Xiuquan, *Reminiscences and Memories*, Beijing, Central Party School Press, 1991, 295]

[9] Original (in Chinese): 丝绸之路. Generally referred to as the Land Silk Road, it is broadly speaking divided into the Land Silk Road and the Maritime Silk Road. The Silk Road originated in the Western Han Dynasty (202–8 BC), when Emperor Wu sent Zhang Qian on a mission to the West to open up a land route starting from the capital Chang'an (now Xi'an), through Gansu and Xinjiang, to Central and West Asia, and connecting to the Mediterranean countries. In 1877, the German geographer, Richthofen, noted the "Silk Road", a term that was soon accepted by academics and the public.

Road" was to develop political and economic cooperation between Asia and Europe on the back of a rich cultural heritage, to strengthen dialogue and communication with a more open and inclusive attitude in further promoting the widespread dissemination of the "Silk Road" culture and even, to a certain extent, global cultural exchanges, and to rightly and positively stimulate mutual understanding and knowledge among the peoples of the countries along the present-day "Belt and Road".[10] Humanistic exchanges, inheriting the connotation of the "Silk Road", have gradually assumed the role of a hub for cultural exchanges and cooperation mechanisms between one another.[11]

Humanistic exchanges between China and Central and Eastern European countries began as early as the 1950s, during which teaching Chinese as a foreign language was the pioneer manifestation. Many Central and Eastern European countries have offered Chinese language courses and sent international students to each other since then. The staff of the Chinese embassies abroad required a knowledge of the language of the country where they were posted and a number of sinologists from Central and Eastern European countries (the Serbian sinologist Radosav Pusić[12]), as well as Chinese scholars, specialized in the history of Central and Eastern Europe (Ma Xipu,[13] etc.), have come to the fore. The Serbian language course was established at the Beijing Foreign Studies University in 1962. In recent years, through official initiatives, such as building planning platforms and enriching the connotation of civil exchanges, China and the CEE countries have formed a

[10] 张斯奇:《"一带一路"背景下中国中东欧关系发展研究——以"16+1"合作框架为依托》，山西大学2017届硕士学位论文。第21页 [Zhang Siqi, *The Research of the Development of CEE-China Relations in the background of "One Belt and One Road" – Based on "16+1" Cooperation Framework*, Master dissertation, Shanxi University, 2017, 21]

[11] 陈斌:《"一带一路"倡议下中国与中东欧人文交流研究》山西大学硕士论文，2017年，第19页[Chen Bin, *A Study of Humanistic Communication between China and Central and Eastern Europe under "The Belt and Road"*, Master dissertation, Shanxi University. 2017, 19].

[12] Radosav Pušić: Ph.D., Full-time professor at the Faculty of Philology, University of Belgrade, one of the few sinologists in the world to have studied ancient Chinese culture, with a specialization in ancient Chinese philosophy.

[13] Ma Xipu (马细谱, 1938): one of the most authoritative experts who is versed in studying Balkan History, and East European History in China. Published works: *The Rise and Fall of Yugoslavia* (《南斯拉夫兴亡》); *Balkan, History in the 20th Century* (《巴尔干百年简史》》) *etc.*

model of exchanges and cooperation in the humanities that focuses on cultural, personnel and ideological exchanges and is characterized by all-round, multi-level and cross-field exchanges.[14]

In terms of economic output, Serbia is a modest country in the Balkans. However, from a geographical point of view, it is strategically critical – at the crossroads of East-West communication. It is claimed that Serbia has been influential to several major strategic global forces since its birth,[15] Serbia is therefore a key player in the political and economic policy of the "South-East European camp".[16] Sino-Serbian relations, in particular in the Yugoslavian period, were shackled by the international political landscape and did not progress significantly. In contrast to this, a growing exchange between China and Serbia, guided by the "Belt and Road" initiative, has made Serbia an equal partner with China.[17] Sino-Serbian relations have gained a real momentum after China launched its "16+1" and "One belt one road" initiatives, in 2012 and 2013 respectively.[18] The conclusion and signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Jointly Promoting the Construction of the Belt and Road by China and Serbia have given rise to their cultural, political, and economic exchanges: multiple types of Chinese companies in Serbia; HBIS (short for Hebei Industrial &Steel Corporation) has acquired the iron and steel plant in Smederevo; since 2017, China and Serbia have implemented a

[14] 宋黎磊:《中国-中东欧国家人文交流：合作进程、影响因素与前景》当代世界，2020年第4期，第18页[Song Lilei, "Humanities Exchanges of China and Central and Eastern European Countries: Cooperation Processes, Influencing Factors and Prospects", *Contemporary World*, Vol. 4, 2020, 18].

[15] 布拉尼斯拉夫·乔尔杰维奇:《中国和欧盟在"一带一路"战略框架下的政策协调：现状及前景——塞尔维亚的视角》，欧洲研究，2015年第6期，第31页（第28-32页）[Branislav Djordjevic, "Policy Coordination Between China and the EU in the Framework of the Belt and Road Strategy: Current Situation and Prospects – A Serbian Perspective", *European Studies*, Vol 6, 2015, 31].

[16] 杨舒:《中国国家主席习近平出访三国：塞波乌按下"一带一路"快进键》国际商报，2016-06-22。转引自李璎珞:《"一带一路"视野下的中塞合作》高校马克思主义理论研究，2018年第4期，第142页[Yang Shu, "Chinese President Xi Jinping Visited Three Countries: Serbia, Poland and Ukraine Pressed the 'Belt and Road' Fast-Forward Button", The International Business, 22 June 2016, in Li Yingluo, "Sino-Serbian Cooperation in the Context of 'One Belt, One Road'", *Marxist Theory Research in Higher Educatio*n, Vol. 4, 2018, 142].

[17] Branislav Djordjevic, op. cit. 31.

[18] Florian Bieber, Nikolaos Tzifakis (Eds), *The Western Balkans in the World – Linkages, and Relations with Non-Western Countries*, London, Routledge, 2020, 61.

mutual visa waiver agreement for ordinary passport holders, making Serbia the first European country to grant visa waivers to China (statistically, the number of Chinese tourists visiting Serbia has doubled year-on-year since the visa waiver agreement was signed).[19]

As mentioned previously, the Confucius Institutes and Confucius Classrooms are crucial initiatives to advance humanistic exchanges between China and CEE countries. The Confucius Institute in Belgrade and the Confucius Institute in Novi Sad were officially established in 2006 and 2015 and have been active in offering Chinese language courses and organizing Chinese culture-related activities in Serbia; the University of Belgrade has a Chinese language program and sends international students to China annually; in addition, the Beijing Foreign Studies University, the Shanghai Foreign Studies University and the Guangzhou Foreign Studies University also have a Serbian language program and send international students to Serbia on a regular basis. The number of Chinese students, studying full-time in Serbia, is steadily growing (including undergraduates, master students and doctoral students). The "Belt and Road" initiative, from the point of view of China, is a pivotal platform to being integrated in international relations and achieving global development. For Serbia, on the other hand, it is a golden opportunity to infiltrate the Asian market, upgrade its own economy and intensify its national influence.

Vladimir Trmčić's Two Musical Compositions on Chinese paintings

Vladimir Trmčić, an active young Serbian composer, who currently teaches at the University of Kragujevac, received his Ph.D. from the University of Arts in Belgrade in 2016 with his doctoral composition, entitled *Late Autumn*, a landscape for alto-flute, two harps and two accordions (*Pozna jesen*, pejzaž za alt-flautu, dve harfe i dve harmonike). As early as 2013, furthermore, Vladimir Trmčić composed a piece for two harps on the theme of Chinese paintings, *Autumn Landscape in the Mist* (*Jesenji pejzaž u magli*), from which it can be seen that the composer seems to have an affinity for autumn, but in fact, the choice of the autumn theme is very much related to the composer's understanding of Chinese painting theory in the Northern and Southern Song Dynasties.

[19] 李满长:《"一带一路"助力塞尔维亚再工业化》学习时报，2017年5月8日第001版，第2页[Li Manzhang, "'One Belt, One Road' to help reindustrialize Serbia", *Study Times*, May 8th, 2017, 2].

In an interview with the composer,[20] he stated that he became interested in Chinese paintings one day when he saw a book on Chinese paintings in the home of his relative. In the process of leafing through, the vast and far-reaching mood of landscape painting gave him the urge to compose and, after careful research, he decided to compose musical compositions on Chinese paintings. Regarding the application of Chinese painting theory in his works, he indicated that it was not intentional practice, and he himself had not thoroughly studied Chinese culture, so there are actually no explicit "Chinese elements" in his compositions.

Chinese painting as a source of inspiration

Chinese painting, as one of the concrete manifestations of art, was a status symbol of the ancient Chinese literati. Chinese painting originated from Chinese characters, which in the early days, were combined with drawing and appeared on pottery and bronzes. Later, with the emergence of silk fabrics, painting on silk became a fashionable trend. During the Han Dynasty (汉朝, BC 202–DC 220) and the Wei and Jin Dynasties (魏晋南北朝, 220–420), the influx of foreign cultures and the impact of local culture created a situation in which the emphasis on religion was the main focus of the painting, and landscape painting and flower and bird paintings also appeared. This was followed by a mainstream of landscape painting and flower and bird paintings in the Song Dynasty, during which many painters had a transcendent comprehension of painting, contributing to the formation of a painting ideology at the time.

Vladimir Trmčić's musical works mainly reflect the pictorial concept of landscape painting during the Song Dynasty, drawing inspiration from the paintings of the Northern Song painter Guo Xi (郭熙), who excelled in landscape painting and painting theory. He summed up his aesthetic ideology for the four seasons of the landscape and the Three Distance Methods of landscape composition, which are precisely the basis for the composer's creations.

What are the Three Distance Methods (三远法)? The reply is, the mountain has three distances: "when viewed from the bottom towards the top, high distance is shown (高远); when viewed from the front, a deep distance is born (深远); and when we look at the mountain from the opposite hill, it is called straight distance (平远)."[21] Guo Xi believed that landscape painting requires

[20] The interview was conducted via zoom on June 8th, 2022.

[21] The original (in Chinese): 自山下而仰望山巅，谓之高远；自由前而窥山后，谓

a balance of height, depth and straightness. The Three Distance Methods emphasize different directions, as a visual means of spatial expression to embody the spatiality of "far": "high distance" symbolizes the difference of level; "deep distance" pursues the difference of horizontal distance. Only when the "three distances" are gathered can a painting be called a masterpiece.

It was on the basis of Guo Xi's theory of the *Three Distance Methods* that the composer created these two pieces. As can be expected, the musical works have little connection with Chinese music, and the composer did not rigidly apply Guo Xi's theory of painting, but rather combined it with the musical works. What the composer wanted to express is that how to embody the painting theory of Chinese Northern and Southern Song based on his personal style and in what way the two completely different subjects could be combined to reflect the concept of ideas in the form of music.

Autumn Landscape in the Mist

Before giving careful consideration on his doctoral project, let's take a look at his work from 2013, which was an experiment before he created his doctoral work. Trmčić, at the time, had conceived the idea of creating musical works on the basis of Chinese painting theory. The work, in other words, can be considered an early attempt to apply the idea of Chinese painting to music composition.

The composer deliberately portrayed an autumn scene in the mist, so the haze sense of landscape painting springs up unbidden. In terms of the Chineseness of the work, it should be attributed to the arrangement of the instruments. The work is composed of two harps, whose sound is similar to that of the Zheng (箏), an ancient Chinese instrument. The music and the compositional approach, however, have no connection with traditional Chinese music. The composer, as mentioned above, was inspired by the landscape paintings of the Northern and Southern Song dynasty, so that his musical work pursued the effect of visual association with timber, texture, and instruments, together, so as to shape an imaginary autumn.

The source of inspiration was taken from the Chinese painting theory, though, it is a musical work based on the framework of the Program Music with modern compositional techniques, which will not be discussed here. Only the hidden "Chinese nature" (Chineseness) will be explored in the paper.

之深远；自近山而望远山，谓之平远。See: 鲁博林编著:《林泉高致》南京，江苏凤凰文艺出版社, 第80页 [Lv Bolin, *Lin Quan Gao Zhi*, Nanjing, Jiangsu Phoenix Literary Publishing Press, 80].

The basic form of the work is presented below:

a	b	c	c1	b1	a1	b2	c2
1–19	20–27	28–36	37–48	49–71	72–94	95–106	106–124

The overall structure consists of three fundamental sections: a, b, and c (a in monophonic form, b in chordal form, and c in tremolo form). The first six sections are in inverted form, in which the axial symmetric form is superimposed (a1 is the axis, and the front and rear materials are formed incomplete symmetry). The tonality is rather vague with no use of the traditional Chinese mode. It primarily relies on the rich texture of the harp to achieve the tonal transformation. The sound of the harp is akin to that of the Zheng, so the first few independent notes of the piece reminded me of Chinese music, as ancient Chinese music or music played on traditional instruments generally emphasizes single notes.

To tell the truth, it is relatively obscure to relate this piece to the Chinese painting theory, as there is, either aurally or after a specific analysis of the work, no association with Chineseness. In accordance with the composer's conception of creating the work, it is simply allowing the listeners to make their own associations, and, as the title of the piece implies, the music depicts a scene of autumn in the mist. The composer's 2016 work, on the other hand, reveals Chinese painting theory in a clearer way.

Late Autumn, the landscape for alto-flute, two harps and two accordions

The title of the work, *Late Autumn, a landscape for alto-flute, two harps and two accordions*, illustrates the source of inspiration, which, according to the composer, was a response to Guo Xi's *Early Spring* (早春图). There are two correspondences: spring and autumn, early and late. The composer's use of autumn as the theme of both compositions is the opposite of Guo Xi's painting, and a reflection of his theory: the sense of disparity.

Early Spring is one of Guo Xi's most representative paintings, completed in 1072, and belongs to the late period of Guo Xi's artistic output. This painting depicts early spring slowly waking up from winter, and embodies Guo Xi's *Three Distant Methods*: the "high distance" is represented by a distant mountain peak, painted from an elevated perspective; ancient temples under the cover of mountains and forests, winding mountain streams and deep winding mountain paths and waterfalls that flow down express the "deep

distance"; Guo Xi used the real of the near scene and the virtual of the far scene to form a contrast of "straight distance".[22] As the composer stated, the musical composition aims to present the image of late autumn, using some of the philosophical views of Guo Xi as inspiration, and theoretical foundations.[23]

Photo 1: Guo Xi, *Early Spring*

[22] 殷艺萍:《探析郭熙早春图的艺术特色》中国美术研究, 2021年12月, 第69页 [Yin Yiping, "Explore the artistic characteristics of Guo Xi's Early Spring", *Study of Chinese Fine Arts*, December 2012, 69].

[23] Cf. Vladimir Trmčić, T*eorijska studija o doktorskom umetničkom projektu, Pozna Jesen, pejzaž za alt-flautu, dve harfe i dve harmonike*, Fakultet Muzičke umetnosti, Beograd, 2016, 15 [Vladimir Trmčić, *Theoretical Study in his doctoral artistic project: "Late Autumn", landscape for alto-flute, two harps and two accordions*, Belgrade, Faculty of Music, 2016, 15].

The musical work, *Late Autumn*, has five parts, the first four of which are sub-descriptions of the entire late autumn scene, namely the composer's elaborations on each scene.[24] The last part, however, is the overall layout, which summarizes all the sub-descriptions and presents a whole. Thus, the scene portrayed in the musical composition is elaborately designed in good detail by the composer and determined by the listener's association and imagination. The composer's intention is not simply to describe the picture of late autumn but to use the idea of the painting and the scene embodied as the inspiration to create a musical work in his own style. The five parts are: *Far Mountain in the Mist*;[25] *Clouds over the Mountain Top*;[26] *Dead Tree with a Distant Mountain*;[27] *Landscape with a Mountain, a Tree and a River*.[28]

In this regard, the musical piece opens with an analogous portrayal of the "high mountain" of *Early Spring*, where the mountain is in the distance, surrounded by layers of mist, and appearing as if hidden, only highlighting the ethereal feeling with no contrast emphasized. The second part focuses on the clouds that surround the mountain, and behind the clouds there seems to be a beam of sunlight coming down directly. In the middle of this picture, there is a tree, which is the subject of the third part of the painting (and musical work), highlighting the contrast with the first two parts; the texture is richer, and the color is darker. Then comes the portrayal of the river, reflecting the mountain in the distance, the clouds on the hills, and the lonely tree. The final section is a holistic presentation of all the natural elements that appear in the previous sections, meaning that the music integrates each thematic motif of the first four parts, not simply by combining them, but by understanding and experiencing the ideas conveyed within a larger context.[29]

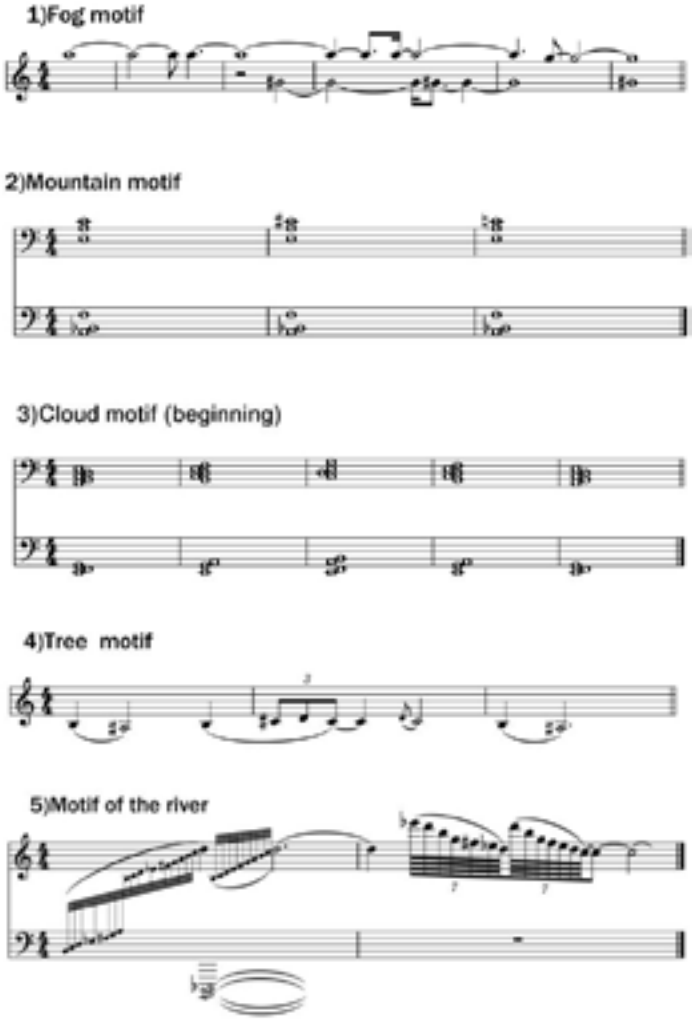
It can thus be concluded that the main natural elements of the piece include mist, mountain, cloud, tree, and river. The composer draws on these five elements to highlight the *Three Distant Methods* in Guo Xi's *Early Spring*, which is an attempt to translate Chinese painting theory into a musical composition. The compositional techniques, according to the composer, are mainly from Olivier Messian (1908–1992),[30] who was a great admirer of na-

[24] Ibid.
[25] Serbian text: *Daleka planina u magli*.
[26] Serbian text: *Oblaci nad planinskim vrhom*.
[27] Serbian text: *Mrtvo drvo sa dalekom planinom*.
[28] Serbian text: *Pejzaž sa planinom, drvom i rekom*.
[29] Vladimir Trmčić, op. cit., 17.
[30] Ibid., 17.

ture, and impassioned about transforming natural elements into melodies, which, aurally, would produce a certain associative effect.

Here below are examples of the musical motifs of the five elements that appear in the piece (Example 1):[31]

Example 1: Vladimir Trmčić, *Late Autumn*, musical motifs



[31] Ibid., 19.

As one can see from the above, the composer used a musical texture to portray the basic form of the musical elements. The melody, for instance, of the mist motif is smooth and has no big leaps between intervals, while the river motif brings out the dynamics of the flowing water. All these motifs, in their multiple appearances in the course of the composition, went through different types of variations. So the musical color and texture are determined by the change of motifs color, the change of instrumentation, the internal arrangements of the chords, the change of the tonal orientation as well as, the position of the performers on the stage- "accordions and harps are placed so that one of them is in the foreground and the background. From right to left, harp 1, accordion 1, harp 2, accordion 2, with the auto-flute in the middle, which greatly expands the sound panorama.[32]

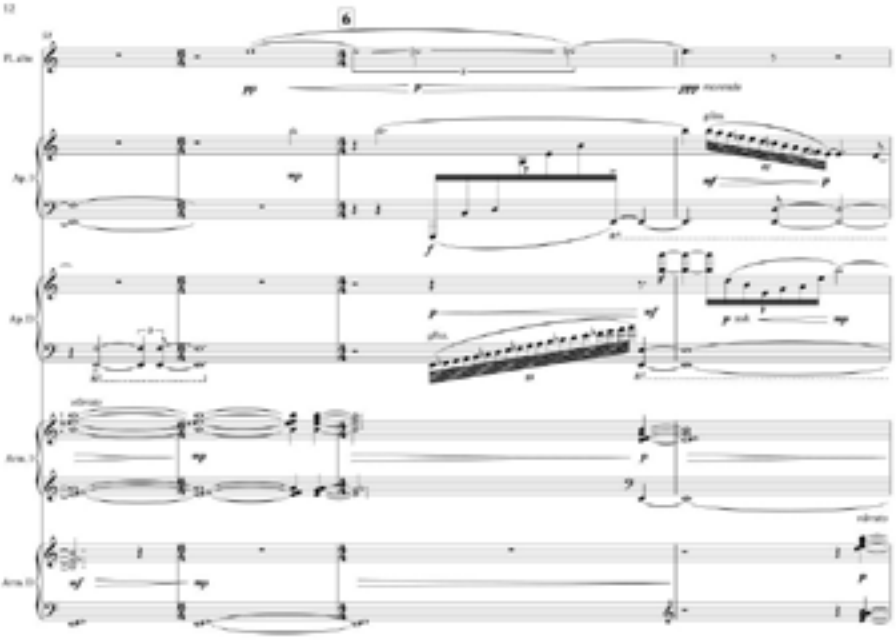
The so-called *Three Distant Methods* are applied to the second, third and fourth sections of the musical work. If we regard the first part as an introduction, the second section then represents the *high distance*, the *deep distance* becomes visible in the third part, and the fourth part obviously stands for the *straight distance*. Moreover, the only place where the traditional Chinese mode is applied is in the second section (mm. 53–54), according to the composer, it is written in the E Phrygian mode with a minor tendency of pentatonic, which occurs in the harp section (Example 2).[33]

The musical work *Late Autumn* is a combination of both visual and auditory sensations, which shows no apparent "Chineseness". The composer's aim is not to create a musical composition with Chinese characteristics, but to use it to portray the scene of the autumn in his mind. Different musical elements are applied to present multiple visual effects, thus creating a vast, far-reaching artistic conception. It is focused on transporting the musical elements into the visual imagination. Realized as a cycle forming five movements form, this composition displays an imaginary landscape, painted with music. Some of the features of Chinese landscape painting can be noticed in the applications of music colours and textures, so as to build a musical flow expressed in the painting. The aforementioned five musical motifs are the foundation of the piece and the overall musical landscape is shaped by transforming and changing them. This is similar to the works of the Impressionists, where the five musical elements are intertwined in the piece, from the mountains in the distance to the rivers in front, everything leaps out on the scroll.

[32] Vladimir Trmčić presented a seating arragement of the perfomers on the stage at his doctoral project. Ibid., 23.
[33] Ibid., 31.

Example 2: Vladimir Trmčić, *Late Autumn,* 2nd movement, tempo=60, segment, mm. 51–54.

e, Phrygian mode



Conclusion: Chinese elements as a source of inspiration for music creation

Since the Western composer, Gustav Mahler (1860–1911), composed the well-known work *Song of the Earth* in line with the Chinese Tang poems and premiered it in Munich, Germany in 1911, it has become a classic case of Western music masters applying traditional Chinese culture as a carrier for their compositions. Many Western composers have followed suit, either by drawing on traditional Chinese music or modeling their music on traditional Chinese culture, or even by permeating it with ideas, allowing more space for musical works to shape spiritual civilization.

The dialogue between East and West in the form of music has become a craze, leading to the development of international music creation with the unique charm belonging to Eastern civilization. In the 20th century, more than a dozen Western composers[34] have shined in the genre of Chinese Tang

[34] Harry Partch:*17 Lyrics of Li Po*; Albert Roussel: *Chinese Odes*, Op.12, 35–47;

poems, collaging it with their individual styles to form a musical composition that blends East and West. The Chinese composer, Ye Xiaogang (叶小纲, 1955), composed a symphonic vocal suite of the same name, *Song of the Earth*, which forms a juxtaposed diptych with Mahler. As a Western composer, Mahler created a musical work based on Chinese Tang poems without some knowledge of Chinese, which naturally differs from the portrayal of a native Chinese composer who is imbued with traditional Chinese culture. There is no superiority or inferiority, Mahler "advances in order to retreat", indicating his pain and disappointment at spiritual disillusionment, while Ye Xiaogang "retreats for the sake of advancing", with positive attitudes toward life, in which one can experience the different sadness and joyfulness. The importance of musical dialogue, therefore, is highlighted, that is, music is a vital reference to understanding intercultural differences so that acceptance and communication can be enhanced.

There are, of course, not a few examples of music and painting inspiring each other. Music is the art of time, appealing to the sense of hearing; painting, on the other hand, is the art of space, resorting to the sense of sight. One expresses things in the form of movement and fills the mood with time; the other condenses vivid situations in a moment and unfolds images in space. Music excels in "describing emotions", and painting wins by "describing objects". However, they are consistent in that they express the subtle and complex emotional changes in the artist's mind and his feelings about the objective world. Music and painting, while carrying forward their respective characteristics, also attempt to break through their own limitations. Painting could be managed to serve people to hear the flowing sound of music; while music could be integrated to make people see the images, which is one of the benchmarks of music composition that local Chinese composers have markedly strengthened in recent years. Fruitful results have been achieved: Zhao Lin's (赵麟, 1973) symphonic poem *A Thousand Miles of Rivers and Mountains* inspired by the hereditary painting of the same name, passed down from the Northern Song Dynasty painter, Wang Mengxi (王孟希, 1096–

Alexander Tcherepnin: 谱中国诗词七首 (*Seven Songs on Chinese Poems*, Op. 71); John Alden Carpenter: 水彩画·四首中国音诗 (*Water-Colors*); Benjamin Britten: 中国歌 (*Songs from the Chines*); Charles Tomlinson Griffes:中国和日本古诗五首 (*5 Poems of Ancient China and Japan*); Constant Lambert: 李白诗八首 (*Eight poems by Li-Po*); Arthur Bliss: 四季歌谣(*Ballads of Four Seasons*); Peter Warlock: 在溪边(*Along the stream*); Krzysztof Penderecki: 第六交响曲·中国诗歌(Symphony No. 6); Anton Webern: 艺术歌曲(*Lieder for Voice and Orchestra*).

1119), which is a reunion of ancient and modern times, bears witness to China's dazzling civilization for thousands of years.

If we look at the music creations in the internationalized context between China and Central and Eastern Europe, the parallelism between music and painting has only gradually emerged under the China-Central and Eastern Europe policy, with the visit of composers from sixteen Central and Eastern European countries to China as the main manifestation. In 2017, the Lithuanian composer Ramunas Moteikaitis (1976) composed a work entitled *Whispering Pines, for Erhu, Yangqin and Pipa*, inspired by the paintings of the Southern Song painters, Li Tang (李唐,1066–1150） and Ma Lin (马麟, date of birth and death unknown), and many other compositions related to Chinese culture, history, and customs.[35] This musical composition practice is an organized and purposeful combination of Chinese culture and the different backgrounds of Central and Eastern Europe, with the aim of strengthening mutual exchange and understanding at the level of Chinese-Central and Eastern European music culture. The Serbian composer, Vladimir Trmčić, on the other hand, has made a spontaneous entry into traditional Chinese culture, which is relatively rare in today's international compositional environment, and this has led to a lack of Chineseness in his works.

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[35] See footnote 34.

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Summary

Since the 20th century, the dialogue between East and West in the field of music has become highly influential, leading to the development of international music creation with the unique charm belonging to Eastern civilization. Many Western composers have followed that line, either drawing on traditional Chinese music, or using traditional Chinese culture as a blueprint, or even infiltrating it with ideas to give musical works more space to shape the spiritual civilization. The exchange between China and Serbia in the field of composition has been gaining prominence with the implementation of China-Central and Eastern European policy. To date, several musical creations with Chinese characteristics have been composed by Serbian composers and premiered worldwide. However, the Serbian composer Vladimir Trmčić, who incorporated Chinese elements into his work, is an act of serendipity.

This paper, first of all, briefly narrated the background of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Serbia (early and Yugoslavia) and the early Sino-Serbian humanistic exchange, so that a general overview of communication could be formed. It gave priority to two of the composer's musical compositions inspired by Chinese painting theory, namely, Guo Xi's *Three Distance Method*s. The "Chineseness" expressed or hidden in these works was explored. More importantly, a wider context of foreign composers taking "Chinese elements" as inspiration was considered in order to clarify the overall creative environment and open up the horizons of cross-cultural studies.

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Sara Pinheiro*
PhD student
Bangor University, School of Music and Media
Wales, United Kingdom

FOLEY GESTURE: TOWARDS A THEORY OF ACOUSMATIC FOLEY

Abstract: The research project "Acousmatic Foley" addresses common traits between foley art and Concrete Music, based on the idea that the foley artist is an acousmatic listener and, in turn, that acousmatic listening is a form of fiction. In this line, the study argues that both fields have similar treatment of the "sonorous object". For this purpose, the research builds on two lines of thought: the "son-en-scène" and the "mise-en-son". Firstly, the "son-en-scène" focuses on the sounds of the filmic mise-en-scène (and its sound props), from very early cases to contemporary instances. The focus on these sound-props provides a perspective of sound for film that emphasizes its role as a tool of fiction and, thus, foley as the craft that leads to that experience. Secondly, "mise-en-son" sheds light on the making of the sound itself by exploring the concept of musical gesture. Either in contexts in which the musical gesture is visible (as with instruments), more cryptic (as with electronic devices), or completely delegated (as in acousmatic music), gesture can be seen a form of agency. Given that foley consists of maneuvering a sound-prop, gesture is as central to foley as it is to musical practices. This paper focus on the idea that gesture carries the same conception as the "sonorous object", that of an "intentional unit". In line with this, and in particular when of acousmatic nature, the research argues that the sonorous object is analogous to the sound-prop. In the end, these two lines of thought (son-en-scènce and mise-en-son) bridge the poietic and esthetic, as in Nattiez's semiotic distinction, towards an experience of "acousmatic foley".

Keywords: foley, gesture, acousmatic, film, sound design

* Author's contact information: mail@sarapinheiro.com

Introduction

The research project "Acousmatic Foley" focuses on the common traits between this line of practice in sound for film (foley art) and the listening proposal that emerged in the early 1950s with the foundation of *Musique Concrète*, namely acousmatic listening. Although the formulation "Acousmatic Foley" seems oxymoronic, the argument is that every foley artist is an acousmatic listener, while acousmatic composition also carries a sense of fiction very close to the manufacturing craft of foley art. In this process of aligning the common ground between both practices, the concept (and practice) of *gesture* emerges in the shared domain between both fields because one of the central aspects of Foley Art (among other things) is manipulating a physical object, just like musicians need to do in order to produce sound with their instruments.

In foley practices, many times, this sound must match an action quite specifically, rather than being merely a reference. For that reason, the manoeuvre of the object is not to support a 'sonic quotation' but, instead, to signify a replica of the action. This manoeuvre shapes the sound, extracting possible textures and nuances to produce one of the possible definitions of gesture. As with most designations, 'gesture' carries extensive cultural baggage, particularly within musical studies. Even within musical studies, there are multiple incidences, implications and implementations of the term.[1]

However, there is a general contour agreed upon, which outlines an understanding of what gesture is or means. Indeed, the common traits between Foley Art and Acousmatic Composition come forward precisely throughout the scrutiny of the meaning behind 'gesture' – mostly by inheriting the general conventions of acousmatic practice and its development of the "sonorous object" from *Musique Concrète*.[2] In the end, the concept of the "sonorous object" becomes analogous to the proposal of "sound-prop" in Acousmatic Foley's perspective towards a theory that aims at enclosing both practices. Incidentally, both topics had to be studied separately.

[1] Alexander Jensenius, Marcelo Wanderley, Rolf Godøy, Marc Leman, "Musical Gestures: concepts and methods in research", in: Rolf Inge Godøy, Marc Leman (Eds), *Musical Gestures: Sound, Movement, and Meaning*, New York, Routledge, 2010, 12–35.

[2] Pierre Schaeffer, *In Search of a Concrete Music*, transl. by Christine North and John Dack, Berkeley – Los Angeles – London, University of California Press, 2012.

Gesture in Music: a brief overview

Among multiple definitions and contextualizations, there is mutual agreement on a few general premises implied by "gesture". Broadly speaking, a gesture is "any energetic shaping through time that may be interpreted as significant".[3] In this case, interpretation can stand either for the musician or for the listener: a gesture is a way of manipulating either the object in use, or the way it is perceived. Thus, a gesture contains a temporal structure: just like the "sonorous object",[4] a gesture is also an "intentional unit".[5] Accordingly, intentionality implies a sense of agency,[6] carrying a relationship between "movement and meaning"[7] and thus a way to control shape over time.[8] It is "a physical phenomenon, [...] a communication channel that carries a unified or multidimensional elementary action", which also allows for the "visualisation of the signals".[9] In that sense, the gesture is a form of utterance.[10]

However, such approaches require a few caveats. The first is that the context usually makes the gesture visible. In other words, a gesture is systematically contextualised in the perspective of a musical performance; most likely an instrumental performance in a concert situation. In a manner of speaking, instruments do require a certain way of action in order to produce an intended sound: the way one stresses the instrument's strings or pushes the piano's keys will have a direct influence on the way these instruments will

[3] Robert Hatten, "A Theory of Musical Gewsture and its Application to Beethoven and Schubet", in: Anthony Gritten, Elaine King (Eds), *Music and Gesture*, Aldershot – Burlington, Ashgate, 2006, 1.

[4] 'Sonorous object' is Dack and North's translation of Schaeffer's *object sonore*, and is identical to 'sound object' as used more commonly elsewhere (as for example in Brain Kane, "L'Objet Sonore Maintenant: Pierre Schaeffer, sound objects and the phenomenological reduction", *Organised Sound*, 12(1), 2007). See Pierre Schaeffer, *Treatise on Musical Objects: An Essay across Disciplines*, transl. by Christine North and John Dack, Oakland, University of California Press, 2017.

[5] See Rolf Godøy, "Gestural-Sonorous Objects: embodied extensions of Schaeffer's conceptual apparatus", *Organised Sound*, 11(2), 2006, 149–157.

[6] Elaine King, Anthony Gritten, op. cit.

[7] Alexander Jensenius, Marcelo Wanderley, Rolf Godøy and Marc Leman, op. cit.

[8] W. Luke Windsor, "Gestures in Music-making: Action, Information and Perception", in: Elaine King, Anthony Gritten (Ed.), *New Perspectives on Music and Gesture*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011, 45–66.

[9] Claude Cadoz, "Instrumental Gesture and Musical Composition", *ICMC 1988 – International Computer Music Conference*, Cologne, Germany, February 1988, 1–12. ⟨hal-00491738⟩

[10] Rolf Godøy, op. cit.

sound. And yet, there may be other gestures that anticipate those movements. The instrumentalist's body expression will have an immediate impact on the perception of that sound. It may be required for that production, or not, but it anticipates it – just as the gestures of an orchestra conductor similarly anticipate the action of the interpreter. This visibility produces an empirical understanding of the moment. In fact, this embodiment is one of Jensenius, Wanderley, Godøy and Leman's first statements: gesture as the interaction between body and mind, the process of articulation between movement and meaning, bypassing the "Cartesian divide between matter and mind".[11] Nevertheless, as mentioned above, this notion departs from the principle that gesture is a visible action. Needless to say, the acousmatic principle proposes a different challenge to that idea.

The second assumption questions whether the gesture is crucial to producing sound, or somehow merely accompanies that production.[12] Are there two different kinds of gestures? As stated, when the performer holds his or her own breath, and raises a hand or a bow; this is a 'gesture' of anticipation. The question is then not whether it is crucial to the production of the sound, but how it influences one's interpretation and perception of that gesture. It makes a difference precisely because this anticipation builds expectation. Conversely, there are also gestures that are not crucial to the sound itself. For example, when an artist destroys an instrument on stage, the gesture is crucial, not the sound. It may be a political 'gesture', but the intent is different because the sound is (almost) irrelevant. A well-known example is that of electric guitarist Jimi Hendrix, who burned his instrument on stage at the Monterey Pop Festival (1967). Here, it was not about the sound it might produce, but rather the act of rebellion it entailed; and because it was an act of rebellion, the sound (accompanying that gesture) was figuratively part of it, a part of a larger process. Or when Nam June Paik lifts the violin slowly to then smash it on the table (*One for Violin Solo*, 1962), the sound itself is just part of the performance's concept; it supports the gesture. Similarly, Annea Lockwood's "Burning Piano" (1968) is a "happening" in itself, with the gesture and sound forming layers in a complex event. In these cases, the gesture surpasses the sound. And yet, these are still gestures; that is, "a movement that can express something".[13]

[11] Alexander Jensenius et al., op. cit.

[12] Rolf Godøy, op. cit.

[13] Fernando Lazetta, "Meaning in Musical Gesture", in: Marcelo M. Wanderley, Marc Battier (Eds), *Trends in Gestural Control of Music*, Paris, IRCAM – Centre Pompidou, 2000, 259–268.

In contrast to a conventional musical instrument such as a violin, there is no empirical relationship between the gesture and an electronic-generated sound. In spite of the gesture being absolutely necessary for the production of the sound, it seems to convey no meaning.[14] The claim is that a keyboard, a knob or a fader does not depend on the mode of operation. A midi-controller is seen by many as an inexpressive instrument. In sum, there is no direct relationship between the energy of the trajectory of the physical action and the energy of the trajectory of the sound. This is contentious for many reasons. First, each of these tools may comprise several different variables and indeed depend on articulating the movement in operation (especially when it includes sensors, of course). Second, Lazetta departs from Coker's definition of gesture, which adds "recognition" to the constellation of premises listed above. In Coker's words, a gesture is also a meaningful movement (mostly because it is intentional) but he adds that it "comprises a recognizable formal unit".[15]

According to these terms, a gesture would depend on the distinction between "simple movement" and "meaningful movement" but also on whether this movement is recognised as such. With an acoustic instrument or other sounding body, the relationship between the gesture and the sound caused is a direct consequence of its physicality.[16] But with an electronic device, this relationship must be mapped. It can be changed in many ways, it can be more or less gesture-oriented and even the typology of gesture can be more or less expressive/noticeable. Furthermore, if an electronic performer repeats a certain movement that movement will be directly associated with the sound it produces. Thus, a gesture comprises "action, information and perception" despite the instrument's nature.[17] In other words, a gesture is also a pattern that establishes the possibility for anticipation and recognition within the event itself, for example through repetition.[18] Ultimately, "what is perceived is the movement of a person".[19]

In summary, with an acoustic instrument, there is a causal relationship between the gesture and the sound, whereas with an electronic instrument,

[14] Ibid.

[15] Wilson Coker, *Music & Meaning: A Theoretical Introduction to Musical Aesthetics*, New York, The Free Press, 1972, 18, cited in: Fernando Lazetta, op. cit., 14.

[16] See Denis Smalley, "Spectromorphology: Explaining sound-shapes", *Organised Sound*, 2(2), 1997, 107–126.

[17] W. Luke Windsor, op. cit., 45.

[18] Ibid.

[19] Ibid., 48.

there is an arbitrary relationship between the gesture and the sound – because one can decide what and how that relationship will be. However, this relationship is only significant if the gesture is visible, which is not the case in acousmatic music.

The Acousmatic Gesture

In this context, the acousmatic principles take the 'visibility' out of this equation of gesture, foregrounding a "theoretical disjunction between sound and source".[20] This causes a certain disembodiment, but still comprises movement (an intrinsic quality of sound) and intentionality (part of the communication process). There is an 'intention' in playing back a certain sound, and there is an intention in aligning those multiple sounds together. In this case, the agency is transposed from the performer on stage to a hidden agent behind the loudspeakers, so the "attention is shifted to more compositional causes".[21] However, can this still be framed as a gesture?

Technically, the core difference between a visible and an invisible gesture is that it lies in the processes that receivers (i.e., the audience) undertake when listening to the sound. As Windsor observes, "it is one thing to show how a musical signal can be decomposed to reveal a nested hierarchy of temporal trajectories that originate in the gestures of the human body, quite another to detail the extent to which these are perceived".[22] Since there are no visual cues in acousmatic music, the idea of gesture can only depend on the way a listener perceives this sound. Therefore, the emphasis falls on the way the sounds are perceived (and hence on the process of that guidance). For this reason, there are often "traces of information" left by the composer in an acousmatic gesture, advertent or inadvertent signs of their own presence.[23] Sometimes, their presence is audible in the recording. At other times, their agency emerges from the interventions made in the sounds. For example, by joining sounds that do not belong together in nature or at least in that kind of sequence. It can also be that the sounds are played in different conditions (repeated, filtered, de-contextualised). And at other times, the sounds are clearly fabricated.

[20] Ibid., 58.
[21] Ibid., 60.
[22] Ibid., 62.
[23] Ibid.

In fact, one could claim that acousmatic music is a work of 'fiction',[24] conveying both a sense of manufacturing and a suspension of disbelief.[25] The goal is to create an illusory feeling of possibility no matter how artificial the process may be. In the same way that the film-spectator needs not necessarily be aware of the process that manipulates their own perception of the film-narrative, the same happens for the listener of acousmatic music. Just as a camera movement in a film conveys "perceptual realism" without the need for the general audience to recognise it as such. Acousmatic music does so too, by moving sound sources across loudspeakers. For, as stated by Windsor, "although an attempt has been made to show how even in acousmatic composition the human presence of the composer can be detected, it is another thing to show the extent to which this occurs and identify the invariant properties of sound that specify such human causation".[26]

In the context of electroacoustic music, Smalley addresses these issues partially in his conceptualization of "spectromorphology", which is a theory about the shape of sonic content. As he points out, "the 'working gestures' of the acousmatic compositional process do not carry perceptual information equivalent to an intuitive knowledge of the physical gestures of traditional sound-making".[27] If so, what is therefore meant by 'acousmatic gesture'? Arguably, acousmatic music occurs within a propelling trajectory of motion. This trajectory itself also builds a sense of expectation – just as the gesture of the pianist does when it anticipates attacking the keys. Furthermore, as Smalley states: "if gestures are weak, if they become too stretched out in time, or if they become too slow in evolving, we lose the human physicality".[28] Given the different nature of these two environments, Smalley actually divides sounds into two categories – gesture-carried and texture-carried sounds – based on the fact that one takes over in framing (shaping) the sound more than the other.[29] However, Smalley defines sound according to its structural function, almost like data. He thinks of gesture in acousmatic music as a surrogate for a physical action.

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[24] See Sara Pinheiro, "Acousmatic Foley: Staging sound-fiction", *Organised Sound*, 21(3), 2016, 242–248.

[25] Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria; or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life and Opinions*, London, Rest Fenner, 1817.

[26] W. Luke Windsor, op. cit., 62.

[27] Denis Smalley, op. cit., 109.

[28] Ibid., 113.

[29] Ibid., 114.

Arguably, within the context of foley art, all gestures are texture-carried because there is no sound without one another. The sound does not precede the gesture: the gesture produces the sound and therefore its texture. For example, a "footstep" is the composite of a gesture (the movement), and a texture (the shoe and the surface) in order to match the image. Naturally, the gesture directs more or less energy in one or another part of the spectrum but that results in what is perceived as texture (a frequency structure). Therefore, gesture and texture are inseparable. In this sense, foley challenges the idea of gesture even further, for it is neither visible nor acousmatic while, at the same time, being both. It does have a common trait with instrumental music by making use of objects in an imitative and repetitive way, but its nature is more likely acousmatic music. In spite of spectromorphology offering an insightful perspective on sonic shapes – in particular through the contrast between extrinsic and intrinsic links in source bonding (which is almost analogous to a diegetic and non-diegetic perspective) – the "structural function" of these descriptions is still abstract and *unrelatable* in the "real" world. That is precisely what foley brings to the acousmatic equation because it aims at a relatable "in-this-world" kind of experience.[30]

Finally, the argument within acousmatic music is precisely that the absence of visuals turns *everything* into a gesture: every movement is noticed and perceived as an energetic event. For each event, there is a deductive understanding of the information. It is irrelevant if the majority of listeners try to figure out what is what, or not: deduction is the basis of proprioceptive perception, the gestural embodiment. Stemming from Badiou, Giannakopoulos explains that "an event is a rupture in the *knowledge* of a situation and it triggers a *truth procedure*".[31] In this case, it matters that through this trajectory, one is propelled along, relating one thing to the other and establishing a connection or relationship between the sounds and the listener's 'real world'. Such engagement is called "source bonding", which is also crucial for foley.[32]

[30] Smalley describes a number of motions and growth processes that focuses on "directional tendencies" of sound (1997) that says more about the dynamics of the sound than of its content. For a discussion on "being-in-the-world" and sound, see Sara Pinheiro, Matěj Šenkyřík, Jiří Rouš and Petr Zábrodský, "Reflections on sonic digital unreality," *Digital Creativity*, 30(3), 2019, 196–205.

[31] Babis Giannakopoulos, *Stochastic Music as Metaphor*, Master's Thesis, Institute of Sonology, The Hague, 2011.

[32] Denis Smalley, op. cit., 110.

Foley, a brief introduction

Despite having only one moment with synchronised sound – the famous line "Wait a minute, wait a minute" from *The Jazz Singer* (Crosland, 1927) is frequently credited as the first sound film. You ain't heard nothing yet!" (00:21:58).[33] However, the first film to use synchronised music and sound effects was *Don Juan* (Crosland, 1926), while the first film to extensively record dialogue on set was in fact *The Singing Fool* (Bacon, 1928). In the meantime, while making *Wild Party* (1929), director Dorothy Arzner encountered a very nervous actress (Clare Bow), who could not handle the restriction of having to project her voice toward the microphone.[34] In the face of this problem, Arzner decided to hang the microphone on a pole to follow Bow's movements, and help her be more comfortable. Unfortunately, Arzner failed to patent her invention, so she is not credited often enough for it.[35] However this improvised solution turned into an extremely important development: recording sound was hitherto very restrictive on set, and the implementation of a boom-pole was the first step towards a craft that, through the years, would develop into sound design.[36] From the moment films included recorded sound, certain silences became less acceptable. In the case of musicals, for example, if one could hear the singing and the music clearly, one expected to hear other sounds too (dancing footsteps mostly).

[33] Donald Crafton, *The Talkies: American Cinema's Transition to Sound, 1926–1931*, Berkeley – Los Angeles – London, University of California Press, 1999, 2.

[34] A struggle that is portrayed years later in *Singin' in the rain*: two silent film-stars (Don Lockwood and Kathy Selden – played by Gene Kelly and Debbie Reynolds) are facing the end of their careers until Cosmo Brown (Donald O'Connor) decides to include music in their films. The plot revolves around the fact that Selden is completely unable to sing and even her speaking voice is laughable. For that reason, she is dubbed by Lina Lamont (Jean Hagen). The big climax occurs when Kathy is singing in front of the audience and the real singer (Lina) is revealed behind the curtain. Without turning this example into anecdotal, the "curtain veil" analogy is unavoidable. See Brian Kane, 2014.

[35] Theresa L. Geller, "Dorothy Arzner – Great Directors", *Senses of Cinema*, 26, 2003. https://www.sensesofcinema.com/2003/great-directors/arzner/

[36] The term Sound Design is often attributed to Walter Murch, for being the first appearing as such in the final credits of Coppola's *The Rain People* (1969). The term was ultimately popularised later with another Coppola film, *Apocalypse Now* (1979). See Michael Ondaatje, *The Conversations: Walter Murch and the Art of Editing Film*, A&C Black, 2002. For valuable testimonies of early sound recording on set see Vincent LoBrutto, *Sound-on-film: Interviews with Creators of Film Sound*, Westport – Connecticut – London, Praeger Publishers, 1994.

Due to technological limitations, there needed to be a selection of sounds relevant to the narrative, or their absence would be more obvious. In this way, foley emerges as an attempt to cover all the other sounds that the on-set microphone was unable to capture. It began as a process of giving embodiment to the scene: a sense of physicality and credibility.[37] In other words, the presence of "direct sound" and the implementation of dialogue showed the absence of all other sounds. Thus, foley started from the need to attribute physicality and, more importantly, verisimilitude to the scenes – a concept very dear to story-telling. The term "Foley" refers therefore to an early practice of sound for film back when technological restrictions implied recording many sounds simultaneously and therefore limited options. It takes its name from the first-known practitioner: Jack Foley. Foley was a general assistant on film sets and when the need arose, he started performing sounds *live on tape* to complete the tracks.[38] Slowly, he established a room for that purpose (later on called the "Foley stage") where he would perform sounds in sync with the image and sometimes even simultaneously with the orchestra.

Naturally, in order to be able to reproduce many different sounds, this foley stage slowly became a storage of different sorts of props, growing into a very specific kind of studio that included different kinds of surface floors (foley pits), many different doors, and an endless amount of *junk* in boxes and shelves ready to be manoeuvered.[39] Not long thereafter, foley became a craft that resulted from having a choice: replacing the original texture of, for example, footsteps, with a texture that better suited the emotional intention of the scene. But, in sum, foley art emerged as a specific technique to add sounds to the [integrated] soundtrack.[40]

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[37] The idea of sound embodiment is a whole other discussion. See, for example, Iain Campbel, "John Cage, Gilles Deleuze, and the Idea of Sound", *Parallax*, 23(3), 2017, 361–378. DOI: 10.1080/13534645.2017.1343785 In the context of the topic hereby addressed, Pauletto summarises the idea very concisely: "if the voice delivers the threats, Foley delivers the punch", alluding to the physicality foley brings to the image. See Sandra Pauletto, "The Voice Delivers the Threats, Foley Delivers the Punch", in: Miguel Mera, Ronald Sadoff, Ben Winters (Eds), *The Routledge Companion to Screen Music and Sound*, New York, Routledge, 2017, 342.

[38] Jack Foley was something like what nowadays is credited as a "runner", but at that time the film credits were not fully formulated as such.

[39] For a complete contextualization of Foley Art see Vanessa Ament, *The Foley Grail: The Art of Performing Sound for Film, Games, and Animation*, Verlag, Routledge, 2014.

[40] The "integrated soundtrack" proposes an understanding of sound design and its elements as equal to the so-called "soundtrack", which usually only considers the music.

Figure 1: Screenshot of captions in *Schitt's Creek* (CBC television series)

Furthermore, many times an object (the prop) used to reproduce the sound is not necessarily the object seen in the scene. In other words, on several occasions the foley artist needs to use another object to "make-as-if" it is the object on-screen but for manifold reasons.

First, the *original* prop might not sound *real* because the microphone's proximity might render the sound harsh and unnatural (making the sonic experience more alien and hence more artificial). Second, the object might be too big or impractical to bring to the studio, so the foley artist would need to come up with an alternative solution: an object that makes the *literal* sound but that is actually manageable in a studio. For example, as explained by Yewdal in his description of the epic battle sequence in *Spartacus*,

> Jack [Foley] was faced with the unique and exciting challenge in the scene where 10,000 battle-hardened Roman troops pressed forward in a deliberate rhythm as they approached the ridge [...] Foley [...] and his assistants stood together on the

Kulezić-Wilson proposes to reckon "the interconnectedness of all soundtrack elements: [...] score, speech and sound effects" in a less hierarchical manner. See Danijela Kulezić-Wilson, *Sound Design is the New Score: Theory, Aesthetics, and Erotics of the Integrated Soundtrack*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2020, 3. Alternatively see Sara Pinheiro, "The Audiovisual *Musique Concrète*: Towards the Integrated Soundtrack", *Iluminace*, 33(4), 2021, 69–74.

> Foley stage and rhythmically shook the [metal curtain] rings in sync to the soldier's feet, creating the extremely effective and frightening effect, uniquely underlining the military might of Rome.[41]

Third, the *original* prop might defraud the image itself because there is a built-in culture within certain actions and/or images, almost like a dialect (and/or a cliché), that implies *sounds to happen* in a certain way. For example, in a car chase, tires always screech, squeal and/or squeak. Naturally, it is not about bringing a real tire to the foley stage to reproduce that sound (which is easily done with a rubber hot-water-bag instead) (Figure 2). Or, another example, handling a gun on screen rarely goes silent either because it is on a close-up or because it is meant to emphasise the action. But the prop used in the scene might not reproduce the expected sound because it might be a fake gun (plastic) or too smooth (not expressive enough) and thus in the foley stage one needs to create the "metallic" sound effect to make the gun appear more "authentic".

Figure 2: Mary Jeanne Wickmans using a rubber hot-water bottle to create the sound of a squeaking tire.[42]

[41] David Lewis Yewdall, *Practical Art of Motion Picture Sound*, New York, Routledge, 2011, 427–428.

[42] Screenshot taken from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iP6_Rzg8L18&t=49s&ab_channel=FMBrussel

At the same time, some sounds *really* have to be made up: either because they don't exist in reality or because they can't be made for real (otherwise, there would be many bones broken instead of celery sticks). The dinosaur sounds in the *Jurassic Park* film franchise, or the *lightsaber* flights in *Star Wars* films, are famous examples. Given their fictional nature, such sounds had to be manufactured from scratch. As it was not possible to record it *naturally*, something had to be *made up* for it. In this way, foley art becomes also the craft of "making-believe".[43] As Drever puts it, it is "an ideal notion of sound or soundscape rather than an assiduous attempt of *authenticity*".[44]

Figure 3: Two sets of shelves in a foley storage room, at the Foley Stage in Prague. Courtesy of Petr Kapeller.

[43] "Make-believe" is a core concept of fiction. Etymologically, fiction implies the making or manufacturing of something. It presupposes a creator. Additionally, as mentioned above, it requires "the willing suspension of disbelief" (Coleridge and Shaw, 1817), which suggests that it is not completely detached from reality despite being a construct. See: Gertrude Currie, *The Nature of Fiction*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008 and Robert Stecker, "Fiction, Nature of", in: Stephen Davies et al. (Eds), *Companion to Aesthetics*, Chichester, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, 275–278.

[44] John Levack Drever, "Sound effect – object – event. Endemic and exogenous electro-acoustic sound practices in theatre", quoted in: Ross Brown (Ed.), *Sound: A Reader in Theatre Practice*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, 196.

In these early contexts, a few sound *amateurs* could be really involved in developing a specific aesthetic for the film for which they were working.[45] Walter Murch, for example, took a long time to explore multiple sounds and techniques in order to develop the soundtrack for *THX-1138* (Lucas, 1971). Eventually, it led to the foundation of sound design as we know it. Here lies also a common trait between sound for film and Concrete Music: these are studio activities of sound manipulation and expansion for which only repeated playback will allow.

At that time, Murch was interested in exploring sound properties, just as Schaeffer had been doing with *Musique Concréte* decades before. In fact, finding Concrete Music playing on the radio led Murch to realise that sound had many possibilities to explore.[46] For example, his process of developing the sounds for *THX-1138* was very similar to treating sound under the concept of sonorous object: sound as plastic material, handling the recording itself, an identity of its own.[47] Naturally, Murch became known as a sound designer not a foley artist, but the idea of foley in this comparison refers to a preoccupation with the sounds in the mise-en-scène, regardless of the technique to achieve them. In fact, no sound should be perceived as a foley sound because it should blend in with the image in a natural way – be it a completely artificial sound such as the lightsaber in *Star Wars*, or the banal sound of a character chewing gum.[48] In any case, the core idea is that of sound fiction: crafting and making-believe.[49]

From this point of view, foley is concerned with the materiality of the object on the screen, and if the initial focus was towards footsteps and other (more evident) actions or objects – such as doors opening/closing, for ex-

[45] The term "amateur" refers to the literal sense of the word, as explained, for example, by Jonáš Gruska although in a different context (see https://rwm.macba.cat/en/sonia/sonia-318-jonas-gruska).

[46] See Vincent LoBrutto, op. cit.

[47] In LoBrutto, 1994, op cit. Murch explains many of his acoustic explorations at that time which led to the technique "worldizing". In simple terms, it consists of recording sounds back in *real* acoustic spaces to include that same acoustic propagation and turn them more organic. Another technique was also recording a few people screaming in a bathroom and using only the saturated tale to create abstract textures and atmospheres.

[48] I am referring to a specific character in the film Redux (Heimir Bjarnason, 2022), to which we added a proeminent shewing sound in order to make him even more annoying. See https://filmfreeway.com/Redux2021

[49] See note 39.

ample – from very early on, the narrative incorporated other elements to a point of turning sound into a story-teller.[50] As Lewis puts it, "a Foley artist knows that although they may not have produced the same sound in exactly the same way as the sound that they are being required to caricature, they can however replicate a gesture type that will match both the visual and aural gesture types presented in the cinema".[51] In this way, the concern is to manoeuvre the object in the right way to match the gesture on the screen.

Foley Gesture

Foley is a performative art. Foley artists perform the sounds of certain actions in sync with the image on display. For that, they need to combine different skills. In a manner of speaking, the foley artist needs to become an actor, a dancer, or a musician. They need to become *that* actor, whose actions are to be mimicked. They need to impersonate the physicality of a certain type of body with the specific emotion of the scene. Furthermore, foley artists need to be quite sharp in their reactions, with a choreographic sense of movement, just like a dancer. And, like a musician, the foley artist needs an acute sense of rhythm and tempo, following a score, reacting on time to cues, and being precise in their gestures. All summed up, the foley artist is a performer.

Other than that, each prop is an instrument, and each artist has their way to operate it – playing it. Every prop needs to be manoeuvered and gestured to create texture, dynamism, and rhythm to become animated. Clearly, each prop has a specific purpose simultaneously soundly and fictional. Each prop is, therefore, a sound-prop.[52] The idea of sound-prop extends the objecthood of the prop to its sonic properties because each sound-prop is chosen for the sound it makes, not for the *object* it is.[53] That is, in fact, the parallel with acousmatic listening: the prop is chosen according to its sonic traits in spite of what it means in its context. A sound-prop, like the sonorous object, is also

[50] See Sara Pinheiro, "Acousmatic foley: Son-en-Scène", *International Journal of Film and Media Arts*, 7(2), 125–148. https://doi.org/10.24140/ijfma.v7.n2.07. 2022.

[51] Matt Lewis, "Ventriloquial Acts: Critical Reflections on the Art of Foley", *The New Soundtrack*, 5(2), September 2015, 117.

[52] As explained elsewhere, "a prop is part of the *mise-en-scène*: an adornment or another means of characterization, which contributes to the development of the action or the characters". Sara Pinheiro, "Acousmatic foley: Son-en-Scène", op. cit.

[53] Of course it is the *object it is* that makes the *sound it makes*, but the object is chosen for that sound, in spite of the social understanding of the object's purpose.

de-contextualised. Its identity will be shaped only by the sound it makes, and that occurs through the operative gesture applied to it.

As Lewis asserts, "the kinds of gestures associated with Foley are used to understand the physical properties of and therefore our relation to those objects are a crucial part of learning about our environment".[54] These physical properties concern "a taxonomy of causes" [55], which is in line with Smalley's source bonding mentioned above, but more than a relationship between sounds and listener: source bonding is the relationship between original physical sources and sound as heard. That is, foley is always 'source bonded', even more if the actual source is not really the thing that it appears to be. In foley's case there would always be two perspectives: the first one happens on the foley pit, with the sound being created in order to bond with the object on screen, and then on screen, with the sound being justified by the image.

In this way, the gesture in the studio must obey the expectations on screen. This concerns mostly movement: if the movement matches, most likely the sound will match too.[56] The context of procedural audio helps to inform this: understanding the physicality of the object and trying to synthesise those characteristics by replicating it in a heuristic way. The difference is, paraphrasing Hug and Kemper, that this process takes time and energy away from the sound-driven exploration itself.[57] That is, the focus moves towards decomposing the sound, understanding its structure, and then reproducing it, rather than on the sound itself. At the same time, synthetic audio lacks organicity, which is precisely what a foley gesture excels at. The gesture itself creates the envelope (the shape of the sound over time), but it includes variable texture, movement, and (more importantly) the dramaturgic weight of the scene (and therefore, meaning).

In the end, the treatment of the sonorous object is the most common ground shared between foley art and concrete music. However, if for concrete

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[54] Matt Lewis, op. cit., 108.

[55] Ibid., 109.

[56] Michel Chion called it "syncresis" which is "a word forged by combining *synchronism* and *synthesis*" — a phenomenon dependent on "contextual determinations". Michel Chion, *Audio-vision. Sound on Screen*, edited and transl. by Claudia Gorbman, New York, Columbia University Press, 2019, 64.

[57] Daniel Hug and Moritz Kemper, "From Foley to Function: A Pedagogical Approach to Sound Design for Novel Interactions", *Journal of Sonic Studies*, 2014, Vol. 6. https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/237166/237167

music the challenge was to emancipate the sound from its source or meaning, the challenge for foley art is to make something that matches the image in spite of being a real object or not, or what is causing it. There are many anecdotes about this, from coconut shells mimicking horses' galloping, to leather gloves for flapping wings. Ultimately, the foley artist needs to *look* at objects beyond their real functionality and, instead, toward the sound they will make. Therefore, they are acousmatic listeners because they look at a scene for what it should sound like rather than for what is visually contained within. By the same token, they look out for the sonic properties of an object itself, regardless of its *reality*, scouting for the sonic properties of that object for what it can become rather than for what it is. Hence, foley art involves a form of acousmatic listening.

The Sonorous Object

The foundation of Concrete Music lies in Schaeffer's proposal of acousmatic/reduced listening and of *l'objet sonore*. Accordingly, the "sonorous object" is "an 'intentional unit' constituted by our own mental activity";[58] that is, as "an organised totality that one can assimilate into a 'gestalt'".[59] In other words, the sonorous object results from the ontological organisation of sonic elements as in a perceptual experience. In Schaeffer's words: "The sound object is the coming together of an acoustic action and a listening intention".[60]

Thus, the recent translation of an *objet sonore* as a *sonorous object* helps to clarify the acousmatic proposal. The sonorous object is an abstract partitioning of sound, rather than an *object that makes sound*. In other words, it thinks of sound as an object, in spite of its *objecthood.* In this case, the *objecthood* lies more in the possibility of replaying the sound and the affordance of repeated listening, as a region, rather than on the object recorded itself. For example, the sound of a bell is a sounding object when recorded, but the bell itself is a sound object as in an *object that makes sound.* At the same time, the sonorous object also signifies the sound object itself in this case. It opposes

[58] Pierre Schaeffer, *Traité des objets musicaux*, Paris, France, Le Seuil, 1966, 263, quoted in: Rolf Godøy, "Gestural-Sonorous Objects: Embodied extensions of Schaeffer's conceptual apparatus", *Organised Sound*, 11(02), 2006, 149–157.

[59] Michel Chion, *Guide des objets sonores: Pierre Schaeffer et la recherché musicale*, Paris, Buchet/Chastel, 1983, 34; Joanna Demers, *Listening through the Noise: The Aesthetics of Experimental Electronic Music*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010.

[60] Pierre Schaeffer, *Treatise on Musical Objects...*, op. cit., 213.

foley art in the sense that foley art pertains to *physical* sound objects, tangible, palpable and malleable towards their sonorosity. These are actually sound-props.

At the foley stage, the sound-prop is an instrument to *make-as-if* the one on screen. As with any instrument, it will deliver the necessary sound depending on how it is played (therefore, like an acousmatic gesture, both are concerned with the *making of* the sound). But, in a manner of speaking, its perception is also acousmatic because the *real* source of the sound (the sound object from the foley pit) should go unnoticed; the craft itself is also decontextualised, and one perceives the sonorous object as organised in the editing/mixing. It is almost as if it is not perceived because it is not perceived as it is, but as it seems to be. As Kane posits, "sound is always in danger of being apprehended as something other than itself"; and Foley Art uses that in its favour.[61]

Towards a Theory of Acousmatic Foley

In sum, the foley gesture acts as an agent for the point of audition: this "point of audition enables the rendering of action through the perception of an embodied protagonist by an auditor".[62] In other words, the foley gesture establishes the focus of the scene and directs the perception towards what is meant as a protagonist.

Unfortunately, much attention is given to footsteps and other common sounds, but foley actually covers every other individual sound: anything that moves, anything that is touched. Many times, it is done so in a very discreet fashion, and is therefore oblivious to most of viewer-listeners. For example, in *Battle of the Sexes* (Dayton and Faris, 2017), there is a crucial scene in which Billie Jean King (Emma Watson) is clearly "accepting the call for adventure" and, to emphasise the emotion of the moment, her clothes become very audible.[63] In short, she challenges a couple of male tennis promoters with her plans to make her own tournament in response to unequal pay. As

[61] Brian Kane, "L'Objet Sonore Maintenant: Pierre Schaeffer, sound objects and the phenomenological reduction", *Organised Sound*, 12(1), 2007, 18.

[62] Sheldon Schiffer, "Footsteps, breath and recording devices: Abandoning a camera-centric construction of 'point of audition'", *The Soundtrack*, 5(1), June 2012, 16.

[63] Call for adventure is a reference to the 12 steps in the "Hero's Journey". See Christopher Vogler, *The Writer's Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*, Seattle, Michael Wiese Productions, 2007.

she walks out of their office with Gladys Heldman (Sarah Silverman), they are petrified by what they have just done and their clothes' noises stand for the commotion in their minds. The foley accentuates both the physical and the narrative gesture. Usually, this kind of noise is diminished, hidden, or used to a minimum. In this scene, it is maximised precisely because it punctuates the moment (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Screenshots of *Battle of the Sexes* (Dayton and Faris, 2017) Gladys Heldman: "Are we really gonna do this?" Billie Jean King: "Sure we're gonna do this." Gladys Heldman: "How are we gonna do this?" Billie Jean King: "No idea."

Last but not least, amongst the sound team foley as a technique is not concerned with the way the sound is perceived, but rather the way it is crafted. In fact, according to Ament:

> it is common for most cineastes to confuse an edited sound effect for Foley and vice versa. The simple explanation is that the foley artist is concerned with what the actor is doing, whereas the sound editor is editing in effects that deal with the action or environment. However, this is not always the case.[64]

[64] Vanessa Ament, *The Foley Grail: The Art of Performing Sound for Film, Games, and Animation*, Routledge, 2014, XV.

In other words, the same sound can be assigned to the foley team in one project or to the sound effects team in another project, depending on how it is afforded. Within the foley team itself, there are different crafts and tasks. For example, the foley editor organises and perfects the dynamic balance between all the layers. Editing foley is a magnified experience of the film, as the screen is divided into so many different layers. In my experience, the first and last gesture on screen is one of the main things I focus on most when editing foley provided by the foley stage. By the same token, if there are multiple characters walking, for example, as an editor one has to choose what character to focus on. Performing and editing foley takes precision, like playing an instrument.

Finally, it is important to remember that no sound should be noticed as foley because all foley sounds should blend in with the image and seem originally recorded with it (while a sound effect can actually produce a certain "artificial" impact on the audience). Foley is rooted in story-telling for being, at its core, diegetic (concerned with the narrative) and fictional (manufactured). For its purposes, its instrument is the sonorous object, and its technique is gestural. In foley, any given object (a sound-prop) serves as its instrument and it is the gesture itself that *organises* the sound into a sonorous object, giving it shape and therefore meaning. In fact, both cases align with Coker's proposition mentioned above, that of a meaningful movement comprising a recognizable formal unit. If for concrete music that 'formal unit' is a sonorous object (plausible to create with), for foley art, it is a plausible sonorization of a given action. They are both *poietic* and a*esthetic* simultaneously, as in Nattiez's semiotic distinction, because they are part of the making of the artwork *and* of the experience of the artwork. In the end, the sound-prop is for foley what the sonorous object is for acousmatic music.

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Summary

The research project "Acousmatic Foley" addresses common traits between foley art and Concrete Music, based on the idea that the foley artist is an acousmatic listener and, in turn, that acousmatic listening is a form of fiction. It focuses on the common traits between this line of practice in sound for film (foley art) and the listening proposal that emerged in the early 1950s with the foundation of *Musique Concrète*, namely acousmatic listening.

For this purpose, the project is built based on two lines of thought: the "son-en-scène" and the "mise-en-son". Firstly, the "son-en-scène" focuses on the sounds of the filmic mise-en-scène (and its sound props), from very early cases to contemporary instances. The focus on these sound-props provides a perspective of sound for film that emphasizes its role as a tool of fiction and, thus, foley as the craft that leads to that experience. Secondly, "mise-en-son" sheds light on the making of the sound itself by exploring the concept of musical gesture. Either in contexts in which the musical gesture is visible (as with instruments), more cryptic (as with electronic devices), or completely delegated (as in acousmatic music), gesture can be seen a form of agency.

Furthermore, proposing an understanding of foley within the principles of Concrete and acousmatic music sheds light on the common traits of both practices. Given that foley consists of maneuvering a sound-prop, gesture is as central to foley as it is to musical practices. In that line, gesture carries the same conception as the "sonorous object", that of an "intentional unit" in both environments and, at the same time, both fields have similar treatment of the "sonorous object". In particular when of acous-

matic nature, the "sonorous object" is analogous to the sound-prop in their de-contextualised plasticity, conception and instrumentality.

In the end, these two lines of thought (son-en-scènce and mise-en-son) bridge the poietic (making of the artwork) and esthetic (experiencing of the artwork), as in Nattiez's semiotic distinction. By doing so, the research presents a theory of sonic-fiction that is specific in its dramaturgy and therefore, moves towards an experience of "acousmatic foley".

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Ivana Miladinović Prica*
University of Arts in Belgrade
Faculty of Music
Department of Musicology

AUGMENTED SONIC REALITY: *Underneath* for hyperorgan by Jasna Veličković**

Abstract: *Underneath*, a piece for hyperorgan by Jasna Veličković was commisioned by Orgelpart in Amsterdam, for a project dedicated to the modern organ, which essentially incorporates new scientific and technological achievements. In this work, Veličković found a way to continue her "open project" based on conducting experiments in acoustic technology and amplifying electromagnetic fields. She introduced the technological into the tradition of organ music by using coils to test the construction of the instrument, by teasing out the invisible possibilities of the organ's sound space, and by amplifying electromagnetic waves. The composer establishes an augmented reality and points to the expansion of sound and its presence where it remains outside of what our hearing can encompass.

Keywords: Jasna Veličković, hyperorgan, Orgelpark, experiment, electromagnetic fields

* Contact details: ivanamp@fmu.bg.ac.rs

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Underneath,[1] a piece for hyperorgan by Jasna Veličković,[2] originated under the auspices of the project titled *Nieuwe estafette compositie*, a project dedicated to the modern organ, which essentially incorporates new scientific and technological achievements. In 2020, in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, ten composers were gathered for an artistic residence programme at Amsterdam's Orgelpark to explore the possibilities of the Utopa Baroque Organ, providing a broad view of the link between organ practice as a locus of historical experience and contemporary music, which strives to push the boundaries toward a potentially infinite horizon of sound. *Underneath,* as the initial, opening "link" in a *chain composition* (Dutch: *kettingcompositie*), was premièred by the composer herself at a concert presentation of the project on 1 September 2021.[3] In Autumn 2022 Veličković was awarded for this piece the prestigious Stevan Mokranjac prize,[4] which remains Serbia's most important and only award in the field of contemporary music creativity.

This dialectical *consonance* between the tradition of organ music, spanning many centuries, and fascinating technological achievements, which enabled the "audio has become the world […] in which the limitations of the physical laws do not exist",[5] gave birth to a new synthesis – the hyperorgan.[6] The prefix *hyper* serves to highlight the close connection between modern technology and the largest and most complex of musical instruments, whose beginnings date back all the way to antiquity,[7] as well as to the improvement, upgrading, and expansion of the organ's capabilities and potentials of expression, enriching the creative and performing experience of contemporary art-

[1] Recording is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZyD8W43xQjU

[2] Jasna Veličković (Belgrade, 1974) studied composition at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade with Srđan Hofman, graduating in 1999, and then continued her postgraduate studies (2001–2004) at the Royal Conservatory in The Hague, studying with Louis Andriessen, Gilius van Bergeijk, Clarence Barlow, and Martijn Padding. She has lived and worked in the Netherlands since 2001.

[3] Het Orgelpark is an important hub for new organ music, whose main purpose is to integrate the organ into Holland's musical life. Along with Jasna Veličković, the project also included the following composers: Claudio F. Baroni, Boris Bezemer, Aspasia Nasopoulou, Eric de Clercq, Sander Germanus, Anthony Dunstan, Samuel Vriezen, Sylvia Borzelli, and Thanasis Deligiannis.

[4] The Stevan Mokranjac prize, established in 1994, is awarded by the Composers' Association of Serbia for works of serious/artistic music premièred in the previous year.

[5] Miomir Mijić, *Audio Industry in Serbia*, Belgrade, Musem of Science and Technology, 2021, 39.

[6] The term was coined by Randall Harlow.

[7] Cf. Mirta Škopljanac-Mačina, "Orgulje u bogosluženju", *Sveta Cecilija*, 1–2, 2002, 4.

ists and performers' beyond the limits of traditional organ practice. In other words, the hyperorgan offers a new type of paradigm, associated with changes in the way we create, perform, and listen to music.

Combining the efforts of four companies – *Elbertse Orgelmakers* from Soest, the Netherlands; *Hermann Eule Orgelbau* from Bautzen, Germany; *Sinua* from Düsseldorf, Germany; and *Munetaka Yokota* from Tokyo, Japan[8] – het Orgelpark became the construction site of an analogue-digital organ that actually combines two distinct identities, mutually opposed like the two faces of Janus. Modelled after a 18th-century Hilderbrandt organ, this instrument, under the name of Utopa Baroque Organ, combines within its manipulative section operated by the performer a "classical" console (keyboards/manuals, pedals, registers/stops) with a digital one, which enables it to expand into the digital world. It is an instrument equipped with the most up-to-date software, processors, and construction solutions.[9] This instrument, endowed with "extended capabilities that seamlessly blend the electronic and acoustic worlds", serves a twofold function:[10] on the one hand, it enables historically informed performances of baroque music and, on the other, inspires contemporary authors to create new music for it.[11]

It is important to note that the tracker action of this organ, that is the system connecting the keys and digital console (software) with the pipes at the far end of the instrument, where sound is generated, is digital, that is, electro-magnetic. It was precisely at this point where the organ's digital and analogue parts come together that Jasna Veličković sought to play around with the instrument's entire sonic capacity, expanding the technical reality of her work in her own peculiar way. Plunging into an inaudible world, she enlisted the hyperorgan within a different process and brought to life an augmented inaudible and no less mysterious sonic (hyper)reality, opening new dimensions and exceeding the categories mentioned above.

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[8] For more detailed information about the instrument, see the Utopa Baroque Organ webpage at https://www.orgelpark.nl/en/Informatie/Instrumenten/Het-Utopa-Barokorgel.

[9] The organ was built on the initiative of the Utopa Foundation and has been located at het Orgelpark since 2018.

[10] Randall Harlow, "Recent Organ Design Innovations and the 21st-century *Hyperorgan*", https://www.huygens-fokker.org/. Cited in: Hans Fidom, "The Utopa Baroque Organ at het Orgelpark", in: Hans Fidom (ed.), *Orgelpark Research Reports*, Vol. 5, part 2, Amsterdam, VU University Press, 2020, 21.

[11] Cf. ibid., 15.

Experimentation – involving a unique combination of action, imagination, and knowledge – is a constitutive term in the creative practice of Jasna Veličković. For her, experimentation is a domain of the experiential, the sensory, the *experience of a procedure* that potentially leads toward various accidental discoveries. Her personal engagement plays a key part in her understanding of art. The composer explores sound in depth, finding new sources of sound and forms of expression that meet the demands of her artistic, *protean* temperament. A sort of "line of flight", which Veličković has pursued since 2008 in her retreat from the order of Western European music, initiated a great proliferation of experimental works in her oeuvre and exploration of technical devices as "artistic tools". Experimentation in the field of live electronics has led her to explore augmented sound in the domain of traditional instruments and experiment with induction coils. Exploring the link between music and magnetic fields has led her to conduct interesting projects on a sort of "no man's land", beyond the expected formats for presenting a composer's work and finally, in 2013, to the construction of a new instrument, the velicon,[12] where the source of sound is a magnet.

Underneath by Jasna Veličković is based on her perception of sound and familiarity with natural phenomena and processes, wherein she identifies unexplored creative worlds. In this work, Veličković found a way to continue her "open project" based on conducting experiments in acoustic technology and amplifying electromagnetic fields, simultaneously playing the roles of a composer, instrument builder, performer, and improviser. Uninterested in the hyperorgan's perfection, she wants to explore what lies under the range of audibility and in the very architecture of the instrument. Like the velicon, the hyperorgan becomes a sort of playground for working with sound, predicated on using coils to amplify otherwise inaudible acoustic contents in the organ's magnetic field. This methodology has enabled her to *enter* the instrument's structure and build *from the inside* a variable sound space where perspective apparently does not exist.

[12] The instrument's name was derived from the composer's last name. "The velicon consists of a large number of magnets arranged on a metal plate that is wired for sound. The performer holds a coil in each hand; moving them closer and further away from the magnets she plays, *captures* otherwise inaudible acoustic events in the magnetic field. In its infinite permutations, incompleteness, and mobility, the velicon is a work in progress." Ivana Miladinović Prica, "The Velicon and Music of Experience", William Brooks (Ed.), Experience Music Experiment – Pragmatism and Artistic Research, Lueven, Orpheus Institute, Lueven University Press, 2021, 161.

As the constructor of the velicon, Veličković this time faced the "queen of instruments", endowed with different depths and levels of hidden sound. She introduced the technological into the continuity of the organ sound by using coils to test the construction, by teasing out the invisible possibilities of the organ's sound space, and by amplifying electromagnetic waves. The composer establishes an augmented reality[13] and points to the expansion of sound and its presence where it remains outside of what our hearing can encompass. This testing game produces a unique amalgam that bridges over binary divisions: analogue vs. digital, organic vs. technological… and immerses the listener into a dynamic and imaginative sonic universe, creating a continuum wherein time is condensed, stretched, and relaxed again, "destroying" the instrument with its action and, paradoxically, rebuilding it and dismantling its aura.

Jasna's creative process goes through different stages, which may be observed in her scores, where a fixed sonic result is often missing, replaced by instructions describing the process of obtaining it. She began working on the piece by experimenting, listening carefully to the organ's sound, the sound of the hall, as well as that of an electromagnetic field. She prepared the instrument by using three induction coils, three signal boosters, a three-channel mixer, and full-range speakers. By chance, intuitively, she placed those three coils in specific positions inside the instrument: inside the tremolo wooden box, at the beginning of the second row of pipes on the left wings, on top of the solenoid, and at the beginning of the second row of pipes on the right wings, on top of the solenoid, in the middle register (Example 1).[14] The specificity of those positions is that they are right next to the electromagnetic valves. Unlike the velicon, which she "plays" by moving the coils closer or further away from the magnet, that is by capturing acoustic content in its magnetic field, here the coils are fixed and capture the electromagnetic field depending on their distance from the electromagnetic valves, which are activated by pressing the keys on the keyboard. The result is a sort of *event,* an inalienable part of an artificial experimental setup, present only in this kind of performance.

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[13] The concept of augmented reality (AR) was established around 1990. "Augmented reality is the blending of interactive digital elements – like dazzling visual overlays, buzzy haptic feedback, or other sensory projections – into our real-world environments. Kevin Bonsor, "How Augmented Reality Will Work", https://computer.howstuffworks.com/augmented-reality.htm

[14] Jasna Veličković, *Underneath* for hyperorgan, score, commisioned by Orgelpark, Amsterdam, self-published by the composer, 2020, 1.

Example 1: J. Veličković, *Underneath*, position of the coils

After several hours of "playing around", she discovered a sound that fascinated her and began constructing her piece as a composer/performer/listener.[15] A coil, therefore, forms an "extension" of her sense of hearing (her extended ears) as well as the instrument's sonic power, enhancing its sonic existence. Jasna's prepared hyperorgan expands the perceptive dimension of our experience. We hear the sound of an organ from different planes and angles of perception. The sonic realities shift, exposing the relativity of human experience, while the listener is pulled into a trans-human whirl right from the start, wherein the boundaries between the two sonic worlds are not entirely clear. The respective sounds of the organ and electromagnetic field engage in dynamic interaction, which Jasna leads toward a dramaturgically well thought-out and clear culmination. The essence of her instrument is that two different flows, the organ and electromagnetic flows, placed one next to the other, are actually "forced to reflect each other. Due to the instrument's "anatomy", an organ performer cannot apply additional skill or her own sensibility, or directly affect the sound, so that both flows are unburdened by the performer's subjective experience.

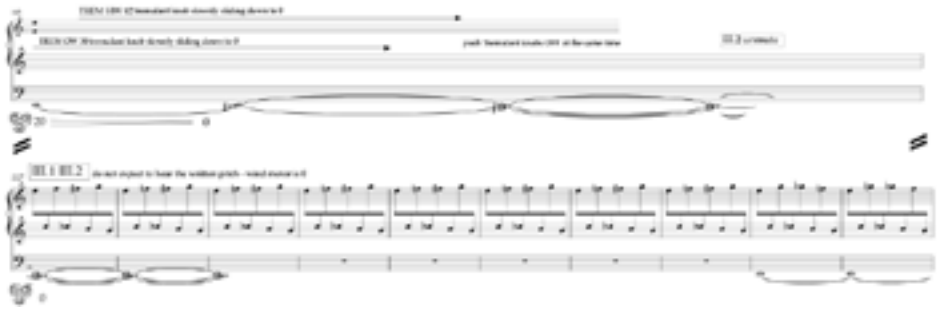
The very beginning of the piece features pure vibrations coming from the pipes. While the left hand is sustaining an F-major pedal, varying the amount of air released through the pipes (20–30) opens up their harmonics, building an elusive "shadow melody", as specified in the score.[16] In the ensuing segment the airflow is cut off and we can only hear electromagnetism, an ephemeral sound devoid of exteriority and a point of reference, which represents the augmented reality of the organ sound. Turning on the tremulant activates an electromagnetic signal, in the form of a constant pulsating line. The piece opens like a prelude, acquiring the character of a rhythmically animated toccata from the middle segment onward. The two coils placed in the left- and right-wing pipes between e^2 and f^2 transform the organ's sound in its middle register. In that section of the piece (in C), which uses middle register prepared by coils, there is a sort of intimacy, an effect of closeness, similar positioning and rhythmic properties between the two sound flows. This contact between a magnetic and organ sound results in an exchange and the imposition of a new regime – the two flows come closer together but

[15] A conversation with Jasna Veličković at the Forum, concerning the 2021 Stevan Mokranjac award, *31. trибина композитора* [31st International Review of Composers], Josip Slavenski's Legacy House, Belgrade, 4 October 2022.

[16] "Shadow melody created by the speed of the wind motor notated as a reference guide." Jasna Veličković, *Underneath* for hyperorgan, op. cit., 5.

retain their separate identities, without blending. The sound of an electromagnetic field is the "mystical" ingredient that enriches the warm and majestic sound of the organ. In this segment we have a sort of self-reflection of sound, a dialogue between sound and itself in an electromagnetic field, the clashing of different materials that are moving in different ways and reconciling in that space, a confrontation between "positives" and "negatives", the sound of an organ and that of a magnetic field. About two thirds into the piece (around the five-minute mark), the full sound of the organ bellows out, like in a splendid and lavish phantasy, as though introducing us to a solemn ritual. Following this culmination point, the wind motor slows down again, and in the final segment we can only hear the sound of an electromagnetic field. When the airflow is cut off, the keys on this prepared hyperorgan are no longer linked to individual tones, but to a potential sonority (of a magnetic field) – the sound coming out of the organ bears no similarity with the pitch implied in the score (Example 2). At the same time, one should note that preparing the organ cancels the unity of the sign; the signifier is devoid of content, because what the sign signifies (what one hears) is not the appearance of the signified. The *différance* between a notated sign and the resulting sound means that an accurate notated record is impossible to achieve, which suggests the practice of *ad libitum* performance – an integral part of the organ tradition.

Example 2: J. Veličković, *Underneath*, m. 113-226.



Listening to an organ is a special perceptive/bodily experience, and it is precisely this vulnerability and exposure of the listening subject that informs the essence of this perceptive act. The organ is basically an instrument bound to a specific place, because the acoustics of the space it inhabits becomes/remains an inseparable part of its character. When exposed to the sound of

an organ, it becomes especially evident how subordinate the body is to the sense of hearing, more so than to any other sense, which is also discussed by Foucault in *The Hermeneutics of the Subject*. Aristotle already noted that hearing could not be entirely turned off because, unlike the eyes, which are equipped with eyelids, the ears cannot be naturally closed. Hearing is an extremely penetrable sense. In the act of hearing, we do not keep the world at bay, but receive it.[17] In his treatise *On Listening to Lectures*, Plutarch argues that hearing is the most sensitive and most passive of the senses. In Greek culture, *listening* was the first step in the subjectivisation of the discourse of truth. Their culture was based on oral expression, which made hearing the only conduit between the soul and the truth.

By creating this new audibility of a magnetic field, Jasna Veličković enables us to perceive and understand the world in a new way. "Augmenting" the hyperorgan by using magnets adds a novel dimension to its sound space and renders it multidimensional, expanding its potential meanings. It seems that to her sound means incomparably more than the phenomenon affirmed by the existence of ears. Jasna seeks to show us that the world we encompass with our senses is only a part of the basic phenomenon of sound. With her work, she makes a plea to the culture of listening, for a simple reason: whatever exists, sounds (taking her cue from John Cage), including that which is not sonorous in the narrow sense of the word. The piece *Underneath* proposes to renew sensory perception by aestheticising the world in the literal sounding/meaning of sound. Experimentation becomes a synonym for experience (experimental = experiential).

In *Underneath*, Jasna Veličković provides a historical walk through time, sounding out the link between music history and contemporaneity, pulling the organ out of the domain of the sacred and expanding its sonic identity. For her, the hyperorgan is a technological and media instrument for re-aestheticising the world of art and music, examining the possibility of thinking organ from within, as a new aesthetic event.

The composer's involvement in the design of the instrument and performance of the work lent a new dimension to the creative act in *Underneath*. Veličković changes her "perspective" and approach to the instrument in order

[17] Мишел Фуко, *Херменеутика субјекта: предавања на Колеж де Франсу (1981–1982* године), прир. Фредерик Грос под управом Франсоа Евалда и Алесандра Фонтане, с француског превели Милица Козић, Бранко Ракић, Нови Сад, Светови, 2003, 418.

to discover what lies hidden in it. With her authorial procedure and commitment to exploring what music is or could be – pointing out or transgressing the boundaries between humans, technology, and inorganic matter – the author has shown that the ontology of a work of art is conditioned by the experience of its instrument's technology. Although using the same way of thinking, the outcome is different than concerning the velicon. The author says: "the result varies depending on whom we talk to and what each one of us is capable of; something different comes out of a dialogue with each person, and even with the instrument".[18] With her instruments, she formulates different possibilities of interpreting music and sound in terms of experimenting with knowledge and its power politics.

Jasna reassembles/transforms the hyperorgan, recreating it in the very act of creation, and produces her own unique galaxy of sound, whose conceptual power is defended by the work itself. By virtue of this restorative procedure, Jasna Veličković inscribes her compositional script into the code of tradition, into the history of organ music.

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Summary

Underneath, a piece for hyperorgan by Jasna Veličković, originated under the auspices of the project titled *Nieuwe estafette compositie*, a project dedicated to the modern organ, which essentially incorporates new scientific and technological achievements. Modelled after a 18th-century Hilderbrandt organ, this instrument, under the name of Utopa Baroque Organ, combines within its manipulative section operated by the performer a "classical" console (keyboards/manuals, pedals, registers/stops) with a digital one, which enables it to expand into the digital world. It is important to note that the tracker action of this organ, that is the system connecting the keys and digital console (software) with the pipes at the far end of the instrument, where sound is generated, is digital, that is, electro-magnetic. It was precisely at this point where the organ's digital and analogue parts come together that Jasna Veličković sought to play around with the instrument's entire sonic capacity, expanding the technical reality of her work in her own peculiar way. Plunging into an inaudible world, she enlisted the hyperorgan within a different process and brought to life an augmented inaudible sonic (hyper)reality.

Veličković changes her "perspective" and approach to the instrument in order to discover what lies hidden in it. With her authorial procedure and commitment to exploring what music is or could be – pointing out or transgressing the boundaries between humans, technology, and inorganic matter – the author has shown that the ontology of a work of art is conditioned by the experience of its instrument's technology. With her instruments, she formulates different possibilities of interpreting music and sound in terms of experimenting with knowledge and its power politics. By virtue of this restorative procedure, Jasna Veličković inscribes her compositional script into the code of tradition, into the history of organ music.

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Mina Božanić*
PhD student
University of Arts
Faculty of Music, Department of Musicology

BEING FASCINATED WITH MUSICAL SPACE-TIME: PIANO WORKS BY BRANKA POPOVIĆ (*SOLITUDE: SELF REFLECTIONS, WITHIN A DENSE MOLECULAR CLOUD* AND *FROM RAYLEIGH TO MIE)*

Abstract: The piano works by Branka Popović (1977) appear as a unique and independent group in her oeuvre, as well as in the context of Serbian music of the current century. The question of the relation between the composer and *musical space-time,* which can be experienced directly, during the act of listening and indirectly, during the analysis of the piece of music, emerges as an essential point for understanding and interpreting Branka Popović's piano works. Under the assumption that this relationship is in the realm of unconsciousness and intuition, my goal in this article is to discover the hidden places that show how the musical space-time manifests, in this case, in the piano writing of Branka Popović. To achieve that, I will use an interpretative musical analysis, in which I will point out the specific compositional technique that Branka Popović employs and by which she 'regulates' different musical dimensions and, more precisely, musical components and their elements (specifically rhythm, timbre or tone color, harmony, motivic/thematic structuring, and dynamics) in the act of shaping the musical space-time.

Keywords: Branka Popović, piano music, musical space-time, the perception of the piece of music, musical analysis

* Contact details: minabozanic88@gmail.com

> 00:06 – 00:20 *Pure, perceptually sharp sound in the highest register repeating itself. Does it pulsate? Where is it moving?* 00:20 – 00:30 *Sounds are repeating and following one another... Gradually accelerating in movement... Where are they now?* 00:30 – 00:45 *They melted together in one sound! I can't recognize the individual sounds anymore...* 00:45 – 01:10 *Here is another sound, slightly lower than the previous ones. Like two drops dripping regularly and tenaciously onto the solid, metal-like surface...*
>
> 01:00 – 01:44 *A rather tense sound. It is approaching... almost like it is in front of my eyes...* 01:45 – 02:25 *Yet a new sound, clearer and more precise. It's vibrating... Rays of light on the water's surface...*
>
> 02:47 – 03:24 *Harp? Isn't this a piano piece? Oh – rich glissandi are just creating the impression it is a new timbre... They are overflowing...*

Those are just a few selected impressions I experienced while listening to the piano pieces *Solitude: Self Reflections* (2005), *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud* (2008) and *From Rayleigh to Mie* (2019/2021)[1] by Branka Popović, which could be described with a similar vocabulary. These impressions refer to all three pieces; although they have rather different musical material and identities, I experience each of them as an intense, exciting, and 'plastic' musical flow.[2]

[1] *From Rayleigh to Mie* is recorded in 2019 on CD *Arrhythmia – Piano Compositions by Contemporary Serbian Authors*, performed by Neda Hofman-Sretenović (available at: https://soundcloud.com/neda-hofman/sets/arrhythmia-piano-compositions-by-contemporary-serbian-authors); the score has been published in *From Rayleigh to Mie*, for piano [score], Belgrade, University of Arts, Faculty of Music, 2021). *Solitude – Self Reflections* was performed at a concert dedicated to the works of B. Popović, which took place in SKC (Student Cultural Centre) in 2017, by the pianist Bojana Šumanjski (available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZmF8OQsq-Q), as well as in 2007, by the pianist Stephen Gutman (available at: https://soundcloud.com/brankapopovic/solitude-self-reflections-for-piano). *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud* is still in the form of a score (not recorded). All three compositions are, by far, the only pieces which Branka Popović wrote for solo piano.

[2] The music of Branka Popović is, overall, extremely sensual and audibly rich. Her imaginative and masterly way in working with rhythm, tone color, and dynamics, and, secondly, with texture and orchestration leads to an additional 'vitality' in her compositions. This specific sound 'identity' of her oeuvre has been recognized by several authors: Ksenija Stevanović, "The String Quartet *Out of Nowhere* by Branka Popović", *New Sound International Journal of Music,* 35, I/2010, 66–69; Ksenija Stevanović, "Poetical mechanism of *Lines and Circles*: compositional understatement of Branka Popović", *New Sound International Journal of Music,* 50, II/2017, 73–77; Srđan Teparić, "Temporality and movement in the composition of *Toba* by Branka Popović", *New Sound International Journal of Music,* 50, II/2017, 175–187; Milica Lazarević, "14:30 by Branka Popović: A

I hear the *echoes of some longer and more beautiful melodies*[3] which are very 'active' within the musical flow. They are moving even when they are 'standing still' or when repeated on one tone, in a form of precisely noted rhythmical patterns of triplets,[4] quintuplets, sextuplets, septuplets[5], or as tremolos[6]; in some cases, they are only *ad libitum* rhythmical patterns of the same tone,[7] where the performer determines how many times they will be repeated. Furthermore, thematic fragments are spread over the entire sound register of the piano. At the beginning of these works, the fragments are mostly located in the higher or the highest piano register,[8] perceptually disclosing that the actual size of the musical object we are listening to is enlarged and surrounding us at almost every given moment. Or maybe we are standing in front of that object and admiring its size? Even when we hear same motifs being repeated, it is not a mechanical and fragmented repetition, but, in a strange way, is embedded in the thread of the musical flow, contributing to its unity. It is clear to me that from the beginning till the very end of each of the piano pieces I am *the part* of the musical flow: my experience of space and time is united with the space-time of the piece of music. Moreover, it is also clear to me, first as a listener and then as a musicologist, that the overall sound quality, i.e. pitch height, timbre, intensity, and duration (in sum, every basic physical element of the musical sound) is in the focus of Branka Popović, especially in her piano pieces selected for this article.

Game of 'Musical Chronos'", *New Sound International Journal of Music*, 57, I/2021, 53–72; Zorica Premate, "Autogram", Radio Belgrade 2, aired on November 19th, 2021, https://www.rts.rs/page/radio/sr/story/24/radio-beograd-2/4581067/branka-popovic.html.

[3] I paraphrase the composer's statement on why she mostly uses short motivic cells as the primary content in her compositions. From a private conversation with Branka Popović, conducted online via *Zoom* on December 23rd, 2022. I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Popović for the interview and valuable insights into her piano works, some key points of her poetical and aesthetical approach and, overall, an inspiring conversation about the music in general.

[4] Noticeable in *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud*.

[5] Noticeable in *Solutide – Self Reflections* and *From Rayleigh to Mie*.

[6] Crucial for *From Rayleigh to Mie,* where tremolos appear in two different forms: as 'standard' marks (embellishment) and as notations for the actual sound results, in the form of thirty-two notes.

[7] Occasionally, in all three pieces.

[8] With the exception of *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud*, which opens in the lower register.

On musical space-time

Even though my experience as a listener is valuable in commenting on these works, unfortunately, it is not sufficient when it comes to my musicological interpretation. To be fully adequate, the second, musicological experience requires an additional theoretical and methodological foundation. However, the literature on the subject of musical space-time is quite vast; the subject has been elaborated from different scientific disciplines and within different methodological frameworks. Therefore, in this article, I will use the term musical space-time to interpret the phenomenon that is immanent to the music as an art form, regardless of the poietic, aesthetic, and stylistic context in which a piece of music has been created or the influences of this context on the composer himself. I understand musical space-time as the reflection and presentation of the piece of music itself, which implies that the musical form can also be interpreted as a musical space-time. The dimensions and characteristics of space-time in music are similar to the experience of physical space-time at the metaphorical level, which manifests itself in the language of music (pitch height, tone leap, higher/lower register, etc.) and also in the way in which the composer approaches the musical components and their elements when creating a piece of music.

Besides this interpretation, there are some other and more unique views on musical space-time; the most appealing being the one advocated by Maria Anna Harley. Her Ph.D. thesis is focused on the phenomenon of *spatialization*, which defines one precise and rather niched aspect of the manifestation of space-time in music.[9] According to Harley, "the presence of spatialization can be recognized in every situation in which spatial extensions, positions (directions and distances) of the sound sources as well as the acoustic quality of the

[9] Maria Anna Harley, *Space and Spatialization in Contemporary Music: History and Analysis, Ideas and Implementations*, Ph.D. thesis, Faculty of Music, McGill University Montreal, 1994, 4. Defining musical space-time by means of the analysis of the musical components is the most common approach in the field of phenomenology, aesthetics, and music theory, particularly in Anglo-Saxon and German literature on the subject. What Harley concluded in the part of her research dedicated to the history of the idea of musical space is that the authors (Ernst Kurth, Gisèlle Brelet, Roman Ingarden, Hermann Helmholtz, and others) mostly question the issue of 'inner' musical space, a hidden phenomenon or structure which 'resides' in a piece of music, and reveals itself through listening (or partially, the score, added by M. B.), especially through certain perceptually distinctive aspects of spatiality.

performance space are given compositional significance".[10] It can be the acts of using musical 'dimensions', such as rhythm, timbre, dynamics, pitch height (i.e. the motivic/thematic level of the piece), and harmony, but it can also be the acts of unique seating settings for performers or listeners during the concert, performing music in a precisely designed space, the use of technology (i.e. loudspeakers) in achieving specific, and above all, spatial effects, etc.

The studies and articles which deal with the concept of space-time in art music are aiming to prove the existence of musical space-time and its manifestation in the piece of music by examining the role of movement. More precisely, the primary premise here is the existence of the energy within the musical flow, because the movement, the change of positions, the distance, etc. are identified as spatial dimensions of height and width. Here, the *geometrical model of space-time* has been equated with the musical space-time, which in the further elaboration by M. A. Harley is shown as inadequate, especially when it comes to interpreting the space-time in music. However, it is crucial to emphasize this fact precisely because the writings of musical theorists, aestheticians, philosophers, as well as composers are mainly focused on the idea of musical space-time as a geometrical model, which subsequently influenced the relationship between the composer and the musical space-time; for some of them, the musical space-time was seen as a literal translation of the physical/scientific concept of the space-time into music.

Lastly, there is another significant approach to the subject of space-time in music, which relies on the premise that space-time is inseparable from the form and the content of the piece of music. For the musical theorist and composer Berislav Popović, musical form and musical content are in a close interrelation, making it impossible to think about one without thinking about the other. Only together do they participate in creating a space-time continuum. Furthermore, the author focuses on the question of energy and overall dynamism of the musical flow as one of the pre-defined criteria for the piece of music, and his interpretation of gravity, as one of the essential questions of space-time in general, also has a fundamental place in his theory of musical form.[11]

[10] Ibid. The author's focus is on the subject of spatiality because, in her opinion, the subject of musical time is already thoroughly analyzed in the literature.

[11] Berislav Popović, *Muzička forma ili smisao u muzici* (*Music Form or Meaning in Music*), Beograd, Clio, 1998, 18, 21, 39, 61, 69, 89, 100. For Popović, motifs are "generators of the musical flow", since they store the potential to initiate and maintain the movement within the musical flow.

On perceiving musical space-time

The scientific representation of space-time, which, since the introduction of Albert Einstein's theory of relativity,[12] is a four-dimensional model of space-time, is not something quite possible to audibly recognize in the piece of music. Don Ihde, for example, argues that it is rather false to even think about the entire World (as the space-time, added by M. B.) in the terms of scientific models, bearing in mind that we are dealing with both phenomenologically and perceptually complex phenomena, which is impossible to perceive with one sense only.[13] To be able to perceive (and experience!) the World in all its complexity one must rely on all the senses, only in a somewhat different ratio. What Ihde points out as questionable is that, since the time of Plato and Democritus at least, human perception has been conditioned solely upon the sense of vision.[14] The fact that vision dominates and regulates our perception has also influenced how we perceive music: we *watch* the performance and *read* the score, which makes our understanding and experience of music harder, especially at the most primal, phenomenological level, especially concerning the nature of the music itself, i.e. her acoustical representation.

If we succeed in overcoming the sense of vision as the dominant sense to perceive the World[15] and experience, in a way, the holistic perception of the

[12] The credit for the idea of four-dimensional space-time belongs to the mathematician Hermann Minkowsky. For a detailed insight into the history of the idea of space-time in science, cf: Max Jammer, *Concepts of space. The history of theories of space in physics*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1954; Lawrence Sklar, *Space, time and spacetime,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974; Bas C. van Fraassen, *An introduction to the philosophy of time and space*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1985.

[13] Don Ihde, *Listening and Voice: Phenomenologies of Sound*, second edition, State University of New York Press, 2007, 11. Ihde emphasizes that *all* our senses participate in the perception of the World, at any given point, only that theorization and rationalization lead to the impression that we use only one specific sense (for example, the sense of vision) in perception. For an in-depth elaboration on the domination of vision in (Western) philosophy and culture, cf. ibid., 6 onwards.

[14] Ibid., 9 onwards. Vision, potentially, has the dominant role in the perception of space because the terms related to spatiality are mostly connected to the visual experience (for example, distance, height, width, and depth). However, the bodily experience that we are 'in a space' is also involved in the perception of this phenomenon. On the other hand, time is primarily and almost exclusively perceived with the body, i.e. the 'inner clock' sense for time. Visually, time can be perceived by looking at a watch, calender, etc.; however, those are rather ways to quantify time, not the experience of the time itself.

[15] The dominance of the visual in Western culture is deeply related to the phonetic type

phenomena, the difficulty with listening seems to emerge as problematic. According to Ihde, listening as a phenomenological act "…is more than an intense and concentrated attention to sound and listening", therefore it implies that during the listening act, we are aware (more or less, added by M. B.) of the interference of our beliefs, values, and judgments in the process of 'just' listening, or hearing things as they are, on the phenomenological level.[16] In that case, it could seem impossible to find a way to perceive reality as a pure phenomenon, without the 'imprint' of the listening subject. Would that type of phenomenological experience be even authentic and valid?

Accepting the view that the perception of space-time and the perception of music is a complex cognitive activity, we could easily ask ourselves how is it possible to perceive one complex phenomenon (space-time) in the context of the other complex phenomenon (music). More precisely, in which way do we perceive space-time in music or pieces of music? The question is intriguing but it requires a broader discussion, which is not the subject of this article. In this article however, we can rely upon and accept the premises that during listening to the music we experience the musical space-time based on how the musical flow is shaped, or the role of certain musical components in perceiving the musical flow as musical space-time.

The manifestation of musical space-time in the piano works by Branka Popović

Reflecting upon the history of Western art music and the changes in musical language in a broader context, the fact that the characteristics of the sound, i.e. pitch height and duration (which were crucial in music up to the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century), and gradually afterward, timbre or tone color and dynamics or intensity (which were, up to that time, only secondary!),[17] up to the musical components and their elements, had a significant role in the manifestation of space-time in music. In other words, the characteristics of sound are related and equated to dimensions of musical space-time, thanks to how they appear in a musical flow and which percep-

of our letter, whereas Eastern cultures use idiosyncratic types of letters. Tijana Popović Mlađenović, *Muzičko pismo. Muzičko pismo i svest o muzičkom jeziku sa posebnim osvrtom na avangardnu muziku druge polovine XX veka,* drugo izdanje, Beograd, Fakultet muzičke umetnosti, 2015, 33–44.

[16] Ihde, op. cit., 49.

[17] This is inseparable from the changes in musical notation and musical writing. Cf. Popović Mlađenović, op. cit., 44–46.

tual effect they evoke, i.e. in which way the composers are 'using' them when creating a piece of music. Therefore, to understand how we experience space-time in piano works by Branka Popović, the musical analysis will aim to show the role of musical components and their elements in the experience of musical space-time. For a comprehensive overview of the way the composer relies on musical components and their elements, and how they influence our perception of musical space-time in her piano works, the analysis is focused on the technique employed when working on specific components. In some cases, we can hear only one component or element as leading at a given moment; however, it is often the case where almost every if not all components and their elements create a certain musical effect.

Rhythm

Rhythm, along with meter and speed (i.e. tempo), is a direct manifestation of the musical time. In the piano works of Branka Popović, it regulates the musical flow from several planes. Firstly, it captures the actual duration of the piece of music, and then regulates the *density* of musical space-time.[18] Furthermore, the rhythmical dimension in *From Rayleigh to Mie* (mm. 41–66), along with the dynamics, intensifies the musical flow, leading to the culminating point and a new segment of the piece. In the segment from mm. 81–128 (especially, mm. 125–128), besides rhythmical, we see also metrical changes, which is the next level of manipulating the duration. From mm. 1–40, rhythm regulates the acceleration of the musical flow; the figures are complementary (in the right hand, eight notes, often in the combination an eight note and an eight pause; in the left hand, this underlying eight note beat is enriched with thirty second notes), which creates the impression of the field within which the composer elaborates the musical content by alternating the motifs in both hands and regulating in that way the density of musical space-time as well. On the other hand, in *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud* we notice two differentiated rhythmical 'flows', which is the central axis in contrasting between the segments of the three movements of this piece.[19] In the first movement, for example, we can clearly notice two different rhythmical

[18] Considering the fact that musical space-time always contains musical objects and events, which subsequently affect the appearance of the musical space-time itself, it cannot be empty, even when it contains only a rest.

[19] Besides the richness of the rhythmical component, pitch height (thematical-motivic dimension), dynamics, and registers also play a crucial part in creating contrast between formal sections.

'profiles': in mm. 1–46 the profile consists of quintuplets and short rhythmical figures, while from m. 47 onwards and till the end of the movement, triplets are the elementary rhythmical pattern (followed by the change in texture, register, and dynamics).[20] Moreover, the composer also adds *ad libitum* patterns, usually indicating the indefinate number of repetitions, which can be interpreted as the dilatation of musical time, followed by numerous oppositions within the rhythm.[21] These oppositions are represented in opening motifs of *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud.*

In all three piano pieces, the composer also uses the metrical component, creating mostly linear polymetrics. This can be noted in mm. 61–84 of *Solitude – Self Reflections*; the section leads into a culmination (mm. 85–88). In some places we can also notice vertical polymetrics, most transparent in *From Rayleigh to Mie*. The speed in the piano works of Branka Popović is the only component which remains unaltered; interestingly, there are only a few parts written in rittardando (*Within a Dense Molecular Cloud,* II, m. 40 onwards), without any traces of accelerando. On the other hand, in *From Rayleigh to Mie* the rhythmical component is compressed (which leads to the acceleration of musical time) until the shortest rhythmical units (again, thirty two notes), which transforms into a resonating glissando at the end.

The important part of the rhythmical design of the musical flow in these works is a rest. Usually interpreted as a signal of stopping or ending,[22] the rest within the musical flow always brings a certain level of tension, because the listener is never completely certain what comes afterwards (the final ending of the piece or just a temporary hold). However, in the piano works by Branka Popović, the rest is not only an important agent of the musical dramaturgy, its musical-semantical meaning and value is created within the context of the overall rhythmical design.[23] For example, in *Solitude – Self reflections*, the rest

[20] Referring to her approach to musical material, the composer disclosed that she uses "time condensed" material, which then serves as the nucleus for the dramaturgy and outline of the entire piece. Private conversation with B. Popović.

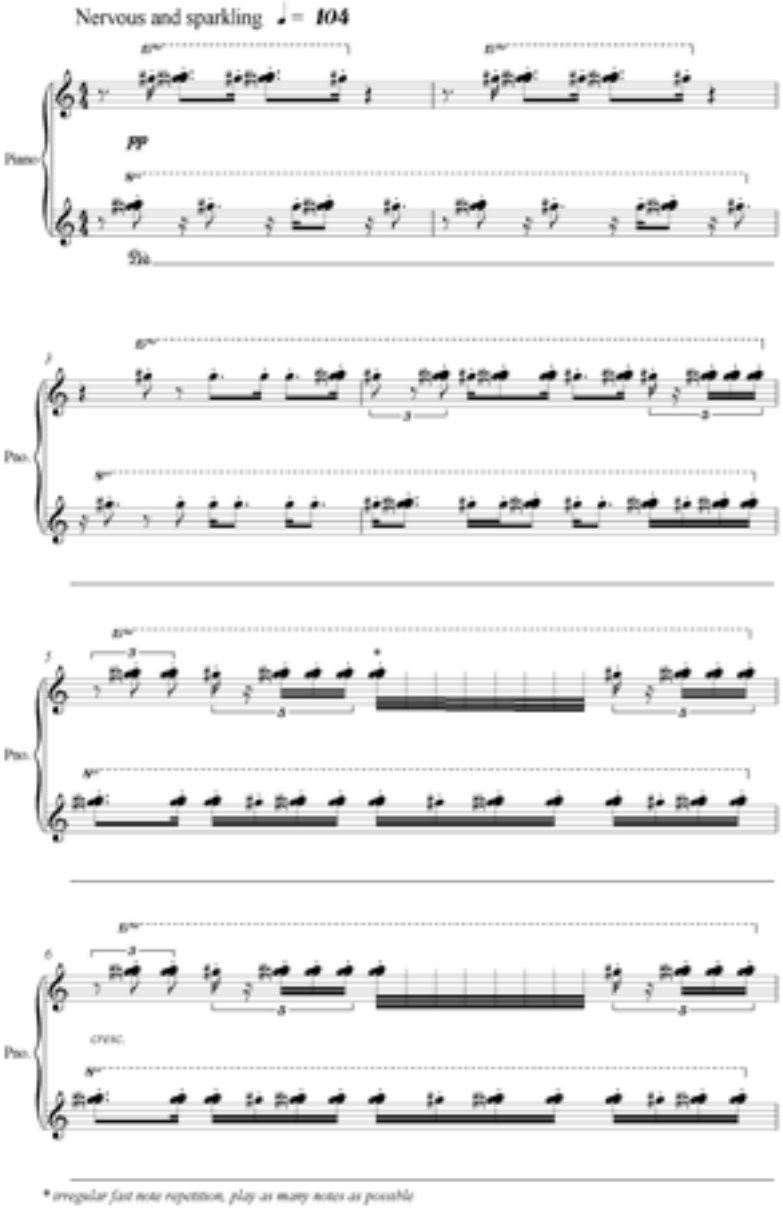
[21] This is also an act of segmenting the musical flow, therefore the rhythmical changes also have the role of marking the shifts between the formal segments.

[22] Cf. Zofia Lissa, „Tišina i stanka u glazbi", u: *Estetika muzike /ogledi/*, prev. Stanislav Tuksar, Zagreb, Naprijed, 1966, 145–168.

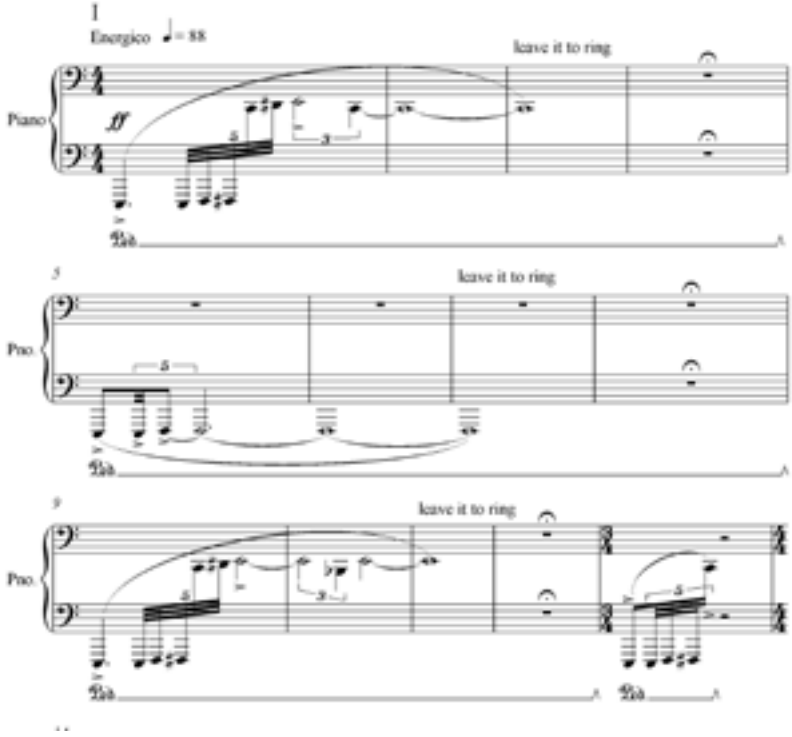
[23] The unique approach towards the musical time (rhythm and tempo) is also noticed by other authors, in other works by B. Popović, especially: Lazarević, op. cit., 56, and Teparić, op. cit., 185. Lazarević compares the composer's approach to the approach of Anton Webern, which is confirmed by the composer herself, in the statement about "time-compressed" musical material.

is a part of the very structure of the motif: it appears in the precise beats and at a precise location within the musical flow (Example 1a), which is the same technique used in *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud* (Example 1b).

Example 1a: B. Popović, *Solitude – Selfreflections*, mm. 1–6.



Example 1b: B. Popović, *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud*, I, mm. 1–10.



Tone colour

Even though all three pieces are composed for the piano, the composer's approach to the instrument and its colour in all three is different. There is a common characteristic in the way in which B. Popović approaches the sound of the piano, which reflects her devotion to the instrument and focus on the detail. On the other hand, we can notice that she explores different sound nuances within the parts of her compositions, which often results in transforming the sound of the piano into a new sound.[24] In that sense, the following techniques are employed: 1) the precise and intentional use of different registers in achieving a certain tone colour (higher registers sound sharp and

[24] In our conversation, the composer revealed her (intimate) passion for the instrument; in her opinion, the piano represents "the source of never-ending possibilities in exploring sound and experimenting with it".

'dry', while lower registers reflect depth and 'fullness'; also, the sound in higher registers is always easier to perceive, since we can clearly distinguish between different pitch heights, which is not the case with the sound in the lower registers – often, we hear only a sound mass instead of differentiated pitch heights), 2) the musical material which *simulates* the tone colour of some other instrument by the technique of melodical – rhythmical transformations (i.e. the sound of the harp in *From Rayleigh to Mie*, mm. 67–80), 3) the distinctive compositional/performing technique which transforms the sound of the piano into the sound of percussions (in *Solitude – Self Reflections*, with the assistance of the rhythmical component and the register in which the motif is displayed, mm. 1–40; at the end of *From Rayleigh to Mie*, when the pianist performs left-hand glissandi on the F string within the piano, while simultaneously performing the *ad libitum* part in the right hand, mm. 146–154), and 4) instructions on leaving the tones to ring, which is marked in the score but also indicated with the use of the right pedal, longer rhythmical notes and an arpeggio that is 'written down' (*Within a Dense Molecular Cloud*, I, mm. 1–12 or *From Rayleigh to Mie*, mm. 129–135). What is intriguing is that there are almost no cross sections within different registers in the pieces: it appears that the composer has a clear intention to focus on tone colour and sound quality, rather than the position of the sound in the musical space-time. Therefore we can notice the longer parts of these pieces where the musical flow is located within one specific (for example, high) or nearby registers, which changes only in the moments of culmination and leads to the separation of registers, and subsequently the perception of the actual volume of the musical flow.

Besides creating a goal-oriented sound experience, B. Popović's use of registers also contributes to the experience of musical space-time. For example, the first part of *Solitude – Self Reflections* and *From Rayleigh to Mie* is located exclusively in the higher registers, which can be associated with the impression of one high and wide space. A similar impression appears at the beginning of *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud*: the lower register is experienced as a dark, gloomy space located underground or gradually opening in the direction of the underground.

The dimension of harmony

The dimension of harmony appears to be secondary in the experience of the musical space-time, at least in the perception of the phenomenon. The semitones and non-triadic chords are employed in shaping the timbral dimension

of the musical space-time, rather than in the positioning of the vertical as the structural point of the piece.[25] The most transparent harmonic thinking is seen in the third movement of *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud.* There we trace the harmonic structures which are seventh chords but spread out in both hands. Interestingly, these chords do not make any progression: they are only repeated in a specific pattern and are not in any way related or dependent on the following chord. One is intrigued to think whether these parts of the musical flow are even thought-out as (traditionally) harmonic or, on the other hand, they contrast the previous voice-leading manner[26] of presenting the musical material. The conclusion is that the vertical, i.e. harmonic dimension in the selected works is not an important part of the overall structure of the musical form, rather it marks only some points for the more powerful melodic line.[27]

Motivic/thematic structuring

The composer approaches the musical material primarily from the developing principle, i.e. the principle of developing variations. She uses one motivic nucleus, which appears to be the central one in shaping the musical flow, to create all subsequent motifs, mostly using repetition and interrelation. In the perception of all three piano works, what is the most striking is how we experience the unity of musical flow within its essentially fragmented design. The experience of perceiving how the distinctive motifs freely move throughout the musical flow, mark the shape of musical space-time in different piano registers and dynamic nuances. The most common technique is the unison repetition of a selected motif (which is paradigmatic for *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud*) or alternation of the motifs of similar design and content (which is paradigmatic for the other two piano pieces). In *From Rayleigh to Mie* (Example 2), the effects which evoke the thriller and tremolo are especially intriguing: this musical content creates the impression of a vibrating

[25] In that context, the piano works of Branka Popović most closely resonate with the orchestral works from the 1960s, particularly *Atmosphère*s (1961) or *Lontano* (1962) by György Ligeti, and *Jeux vénitiens* (1961) by Witold Lutosławski.

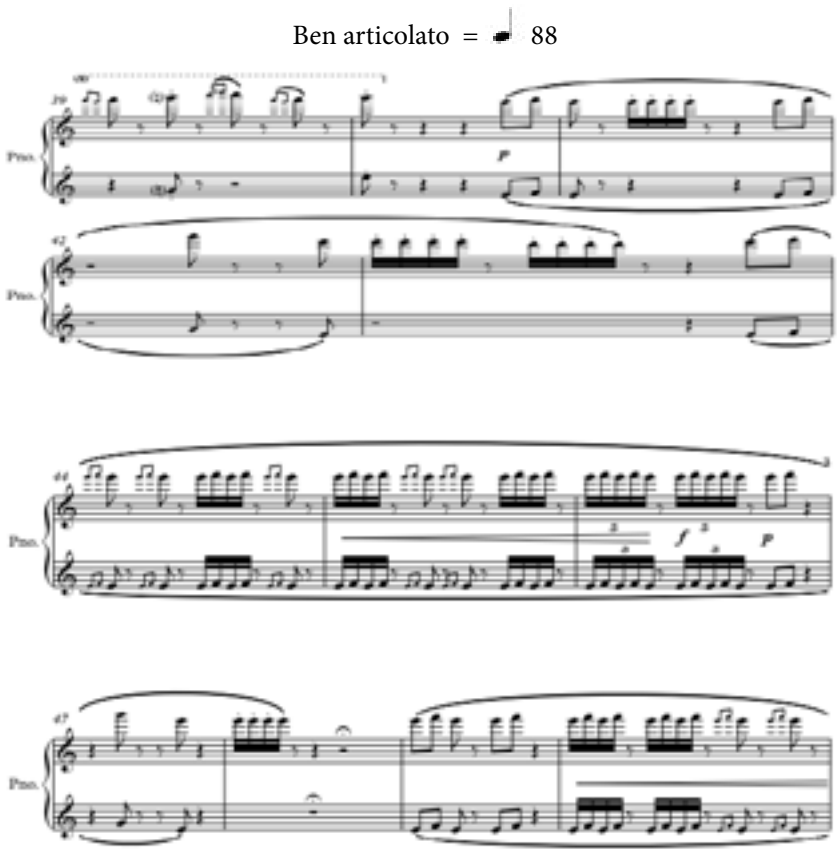
[26] Here, it is more accurate to use the term monothematic, considering the fact that motivic cells are spread out in both hands, creating the impression of one entity that is continuously developing either by adding new material or, on the other hand, by repeating the familiar material but altering other components and elements of the musical flow. This type of development is applied in all three piano works.

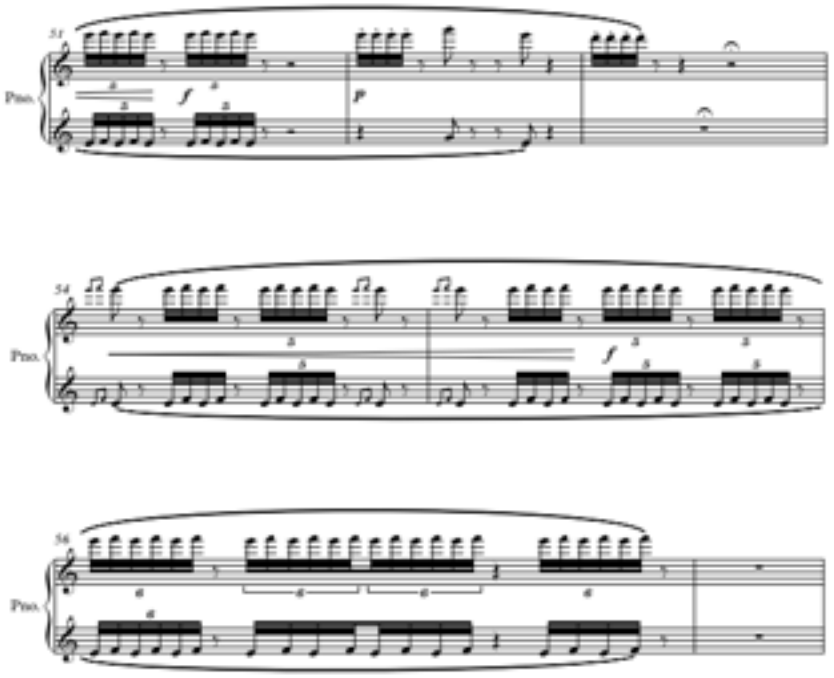
[27] Cf. Stevanović, op. cit., 2017, 68, footnote 3.

and sparkling musical flow, along with a striking visual experience. After this, one could say, 'endless' tremolo, the musical flow continues in a form of glissandi, followed by the change of the tone colour (the harp). That way, the musical flow has reached balance; two seemingly different movements – two types of light! – join in the same flow until the end of the piece.

On the other hand, in *Solitude – Self Reflections* we can notice one primary motif (mm. 1–30), which appears to have the leading role in the musical flow: in this case, the basic motif continuously spreads out within the musical space-time, reaching the peak point in mm. 8–15. Perceptually, we experience it as if only this singular motif *is* the musical flow, which continuously growing in size and volume.

Example 2: B. Popović, *From Rayleigh to Mie*, mm. 40–57.





Dynamics

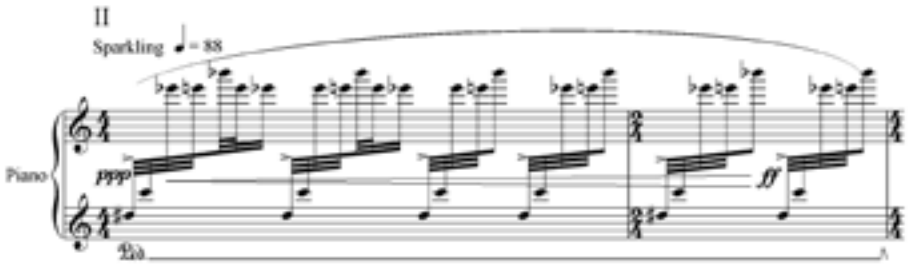
Of course, the molding of space-time in the selected piano works of B. Popović cannot be fully comprehended without analyzing the role of the other components and elements of the musical flow. These other compontents and elements mostly participate in emphasizing some other component, for example rhythm, or assist in making its influence perceptually transparent. Besides that, the other components and elements also participate in building thematically contrasting sections (for example, in *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud,* the structure of which is basically rooted in duality, thanks to the juxtaposition of the two opposing materials, found in all three movements of this piece) and different formal sections.

From these other components and elements, the *dynamics* have the most prominent role; not only do they affect the perceptual value of the other components in the course of listening, but they also emphasize the experience of musical space-time. The sections performed in the piano dynamics create the impression that the musical objects we perceive are actually distant

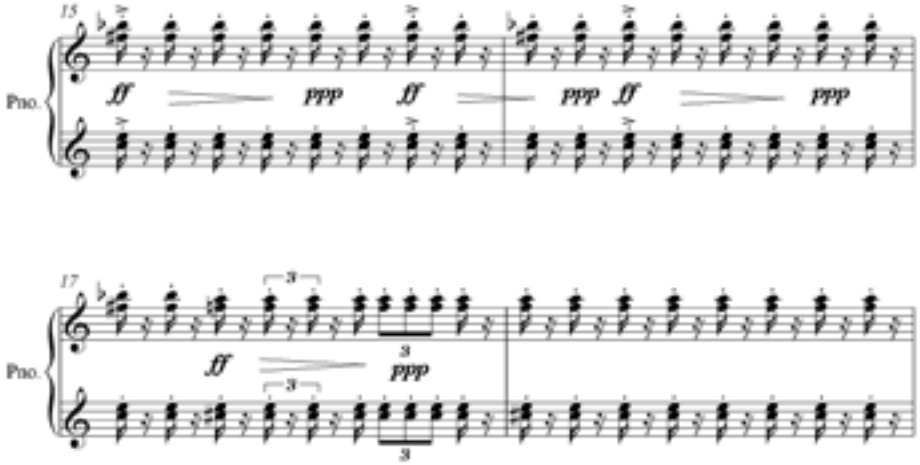
from our standpoint, while the sections performed in forte and fortissimo are experienced as if the musical objects are right before us. Moreover, the dynamics have a distinctive role in the dramaturgical layout of these compositions: the changes in dynamics are usually linked with the peak points or with the process of graduation and tension building. In *Solitude – Self Reflections* we notice these types of changes in the dynamics in the first part of the piece (mm. 1–33); in mm. 1–32 the gradual tension building through the dynamics is achieved by using piano and pianissimo, then a slight crescendo (m. 6 and 11), then a decrescendo (m. 19) and finally, settling in pianissimo (m. 32). Here, the dynamics are also involved in the experience of 'fading out', followed by the gradual 'decomposing' of the motivic thread, which is then experienced as a slowing-down moment (a sort of structural decrescendo). However, a sudden change takes place in the next measure, signaling the next formal section of the piece (mm. 34–60). A similar technique is used in *From Rayleigh to Mie*, mm. 58–66, where the central dynamic nuance (piano) gradually reaches pianissimo, and then forte, accumulating the energy which will be released in m. 67, in the glissandi section. In *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud* (Example 1b), the forte dynamics at the beginning of the piece help in perceiving the sense of spatiality, together with a lower register and the sound shape of the initial motif, which continues to resonate (instructed in the score with the "leave it to ring" mark). This particular gesture brings us to the horizon of silence, which in mm. 47–73 enters the field of echo, expanding in that way the timbral dimension of the musical space-time.

Somewhat more profound dynamics can be noted in the second and third movement of the mentioned piece. The intersections between piano and forte happen within the same motif (II movement, mm. 1–2 or mm. 13–14, III movement, mm. 1–2 or mm. 15–17), which makes the perception of the musical space-time more intense (Example 3a, 3b). These fast changes in dynamics are experienced as if the group of several motifs (although, there is only one!) are moving in different directions and at a different range in regard to the listener, which subsequently creates the impression as if there are more than one musical object located at different positions of the musical space-time. This type of multi-directional movement of the objects in all possible directions within the space-time is typical of post-tonal music.

Example 3a: B. Popović, *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud,* II, mm. 1–2.



Example 3b: B. Popović, *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud,* III, mm. 15–17.



Articulation and phrasing; articulation marks

The prominent role in shaping the musical flow and, therefore, the musical space-time, besides dynamics, belongs to *articulation and articulation marks.* The composer employs these elements in order to make a certain musical object more solid and perceptually distinctive (for example, the accentuation at the beginning of the III movement of *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud*, together with forte, results in a sharp, penetrating sound effect). The articulation marks also contribute to the experience of the musical space-time in these piano works, because they are linked with the tone quality, i.e. timbre ('resonating' motifs followed by the mark "leave it to ring" and the use of echo, the marks which define the interpretation, such as "sparkling", "myste-

rious", "nervous", "angry", etc.). However, these subtle nuances suggested by the composer can be noticed only when reading a score; in the performance, those nuances cannot be easily perceived.[28] Moreover, the important role in the experience of musical space-time belongs to the technique of piano playing, i.e. the use of the right pedal (primarily to create resonation and therefore to manipulate the timbral and rhythmical dimension of the musical space-time), the use of tremolos and glissandi, as well as staccato (in *From Rayleigh to Mie*, the staccato is an inseparable part of the new form of expression, while in *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud* it shapes the character of the motifs, making them sound sharp and dry).

Concluding remarks

The analysis of the piano works by Branka Popović reflects the complexity of musical space-time, not only at the primary, phenomenological level of perception, but also at the analytical/musicological level as well.[29]

By comparing all three pieces, certain common characteristics appear, especially in the treatment of sound, the musical material and musical components, which can be related to the relation between the composer and the phenomenon of musical space-time.[30] Evidently, the essential focus is on the matery (more precisely, atoms and the particles) and light, which is most obvious in the last piece of this selected group of her solo-piano works, *From Rayleigh to Mie*.[31] However, even without the explicit interest for the matery and light, the way in which the composer approaches the musical material in her composition reveals her fine-tuned sensibility for musical space-time.

Therefore, the understanding of the manifestation of space-time in music is possible through an insight into shaping the musical flow and the musical

[28] We can notice when the musical flow becomes more dramatic and tense, or when a certain section sounds sparkling or radiant.

[29] Musical space-time is the phenomenon which is deeply rooted in the existence of the music itself (especially, Western music), and it can be experienced in every piece of music, to a different extent. Therefore, the analytical procedure which, in this article, is conducted in the analysis of piano pieces by Branka Popović can be actually applied to any other piece of music, which is written in the score (captured in musical writting).

[30] The composer revealed her genuine interest in nature and its phenomena, especially those in relation to space-time and the universe. From Private conversation.

[31] This piece focuses on two different light phenomena, embodied in two distinctive thematic materials, shaped as a duet. The composer brought my attention to this compositional manner, in our Private conversation.

components of the musical flow. In that sense, the analysis of Branka Popović's piano works revealed this complex phenomenon from the aspect of its 'dimensions': duration, timbre or tone color, pitch height, and dynamics or intensity, as well as the musical components and their elements (rhythm, meter, and tempo; motivic/thematic structuring and harmony; articulation marks, agogics, and articulation). What is the most striking and appears as a manner is the composer's relation to the dimensions of duration, especially rhythm, meter, and speed; we could trace and hear that the rhythmical dimension is highly developed, which directly evokes the effects of compression or dilatation of musical time. The composer achieved this by a rich rhythmical outline of her works, using different figures and patterns, often organizing the rhythmical flow as duets (in *From Rayleigh to Mie* or *Within a Dense Molecular Cloud*) or, on the contrary, as a unique metro-rhythmical thread (in *Solitude – Self Reflections*).

The timbral dimension is another important aspect of the manifestation and shaping of the musical space-time. Here we also trace and identify the composer's sophisticated and elegant taste and sensibility towards the piano and its sound in particular. Her imagination in treating the instrument can be noticed in the manner of transforming the piano sound into the sound of a harp (*From Rayleigh to Mie*) or percussions (*Solitude – Self Reflections*). Furthermore, the composer uses the registers on the piano with the precise intention to create a unique sound effect: the higher registers sound with a sharp, penetrating, and perceptually distinctive sound, while the lower registers sound more gloomy, darker, and indistinctive.

Lastly, the dynamics, i.e. the dimension of intensity, also have a significant role in shaping the musical space-time. This particular dimension regulates the size and volume of the musical objects in musical space-time, and therefore their position regarding the listener. In that sense, the objects that appread on the horizon of piano dynamics are perceived as distant and almost audiably unattainable, while the objects in forte are perceived as nearby. However, the musical space-time can be fully and authentically experienced only as the mutual interrelationship of all the musical components and their elements; in the listening act, certain components and their elements can appear as perceptually more distinctive than others, or we can, willingly, perceptually distinguish and separate one component from the others.

In the overall listening experience, the piano works of Branka Popović, in the context of perception, interact intensively with our senses, making the listener awaiting for the next event in the musical space-time, which captures

his attention and occupies his perception. Listeners are involved in the musical flow and events within it, and the composer's craftsmanship and delicate musical language are what take us through the unique experience of the musical space-time of her piano works *Solitude-Self Reflections, Within a Dense Molecular Cloud* and *From Rayleigh to Mie*.

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Summary

In the main focus of the present article is the phenomenon of musical space-time, in the context of the piano works by Serbian composer, Branka Popović. The concept of musical space-time is defined as the mode of presentation of the piece of music, which implies that the musical form can also be interpreted as a musical space-time. The dimensions and characteristics of space-time in music are identified with the experience of physical space-time at a metaphorical level, which is noticed in the language of music (pitch height, tone leap, high/low register, etc.), and in the way in which the composer manipulates the musical components and their elements in the musical flow. In the musical analysis, however, the parameters of the sound are identified with the dimensions of musical space-time, thanks to their appearance in the musical flow and the perceptual effect they create, i.e. the way in which the composers 'make use' of them when creating a piece of music. In this article, the musical analysis of Branka Popović's piano works revealed this complex phenomenon from the aspect of its 'dimensions': duration, timbre or tone color, pitch height, and dynamics or intensity, as well as the musical components and their elements (rhythm, meter, and tempo; motivic/thematic structuring and harmony; articulations marks, agogics, and articulation). In the piano writing of Branka Popović, we can notice that she relies especially on rhythm, tone color and dynamics when shaping the musical space-time; other components and their elements are noticeable in peak moments, as well as in segmenting and achieving the unity of the musical flow. It should be noted, however, that musical space-time can only be fully comprehended and experienced in the entirety of the musical flow, through the unity of the musical components and their elements; in the listening act, certain components and their elements can appear as perceptually more distinctive than the others, or we can, willingly, perceptually distinguish and separate one component from the others. In the overall listening experience, the piano works of Branka Popović, in the context of perception, interact intensively with our

senses, therefore the listener awaits the next event in the musical space-time, which captures his attention and occupies his perception. Listeners are involved in the musical flow and events within it, and the composer's craftsmanship and delicate musical language are what takes us through the unique experience of musical space-time of her piano works *Solitude-Self Reflections, Within a Dense Molecular Cloud* and *From Rayleigh to Mie*.

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Tijana Ilišević*
University of Arts in Belgrade
Faculty of Music
Department of Music Theory

EXAMINING THE 'HYPER' STATUS OF VARÈSE'S 'PRISM'

Abstract: This paper offers an interpretation of the composition *Hyperprism* by Edgard Varèse. It provides an explanation of the work's possible meanings, placing emphasis on the investigation of the "hyper" status of the work as a "prism". Relying on the composer's poetics and bearing in mind his scientific approach to sound and sound articulation, this paper proposes the interpretation of the meaning of *Hyperprism* from the perspectives of geometry, optics, and mineralogy.

Keywords: Edgard Varèse, sonorism, Hyperprism, sound masses, pc set theory, goal-directed processes, chromatic aggregate

Forming the trilogy with the other two of Varèse's works – *Octandre* and *Intégrales*, the analysed composition – *Hyperprism* – reveals the composer's interest in a scientific approach to sound and sound articulation. Created in the period between November 1922 and the Spring of 1923, for an ensemble of nine wind instruments, siren, and pitchless percussion, this composition represents the author's new, radical aesthetic. This is primarily evident in the choice of instruments, as well as in his approach to sound articulation, and the articulation of the form of the work. In 1916, Edgard Varèse declared for the New York *Morning Telegraph*: "Our musical alphabet must be enriched. We also need new instruments very badly [….] In my own works I have al-

* Contact details: tijana.ilisevic@gmail.com.

ways felt the need of new mediums of expression […] which can lend themselves to every expression of thought and can keep up with thought."[1] As a young composer of only twenty-two years, Varèse discovered the scientific thought of Hermann von Helmholtz[2] whom he later referred to as a figure of inspiration. The scientist inspired the composer in thinking of music as masses of sound evolving in space.[3] A composer and a scientist should cooperate, Varèse regards, to create (discover) a musical instrument able to produce a continuous tone of any pitch.[4] This continuous tone as an "idée fixe" of his artistic path[5] Varèse found in the sound of a siren, which he used, inspired by Helmholtz's experiments, in three compositions, including *Hyperprism*.[6] Malcolm MacDonald speaks about the siren as one of the "auditory symbols" of Varèse's childhood that he spent in the small village in Burgundy. The sound of the riverboat's siren, as well as the whistle of a distant train, remained in Varèse's memory, and he recalled and recognized them later in his life in the sounds of New York City: "But even as a child Varèse was fascinated by steam engines. He spoke of one particular night when he was awakened by the long C# of the train whistle as it passed by the village; and how, many years later in New York, he heard again that C# whistle coming from the docks to where he was living on West 14th Street."[7] Speaking of the

[1] Chou Wen-Chung, "Open Rather Than Bounded", *Perspectives of New Music*, 5/1, 1966, 1.

[2] In 1905. the young composer discovered the French edition of *Die Lehre von den Tonempfindungen als physiologische Grundlage für die Theorie der Musik* (1863), translated as *Théorie physiologique de la musique fondé sur l'etude des sensations auditives* (1868) / *Physiological Theory of Music Based on a Study of Auditory Sensations*. See: Philippe Lalitte, "The theories of Helmholtz in the work of Varèse", *Contemporary Music Review*, 30/5, 2011, 329–330. However, the author notices that the French translation is misleading because it focuses on a theory of music, instead of a theory of the auditory sensations as applied to music. Ibid., 343, see the footnote no. 1.

[3] See: Edgard Varèse, L. Alcopley, "Edgard Varèse on Music and Art: A Conversation between Varèse and Alcopley", *Leonardo*, 1/2, 1968, 194.

[4] See: Драгана Стојановић-Новичић, "О чему је сањао Варез?", *Музика кроз мисао – Зборник радова*, Београд, Факултет музичке уметности, 2002, 69.

[5] Ibid., 69.

[6] Another two compositions with the siren as an instrument included in the orchestra are *Amériques* (1921) and *Ionisation* (1931).

[7] Malcolm MacDonald, "'Only One Thing of Value': Varèse the Burgundian", in: Felix Meyer and Heidy Zimmermann (Eds), *Edgard Varèse: Composer – Sound Sculptor – Visionary*, Woodbridge, Suffolk, The Boydell Press, 2006, 19.

"wonderful parabolic and hyperbolic curves of sound" of the siren, Varèse emphasizes the essence of its sound quality:

> It is astonishing to see at what point pure sound, without harmonics, gives another dimension to the quality of the musical notes which surround it. Truly, the use of pure sounds in music has the same effect on the harmonics as a crystal prism has on pure light. This use irradiates them with thousands of unexpected and varied vibrations.[8]

The premiere of *Hyperprism*, with the composer as a conductor, took place on the fourth of March 1923. The performance caused boisterous, disapproving reactions of a part of the audience, who, among other things, was very bothered by the persistent repetition of the C-sharp tone at the opening measures of the work. Paul Rosenfeld's words witness Varèse's reaction on the night after the premiere of his work, revealing at the same time the origin of this particularly irritating tone, at least for one part of the audience:

> During the first performance of the work, [the c-sharps] produced convulsive laughter in the audience. But when the composer returned to his home that evening, and sat working into the night, he heard from somewhere over the city, a very familiar sound, a siren; and realized that he had been hearing it for many nights, over six months; and that the tone was exactly a very shrill high c-sharp.[9]

The inherent nature of sounds is, in Varèse's opinion, "intelligent" and he perceives them as constantly moving. Malcolm MacDonald gives the following explanation of Varèse's approach:

> At the atomic and sub-atomic levels, everything is in motion; matter is anything but inert. At such levels, sounds are as alive, as 'intelligent', as crystals, or plants. The only expressions available to science to describe and manipulate such phenomena are mathematical. Music and mathematics go hand in hand: music, as an 'art-science' (Varèse's term) that deals in the physical reality of acoustical structures, can be seen as a symbol of the union of the mystical and the scientific at the root of matter.[10]

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[8] Edgard Varèse, *Ecrits*, Paris, Christian Bourgois, 1983, 180 and 44, see: Philippe Lalitte, op. cit., 333.

[9] Paul Rosenfeld, *An Hour with American Music*, Westport, Hyperion Press, Inc., 1979, 163, see: Robert Jackson Wood, *At the Threshold: Edgard Varèse, Modernism, and the Experience of Modernity* (doctoral dissertation), New York, City University of New York, 2014, 27.

[10] Malcolm MacDonald, *Varèse, Astronomer in Sound*, London, Kahn&Averill, 2003, 136–137.

Varèse's fascination with "the liberation of sound" is also reflected in the terminology he uses to describe the process of composing – for him, sounds are "detaching" and "projecting" themselves, they are also "sent forth", whereas sound masses "collide" with one another, "penetrate", and "repulse" one another.[11] Therefore, he is apparently aware of space as a comprehensive and thoroughly permeating factor in the process of composing. As a composer, Varèse examines, researches, and conquers the borders of space, making the process of sound and space liberation the fundamental and ultimate condition, means, method, and goal of his creation.

Varèse speaks of his sounds as "intelligent" entities because he considers them entities with their own will. The composer's task, he regards, is just to initiate the "projection" of a sound onto available spatial dimensions. After this projection, sound as an independent, intelligent entity will further "conquer" space on its own. Because of this independence and intelligence of sounds, able to freely move through all possible directions, Varèse considers space to be open, rather than bounded. Talking about the electronic means of creating music, and the issue of possessing control over materials, he once said:

> I want to be *in* the material, part of the acoustical vibration, so to speak [….] I think of musical space as open rather than bounded, which is why I speak about projection in the sense that I want simply to project a sound, a musical thought, to initiate it, and then to let it take its own course. I do not want an a priori control of all its aspects.[12]

The sound travels on its own, projects itself further on its own, and conquers open space, expanding its initial boundaries to unimagined scopes. This is where the power, freedom, and intelligence of a sound lie. Regarding the issue of an open, unlimited space, and its dimensions, Varèse talks about spatial projection as a fourth dimension (except for the horizontal, vertical, and dynamic shedding). He speaks about the concept of *sound projection* as "the feeling given us by certain blocks of sound. Probably I should call them beams of sound, since the feeling is akin to that aroused by beams of light sent forth by a powerful searchlight. For the ear – just as the eye – it gives a sense of prolongation, a journey into space."[13] These "beams" or "blocks" of

[11] Ibid., 139.

[12] Gunther Schuller, Edgard Varèse, "Conversation with Varèse", *Perspectives of New Music*, 3/2, 1965, 36–37.

[13] Malcolm MacDonald, op. cit., 139.

sound, affected by this projection that encompasses all possible dimensions, Varèse calls "planes" (for linearly, melodically developed ideas) and "sound masses" (for vertical structures). Moreover, he considers planes to be capable of expanding into sound masses, which he called the "expanding plane". The opposite situation is also possible, making sound masses capable of converting into planes.[14]

Varèse speaks of his process of composing in terms of a "constant", and a "variation" of that constant, and says:

> While in our musical system we deal with quantities whose values are fixed, in the realization that I conceived the values would be continually changing in relation to a constant. In other words, this would be like a series of variations, the changes resulting from slight alterations of the form of a function or by the transposition of one function into another.[15]

This constant may be the very thought (in terms of musical thought, focal pitch, or basic pitch-class set) initiated by a composer, and the variation may be all that unbound motion of the sound through space, as well as the liberation of that same space. For his process of composing, therefore, Varèse provides a metaphorical explanation, comparing it with the "process of crystallisation". Consequently, the musical form he considers not to be predetermined, but to emerge out of a process, is a result of processuality. Accordingly, he points out:

> The misunderstanding has come from the thinking of form as a point of departure, a pattern to be followed, a mold to be filled. Form is a result – the result of a process. Each of my works discovers its own form [….] Conceiving musical form as a *resultant* – the result of a process – I was struck by what seemed to me an analogy between the formation of my compositions and the phenomenon of crystallization.[16]

He quoted the description of the crystallisation process, previously given to him by the Professor of Mineralogy at Columbia University, Nathaniel Arbiter:

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[14] John D. Anderson, "Varèse and the Lyricism of the New Physics", *The Musical Quarterly*, 75/1, 1991, 35.

[15] Malcolm MacDonald, op. cit., 140.

[16] Chou Wen-Chung, "The Liberation of Sound", *Perspectives of New Music*, 5/1, 1966, 16.

> The crystal is characterized by both a definite external form and a definite internal structure. The internal structure is based on the unit of crystal which is the smallest grouping of the atoms that has the order and composition of the substance. The extension of the unit into space forms the whole crystal. But in spite of the relatively limited variety of internal structures, the external forms of crystals are limitless [….] the crystal forms itself is a *resultant* […] rather than a primary attribute.[17]

With reference to this, he continues as follows:

> This, I believe, suggests better than any explanation I could give about the way my works are formed. There is an idea, the basis of an internal structure, expanded and split into different shapes or groups of sound constantly changing in shape, direction, and speed, attracted and repulsed by various forces. The form of the work is the consequence of this interaction. Possible musical forms are as limitless as the exterior forms of crystals [….] form and content are one.[18]

This paper has its methodological support in Allen Forte's set theory.[19] Furthermore, it inevitably sheds light on the issue of the sound mass concept, as defined by Varèse himself. The study reveals the role of planes and sound masses in developing the processive musical flow, directed towards different goals. This enables the segmentation of the overall form of the composition, the recognition of its structural boundaries, and the potential symmetries within it. Designed in this way, the basic analytical approach provides three possible interpretations of the meaning of the analysed work. The first one is the interpretation of its possible meaning from a mathematical (geometrical) point of view. The second one provides possibilities for considering its meaning from the point of view offered by physics (optics, namely). Finally, the third one attempts to offer an understanding of this work with respect to the composer's poetics. Consequently, these three facets should provide the understanding of the 'hyper' status of Varèse's piece as a 'prism'.

Primarily one needs to point out that the set theory provides the detection of the presence of several parallel processes within the piece, which proved to be essential for the perception of the structural boundaries and the segmentation of the work. These processes form the musical flow and direct cognition of an analyst towards the 'nodal points'. These are the moments of

[17] Ibid., 16.

[18] Ibid., 16–17.

[19] Allen Forte, *The Structure of Atonal* Music, New Haven – London, Yale University Press, 1973.

closure that are primarily related to the occurrence of the last member of a certain "family of entities".[20] In Varèse's work, this family is represented by twelve pitch classes, whose completion represents the occurrence of the chromatic aggregates. The occurrence of the last pitch class represents the moment of closure. The completion of these processes is in some cases limited to only one section, which makes boundaries easily perceptible. In other cases, these processes unfold through a wider time-space span, thereby connecting different, time-distant points and segments of the form. Thus, these goal-directed linear processes, unfolding in various directions and at various speeds, show Varèse's aspirations towards the liberation of sound and exploration of the open, unlimited, unbounded space. By monitoring directed processes in different dimensions which they 'occupy', as well as by monitoring inextricably connected planes and sound masses, which are responsible for the development of these processes, it is concluded that the overall form of the analysed work consists of three parts, each composed of three sections (example no. 1).

Example 1: The overall form of Hyperprism

Edgard Varèse - *Hyperprism*

I part (b.1-30)

first section (b.1-12)	second section (b.13-18)	third section (b.17-30)

II part (b.31-59)

first section (b.31-40)	second section (b.40-45)	third section (b.45-59)

III part (b.60-90)

first section (b.60-76)	second section (b.77-84)	third section (b.85-90)

[20] Miloš Zatkalik, "Reconsidering Teleological Aspects of Nontonal Music", in: Denis Collins (Ed.), *Music Theory and its Methods: Structures, Challenges, Directions*, Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang Publishers, 2013, 287.

Varèse's piece develops from one basic "internal structure", or to use Anderson's term, "germinal cell",[21] hereinafter referred to as the B – B-sharp – C-sharp1 trichord of the tenor trombone. It seems, in fact, that this basic trichord (012) is also developed from one (focal) C-sharp1 pitch. Regarding Varèse's poetics, we could conclude that this focal pitch represents the basic "idea" initiated by the composer himself. All the successive development of this focal pitch represents the result of its further projection, independent movement and conquest of the open space. The projection of that independent, "intelligent" sound onto the horizontal dimension (through the *plane* of the tenor trombone) results in a trichord that establishes itself as a basic building unit of the piece, or the "constant", to use Varèse's own term. The further development of this initial trichord and its projection onto the horizontal and vertical dimensions denote a gradual expansion through space, simultaneously acting as a "variation of the constant". It is first reflected in the expansion of the B – B-sharp – C-sharp1 trichord (012) into the C-sharp1 – D1 – E-flat1 – E1 – F1 pentachord (01234), which gives the pitch-class set (0123456) within a complete horizontal flow. Besides the expansion through the horizontal dimension, which is reflected in the developing melodic line of the tenor trombone, the expansion is also present in the vertical dimension. It can be noticed in the occurrence of the first 'accompanying vertical' C-sharp1 – D (01) between the sound mass of horns, and bass trombone (m. 6). The further "variation" of "the constant", relying on the developed pentachord (01234), can be seen with the occurrence of the (0134) tetrachord (m. 12) in the plane of the first horn. The projection of the initial pitch and the further free motion of sound through the horizontal dimension of the space within the first section (mm. 1–12), initiate the first process of the piece which is related to the completion of the chromatic aggregate. The horizontally conquered space of the first section (012345678) obtains its vertical realisation in the second section (Molto calmo, mm. 13–18). By the verticalisation of the previously horizontally exposed pitch-class set, the process of "the liberation of sound" continues in two ways. The first way is directly related to conquering the new dimension of the physical space, whereas the second one is related to gradually conquering the space of the chromatic scale. The appearance of the tenth pitch (F-sharp) within the sound mass of horns (m. 15) 'provokes' the establishing of the first vertical occurrence of the pitch-class set (012345678). Further development goes in the direction of re-estab-

[21] John D. Anderson, op. cit., 35.

lishing the horizontal dimension, with the appearance of the plane of the flute. It is exactly in the flute that the first chromatic aggregate of the work will be completed (m. 22). The last three pitches (the aforementioned F-sharp1 in m. 15, G2 and A-flat2 in the flute, m. 20 and m. 22), whose absence is accountable for the unfolding of the process through three sections of the first part, also represent a pitch-class set (012). At the same time, the distinctive appearance of the flute plane within the third section of the first part (Calmo, a tempo – Tempo I, mm. 19–23) is the first time that one instrument was treated as a solo instrument. The flute passage misses only C and D in order to complete its own linear chromatic aggregate. As the surrounding pitches of the starting, initial pitch (C-sharp1), they were the distinctive pitches of the 'accompanying verticals' during the first and the second sections (mm. 1–18). It is thus additionally confirmed that these three sections belong to the first part of the composition. Likewise, this is another subtle way in which Varèse "liberates" the sound and expands it through space, avoiding the domination of one dimension over another in "the process of liberation". All dimensions must be equally included in this process and a musical piece must be realized in a general, universal space in which all dimensions are merged into one. Perhaps we should at this point recall Varèse's fourth dimension in the music, which gives the feeling of "prolongation" and the sense of "a journey into space."[22] The second process, conducted in parallel with the aforementioned one, also considers the completion of the chromatic aggregate. However, it is realized through the vertical dimension, with the appearance of 'accompanying verticals' (01) characteristic for the piece. This process can be traced through the verticals of the first part (C-sharp1 – D in the first section, C3 – C-sharp2 in the second section, and E-flat2 – E3 and A3 – B-flat2 in the third section). It is completed within the first section of the second part (Pesante, mm. 31–40) in which the vertical dimension dominates. The first vertical (mm. 31–33), which represents the verticalized pitch-class set (01234) from the beginning of the piece, completes the previous array with F, G-flat1, G, and A-flat, whereas the second one completes the array with B pitch. Thus, the process of completing the chromatic aggregate through the interplay of vertical and horizontal dimensions is expanded onto four sections, comprising two parts of the composition, respectively.

The beginning of the second part (mm. 31–59) of the composition is primarily marked with the occurrence of the new sound mass. For the first

[22] See the footnote no. 13.

time, horns and trombones are explicitly joined in one compact sound mass. Novelty can also be noticed in the simultaneous and, in a smaller space obtained, alternate development of the horizontal and vertical dimensions. The most significant characteristic of this part is reflected in the abundance of the parallel goal-directed processes. These processes seem to be unpredictable and unintentional consequences of a free movement of the projected intelligent sound. However, they reveal a complex, dense network of tightly connected, well-planned activities of sound masses. In the second part both dimensions are represented as equally credited for the development of structurally important pitch-class sets. The second part is also marked with the first withdrawal of the percussion sound mass. The second section of this part (Lento, mm. 40–45), is linked to the previous section with E-flat in the first horn. At the same time, this section is also marked with the most complex vertical from the beginning of the second part (012345689, mm. 43–44), which highlights the basic trichord (012), and the resulting trichord (013). The pitches missing from this vertical – E, G, and G-sharp – are prominent in trumpets at the beginning of the second section (E in the first trumpet, mm. 40 and 41), and within the third section (G2 and G-sharp1 as the accompanying vertical of the trumpet sound mass, mm. 47–50).

The third part of the form (mm. 60–90) represents the recapitulation of the previous two parts. Certain planes and sound masses, rhythmic patterns, and pitch-class sets of the previous two parts of the form, are recapitulated in a virtually transformed manner. This way, the third part functions as a "variation" of "the constant", represented by the first two parts. The sound masses developed within the first two parts, are now transformed in different ways, concerning the pitch, rhythmic image, or timbre. However, compared to this direct way of transformation, the idea of recapitulation is recognized indirectly as well, even to a greater extent. This is realized through strong associative connections with certain materials (pitch-class sets, namely) from the previous two parts. This enables the elevation of the aforementioned processes from the level of sections and parts, to the level of the whole composition. The first distinctive change at the beginning of the third part is the disintegration of the initially coherent sound mass of the tenor trombone and horns (at the beginning of the composition). Here, for the opening of the third part, Varèse uses the bass trombone, followed by the upper two horns. This is where the varied form of the "germinal cell" firstly appears. It is in the first horn, transposed on the F-sharp, and primarily represented as (01234) pentachord. Only after that does the "germinal cell", also transposed on the

F-sharp, appear in the tenor trombone also as a (01234) pentachord. This is the first direct recapitulation of the previous materials, and planes and sound masses as well. We cannot escape the impression that Varèse deliberately chose the F-sharp for this recapitulation, by which he achieves a kind of allusion to the idea of subdominant recapitulation in a sonata form. This idea of recapitulation is also followed by the sound mass of percussion instruments repeating rhythmic patterns from the beginning of the composition. The occurrence of the sound mass of the piccolo flute and clarinet (m. 69) represents an example of the direct recapitulation of the previous sound masses, as well as their materials. It is the recapitulation of the first and the third sections of the second part (Pesante, m. 31 and onward, and Mosso, m. 45 and onward). The C – B – B-flat (012) trichord in the sound mass of the piccolo and clarinet (from the third section of the second part, mm. 45–48, and mm. 56–59), is recapitulated and rhythmically modified by the piccolo in the mm. 69–72 (within the sound mass of the piccolo flute and clarinet). This melodic motion is accompanied by the clarinet melody consisting of the G-flat3 – F2 – E3 (012) trichord. The selection of instruments emphasizes the connection between these two, spatially and temporally distant points. Furthermore, the clarinet melody horizontalizes the vertical of the horns from the first section of the second part (Pesante, mm. 31–33), making dense associative spatial connections. This brings us to the conclusion that the two original distinct dimensions (the vertical one from Pesante section, and the horizontal one from Mosso section) merged into two horizontals sounding together in the vertical dimension. The other four pitches of the piccolo melody (E-flat4, A3, F-sharp3, and G4), with the following A-flat3 in the clarinet, represent the horizontalisation of the horns and trumpets from the third section of the second part (Mosso, mm. 46–48, and m. 56). This is additionally confirmed by the appearance of the quarter tone in the bass trombone (between D-flat and D), which is a direct reference to the rest of the material from the third section of the second part – namely, to the sound mass of trombones. Another confirmation of these connections comes with the 'accompanying vertical' of the sound mass of the piccolo and clarinet (G4 – A-flat3), which is a reference to the most prominent accompanying vertical of the second part (Mosso – Vivace, mm. 48–50). This recapitulation hence embraces the entire third section of the second part within one sound mass.

The indirect recapitulation (achieved by using associative connections) is apparent in the first section of the third part (mm. 60–76) in several ways. The distinctive F-sharp pitch of the beginning of recapitulation, as well as the

prominent 'accompanying vertical' of the piccolo and clarinet sound mass (G4 – A-flat3), which concludes the first section, make associative connections with the first section of the first part (mm. 1–12), mainly because they form the (012) trichord, but also because these pitches were accountable for the closure of the first process in the composition – the completion of the chromatic aggregate, namely. Another associative connection is achieved by insisting on the bass trombone timbre and its D-flat – D quarter tone (mm. 69, 72, 74–75), while the only two missing pitches in the piccolo and clarinet sound mass are C-sharp and D. C-sharp, as the initial pitch of the composition, was accompanied by the D of the bass trombone. This time, the recapitulation misses the C-sharp and D, but insists on the D-flat – D quarter tone of the bass trombone. Therefore, it simultaneously makes an associative connection with the first 'accompanying vertical' of the composition. Another indirect way of recapitulation, which is related to the process of completing the chromatic aggregate expanding through all three sections in the first part of the composition, can be noticed in the plane of the tenor trombone (in mm. 67–69). In the recapitulation of the initial (012) trichord, namely, it is possible to notice the appearance of the whole chromatic scale downward from the C1 (m. 67). This process is completed by the D-flat – D quarter tone of the bass trombone and this is also the first explicit appearance of the chromatic aggregate. Moreover, this process is completed within the narrowest temporal and spatial frame. The completion was for a moment disrupted by another appearance of the initial (012) trichord (D – D-sharp – E), which interrupted the perfect chromatic downward array by using a conventional imitation of laughter ("slide"), followed by a 'jesting' appearance of the quarter tone. However, the missing D will finally appear as the first pitch of the horn sound mass at the beginning of the last section of the third part (m. 85), significantly emphasized with the use of *fortissimo* (*ouvert*), simultaneously as a directly varied recapitulation of the Pesante section from the beginning of the second part (mm. 31–34).

One definition of a prism we can find in mathematics, where it is defined as a three-dimensional shape with two identical sides of equal bases facing each other. The idea of the mathematical notion of prism can, on the one hand, be perceived at the level of each individual section, as well as on the level of each part of the form, on the other hand. In addition to this, it can be recognized on the level of the entire work. The material of each section is based on the initial (012) trichord ("germinal cell") and its further development through two different dimensions (through the planes and sound

masses, correspondingly). The "germinal cell" is itself based on the three equidistant pitches. Each part of the overall form of the composition is built from three sections sharing the same processes which, in this way, make them 'equal'. Finally, on the level of the whole composition, the third part, putting the emphasis on all the structurally important pitch-class sets, as well as all the important materials, planes, sound masses, and processes of the previous two parts, becomes 'the same', 'consistent', and 'parallel' with other two parts. The third part can be observed from a higher hierarchical level, like an instance that 'reflects' the first two parts of the form, parallelising itself with the previous two parts within the paradigmatic axis. The notion of a mathematical prism implies the existence of an *n*-sided base (in the case of the analysed composition, 'the base' is three-sided), and a second base which is a translated copy of the first one. As far as the form of this work is considered, the third part is a translated copy of the first two parts of the form.

The perception of the piece through the vision of the optical prism can be gained in two ways – through the notion of a dispersive, on the one hand, and a reflective prism, on the other. The third part of the composition could be viewed in both ways since the processes and different forms of the liberation of the musical space (realized through the aforementioned goal directed processes), recorded in the first two parts of the composition, spread themselves through the space of the entire composition. This is realized in such a way that the third part positions itself as a syntagmatic and paradigmatic prism of the first two parts at once. On the syntagmatic plane, the third part is the evident recapitulation of the previously presented materials (pc sets) and sound masses. On the paradigmatic plane, as already mentioned, the third part positions itself as a hierarchically higher unit, as a 'magnifying mirror' of the processes of the first two parts. Compared to the first two parts, the third part functions as a dispersive prism, which breaks a beam of light into its basic colours. The third part, in a similar way, contains the essential, elementary part of the entire composition. If we reverse the perspective and take the angle of view from the third part of the form, we will see that the third part 'breaks' the *sound* (all the materials and sound masses of the composition) into elementary materials presented in the first and the second parts. At the same time, the aforementioned numerous transformations of the materials in the third part reveal the qualities of the reflective prism which reflects light in order to flip, rotate, deviate and displace the light beam. The entire piece and its *sound* can be perceived through the vision of the dispersive prism. Two non-related sounds presented through the

planes and sound masses of wind instruments, on one side, and percussion instruments, on the other, could not 'merge' and blend into a common sound due to their different natures of sound. This should not be surprising, considering Varèse's sonoristic approach to the issue of timbre, and his striving towards the differentiation of colours and densities:

> The role of colour would be completely changed from being incidental, anecdotal, sensual or picturesque; it would become an agent of delineation like the different colours on a map separating different areas, and an integral part of form. These zones would be felt as isolated, and the hitherto unobtainable non-blending (or at least the sensation of non-blending) would become possible.[23]

We cannot, then, resist the impression that the siren, as *a pure sound*, which Varèse compares to a *crystal prism*, is a kind of paradigm of the entire work.

A famous transmutation as a result of collision and penetration of sound masses was not used in *Hyperprism* in full swing – it seems, moreover, that Varèse did not aim at merging these two different sounds. On the contrary, it seems that he intentionally wanted to put emphasis on the two different colours of the ensemble. In that sense, the work positions itself as a dispersive optical prism towards two non-related (raw, basic) sounds of the orchestra. The piece exists in their mutual consonance, but simultaneously 'breaks' the wholeness of sound into two divided, essentially different elementary sounds. In the same way, the dispersive prism merges the unity and differences of a beam of light in one moment. As a piece, *Hyperprism* positions itself as an aural counterpart of the optical prism.

The process of crystallisation is perceived in the projection of the focal C-sharp1 and in the free movement of the "intelligent" sound. During this free movement, the "germinal cell" (012), or the B – B-sharp – C-sharp1 trichord is formed, whose further projection enables the formation of different pitch-class sets in both the horizontal and vertical dimensions of the musical space. Additionally, by virtue of this projection, many teleological processes are initiated and completed during a shorter or longer period of time. These processes are sometimes realized and completed within one segment of the form, making the boundaries more reliable, whereas, in other cases, they are 'prolonged' through a longer time period, crossing the structural boundaries. These linear processes, with the individual speeds of development and the different dimensions and time frames they 'occupy', point out

[23] Edgard Varèse, "New Instruments and New Music", 12. see: Malcolm MacDonald, op. cit., 141.

to a liberated, "intelligent" sound which, once projected, travels freely through musical time-space exploring its "openness". Thus, the whole musical flow becomes "an acoustic vibration", an intelligent substance that constantly moves, varies, and pulses. At the level of pitch-class sets, the process of crystallisation is evident. Each succeeding pitch-class set is derived from the "germinal cell" (012), which functions as "a constant", while all of the derived pitch-class sets represent the "variation" of that constant. These derived sets can therefore be regarded as crystals produced by the projection of the initial cell – they are particular, but not all possible evident forms created as a result of the projection of a basic crystal unit. Furthermore, the projection of the "germinal cell" initiates distinct goal-directed processes which unfold themselves in different ways and with different speeds, and achieve their closure through shorter or longer time periods. These processes affect the creation and identification of structural boundaries, determining as well the complete form of the work in a way that every three sections group themselves within three parts of the complete form. The complete form of the piece, as well as the form of the crystal, thereby emerges from this free movement and processes it triggered, representing only one of its countless possible forms. Just as the crystal, developed on a limited number of internal structures and exempted from the rules related to its unlimited complete form, this piece, developed from one pitch solely, takes up only one of the countless numbers of its external possible forms. In that sense, it is possible to provide an explanation for its name. Developing from the basic internal structure, its complete external form, as a *resultant*, may have taken any other way. The projected focal pitch, as well as the "germinal cell" as an "intelligent" sound, may have taken a different way. Just as the crystal, whose complete form depends on current external factors which make it unique, this piece is also a resultant of one particular motion and 'behaviour' of the initiated projected sound. There are countless forms of external realisation of the piece derived from the initial pitch, or germinal cell, and this is only one of its possible forms, because of which Varèse's 'prism' is manifold in nature.

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Summary

The analyzed work – *Hyperprism*, written between 1922 and 1923 in a unique way reveals the composer`s scientific approach to the issue of sound articulation. Edgard Varèse manfully combines different timbres, creating the work for the ensemble of nine wind instruments and non-pitched percussion instruments. This way, the composer creates new sound horizons, examining all of the available dimensions of musical space. Establishing the fourfold division of the musical space, which includes the spatial sound projection as a fourth dimension, alongside the horizontal and vertical dimensions, and dynamic shedding as well, Varèse in an utterly individual way approaches the examining of musical space borders.

As an independent, intelligent entity, sound conquers *open*, *unbounded* space on its own after being initially projected by the composer himself. The sound accomplishes this through the horizontal dimension or planes on the one hand, or through the vertical dimension or sound masses (blocks of sound), on the other. During its free movement, sound liberates the open space, at the same time revealing the specific time profile of the composition. It is through planes and sound masses that goal-directed processes are initiated and completed during a shorter or longer period of time. These processes are, as a rule, directed towards the chromatic aggregate as the goal of

the movement. Thus, inextricably linked, space and time are being simultaneously developed and liberated.

Examining the possibilities of the interpretation of the analyzed work, this paper relies on historical sources that include numerous lectures and interviews given by the composer himself. These sources serve as a guide mark in a process of examining the composer`s poetics. The inspiration for this paper is also drawn from the very name of the composition, which reveals the scientific provenance. Accordingly, the paper sheds light on the possibility of the interpretation of *Hyperprism* from the geometrical and optical, as well as the point of view of mineralogy. Through the analysis of different goal-directed processes governed by planes and sound masses, as well as through the monitoring of different relations these planes and sound masses achieve, the paper reveals some of the many "faces" of Varèse`s prism. The *hyper* status of the work as a *prism* will thus be considered from the perspective of the generic cell projection and its further development through the work. This will inevitably include the issue of the overall form construction as the *resultant* of this specific projection and free unlimited movement of the sound through the musical time-space.

VIEWS

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UDC 78.071:929 Жебељан И.

Paul Cassidy
Brodsky Quartet, United Kingdom

TRIBUTE TO ISIDORA

It is a rare and thrilling moment when you encounter a truly great musician. Someone who appears to act as a conduit enabling music to materialise out of thin air. This was Isidora Žebeljan.

When the violinist Ignaz Schuppanzigh implored Beethoven:
"Maestro, why do you insist on writing these crazy violin parts that neither I nor anyone else can possibly play?"
He replied impatiently:

"Do you think I spare a thought for your wretched violin when the gods are speaking to me!"

The same could be said of our first meeting with Isidora.

We were in Belgrade to give the first performance of *Song of the Traveller in the Night*, the clarinet quintet she had written for ourselves and Joan Enric Lluna. Unused to the complexities of her highly original and deeply personal writing, we were collectively struggling to lift the music off the page. You see, despite possessing an unmistakably unique voice – like for example, Janáček or Bartók – her, and their music, looks similar to lots of other music. Not-

withstanding one or two distinguishing features, like those little notes with dots and lines followed by those all important rests, we, the interpreters are confronted by the same hieroglyphics, the same code that we are always faced with. Meeting and working with Isidora transformed how we saw and felt the music in an instant.

Take the "Traveller" for instance. We were busy trying, quite rightly, to imbue every single utterance of that introduction with as much beauty as it deserved. While she was thankful for, and praised that approach, she also showed us that of paramount importance were the harmonic shifts from bar 1 to bar 4 and eventually to bar 17. The music lost none of its whimsical beauty but structurally, became so much stronger for this insight.

The scenes that this traveller witnesses on his/her journey are numerous and varied. Isidora does not pour over them laboriously, instead she chooses to give us snapshots of these experiences, rather like polaroid shots of the events. The music therefore takes on a manic quality, shapeshifting at the rate of knots.

As a performer, this adds to the already demanding nature of her writing. The very real technical challenges involved in playing Isidora's music endanger the music becoming stodgy and earthbound as the players become tied up in their own difficult worlds. When Isidora leapt to her feet in that very first rehearsal, ran to the piano and gleefully explained: "It goes like this!". She then proceeded to play the entire quintet from memory, singing and dancing as she went. All those frantic, complicated rhythms were instantly transformed into what they really were, euphoric dances; those wild, soaring lyrical lines, overexcited banshees singing their hearts out.

We would probably have got there in the end, but this mesmerising display of brilliance and pure joy did more for our understanding of her music than any amount of words could ever explain. Here was someone who embodied the very essence of everything I have ever thought about music – it is about song and dance.

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Borislav Čičovački*
University of Kragujevac
The Faculty of Philology and Arts
Department of Music

THE OEUVRE OF ISIDORA ŽEBELJAN

A Survey, Classification, Specificities, and Significance (II)

Abstract: In line with the extraordinary international significance that the oeuvre of Isidora Žebeljan commands in Serbia and abroad, the article begins by discussing the essence of that significance, highlighting the most important artistic accomplishments of Isidora's music as well as its unique traits that have played a direct role in the assertive breakthrough that Serbian music has made on the international stage. Specifically, it analyses three creative periods in Isidora's oeuvre, discussing the most important works and unique characteristics of Isidora's music and its originality, along with relevant facts from her biography.

Keywords: Isidora Žebeljan, originality, commissions, operas, unpredictable flow of musical contents, musical surprise, elements of folk music tradition, popular music

THE INTERNATIONAL (MATURE) PHASE in the compositional oeuvre of Isidora Žebeljan began in 2002 with her opera ***Zora D.*** and continued until the end of her life. Spanning almost 20 years, this phase saw the emanation of Isidora's mature, highly original type of compositional expression, entirely overlapping with her international career, the most versatile and significant in the history of Serbian art music. Within this phase, one may further dis-

* The author's contact details: bcicovacki@yahoo.com.

tinguish three subphases, each one of them marked by at least one capital, central piece, namely, an opera.

The opera ***Zora D.*** can and must be discussed from various perspectives, each one of them highly significant for Serbian opera as well as for Serbian music in general. By looking at this work of music in detail, from an aspect that exceeds our local context, we enter the domain of contemporary phenomena on the global operatic stage, to which Žebeljan, with her five operas composed for international productions, gave a major contribution. In 2002, along with another three works, ***Zora D.*** was selected for staging and financial support at a prestigious international competition sponsored by the London-based Genesis Foundation. ***Zora D.*** was thus composed as a commission from the Genesis Foundation, while the first staging was produced by Opera Studio Nederland and Wiener Kammeroper, with its world première taking place on 15 June 2003 at Frascati Theater in Amsterdam – an event that qualifies in Serbian music as one of its most significant international achievements.[1] In music-historical terms, this was the first opera by a Serbian composer to have its world première abroad, exactly a hundred years after the première of the first Serbian opera ever to be staged: Stanislav Binički's *At Dawn* (*Na uranku* – На уранку). The first staging of ***Zora D.*** was co-directed by Sir David Pountney, one of the most prominent opera directors of our time, and German director Nicola Raab. The production had more than 20 performances in five European countries. The libretto for ***Zora D.*** was co-authored by Isidora Žebeljan, Milica Žebeljan, and Borislav Čičovački, based on a TV film script by Dušan Ristić, with verses by Jovan Dučić, Miloš Crnjanski, and Milena Pavlović Barili. In terms of genre, the libretto is a blend of thriller, melodrama, and mystery, with a pronounced presence of fantastic elements.

The first and most prominent peculiarity about this music is its extraordinary and highly distinctive type of melodic invention. The uniqueness of its melodies is tinged with micro-elements of folk music, of Serbian (Vojvodina), Romanian, and South Balkan origins. However, these folk-music particles (modality, distinctive ornamentation, mixed/additive rhythms, melodic endings on the second degree, etc.) are fitted into the musical whole and in-

[1] The book *Историја српске музике* ("History of Serbian Music", Belgrade, Завод за уџбенике, 2007, 457) erroneously states that *Zora D.* was premièred in Vienna. While it is true that the opera's original production had 12 repeats in Vienna in 2003, with one of them inaugurating the Wiener Kammeroper's 50th season, the world première of *Zora D.* did not take place in Austria's capital city.

corporated in Isidora's musical language in such a way that they provide it with additional peculiarity and colour, at the same time coming across as an integral part of the composer's creative being, endowed with a musical awareness of its native part of the world. A pronounced streak in the opera's harmony is the presence of peculiar diminished-fifth chords. They are a result of using folk-music scales with augmented seconds, although the latter are almost absent from the opera's melodies. The music's rhythmic-metric component is complex, but naturally derived from the melody and characterized by mixed (additive) rhythms and variable metres. The opera owes its rich rhythms to the prominent presence of percussion, whose parts are often quite autonomous from the underlying rhythm of the melodies. These rhythmic patterns in the percussion section are built into the overall musical edifice by way of sequencing multiple melodic-rhythmic tracks, or layers, in parallel, producing a multilayered sound. That is one of the most important rhythmic traits of this opera, as well as its peculiar orchestration. Very often, the rhythmic component has the character of a dance, but one can never quite recognize the exact type of that dance. Instead of resorting to usual orchestration procedures, Isidora sought to accomplish striking sound colours, thereby transferring real dramatic tension from the words to the music and especially to the orchestra, achieving a fast-paced alternation of different emotional states. In terms of internal formal structure, the opera constitutes, so to speak, an endless series of melodies. In some places, although seldom, its melodic entities exhibit the contours of an aria. An outstanding musical characteristic of ***Zora D.*** is so-called musical surprise, an element of Žebeljan's compositional language and script, which is seldom encountered in the literature. Abruptness and surprise are important traits in Žebeljan's music. Every emotional state in the opera constitutes a musical cluster of micro-states, different in their primary effects, but combined into a natural, organic whole.[2] Therefore, those listening to ***Zora D.*** will never, in their initial auditory experience, *hear* dark or bleak music portraying tragic or dramatic events, but will be able to *feel,* by listening to the music, the soundtrack of tragedy present in the totality of the sound offered in the work. Listeners will not pursue that track consciously; rather, they will be led by it and brought to the right emotional stimulus that they will be unable to resist by reason alone. Therein lies the wizardry of Isidora Žebeljan's music. Such an expression is a mode of musical

[2] Isidora Žebeljan, "O mogućem načinu komponovanja opere danas", in: *Dok slušamo muziku, sadašnjost je večna*, Novi Sad, Akademska knjiga, 2021.

fantasy, that is, magic musical realism. At certain points in the opera, that impression is achieved by means of a procedure that one might liken to Sergei Eisenstein's so-called intellectual montage, a procedure based on combining two seemingly unrelated images/motives, whose emotional conditions are not causally linked, but whose interference provokes a third, entirely new, and more comprehensive emotional state.[3]

Following her award at the London-based Genesis Foundation's opera competition and, in particular, after the extraordinary success of ***Zora D.***, which was performed the same year on the stage of Wiener Kammeroper,[4] the international composition career of Isidora Žebeljan experienced a meteoric rise. Already that same year, in 2003, Isidora was commissioned by the Genesis Foundation to compose a chamber music piece, its première planned for the opening of "The Passion", an exhibition of works by Bill Viola, one of the most prominent visual artists of our time, at the National Gallery in London. For this occasion, Isidora composed a quintet for clarinet and string quartet, titled ***Song of a Traveller in the Night***, which became one of the most frequently performed pieces of Serbian music abroad. The work was premièred in London in 2003, by the Spanish clarinettist Joan Enrik Lluna and members of the Academy of Saint Martin in the Fields chamber orchestra; subsequently, the work became part of the standard repertoire of the renowned Brodsky Quartet. In her commentary marking the première, Isidora wrote that "the performance of the composition should create the impression of a journey, in which there is a succession of different landscapes, whereas bthe observer is always the same person (whose mood, admittedly, can change during the journey)".[5] This was Isidora's first work in which the originality of a unique form, that is, structure expressing authentic musical content, manifested itself in its complete guise, which came to feature in all subsequent works by Isidora as a special, easily recognizable quality.

The essence of authenticity in Žebeljan's mature compositional style lies in the relationship between her works' musical content and form, that is, in the way their musical content shapes their musical form. In her pieces, form is entirely subservient to the *unpredictable* flow of their musical content.

[3] Борислав Чичовачки [Borislav Čičovački]: "Зора Д. Исидоре Жебељан – пут ка новој опери", *Музиколоīија*, 4, 2004, 223–245.

[4] The opera *Zora D.* was performed at the Wiener Kammeroper along with Sir Peter Maxwell Davies's chamber opera *Mr. Emmet Takes a Walk*. The libretto was written by Sir David Pountney, who also directed the production.

[5] Isidora Žebeljan, *Song of a Traveller in the Night*, Milano, Ricordi, 2005.

Here, unpredictability refers to the abrupt or sudden way that the individual segments of her works' musical contents succeed one another, approximating the formal construction of a short story or film – a series of diverse (musical) events that lend sound to an experiential whole. That involves alternating various thematic motives. They are not transformed into themes, or positioned so as to contrast one another, nor do they originate from different stylistic epochs; therefore, the form they produce bears no resemblance to a collage. The form of these works emerges by means of connecting thematic motives, whose kinship lies primarily in their musically narrative function, capable of producing a musical whole reminiscent of a short story or film. That is why Žebeljan's music is athematic or even multi-thematic, that is, multi-motivic, with each individual motive constituting a paragraph in an imaginary novella or a film sequence. Her pieces, at the same time, feature no extra-musical programmes – their only programme stems from a unique sequence of musical motives. The structure of these motives comprises a thoroughly distinct rhythmic unit, built into an irregular (additive) and variable metric flow, itself a consequence of the melodic configuration. The origin of such a complex rhythmic texture lies in the archaic multilayered rhythmic heritage of the Balkans and even the Old World as a whole, but its concrete expression in Žebeljan's works is new and unique, inimitable. The successive literal repetition of individual motives takes this music into a relationship with the formal structure of contemporary dance music as well, thus forging another link between the past and the present. The rhythmic-melodic peculiarities of every independent motive are pronounced to the highest possible degree, while all other musical elements are subjected to their rule. That gives rise to a new type of *monody,* one that is motivically heterogeneous, that is, multi-motivic.[6]

On the heels of the Genesis Foundation commission, Isidora received another one, from the then artistic director of the Venice Biennale, the celebrated Italian composer Giorgio Battistelli, for an orchestral work, to be performed at the 2004 Biennale. For this famous festival, Isidora wrote ***The Horses of Saint Mark,*** *an Illumination for Orchestra,* which was premièred in Venice on 22 October 2004 by the Friuli Venezia Giulia Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Christoph Poppen. Today, this piece is the most frequently performed work of Serbian orchestral music abroad, with performances so

[6] Borislav Čičovački, "Music of Isidora Žebeljan, 'The Horses of Saint Mark', orchestral music by Isidora Žebeljan", CD booklet (7776702), Osnabrück, CPO, 2011.

far by orchestras in Italy, the Czech Republic (Janáček Philharmonic), Sweden (Gothenburg Symphony), Serbia and the western Balkans, as well as Britain, where the work was performed by the BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Michael Seal. Recordings of the composition have been released by German labels CPO and Deutsche Grammophon. A condensed form, comprising a series of shorter and longer motives, intended to provide the work with a unified narrative flow, was fully manifested in Žebeljan's orchestral music for the first time in this piece. The opening thematic section, with its hymnic character, reminds one of a Byzantine sacred chant and, given that the same section, somewhat modified, reappears right before the end of the piece, it acquires the significance of the original skeleton of the entire piece, affirming thereby the impression that ***The Horses of Saint Mark*** are an expression of the author's inspiration by the *spirit* of Byzantium. The listeners of this piece are not positioned as active collaborators: they are *not* supposed to *read* the events, but to *watch* them, like fantastic scenes in a surrealist film. That is why the work's formal structure is a sequence of musical thumbnails, which, each one of them individually, bear their own visual, narrative, and dramaturgical mark, but still serve the unbroken thread of the work's musical narrative. Its structure essentially rests on one of the oldest forms of folk musical practice in the Levant and beyond, in all of human civilization – the pairing of song and dance. Through a peculiar blend of archaic elements (the principle of repetition and two-part writing) and modern elements (peculiar rhythmics), the composer re-examines, juxtaposes, condenses, and expands two types of thematic sections (sung and danced), producing a musical entity reminiscent of contemporary dance music. The piece features lucid surprise elements, unexpected rhythmic and melodic twists, with which Žebeljan engenders a fantastic world of her own. Each section in the piece is accomplished by means of a brilliant exploitation of the orchestra's sound spheres, rendering each section striking in a self-contained way, and thereby the entire story as well. The coda itself, labelled a *Hymn,* employing the entire orchestra (which sounds like an orchestra *a tre,* although it is actually *a due*), is irresistibly reminiscent of a song from the wilds of Transylvania. A particular source of sonic tension in the coda comes from an unexpected piano solo set over a crescendo in the bass drums (*gran cassa*), which suddenly brings the domain of this exciting musical narration from a full shot to a close-up, like in a film.

The Minstrel's Dance, a composition for chamber orchestra, constitutes the first high point in the sublimation of Žebeljan's unique style. Commis-

sioned by the London-based Genesis Foundation, it was composed in 2005 for the Academy of Saint Martin in the Fields, who premièred the work at London's Wigmore Hall under the leadership of Isidora Žebeljan. Choosing to focus in her artistic exploration on minstrels, mediaeval travelling actors and musicians, Isidora outlined the sheer breadth of the musical domain accommodating the searching spirit of her invention, since the activity of minstrels informs all aspects of human life – subjected to their fantasy, everything becomes play. Nonetheless, Isidora did carve out the space where this play takes place into three segments, supplying the work's three movements with their titles: *In the Inn*, *Dance for the Dead*, and *In the Field*. The opening movement, featuring a series of different thematic motives, achieves a virtuosic and astonishing condensation of musical material in a unique and invariably surprising alternation of metres. Amid this turbulent musical narration, as an excellent connoisseur of various musical instruments' unique traits, Isidora exploits the abilities of each instrument to the highest possible degree, by using, for instance, prolonged glissandi in the winds and microtones in the strings, manipulating their top registers with ample imagination. Especially prominent is the complex percussion part, set on surprising slippages from the underlying rhythm, in the form of a separate rhythmic track running in parallel. The second movement was inspired by a custom still practised by the Vlach people, involving ritual graveside dances for the dead, as a remnant from their ancient Roman past. Since this section of the piece is about imitating a ritual dance with certain rules, the movement involves the repetition of individual motives, each time with some modifications, separated by a series of motives evoking a wild, unrestrained dance, at times assuming the characteristics of a ritual summoning of the dead. The third movement is a dance in an unbounded space, outdoors, in a field. That is why its thematic motives are broader, sometimes abruptly and unexpectedly repeated. Its rhythm is so complex that it reminds one of the elusive and indistinct character of rhythmic structures in Romanian Gypsy music. The closing of the movement coalesces into a collective round dance, whereas the coda itself comprises a hymnic song played by the winds, replete with the melodic essence of Romanian folk music. The coda reminds one of the closing images from Bergman's film *The Seventh Seal,* where a group of minstrels sets out on the road, leaving in their wake only the shadow of steps that form part of incantations performed for the dead.

In this subphase in Žebeljan's oeuvre separating two operas, apart from *New Songs of Lada* for soprano and string orchestra (or string quartet), composed in 2006 as a re-arrangement of her *Rukoveti*, another significant accomplishment was ***Ghost from the Pumpkin***, an *Incantation for Brass Quintet* written for London Brass and premièred in London the same year. In this piece, melodic-rhythmic-motivic density is even more pronounced, the essence of sound is even more laid bare, which was accomplished by using aliquot colouring in the brass; the unpredictable abruptness of the motives is even more assertive, as well as closeness to pagan rituals, presented here in an especially seductive way by using the highly diverse traits of Žebeljan's chosen performing forces: from a wild, unrestrained sonic frenzy to contemplative, almost transcendental sounds.

During this period in her life, having already received a commission from Bregenz Festival, one of the most important opera festivals in the world, to compose a dark comic opera, Žebeljan signed a contract with Casa Ricordi of Milan at the behest of its management, granting this publishing house, one of the world's leading, oldest, and most influential, exclusive rights to publish her scores. Also in 2005, she had an artistic residence at the Civitella Ranieri castle in Umbria (Italy), as a fellow of the eponymous New York City-based foundation for supporting the creativity of leading world artists.

The opera that marked the beginning of the second subphase in Žebeljan's mature creative period, a joint commission from Bregenz Festival and the London-based Genesis Foundation, as the first (and so far the only) stage work by a Serbian composer that this renowned festival has ever commissioned (and staged), was her opera ***The Marathon***, based on a film script and play by Dušan Kovačević. It is one of the most significant works in Žebeljan's oeuvre. The libretto, composed of excerpts taken from the play and film script *Maratonci trče počasni krug* (official international title: *The Marathon Family*), was written, like the libretto for her preceding opera, by Isidora Žebeljan, Milica Žebeljan, and Borislav Čičovački, but the characters and plot underwent certain modifications, departing from the (film) template: in order to establish a sort of balance between male and female characters, the father of the main female character, Kristina, was replaced with her aunt (alto), while, for the sake of achieving a dramatically coherent story suitable for an opera, all the episodes related to the construction of the family's crematorium facility were omitted.

In many respects, ***The Marathon*** constitutes an apex of sorts in Žebeljan's unique mode of stylistic expression; in stylistic terms, it takes its cue from

her pieces written after the opera *Zora D*. The underlying structure of musical form in Isidora's works, which essentially consist of series of longer or shorter musical motives aimed at producing a musical work with a unified narrative flow, possesses many features that call for staging, which means that Isidora perfectly adapted her unique formal expression to the condensed, fast-paced narration of this opera, whose scenes unfold at an almost cinematic pace and with a similar degree of suggestiveness. Žebeljan's ingenious feel for musical dramaturgy effectively turned this music into a crystalline grid accumulating a huge amount of energy in the form of spiritual and emotional-passionate musical joy, as well as that of life in general. The melodic-rhythmic structure of the motives in the opera is expressed with complex *aksak* (additive) rhythms in a supremely bold, daring, and inimitably authentic succession of extremely variable (asymmetric) metres, always endowed with a striking melodic component, which often discreetly relies on the peculiarities of Balkan folklore. Another striking feature of this music is that certain elements of traditional music that are present in it, without offering a key for divining their origins, create the sonic impression that the music is based on the folklore of some unidentified, imaginary peoples. That impression is certainly enhanced by Žebeljan's liberal, deft, and carefully thought out use of modality of various origins, including infra-pentatonic series, sometimes reminiscent of scales derived from folk musical practice, such as, for instance, Gypsy, Istrian, and different modes of the octatonic scale, as well as harmonic combinations that are closer to contemporary pop music, which is always subtly present in Isidora's music. Occasionally, for instance, in the scene featuring the opening of the will, the three readers/singers, belonging to three different generations of the deceased's offspring, sing, i.e. read the will in a way that, for each one of them individually, corresponds to the tradition of Serbian vernacular bourgeois songs, that is, to "their time", the time of their youth, which in the opera's structure represents a sort of psychological portrait in sound of each one of the three protagonists. Due to these musical characteristics and often extremely fast tempi, the vocal parts are all highly virtuosic, which applies both to those sections that approximate the form of aria and the opera's many vocal ensembles. One of the main ways Isidora treats the text in her vocal-instrumental works is by avoiding a literal, chronological delivery of the lines. This makes the sound of her operas, including ***The Marathon***, even more flexible, because the listener's attention is constantly focused on the music and its narration. Thus in ***The Marathon***, for instance, there is a section, which might be called an aria, sung by Mirko,

the main character, set on a single word: *deo* ("part", as in his share of the inheritance)!

The audio capabilities of the opera's chamber orchestra, comprising 17 musicians, its wind, string, and percussion sections are used to the highest possible degree, not only in terms of using related instruments (piccolo flute, cor anglais, bass clarinet, e-flat clarinet, contrabassoon), but also, and primarily, by using unusual or previously unused instruments and sounds. In this score, Isidora makes use of ocarinas, a zurna, reed, Theremin, musical saw, as well as the noise emitted by a vacuum cleaner. In addition, ***The Marathon***, for the first time, makes use of a newly conceived instrument from the oboe family, constructed, according to Isidora's desire and conception, by Borislav Čičovački. This instrument, dubbed *oboe-sopile,* was built by combining the modern oboe with a cane reed taken from the Istrian folk instrument called *sopile,* a sort of folk oboe. The oboe-sopile has a piercing sound, like that of a sopile, but, unlike the latter, may be played chromatically, while the sound itself is almost always on the verge of non-temperament, which was, along with microtonality, Isidora's favoured domain for sonic explorations. The opera's orchestration assigns a very important role to two trumpets, a tuba, and percussion, which form the basis of the turbulent music of this opera, a breathless kind of music, as described by a reviewer writing for the *Neue Zeitung für Musik*:

> The score of Isidora Žebeljan's *The Marathon* sounds both contemporary and locally as well as internationally recognizable… This music is like a frenzied fantasy, shouting and weeping, sneering and hitting, celebrating and bursting out, moving between the sound of Balkan brass bands and Kletzmer music, a Gypsy idiom and bebop, between Belgrade and New York… The authentic character of this twisted mix of styles is at all times distanced from postmodern likability.[7]

Following its extremely successful world première at Bregenz Festival on 20 August 2008, the same production, staged by the German director Nicola Raab, had several performances in Vienna as well as at BEMUS festival in Belgrade.

Right before completing the score of *The Marathon,* Isidora received a commission from the International Horn Society to compose a piece for horn and string orchestra. The result was the ***Dance of the Wooden Sticks***, a

[7] Otto Paul Burkhardt, "Bestatter-Satire mit Balkan-Brass-Touch", *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik*, 5, 2008, 70.

piece whose music, akin to that of *The Marathon,* in a unique, virtuosic, and excitingly breakneck way in rhythmic and melodic terms, represents the main features of the central period in the development of Isidora's mature, original musical expression. This piece, which is also available in a version arranged for horn and string quintet, has been performed by some of the leading hornists of our time, such as, for instance, Stefan Dohr, the principal horn of the Berlin Philharmonic, and Hervé Joulain, the principal horn of the National Orchestra of France.[8]

This was immediately followed by another commission, from the Brodsky Quartet, the Netherlands Chamber Choir, as well as a group of co-producers clustered around the Musiktheater im Revier opera house in Gelsenkirchen (Germany), for a new opera.

The Brodsky Quartet, who had already performed, for years, Isidora's *Song of a Traveller in the Night* across the world, commissioned her, together with the University of Kent, to compose a string quartet. The result was one of the most virtuosic works in Isidora's oeuvre, ***Polomka Quartet*** (2009); according to the members of the Brodsky Quartet, one of the most virtuosic string quartets ever written. All the characteristics of Isidora's unique mature expression are brought here to the level of maximum virtuosity in performance. Concerning this string quartet, Isidora wrote the following lines:

> Some of the traditional dances from the Balkans, especially the ones of the Vlachs (an East Balkan population scattered across different countries; in Serbia, they mostly inhabit the Homolje region, Eastern Serbia), are distinguished by characteristic movements: turns, spinning, stomping, rapid knee-bending movements, falling on one's knees and so on, all of which induce the dancers to be transported into a state of mesmeric trance. This kind of dancing represents a unity of mimicry and ilinx (imitation and trance). It is dancing to small steps with vigorous stomping on upbeats (which seems confusing to an observer), the dancers being huddled together hold each other's belts and dance for a long time, intensely and ecstatically. The steps are often simple whereas the movements of the body and legs are exceptionally complicated. Some of the dances are complex because the steps, the course of the dance and changes of movements and tempo depend solely on the leading dancer therefore representing an improvisation and a surprise. The changes between duple

[8] The piece also exists in a version scored for cor anglais and string orchestra (or string quintet), and a recording of that version is available on *Balkan Bolero*, a CD album of music by Isidora Žebeljan released by Oboe Classics of London.

> and triple time are characteristic of some of the Vlach dances. The ¾ bar is always slightly longer for a micro-rhythmic unit and the melodic system of these dances is often non-tempered. Polomka is one of the most popular dances in Eastern Serbia. The noun *polomka* is derived from the verb *polomiti* (which means: to break) therefore this dance could be described as a one in which the body "breaks" to the rhythm of a rather fast tempo and virtuoso playing, in other words – a "traditional Serbian break-dance". This particular dance, as well as other traditional ones, contains in itself an element of pagan trance. The piece ***Polomka quartet*** is inspired by the author's visual impression of these dances. That impression has transcended into an idea of a dance of an imaginary people, of a non-existent region. [9]

The piece was premièred by the Brodsky Quartet at a concert in Canterbury on 27 May 2009 and has since remained on the standard repertoire of this quartet as well as other ensembles, with performances across Europe and in Iran.

The Netherlands Chamber Choir, one of Europe's most renowned choirs, commissioned Isidora to write a longer piece for their tour of Norway, which resulted in ***Latum Lalo,*** her comprehensive choral suite for 12 voices (2008). On the occasion of the work's world première in Oslo in 2010, Isidora wrote the following lines about the piece:

> ***Latum Lalo*** is based on the verses or on the part of verses and refrains from old Serbian, Romanian and Gypsies folk songs. What is special and unusual with the words which are used in this music is the fact that they had completely lost their meaning in today Serbian, Romanian and Gypsy's language. The composer took only "senseless" words from the verses so she could create a new, almost Dadaistic language, but which is completely based on the archaic words. The words were organized in the order and sections solely due to its audio characteristics. The sound of words itself was the main guidance for the author, and music was created together with "new language". Composition is organized as a suite, but like the journey through different landscapes. Even music is modal it is possible to imagine its connection with imaginary Byzantine, or Roman street music, or with pagan pre-antique singing. Music is original and is not in the connection with the sources from any concrete folk music.

[9] Apart from *Polomka Quartet,* Isidora wrote another two string quartets, as well as a song for mezzo-soprano and string quartet titled *When God created Dubrovnik* (2012). The other two quartets are *Dark Velvet* (2005), composed as incidental music for a Belgrade staging of Thomas Bernhard's play *Heldenplatz*, and *Intimate Letter from the Judean Desert* (2018), composed for the Brodsky Quartet, although the latter is labelled as a piece for any four instruments or voices.

Just like in her operas, but here much more clearly and prominently, Isidora used the sound of her chosen words, refrains, as a guide in her quest for melodies and rhythms. That is why the lyrics of this piece operate as acoustic experiences that give rise to music, which, precisely due to the antiquity of these unintelligible words, reminds one of some remote and imaginary pagan archetypes, which give us a sonic experience that we recognize as spiritual closeness with Xenakis's vocal music. Nevertheless, monody, heterophony, and modality, the occasional highlighting of one or two voices, the independence of smaller ensembles and their interplay with the sonic mass of the entire choir, the differentiation of sonic spheres in a musical flow richly endowed with surprises, just like on a voyage, form the main features of this exciting and virtuosic vocal score.

Right after the great success of *The Marathon* at Bregenz Festival, there was a commission from the Musiktheater im Revier opera house in Gelsenkirchen for an operatic work to be performed at a special location, outdoors, at the Eichbaum (Oak Tree) metro station between Essen and Mülheim. This was an important artistic project for the Ruhr district, known for its diverse artistic events and festivals; the production also involved the Essen Theatre (Schauspiel Essen) as well as several other art organizations from Mülheim and Berlin – the project was included among the cultural events staged under the auspices of that year's European Capital of Culture project. Four composers from Germany, the US, and Serbia were commissioned to write an opera in one act each. Thus in just over six months Isidora wrote her third opera, ***Simon the Chosen*** (2009). The producers' only stipulation regarding the opera's content was that the plot should take place near the Eichbaum metro station and somehow relate to that locale. Finding a story for this opera that might transcend the local context was therefore quite difficult, which is why Isidora and her librettist Borislav Čičovački decided to look for a plot for this opera in mythology. They opted for the story at the heart of the Serbian folk poem *Nahod Simeun* ("Simeon the Foundling") as well as Thomas Mann's novel *The Holy Sinner* (*Der Erwählte*). The ancient Indo-European myth of the young Sun that every spring impregnates its mother Earth, widespread in Europe from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean, that is, the story about an involuntary incestuous relationship between a mother and her son (without parricide), along with atonement, is situated in this opera's libretto in modern times, among Germans who have immigrated to Germany from Russia following the fall of the Berlin Wall. At first, the authors of the opera could not find a specific link to Eichbaum metro station, but simply surmised that

such a situation – an orphaned young man leaving Russia upon the fall of the Wall and settling in the Ruhr district, where he later encounters a woman and starts a relationship with her, who turns out to be his mother – might happen there. Whilst working on the production, the team found out, much to the surprise of everybody involved, that the highrise blocks of flats surrounding the metro station housed precisely Germans who had immigrated from Russia, from the banks of the Volga.

In Žebeljan's oeuvre, the opera ***Simon the Chosen*** occupies a very important place due to multiple reasons. It employs a larger musical ensemble than her previous two operas: a symphony orchestra (*a uno*), choir (for the first time in Isidora's operatic oeuvre), and five soloists, along with an actor (a silent role). Another peculiarity of this opera is its almost exclusive usage of prose (as opposed to poetry) in the libretto. The condensed plotline, which seeks to accommodate a large timeframe (from the boy's birth and childhood in Russia to his early maturity in Germany and redemption, which goes on into his old age) into 50 minutes of music, set in prose, conditioned a further sharpening of the unique features of Isidora's operatic music, generating the score that Isidora considered her most expressionistic piece of music (in terms of its melodic, rhythmic, and harmonic structures approximating a certain form of neo-expressionism). Observed from the perspective of Isidora's unique expression, this means that the melodic flows are quick, short, intense, that the rhythm is therefore even sharper, more piquant, acrobatic but not jugular, that modality is concealed behind dense chords made up of seconds, that metric changes and thereby also musical surprises are more frequent, compressed, and intensive, while the orchestration puts even more emphasis on the brass, whose shrillness generates the perception of an unavoidable bleak fate. The opera's music features less conspicuous elements from folk musical tradition than Isidora's other works from this phase, and the same applies to popular music elements as well. The opera features some of the most sublime pieces of music in all of Isidora's oeuvre – the aria of a girl who is abandoning her child and the love scene featuring Ana and Simon, mother and son. The opera ***Simon the Chosen***, staged by the then young German director Cordula Däuper, was premièred in June 2009, featuring the choir and soloists of Gelsenkirchen Opera (starring Piotr Prochera, a baritone from Poland, who later sang the main roles in another two operas by Isidora), the Neue Philharmonie Westfalen, and conductor Bernhard Stengel. The great success of this opera and superb reviews prompted Michael Schulz, artistic director of the Gelsenkirchen Opera, to commission Isidora to pro-

duce a large, evening-length opera treating the same subject matter.[10] In 2012, responding to another commission, this time from the Swaledale Festival in the UK, Isidora used segments from the score of *Simon the Chosen* to fashion a suite for violoncello (or cor anglais) and piano titled ***Simon and Anne***.

At this time, Isidora took an active part in recording her music. Thus in 2011 the German label CPO released a CD with recordings of Isidora's orchestral music, performed by the Janáček Philharmonic from the Czech Republic and Dutch conductor, David Porcelijn,[11] whereas that same year the Brodsky Quartet made recordings of Isidora's chamber music for strings, published on a CD release by CPO in 2015.[12]

Immediately following the première of *Simon the Chosen,* Isidora started work on a new opera, that is, another, different version of the tale about Simon the orphan, but then received an unexpected commission from the Settimana musicale senese festival, Italy's oldest running festival,[13] also for an opera, to be premièred at the 2012 festival. The only condition specified by the commissioning body and producing company, the Accademia Musicale Chigiana, was that it should be a comic opera. Responding to this commission, Isidora and her librettist Borislav Čičovački found very interesting and intriguing content in Thomas Mann's novella *The Transposed Heads* (*Die vertauschten Köpfe*), that is, an Indian fairytale from the ancient collection of *The 25 Tales of Betal*,[14] which formed the basis of Žebeljan's opera ***Two Heads and a Girl***. Here, too, the literary basis merely served as a conceptual framework for the composer's personal sounding and experience of mythological events. Therefore in the opera's plot itself, presented in five scenes, there is no shortage of encounters between two different times – an ancient past and the

[10] "*Simon the Chosen* by Isidora Žebeljan is a high-quality work […] composed with genius." Mühlheimer Woche, Germany, June 2009.

[11] The CD release titled "Isidora Žebeljan: The Horses of Saint Mark, orchestral works" (777 670-2), featuring the following pieces: *The Horses of Saint Mark, The Minstrel's Dance, Rukoveti, Deserted Village,* and *Escenas picaras*.

[12] The CD release titled "Brodsky Quartet plays Isidora Žebeljan: *Song of a Traveller in the Night*, chamber music" (777994-2), featuring the following pieces: *Polomka Quartet, Dance of the Wooden Sticks, New Songs of Lada, Sarabande, A Yawl on the Danube, Song of a Traveller in the Night,* and *Pep It Up.*

[13] The festival was established in 1939 by the Italian composer Alfredo Casella (1883–1947).

[14] The original title of the collection is *Vetala Panchavimshati*.

present. It takes place in an indeterminate mythical era and presents a peculiar kind of love triangle featuring two young men, best friends, and a girl, with whom both youths are in love. Marrying one of them makes the girl desire the other one, which makes life so difficult for all three of them that the youths, each one of them considering himself sinful with regards to the girl and his best friend, decapitate themselves, prompting the distraught girl to obtain a permission from the goddess Kali to reattach their heads to their bodies and thereby bring them back to life. But the girl mixes up and swaps their heads, attaching them to the wrong body. The opera explores the human concept of desire, as the main driving force of the need for change (or exchange). Such a desire serves only the bodily, temporal, and, essentially, never fulfilled abyss of human passions. However, the human soul, fortunately, pursues different, disembodied concerns, forging an inextricable link with the cosmic fullness of the Spirit. And that is precisely the trinity that forms the story of this opera: the body, soul, and reason. That trinity is furnished with its human manifestations in the characters of Padma, Chandra, and Bathi, but not literally so – since all three of them are made up of an unbalanced mix of influences exerted by the inconsistencies of human strivings mentioned above. Beheading, which is often featured in Indian mythology, stands for the necessity of freeing oneself from excessively focusing on one's head, i.e. one's thoughts, ratio, and (re-)directing the focus of one's being to the heart, i.e. feelings. Precisely out of a need to reassert the "voice of reason", the story was complemented with another character, the Narrator, who plays the important role of participating in, and often also driving or diverting, the events. Also, the Narrator is the only character who provides the link between the two times, mythological and present, the one who "pours" the myth into the everyday.

Still, in every opera by Žebeljan, key significance is attached to the sonic conception, with words serving only as its necessary verbal clarification (given the nature of the operatic genre), that is, its verbal sense. That is why in her operas the music is more important than the words, because their meaning is already contained in it. Given that in this opera the mythological content of the story is presented directly, that is, in a way that could have really taken place in its own time, the music, too, derives inspiration from local heritage, from a sort of musical archaeology or even, musical geology. Nevertheless, it is not India that forms the soil from which Žebeljan excavates her musical artefacts, but the Balkans, with all of its sonic ambiguity and rhythmic intemperance. Those are the grounds on which Isidora built the music

of her opera, wherein a representation of mythological (fantastic) events finds its expression by rising above an intuitive selection of elements from musical archaeology and synthesizing a new type of sonic authenticity, as the folk heritage of an imaginary, non-existent people. It is this kind of unpredictable selection of elements, arranged in an unrestrained and elusive combination of rhythmic patterns, generating a striking transposition of verbal mythological content to an acoustic level, so that one cannot divine the element that underpins this exciting emotional effect, one that reaches the listener not only through the sense of hearing, but also, one might say, through the sensors of her every nerve ending.[15] The world première of ***Two Heads and a Girl***, which was attended, among others, by the Dutch Queen Beatrix, took place in Siena on 12 July 2012, whereby the opera became the first Serbian opera to have its world première abroad, sung in Serbian. The opera was staged by the Israeli director Ran Arthur Braun, costumes were designed by Angelina Atlagić, while soloists included the baritones Piotr Prochera and Ivan Ludlow, sopranos Aneta Ilić and Aile Asszonyi, as well as actor Nikola Đuričko, accompanied by Žebeljan orchestra conducted by Premil Petrović.

Then, right after her première in Siena, Isidora received another two commissions: one from the Brodsky Quartet and the other from Bregenz Festival. At this time, the Brodsky Quartet had devised a music-poetical cycle under the title of *Trees, Walls, Cities,* involving authors (poets and composers) from nations (ethnic groups) with a difficult common past. Eight composers from across the world were commissioned to write music for this cycle, that is, a song for mezzo-soprano and string quartet, and Isidora was one of them. The city that was allocated to her as the source for exploring its poetical possibilities was Dubrovnik. Examining works by poets from Dubrovnik and poetry written about the city, Isidora opted for the poem *When God created Dubrovnik* by the Dubrovnik poet Milan Milišić. From that poem she selected several lines that she found the most striking and musically promising, and only then did she learn that Milišić, an ethnic Serb poet from Dubrovnik, was one of the first victims of the Yugoslav war. He was killed in the early days of October 1991 in his home in Dubrovnik, by a shell fired by the Serbian army. Isidora wrote a bravura song, featuring a quick, virtuosic succession of striking melodic-rhythmic motives and metres, with a somewhat more pronounced use of Istrian scales. The world première of

[15] Borislav Čičovački, "Due teste e una ragazza, opera nuova di Isidora Žebeljan", in: *69a Settimana Musicale Senese*, Siena, Accademia Musicale Chigiana, 2012, 35–44.

When God created Dubrovnik (2012) took place at the gala opening of the 2013 City of London Festival, in June of that year, broadcast live on BBC Radio 3, performed by the mezzo-soprano Loré Lixenberg and the Brodsky Quartet, with subsequent performances at numerous concerts in Europe and Israel, and a recording released by Chandos Records from Britain.

Sir David Pountney marked his final season as artistic director of Bregenz Festival not only with his spectacular staging of Mozart's *Magic Flute* on the festival's main stage on Lake Constance, but also with a specially designed gala opening of this major festival. Namely, Sir David commissioned four composers who had left an artistic mark on his time at the helm of the festival to compose orchestral pieces that would thematically relate to Mozart's *Magic Flute*. The four commissions went to the German composer Detlev Glanert, British composer Judith Weir, Russian-British composer Dmitri Smirnov, and Isidora Žebeljan. The result, in 2013, was Žebeljan's piece ***Hum away, Hum away, Strings!***, *a Metamorphosis on Themes from Mozart's Magic Flute* for symphony orchestra, premièred on 17 July that year at the Great Hall of the Festival (Festspielhaus) in Bregenz by the Wiener Symphoniker and British conductor Paul Daniel. The audience included the entire political and cultural elite of Austria (the President, Chancellor, minister of culture, leading members of the clergy), while the festival opening was transmitted live by Austria's public broadcaster, ORF. Isidora derived the themes of this orchestral miniature from the openings of the slow and fast sections of the Overture to *The Magic Flute*. The chords right at the opening provide an illusion of dramatic events due to their makeup involving seconds, but then launch the music into a quick staccato movement, which gestures toward the model only with its opening melody and rhythm. This gives rise to a plunging sort of dance, replete with unpredictable changes of metre and juggling rhythms, coming to a head in an ecstatic finale. The work's title itself, as a sort of homage to Isidora's artistic connection with Bregenz Festival, stems from the title of the literary template for Kristina's aria in the opera *The Marathon* (likewise commissioned by the festival), itself borrowed from a late 19th-century collection of poems by anonymous poets from Vojvodina. It quickly became one of the most frequently performed orchestra pieces by a Serbian composer, including performances by orchestras in Europe and America, such as, for instance, the Moravian Philharmonic Orchestra from the Czech Republic and Louisville Orchestra from the US. In 2014, for the Stift Chamber Music Festival in the Netherlands, Isidora produced a version for violin and piano as well.

The opera *Two Heads and a Girl* and several works that followed in its wake marked the end of the second subphase in the mature creative phase of Isidora Žebeljan, whose main characteristic was the accomplishment of a unique tone of personal sonic expression coupled with exploring the liminal domains of expression, which entailed increasing the intensity of all parameters of Isidora's music, first and foremost the succession rate of motivic entities and that of condensed and complex rhythmic structures amid breakneck irregular metric changes, along with a striking, modally based melodic-harmonic component (with more or less pronounced presence of elements from traditional music of various, typically imaginary origins), often saturated with clusters of intervals dominated by seconds in a quick succession of surprising sonic events.

In the third phase of her compositional oeuvre, Isidora maintained her interest in incidental music, but with less regularity than before, with music for theatre plays almost becoming an exception in her work, especially after 2003. She worked only with those theatre directors who were a strong source of inspiration for her, especially Dejan Mijač, with whom she collaborated on several cult plays, such as *Skakavci* ("Locusts") by Biljana Srbljanović, which won Isidora her third Sterija Prize, and Thomas Bernhard's *Heldenplatz*, which included the piano miniature *Dark Velvet,* one of Isidora's most frequently performed pieces. Still, the most inspiring, versatile, and intense collaboration during this period took place with the internationally renowned Slovenian theatre director Tomi Janežič. Unlike almost all of her previous experiences working in theatre, Žebeljan's artistic contribution to his plays rested on music as an integral, inseparable segment of the play, one that does not serve as an ornament but a structural element of the staging, as important as the words spoken onstage. Together with Janežič, Isidora produced several internationally renowned cult plays, beginning with Shakespeare's *King Lear* at Belgrade's Atelje 212 theatre (featuring Ljuba Tadić in his last theatre role), moving on to Peter Shaffer's *Amadeus* at the Ivan pl. Zajc Croatian National Theatre in Rijeka (Croatia), where she was able to use the entire musical potential of the city's opera in live performance, culminating with several legendary plays that garnered a superb international reputation, such as a production of Chekhov's *The Seagull* at the Serbian National Theatre in Novi Sad, for which she wrote a 40-minute suite for vocal soloists, choir, and chamber orchestra, and a theatrical adaptation of *Doppler*, a novel by Erlend Loe, produced at Trøndelag Teater in Trondheim, Norway, in 2016, widely

regarded as one of the greatest theatrical accomplishments in Norway during the last decade, and also Isidora's last compositional endeavour in theatre. At this time, Isidora was also busy arranging her incidental music written for theatre plays into vocal-instrumental concert suites, which quickly attracted the interest of musicians from Serbia and abroad. The most frequently performed of these suites include *Three Goat's Ears, Leonce and Lena, Tears are O.K., The Mousetrap, Two Songs of the Bride of the Wind,* and *Leda*, while her two piano miniatures derived from her incidental music, *Sarabande* and *Dark Velvet*, as well as the song for oboe and piano *The Miracle in Shargan* have established themselves as frequently performed concert pieces on every continent.

In addition, in 2006, at the age of 39, Isidora became a corresponding member of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, as one of its youngest members in history and certainly as the youngest woman admitted to that institution. In 2012 she became a full member of the Serbian Academy (again as its youngest member) and the same year she was admitted to the World Academy of Art and Science, as the only Serbian composer in the history of that institution.

Isidora completed her most extensive and comprehensive work, ***Simon the Foundling***, a two-hour long opera in three acts with a prologue (10 scenes), in early 2015, which marked the beginning of the final subphase of her mature creative period and was premièred on May 29th the same year at Musiktheater im Revier in Gelsenkirchen, Germany. As was already mentioned above, the opera was fashioned as a full-evening version of her earlier opera composed for the same house, *Simon the Chosen*. However, both the libretto and music of this work are entirely new, constituting an independent operatic work that shares with the earlier, shorter opera essentially nothing except the main story or plot. Therefore, the story of Simon the Foundling, the one told in the Serbian folk poem and Thomas Mann's novel *The Holy Sinner*, forms the basis of this work's dramatic-musical plot as well. But the libretto and music depart from the previous opera with the same topic, and the performing forces are different as well. The main difference between these two operas in terms of the plot is the increased number of situations that Simon must navigate before encountering the woman with whom he will fall in love and then realize that the woman is his mother. Thus in the earlier opera, upon his arrival in Europe (Germany), already in one of his first jobs, at a factory, Simon obtains the address of a woman who rents apartments, whereas in ***Simon the Foundling***, the main hero truly wanders from pillar to

post: his unconscious quest takes him to a car mechanic's shop, then to an old lady in the countryside, then to a factory, and a bakery, where he learns the address of his future landlady. Throughout the opera, there is regular alternation between scenes representing realistic events and fantastic scenes.[16] The redemption of sins is thus presented as a phantasmagoric dream, similar to the one described in Mann's novel. Another difference concerns the two operas' respective time periods: in the earlier opera this is undoubtedly the present (i.e. the opening decades of the 21st century), whereas in ***Simon the Foundling*** the time period of the plot is not clearly determined and refers potentially to an epoch in the development of humanity that featured, for instance, cars and television, but is not the present. The third major difference is the structure of the libretto, that is, its literary genre: whereas in the earlier opera the libretto featured spoken text almost without exception, the later opera is exclusively in (free) verse and prose verse, approximating the poetics of Vasko Popa (the libretto was authored by Borislav Čičovački). The final major difference concerns the makeup of the performing forces. The score of ***Simon the Foundling*** was written for 20 vocal soloists, a large mixed choir, children's choir, large symphony orchestra and band, i.e. an onstage ensemble comprising five instrumentalists (folk wind instruments, clarinet, saxophone, oboe, cor anglais, oboe-sopile, accordion, double bass, and percussion). Viewed from the music-historical perspective, this sort of pairing involving two operas with the same subject matter constitutes a unique example in all of operatic literature: it is difficult, if not impossible, to find two different operatic works treating the same topic, written by the same librettist and composer.[17]

All the main musical traits of Isidora's mature compositional expression are present in this opera amid a large sonic space and to a high and significant degree. Isidora's musical lyricism, represented by striking authentic melodies in the arias and arioso sections, typically with modal accompaniment played by only a handful of instruments, comes to the fore especially in the

[16] See note no. 2.

[17] There are operas by the same composer, even under the same title, sharing the same leading characters but with different plotlines. For instance, such a pairing includes the two operas titled *Anacréon* by Jean-Philippe Rameau from 1754 and 1757, respectively. Also, there are operas that are almost identical in content, but constitute another version of an earlier piece by the same composer. Examples include Rossini's operas *Maometto secondo* and *La siège de Corinthe*, and *Mosè in Egitto* and *Moïse et Pharaon*, with the later versions of both operas made for Paris by expanding their original versions.

opening scene of the Prologue (the aria of a girl who leaves her child to the river), then in the Bird's aria, as well as in Simon's arias, which typically occur at the very end of the scene, when he resumes his travels. Unlike Žebeljan's previous operas, where scenes involving a single singer – arias and ariosos – are relatively rare, allowing the dramatic flow to unfold at an especially quick pace, in this opera the scenes are longer, with a particular focus on the arias, i.e. solo scenes featuring almost all of the main protagonists, which, in fact, shape and narrate the plot. Nonetheless, the uniqueness of Isidora's expression in the quick, surprising succession of (musical) situations is manifested in each individual scene in a way that corresponds to the events depicted therein. Thus the scene at the Car Mechanic's shop is dominated by a trio (Simon, the Car Mechanic, and his wife) comprising three melodic, rhythmic, and metric flows that are musically entirely different, as well as the powerful and exciting aria of the Dog, while the scene at the Old Lady's focuses more on the rhythmic and harmonic peculiarities of authentic Balkan traditional music, above all its folk scales (Istrian), as well as structures built on infra-pentatonic series. The factory scene foregrounds the huge difference between fragile lyricism (the Foreman's aria) and the rough, almost neo-expressionist treatment of the factory workers' choir. A certain neo-expressionist sharpness informs the bakery scene as well, anticipating, like a premonition, the looming incest, committed without knowing. The most virtuosic part is assigned to the instrumental band, which is assigned, like an interpreter and partial protagonist, what are probably the most breakneck sections in Isidora's entire oeuvre, constituting thereby both a sonic surprise and wonder, as well as a musical tool for representing the supernatural or fantastic in music. The only shared musical link between *Simon the Chosen* and ***Simon the Foundling*** is the mother and son's love scene – the only music that Isidora, according to her own words, could not compose twice, in two different versions. The reasons involve the extreme emotional demands of such a creative endeavour as well as, certainly, the special, delicate way of forging a sonic link between these two operas by means of such an exciting musical situation. Also, the scene provides for one of the most emotional musical experiences in Isidora's music. In addition, this opera assigns a highly demanding role to the choir as well, especially at the very ending, when the entire work concludes with an ethereal unison that is almost floating in sound. The children's choir, whose melodies almost exclusively feature indeterminate pitches, brings one of the most moving moments in the opera – children mocking and sneering at Simon as a boy. The world première of

Simon the Foundling, as well as subsequent performances (which took place in front of a packed auditorium with 1,000 seats), were performed by the choir and soloists of the Gelsenkirchen Opera, with Piotr Prochera in the leading role, the Neue Philharmonie Westfalen, the Children's Opera Choir from Dortmund, and a band featuring Bogdan Ranković, Borislav Čičovački, Aleksandar Stefanović, Boban Stošić, and Aleksandar Radulović, all of them under the leadership of the Finnish conductor Valtteri Rauhalammi.[18]

Two years before the première of *Simon the Foundling,* Isidora received one of her most important commissions – a work for an instrumental octet (Schubert's ensemble – clarinet, horn, bassoon, and string quintet), from the Berliner Philharmoniker Foundation. This was the first time in the history of Serbian music that the best and most renowned symphony orchestra in the world had commissioned a work by a Serbian composer. For that purpose, Isidora composed a piece in two movements titled ***Needle Soup***, *a surrealistic fairytale for octet.* The very title and subtitle point to a feature of Isidora's works that gained full clarity in the final subphase of her mature creative period. It concerns extra-musical contents (that is, templates), which, in her works written in this subphase, hails exclusively from fairy tales and their world. Thus in her commentary on one of her most virtuosic and exciting chamber works, Isidora wrote the following lines:

> The title itself, ***Needle Soup***, is the same as that of an old Balkan tale about a hungry traveller/vagrant, who outwits an old miser. The traveller fools the miser by telling him that he can use needles to make the most exquisite soup. And whilst cooking the broth, he sweet-talks the miser into supplying him with more and more exquisite ingredients (which were not needles), eventually making a delicious, rich, and above all tasty soup. A composer-traveller-inventor enchants her miser-ego, so that the latter sets free her intuition by identifying the most exquisite emotive-musical ingredients. And thus telling her musical story, the composer fools the ego, so that both of them may entirely yield to the Spirit. In other words, a single initial idea sets off a chain reaction of unpredictable musical ideas and events – and the result is a "stream-of-consciousness piece of music" with elements of musical mystical surrealism.

In this commentary there is an inkling of the secret that characterizes this piece: namely, in this work Isidora used several musical themes/situations from her earlier pieces, as a sort of homage to her musical journey up to that

[18] Dušan Mihalek, "Premijera fantastične opere *Nahod Simon* Isidore Žebeljan", in: *Muzika i reč*, Novi Sad, Prometej, 2018, 336–339.

point, sensing, perhaps, that its conclusion may not be far off. This intimate creative procedure may be likened to certain examples from earlier epochs, such as, for instance, fashioning a musical subject by using the letters of a composer's name (B-A-C-H), or structuring a musical work by using musical themes from earlier pieces (e.g. Shostakovich's String Quartet No. 8). Memorable musical ideas from some of her earlier pieces, mostly operas (although we even find a modified quotation from a solo song she wrote as a first-year composition student), in an entirely new guise, almost entirely unrecognizable, constitute a part of the sonic adventure of this piece, wherein, apart from the acrobatically seductive ending, the moving, painful, dark viola and lower instruments' solo from the first movement makes for one of the most exciting passages in Isidora's entire oeuvre. The superb performance of the Berlin Philharmonic Octet at the work's world première on 17 October 2015 at the Berlin Philharmonie was one of Isidora's greatest triumphs – ovations for the composer went on for the duration of the interval between the two halves of the concert, which is a compliment that only a few contemporary composers have received, while the queue for autographs extended across the entire hall. "You are the only composer who made the Berlin Philharmonic dance" was one of the comments heard on that occasion. Very soon after the première, ***Needle Soup*** quickly found its place in the concert programmes of major ensembles in Europe (Germany, Spain, Finland), Canada, and Australia.

This was a time in Žebeljan's life that saw numerous commissions for new concert works, as well as large-scale projects for many years ahead, which, sadly, failed to materialize. Out of six planned and agreed concert works (one each for clarinet; violin; horn; violin and cello; string quartet; and piano), Isidora wrote two, for clarinet and violin, respectively. ***Pipe and Flamingos*** (2016/17), her *Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra,* is based on an extra-musical template, a fairytale about "the pipe in this concert-tale has a power to unveil the biggest secrets of a heart, but it's song is not understandable to no one except – the flamingos. They are the only one who understand it due to an infinite flamingos' love for dancing, which makes them open hearted. Therefore, it, the pipe, like the antique Kassandra, tells the truth, but only flamingos still believe in it."[19]

This powerful, moving, and virtuosic piece, whose orchestral part is as demanding and complex as that of the solo instrument, appears to constitute the apex, that is, a sort of final statement of a refined, specific, and unique

[19] From Isidora Žebeljan's commentary written for the work's world première.

expression. Its division in three movements is primarily articulated by drastic changes of tempo, although the movements are meant to be performed back to back, attacca. The almost impressionistic opening of the work, dominated by brass timbres, rhapsodically takes the instrumentalists and listeners into a whirlwind of Isidora's melodies and rhythms, in a characteristically abrupt alternation of states and musical "events", making way for the suggestive and emotional slow central movement, whose main theme is based on the melody of the opening aria from Isidora's opera *Simon the Foundling*. The third movement is an unrestrained, inexorable, orgiastic dance involving the soloist and the entire orchestra (with numerous percussion instruments), based on motives made up of elements from authentic traditional Balkan music, which are also somewhat related to various segments from the opera *Simon the Foundling,* but are taken here to an extreme degree of sonic and kinetic ecstasy. The world première of ***Pipe and Flamingos*** took place at the Auditorio de Galicia in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, featuring the clarinettist Joan Enric Lluna, for whom the concerto was composed, and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra of Galicia, under the leadership of the British conductor Paul Daniel.

Žebeljan's *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* ***Three Curious Loves***, composed in 2017, was her last extended work. It was commissioned by the Eduard van Beinum Foundation for the British-Dutch violinist Daniel Rowland and the Stift Chamber Music Festival.[20] The orchestra comprises a wind quintet, piano, percussion, and strings. Although the concerto's underlying formal structure is tripartite, the work creates the impression of a four-movement piece, due to the third movement, which opens with an extended section in a slow tempo. In addition, the piece hints at certain new peculiarities in Isidora's expression: its motivic structure is not as variable and surprising as it was in earlier works from her mature phase; certain motives acquire some characteristics of a theme; the length of individual motives is, therefore, extended, although there is no motivic or thematic manipulation involved, all of which creates the impression of a calmer and more contemplative musical flow. The slow, ethereal opening movement, entirely set in the high registers of the violin, softly, with a discrete, translucent accompaniment provided by the strings and piano, seems to float over the listeners, like an aura of

[20] The Dutch Eduard van Beinum Foundation (*Stichting Eduard van Beinum*) provides commissions (financial support) to foreign composers for writing new works for Dutch musicians and concert performances in the Netherlands.

sound or a waft of a touching sonic scent. The stormy, almost wildly ravishing second movement seems like a tempestuous and triumphal sum total of the potent and unique type of musical expression dominating the mature phase in Isidora's oeuvre. By contrast, the third movement serves as the ground for expressing unvarnished lyricism right from the start, with evocations from the solo horn seemingly arriving from other, close but unknown expanses of sound. In the opening part of the movement, where love is presented in every dramatic moment within a musical flow fashioned with a patina of nostalgia, a new sort of lyric opens up, which seemingly stems from the immense dignity of the experiences of old age, like a farewell accompanied by a gentle smile, before the second part of the movement, unrestrained, implacable, and daringly virtuosic, transforms the entire piece into a fairytale, where deliverance is available only in laughter and tears. One of Isidora's most intimate and moving pieces, the *Concerto for Violin and Orchestra* ***Three Curious Loves*** was premièred under the auspices of the Stift International Festival at the Grote Kerk in Enschede, the Netherlands, on 24 August 2017, by the violinist Daniel Rowland and the Stift Festival Orchestra, conducted by David Cohen.

Just a few days later, on September 2nd, at the Vredenburg Hall in Utrecht, the Netherlands, under the auspices of the Utrecht Early Music Festival, Isidora's choral setting of ***Psalm 78*** **(*Salmo 78*)** had its world première. It was performed by the Netherlands Chamber Choir under the leadership of Peter Dijkstra. This was part of an artistic project involving four internationally renowned chamber choirs – the Netherlands Chamber Choir, the Choir of Trinity Wall Street in New York, the Norwegian Soloist Choir, and the Tallis Scholars from the UK – with the aim of performing all 150 Psalms in settings spanning a timeframe of ten centuries, starting from those of Hildegard of Bingen all the way to contemporary composers, and touring Europe and America (White Light Festival, New York). Seven composers selected from across the world were commissioned to write a new work each, setting those Psalms that had not been set to music before. One of these composers was Isidora Žebeljan. She chose Psalm 78, but, on account of the sound and melodic beauty of that language, decided to set the Portuguese version of the text. Ethereal, touching, tender music with post-Messiaenian flashes beneath its refined melodic line, typical of Isidora's slow movements, and with a mild flavouring of folk music from the Banat region, almost like a farewell kiss, forms the content of this piece by Isidora, with which she said goodbye to a life made of and lived for music. So, although she did write a few more shorter

pieces – *Intimate Letter from the Judaean Desert, Bagpiper's Vitrage* – and composed an entire concerto for horn and orchestra (which she did not get to write down), Isidora's musical farewell to this world, which she indebted with her musical genius, her fight for music, and her passion for the vocation that was her allotment from God, was a setting of the following lines from Psalm 78:

> For their heart was not steadfast with Him,
> Now were they faithful in His covenant.
> But He, being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity,
> And did not destroy them.
> Yes, many a time He turned His anger away,
> And did not stir up all His wrath;
> For He remembered that they were but flesh,
> A breath that passes away and does not come again. (37, 38, 39)[21]

In addition to her huge commitment to composing, Isidora was active as a performer as well. She regularly performed her own pieces as conductor and pianist, as well as those by other, mostly Serbian composers. As a pianist, she performed and recorded her music with the Brodsky Quartet, and she also performed music by Ljubica Marić and Vlastimir Trajković.[22] Among other occasions, she conducted concert performances in Belgrade, London (the Academy of Saint Martin in the Fields orchestra at Wigmore Hall), and Amsterdam (Muziekgebouw aan 't IJ). Her repertoire included, apart from her own pieces, works for string and chamber orchestra by Ljubica Marić, Ludmila Frajt, Vasilije Mokranjac, Aleksandar Obradović, Dušan Radić, and Vuk Kulenović. Her première performances of several works by Mokranjac and Radić constituted a particular curiosity in Serbian music.[23] Also, she conducted performances of works by Dutch composers, including Marius

[21] Psalm 78, https://www.bible.com/bible/114/PSA.78.NKJV.

[22] Especially noteworthy is her studio recording of *Verses from "The Mountain Wreath"* (*Stihovi iz "Gorskog vijenca"* (Verses from "The Mountain Wreath" – "Стихови из Горског вијенца"), a piece by Ljubica Marić for baritone and piano, the only existing recording of that work, which Isidora made with bass-baritone Bojan Knežević for Radio Belgrade in 2003.

[23] The pieces mentioned above are *Plane Trees* (*Platani* – Платани) by Vasilije Mokranjac for chamber ensemble, premièred in 2012, as well as three concertante pieces by Dušan Radić: *Pastorale* for flute and strings; *Fantasy* for violin, violoncello, and strings; and *A House in the Middle of the Road* (*Kuća nasred druma* – Кућа насред друма) for oboe, violin, and strings, performed in 2010.

Flothuis, Guillaume Landré, and Bertus van Lier.[24] She founded the Žebeljan Orchestra and Žebeljan Ensemble, who chiefly perform music by Serbian composers; so far, they have performed in Italy, Austria, the Netherlands, Israel, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, and Montenegro, and made CD recordings of works by Isidora for CPO (Germany) and Oboe Classics of London. She was likewise proactive, courageous, and tireless in protecting Serbian art music heritage in her capacity as the chairwoman of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts' Committee for the Preservation of Serbian Musical Heritage, during which time a large number of Serbian musical scores were collected and archived, many concerts took place, and ten CDs were released, featuring important works of Serbian music that had not been recorded or published before.

In addition, Isidora was a highly successful professor of composition at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade. She was the first woman to teach composition at a Serbian university (from 2002, first as an assistant professor, and from 2013 as a full professor). Her composition class spawned several artists who belong today among the most significant young and middle-aged Serbian composers, some of whom teach as assistants and professors at the music academies (faculties) in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Kragujevac, and Kosovska Mitrovica. Ordere by age, the most prominent among them include Draško Adžić (shortlisted for the Gaudeamus International Award in Amsterdam, winner of two Sterija Awards and a commission from the Belgrade Philharmonic); Milica Đorđević (a laureate of the Siemens Foundation Prize and a number of major intenational commissions); Vladimir Trmčić (a laureate of the City of Belgrade April Award and the 2016 Best Composer Prize awarded by the *Musica classica* magazin); Luka Čubrilo (the winner of the 2008 Art-Link Most Promising Young Music Artist in Serbia Award); Marko Kovač (a winner of commissions from BEMUS, Kotor Art International Festival, and Cello Fest); Ana Krstajić (a winner of multiple prizes at international competitions, such as the 2014 Women's Work Award in the US and the 2016 De Bach du Jazz International Competition in Paris); Igor Andrić (a winner at the Im Treppenhaus chamber orchestra competition in Hanover and multiple international commissions; his works are published by Universal); and the brilliant Veljko Nenadić, one of the most daring and authentic Serbian composers, with the highest number of international awards of all Serbian

[24] Marius Flothuis (1914–2001), Guillaume Landré (1905–1968), and Bertus van Lier (1906–1972).

composers, including some of the most prestigious prizes ever awarded to Serbian composers (such as, for instance, first prize at the 2019 Ennio Morricone International choral music competition in Florence, first prize at the 2022 Bartók World Competition and Festival in Budapest, first prize at the 2022 Luigi Nono international chamber music competition in Turin, first prize for an orchestral work by the Jeunesses Musicales Bruxelles in 2021; his works are published by the Dutch publisher Donemus).

THE INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE of Isidora Žebeljan's oeuvre lies above all in the uniqueness of her personal type of musical expression, which, as such, constitutes a unique peculiarity in early 21st-century music. This extraordinarily clear personal expression, which informs Isidora's oeuvre as a whole and is easily recognizable in its phenomenal specificity – just like in all those composers whose oeuvres are characterized by a refined, memorable, and highly individual and inimitable original artistic language – has enriched the musical art of Western European civilization, in particular this most personal expression of Isidora's sonic cosmos.

Some of the leading artists among Žebeljan's contemporaries have spoken and written about their experiences of her unique originality, right from the outset of her international career, starting from her opera *Zora D.* Thus Sir David Pountney, one of the leading opera directors of his time, already upon encountering Isidora's music for the first time, stated the following:

> When I was trawling through the entries for the Genesis Opera Prizes 1, amidst an absolute welter of indistinguishable representatives of what one might call 'academic modernism', Isidora Žebeljan's music struck me immediately as something original, fresh, and above all emotionally expressive - a rare commodity, but an essential one for interesting theatrical story telling.[25]

The unique originality of Isidora's music and its creative and performing potentials have been discussed by many other artists and music producers as well. Among others, they include John Manger, formerly the general manager of the Academy of Saint Martin in the Fields, who has remarked that Isidora Žebeljan possesses "a genuinely original voice and a truly impressive talent. The musicians of the Academy who have worked with her cannot praise her highly enough. Her professionalism and craft are amazing, and her original talent is of the first order."[26]

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[25] David Pountney, *Zora D. und Mr. Emmet takes a walk*, *Musiktheater heute*, Wien, Wiener Kammeroper, 2003.

[26] Quoted from www.genesisfoundation.org.uk

Multiple prominent musicians, whose work has left a deep mark on contemporary art, such as the conductor Sir John Eliot Gardiner and oboist Han de Vries, have described their experiences of Isidora's music in the following terms: "I am much impressed by the skill, craft and imaginative range of music by Isidora Žebeljan […] What attach me to this music is its kaleidoscopic range of timbres and, indeed, its many moods", Sir John wrote in a personal letter to Isidora.[27]

Han de Vries, one of the 20th century's most prominent oboists, wrote the following lines concerning Isidora's music: "I am deeply impressed by both the compositions and the playing that is about the loftiest and deepest emotion. This is not playing, singing and composing to impress, but music of a heavenly atmosphere […]."[28]

The originality of Isidora's music, the peculiarities of her expression, her melodic and orchestral writing have been discussed mostly by foreign critics, who thereby asserted the significance of her music for contemporary art:

"In many ways, Serbian composer Isidora Žebeljan might be called the Ottorino Respighi of our time. Ms. Žebeljan is a fascinating instrumental colorist." Houston Radio, USA

"Her music spins off impetuously, unpredictably, with an unshackled verve […] It's fascinating to hear the confidence and imagination with which Žebeljan was throwing about rhythms..." Gramophone, UK

"Her music is a totally unique musical language which is deeply affecting and wildly exciting […] she has an unforgettable voice that is totally compulsive." Musicweb-International, UK

"Serbian composer Isidora Žebeljan is justly celebrated for her music's intense originality and fiery emotional expression […]."[29] BBC Music Magazine

In 2009, *Der Freitag* magazine from Berlin named Isidora one the ten most promising personalities in the world, whereas in 2013 she became the only

[27] Sir John Eliot Gardiner, a letter from 29 December 2014.

[28] Han De Vries, "Balkan bolero", in: *Double Reed News 109*, London, 2014, 33.

[29] David Hurwitz, "Isidora Žebeljan – The Horses of Saint Mark", in: *Classics Today*, USA, 2011, online edition.

Kate Molleson, "Žebeljan", in: *Gramophone*, London, January 2016, 54.

Steve Arloff, "Brodsky Quartet plays Isidora Žebeljan – review", in: *Musicweb International*, London, February 2016.

Kate Wakeling, "Žebeljan", *BBC Music Magazine*, London, March 2016, 90.

Serbian artist to win a Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean Award for making outstanding achievements in art.

In addition to the uniquely recognizable originality of her musical language, there is another part of Isidora's oeuvre that commands further significance. That part comprises her works for oboe. Like few other contemporary composers, with her 20 pieces for oboe – solo, chamber, and concertante – Isidora Žebeljan made a great contribution to the existing literature for oboe and related instruments. However, this concerns not only the sheer number of pieces, but the creation of a new type of sonic expression in music written for these instruments. This different, peculiar kind of sonic expression faces the performer with exacting demands, especially in terms of timbre and dynamics, whose unusually wide ranges give rise to different qualities of sound in the instruments themselves. This is especially true of her music written for oboe and cor anglais, with the latter effectively multiplying the instrument's technical capabilities in an entirely new way. Isidora uses unusual modes of producing sound (playing on the reed, flutter-tonguing, glissando, harmonics, etc.), combining them with one another as well as with the sound of folk instruments from the oboe family (the zurna and oboe-sopile) and other instruments: percussion, accordion, harp, and double bass. That is why Isidora's music for oboe has enticed performers from across the world, including some of the most prominent oboists, from the most senior ones such as Han de Vries, via the most active oboists today, such as the British oboist Nicholas Daniel, all the way to young stars such as the German oboist Viola Wilmsen and American oboist Nancy Ambrose King. The extraordinary peculiarities of Isidora's music induced the legendary oboist Han de Vries to remark that no composer since Bach has improved the sonic expression of the oboe more than Isidora Žebeljan.[30]

Nevertheless, one particular feature of Isidora's composition process itself formed the practical and essential basis for the free manifestation of her original expression's sheer power – this was her creative intuition, that is, that strongest sense of connection with her Vocation, giving rise to different, previously unknown (sonic) worlds by a powerful (ur)feeling.

The immense significance of Isidora's international artistic voice is not confined to the musical accomplishments of her works, but also extends to the historical juncture of her appearance on the international stage, at a time when our country, its values and accomplishments were scorned and neglected in most of the world, due to the deadly force of dirty political games.

[30] From a pre-concert address by Han de Vries, given in Amsterdam in March 2017.

On all continents, Isidora's art, knowledge, virtuosity, and wisdom spoke quite differently about the spiritual power of our people, whereby Isidora played a major role in allowing Serbia, in artistic and cultural terms, to gain permanent and precious respect throughout the world. Therein lies the patriotism of all great artists: in placing their country and nation on the maps of civilization's major accomplishments.

As for us, Isidora's contemporaries, our task is to amass the courage to be aware of the uniqueness that such great artists as Isidora bequeath to humanity, including ourselves, whether we realize it or not, and to allow her music to be an eternal contribution to our spiritually unique place among the peoples of this Earth.

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Summary

Isidora Žebeljan (Serbian Cyrillic: *Исидора Жебељан*, b. Belgrade, 1967–2020) was one of the most original classical music composers of the early 21st century. That is why she is the most frequently and diversely performed Serbian composer abroad, commanding the most prominent presence beyond Serbia. She first came under the attention of the international public with her opera *Zora D.* (Зора Д.), which was commissioned by the Genesis Foundation of London and premièred in Amsterdam in 2003. From that point on, Žebeljan enjoyed a steady stream of commissions from major institutions and music festivals, such as the Berliner Philharmoniker Foundation, Venice Biennale (*La Biennale di Venezia*), Bregenz Festival (*Bregenzer Festspiele*), Musiktheater im Revier Gelsenkirchen, the Netherlands Chamber Choir (*Nederlands kamerkoor*), Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, the City of London Festival, etc. Žebeljan has composed music for major ensembles such as the Vienna Symphony Orchestra (*Wiener Symphoniker*), the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Brodsky Quartet, and London Brass. Her oeuvre, divided in three creative phases, comprises around a hundred pieces, including five operas (written for opera houses in the Netherlands, Austria, Germany, and Italy) and incidental music for 38 theatre plays. *Zora D.* was the first Serbian opera premièred abroad (in the Netherlands), while *Two Heads and a Girl* (*Dve glave i devojka* – Две главе и девојка) was the first Serbian opera that was sung in the Serbian language at its world première (in Italy). Some of the most renowned contemporary musicians and ensembles have performed around 70 of Isidora's pieces on concert and opera stages in 37 countries on every continent. The originality of her language arose from her authentic ability to forge organic links between musical elements originating from different spheres of influence (ranging from old Balkan folk music traditions to rock and pop music), which she achieved by blending, amalgamating, and combining these originally divergent musical elements into new and previously unknown contexts of sound. In her pieces, form is entirely subordinated to the unpredictable flow of their musical contents, leading to unexpected, sudden shifts between individual segments in the work's sonic content, approximating the shape of a short story or film – a series of divergent (musical) events giving sound to a single perceptual whole, similarly to the way magic realism does in literature. A unique specificity of her music's originality stems from her unusual and quite peculiar melodic and rhythmic invention.

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Kenrick Ho*
PhD Student, Teaching Assistant
University of Leeds, Faculty of Arts
Humanities and Cultures, School of Music

ENACTING MUSICAL MAQUETTES: A COGNITION-INSPIRED COMPOSITIONAL APPROACH

Abstract: This paper is a practice-led case study on Fred Lerdahl's "Cognitive Constraints on Compositional Systems". The model attempts to define an artificial compositional grammar in terms of a "universal listening syntax" based on Lerdahl's co-authored *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music.* Through demonstrating the practical application of the constraints, the author reflects on the model's usefulness in light of the contemporary compositional context. Notably, the theory presents abstracted pitch and rhythmic material as an aesthetically neutral syntax, therefore it can only provide stylistically ambiguous infrastructures akin to a musical maquette that needs to be further enacted at the composer's discretion.

Keywords: cognitive constraints, experimental composition, music cognition, phenomenology, enactivism, algorithmic music

In 1961, American composer James Tenney wrote his Master's thesis which was later published under the title *Meta + Hodos*.[1] In the book, Tenney explains that he found traditional music theory to be too outdated to function for contemporary music. For example, labels such as "atonal" and "irregular meter" are too vague to provide any nuanced insight for the music it is de-

* The author's contact details: mckkkh@leeds.ac.uk

[1] James Tenney, *Meta + Hodos: A Phenomenology of Twentieth-Century Musical Materials and an Approach to the Study of Form*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1968, 3.

scribing. This is often still the case where the term "atonality" encompasses all levels of consonance and dissonance in non-functional harmony.[2] Likewise, "ametricity" is used to describe not the absence of meter, but irregular meter where there is usually still traces of salient pulse within complex rhythmic structures.[3] As an attempt to theorize a new framework to describe such music, Tenney turned to the field of music perception in search for a new perspective to understand and describe music. Compositionally, Tenney has always strived to reflect his theoretical thinking in his music.[4] His theory and music had a reciprocal relationship where his music was driven by experimental ideas from his theory, and in turn, his music inspires him to theorize further. My musical interest is broadly inspired by this interdisciplinary crossover between composition and cognition, and this paper is an example of my practice-led approach where I experiment with composing based on a theory from music cognition.

To be sure, the notion of using music cognition for composition is by no means a novel idea.[5] In particular, Fred Lerdahl, a composer-turned cognition theorist, has attempted to theorize a model that promotes such applica-

[2] Carol Krumhansl's research on the tonality of contemporary music makes a parallel observation where there is statistical data to show that there exist multiple levels of tonal-centredness even within dodecaphonic music. See Carol Krumhansl et. al., "The perception of tone hierarchies and mirror forms in twelve-tone serial music", *Music Perception*, 5, 1987, 153–184.

[3] Research on Auditory Gist Perception suggests that listeners have the ability to extract pulse information and synchronize body motion even from complex sound textures. See: Martin Clayton et al., *Experience and Meaning in Music* Performance, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013; Oliver Lartillot et al., "Multi-feature Modelling of Pulse Clarity: Design Validation, and Optimization", *Proceedings of the 11th International Conference on Digital Audio Effects (DAFx-08)*, Helsinki, University of Technology, 2008, 305–8; Sue Harding et al., "Auditory Gist Perception: An Alternative Selection of Auditory Streams?", in: Lucas Paletta and Erich Rome (Eds), *WAPCV*, Basingstoke, Springer, 2007, 1399–416.

[4] Larry Polansky, "Introduction", in: Larry Polansky et al. (Eds), *From Scratch: Writings in Music Theory*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 2019, xi.

[5] In his Master's thesis John Croft mentions Paul Hindemith, Leonard Bernstein, and George Rochberg as examples of composers who were concerned with linking their practice with cognition. However, along with Lerdahl's theory (which will be discussed in the following), Croft notes that these composers held an implication that atonality and ametricality were somehow innately unfit for the human mind – a view which Croft ultimately refuted against. Cf. John Croft, "Musical Memory, Complexity, and Lerdahl's Cognitive Constraints", unpublished Master's thesis, University of Sheffield, Department of Music, 1999.

tion of cognition into composition in his 1988 article titled "Cognitive Constraints on Compositional Systems" (CCCS).[6] The basis for this model came from his earlier co-authored book with Ray Jackendoff, titled *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music* (GTTM). The GTTM is seen to be influential to multiple (sub)disciplines of music cognition, such as in cognitive science, linguistics, semantics and syntax.[7] Despite the broad usages of the GTTM, as Lerdahl noted in his autobiography, he is yet to try composing using the constraints himself.[8] Hence, there is little evidence in practice to demonstrate the usefulness of the constraints. Therefore, this paper aims to demonstrate how the constraints can be used in practice, and in doing so, I hope to answer the following questions: 1) are the constraints useful for composition? 2) what kind(s) of music would the constraints facilitate? And 3) what can the constraints tell us about the relationship between composition and cognition in general? In the following sections, I will first give an overview of how the cognitive constraints work, then address several assumptions regarding the CCCS, followed by a discussion on the compositional process, and finish with a conclusion that revisits the three questions mentioned above.

Cognitive Constraints

For Lerdahl, the motivation for developing the theory came from his dissatisfaction for pieces such as Pierre Boulez's *Le Marteau sans Maître* he found that serial structures were impossible to hear.[9] He theorized that there is a "gap between method and result", which is caused by composers ignoring their listening grammars to rely solely on mathematical approaches. Lerdahl's aim with the CCCS is to promote a reconciliation between method and result by suggesting a framework for the artificial compositional grammar to stay in touch with the listening grammar, which is essentially already written out

[6] Fred Lerdahl, "Cognitive Constraints on Compositional Systems", in: John A. Sloboda (Ed.), *Generative Processes in Music: The Psychology of Performance, Improvisation, and Composition*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988, 231–259.

[7] Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff, *A Generative Theory of Tonal Music*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1983; Fred Lerdahl, *Composition and Cognition: Reflections on Contemporary Music and the Musical Mind*, Oakland, University of California Press, 2019, 31; John McCarthy, *A Thematic Guide to Optimality Theory*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001; Ray Jackendoff, *Semantics and Cognition*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1983; Mark Baker, *The Atoms of Language*, New York, Basic Books, 2001.

[8] Fred Lerdahl, *Composition and Cognition*, op. cit., 85.

[9] Fred Lerdahl, "Cognitive Constraints on Compositional Systems", op. cit., 251.

as a detailed list of preference rules in the GTTM. For example, the first eight constraints are called "constraints on event sequences", and they are listed below:[10]

1. The musical surface must be capable of being parsed into a sequence of discrete events.
2. The musical surface must be available for hierarchical structuring by the listening grammar.
3. The establishment of local grouping boundaries requires the presence of salient distinctive. transitions at the musical surface.
4. Projection of groups, especially at larger levels, depends on symmetry and on the establishment of musical parallelisms.
5. The establishment of a metrical structure requires a degree of regularity in the placement of phenomenal accents.
6. A complex time-span segmentation depends on the projection of complex grouping and metrical structures.
7. The projection of a time-span tree depends on a complex time-span segmentation in conjunction with a set of stability conditions.
8. The projection of a prolongational tree depends on a corresponding time-span tree in conjunction with a set of stability conditions

Before proceeding to discuss how I eventually used the CCCS to generate new compositions, there are three issues from CCCS that are worth acknowledging. For one, the listening grammar (GTTM) claims to be a "universal musical grammar", but the constraints are clearly built to prefer western art music.[11] This implies a post-colonial thought where western art music has been placed in the centre and treated as if it represented music "universally". Furthermore, as pointed out by Cook and Croft, the concept of composing *based on* a listening grammar seems to suggest a structuralist attitude where a specific way of cognizing music is assumed to be indifferent among listeners.[12] Also, Lerdahl's terminology of "artificial" and "intuitive" compositional grammar is potentially misleading. In fact, the composers that Lerdahl ac-

[10] Ibid., 239–49.

[11] Fred Lerdahl and Ray Jackendoff, op. cit., 290.

[12] Nicholas Cook, "Analysing Performance and Performing Analysis", in: Nicholas Cook and Mark Everest (Eds), *Rethinking Music*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, 247; John Croft, "Musical Memory, Complexity, and Lerdahl's Cognitive Constraints", op. cit., 19.

cused for using "artificial" grammars, such as Schoenberg, Boulez, and Xenakis, all relied on a great deal of intuition to design their systems as well as to act upon its results. Hence, it seems inappropriate to categorize those musics as "artificial" when they were clearly written based on intuition, albeit a more systematic implementation in and of itself.

The second issue is that Lerdahl seems to have missed the point for serialism. Lerdahl claims that goal for the constraints is to help "bridge the gap" between serial technique and heard structure, but serial structures are often not meant to be heard, especially in Boulez. In particular, in *Le Marteau*, Boulez allowed himself to deviate from the pre-determined material at certain moments of the piece (which is in itself determined by a serial process), so serial structures (i.e. tone rows) are not always present in the music.[13] Contrary to Lerdahl's impression of the piece, in writing *Le Marteau*, Boulez explicitly hoped to reconcile with expression in multiple serialism.[14] To put bluntly, the reason Lerdahl struggled to hear any serial structure in the piece, is because there is not one for him to hear in the first place. Even for serial music where tone rows were *actually* used, the rows are by no means used with an expectation to be clearly identifiable for listeners. In other words, Lerdahl seems to be trying to solve a problem that does not exist.

Thirdly, perhaps noticeable from the brief introduction to the constraints, it is apparent that no dodecaphonic music will be able to fulfil the constraints. The CCCS is grounded on the GTTM, which means the model's musical preference is implicitly conservative because the GTTM only works for a tonal corpus of music. Lerdahl's justification is that serial music is "incognizable" even for the "experienced" ear, which is why it will fail to achieve any heard structure in his model. It is beyond the scope of this paper to address further theoretical issues with Lerdahl's constraints. See John Croft's thesis for a more detailed critique of the theory, especially with regards to the misunderstanding that atonality is somehow "unnatural" to listen to. While I acknowledge the problematic discourses surrounding the theory, the focus for the rest of the paper will be on the practical application of the constraints to see how they would actually work.

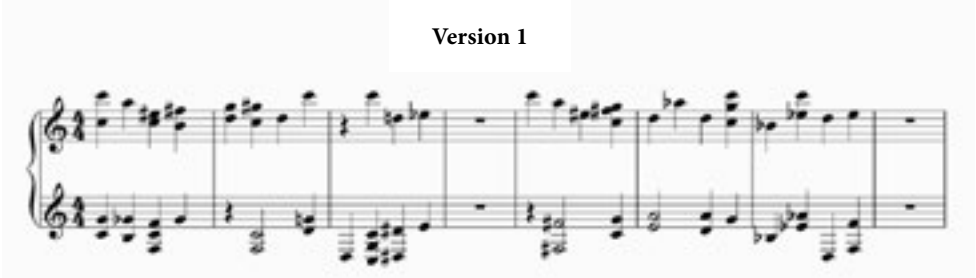
[13] See Lev Koblyakov, *Pierre Boulez: A World of Harmony* (New York, Harwood Academic Publishers, 1990) for a detailed analysis of *Le Marteau.*

[14] Pierre Boulez, *Orientations: Collected Writings*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1990.

The Compositional Process

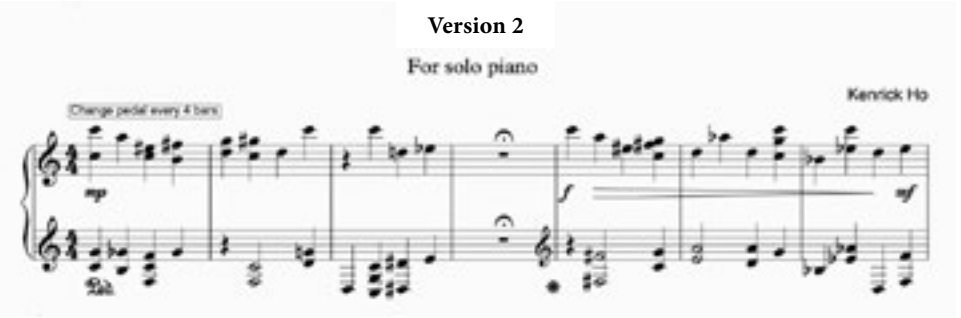
In order to investigate how the constraints function as an "artificial" compositional grammar, an autonomous algorithm on Max/MSP was designed to generate musical materials that satisfy all seventeen constraints. The compositional process is three-fold. In the initial stage, the score only consisted of a transcription of the computer-generated pitch and rhythm. An excerpt of this version of the piece is shown in Figure 1. At this point, the material can technically fulfil all the constraints regarding pitch and rhythm but contains no further instructions for other parameters such as tempo, dynamic, technique, articulation, and phrasing. The first observation to be made is that the constraints cannot be used as a comprehensive music generation system because they do not consider any non-pitch and rhythm parameters which are necessary aspects in writing a piece. The CCCS considers the concept of a compositional grammar in the abstraction of pitch and rhythm syntax, which is insufficient as a generative process because it problematically neglects the consideration for other non-pitch-rhythm parameters of a musical work.

Figure 1: Excerpt from version 1 of the piece



Since there are no instructions on the non-pitch-rhythm parameters, I decided on the missing parametrical information according to my understanding of Lerdahl's theory. For example, the tempo is moderately slow to emphasize on clarity for constraints in event sequences. Dynamic markings and sustain pedal changes every four bars to separate between phrases structures, and the piano was chosen because it can be played with the least intervention in the remaining missing parameters such as articulation and phrasing. However, even with the addition of other parameters, the material was still not quite far from being a complete piece of music. The updated notation for the same excerpt shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Excerpt from version 2 of the piece



In Figure 2, the piece is technically a playable piece of music. There is no longer any missing parametric information where pitch, rhythm, dynamics, pedal markings, and tempo are all written on the score. If the goal of this paper is to see what a "perfect" piece that follows all the constraints would look like, this could be considered an acceptable answer. Even though the score is perfectly playable as it is, I was ultimately dissatisfied with the result at this stage. My problem with the piece, to borrow from phenomenology, is that in the experienced world, we encounter objects as we pursue our goals and enact our identities.[15] Sometimes when an object becomes broken, or perhaps missing, we confront the object as a stranger that is very much separate from us. In other words, our attention is attracted to problems. We hardly notice the unproblematic activities that remain in the background of our lives. Even though version 2 of the piece presents itself to be "unproblematic" in terms of Lerdahl's constraints, my problem is that there is too little to attend to within the piece, which is to say the material felt too "basic" and "unstylized" for my taste. To be sure, I am aware that the results are never truly "un-stylized" as I have indirectly influenced the stylistic outcome by designing the algorithm myself.[16] Rather, what I mean by "un-stylized" is that the piece as shown in Figure 2 only presents the most basic structures of the piece. It is almost analogous to drawing a stick-figure or building a maquette

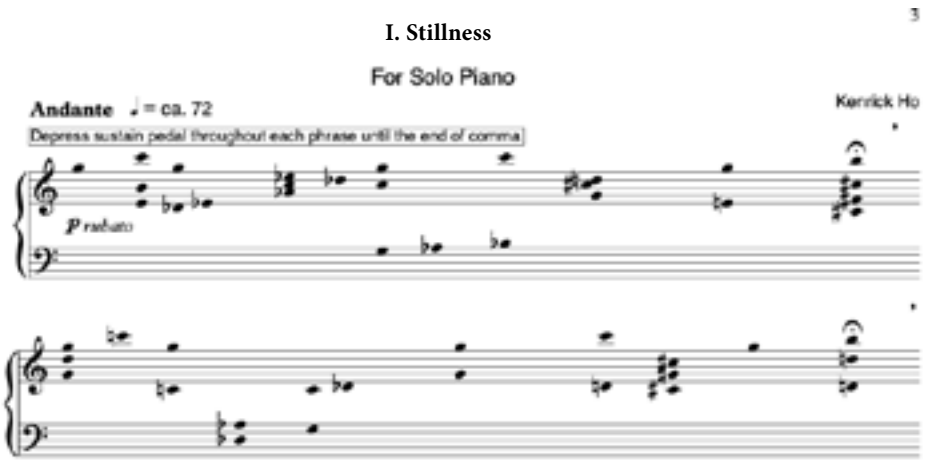
[15] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson, New York, NY, Harper & Row, 1961. Originally published in German in 1927, 154.

[16] Sofian Audry terms this long-range influence between artist and the algorithm "indirect feedback" where the artist experiments with different evaluation functions to produce outcomes, as opposed to directly intervening with the system (direct feedback). See: Sofian Audry, *Art in the Age of Machine Learning*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 2021, 79–82 for more explanation on the process of creating art using machine-learning.

musically. The maquette contains every basic element necessary to create a piece, but it still lacked a stylistic connection to the broader compositional tradition to make any sense as a new piece of work.[17]

My dissatisfaction with version 2 of the piece has led me to revise the piece further to impose more intervention to the algorithmic outcome. To do this, I removed all barlines and stems from the score to create a quasi-indeterminate score that only has pitch notated. The rhythm, phrasing, and dynamics are up for the performer to interpret intuitively, and that made the solo piano piece titled *Stillness* (Figure 3).[18]

Figure 3: Excerpt from *Stillness* (Version 3 of the piece)



Discussion

This three-fold process of working with the constraints has been an unusual experience for algorithmic composition. Traditionally, when composers are dissatisfied with their algorithmic outcome, they would either rerun the algorithm, redesign the algorithm, or deviate from intuitively from the algorithmic material. Here, since the constraints consider compositional syntax in

[17] This is, perforce, a problem only to the extent of my preference and understanding in how I want to write music. There is nothing wrong with playing the material as it is in figure 2, but personally it sounded more like "material" than "work", which is why I proceeded to intervene with the algorithmic outcome.

[18] A recording of the piece can be found here: https://soundcloud.com/kenrick-ho/four-pieces-with-cognitive-constraints-i-stillness

terms of abstracted pitch and rhythm, they are incomprehensive and therefore insufficient to for music generation. To answer the first question raised in the introduction, "are the constraints useful for composition?" Borrowing from David Temperley's terminology, the constraints are useful at the level of infrastructure because they are supposed to be "ubiquitous" and "a means to an end."[19] He writes, "water mains and power lines do not normally bring us joy in themselves, but they facilitate other things – homes, schools, showers – whose contribution to life is more direct."[20] Similarly, the basic structures provided by the constraints can be thought to be ubiquitous, as Temperley writes, "every moment of every piece has a metrical and a harmonic structure."[21] Therefore, the constraints are most usefully considered not as some sort of prescriber for compositional grammar, but as infrastructures that are deliberately vague to function in the background as a means to an end.

At first sight, it may not seem particularly useful to view the constraints as an infrastructure for composition. However, borrowing from Marius Kozak's theory of enactivism, once the composer has become conscious of these infrastructures, the constraints can become situated in the foreground to become the subject of care. In *Enacted Musical Time*, Kozak views time as an infrastructure because all music involves being in time.[22] Time in its neutral state is also unnoticeable, but the composer can foreground it as an infrastructure by being aware of time and its effect. In parallel, take, for example, the first constraint: "the musical surface must be capable of being parsed into a sequence of discrete events."[23] Constraint 1 does not inform the composer what or how to write, but it exists passively in the background as an infrastructure. The constraint can only be foregrounded if the composer becomes aware of it and therefore becomes a subject of care. But even when it is foregrounded, constraint 1 is still not prescribing music because the composer can only "use" it by being "aware" of the criteria of the constraint and its effects. The same goes for constraints on underlying materials such as "stability conditions must operate on a fixed collection of elements" (constraint 9).[24]

[19] David Temperley, *The Cognition of Basic Musical Structures*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 2004, 3.
[20] Ibid., 4.
[21] Ibid., 4.
[22] Mariusz Kozak, *Enacting Musical Time: The Bodily Experience of New Music*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2020, 11.
[23] Fred Lerdahl, "Cognitive Constraints on Compositional Systems", op. cit., 239.
[24] Ibid., 244.

Any given piece of music would have some sort of "fixed collection of elements", but once the composer has become conscious of their choice of "fixed collection of elements", this constraint becomes foregrounded, and it is now possible for this neutral state infrastructure to be situated as the point of concern for listeners and the composer to care for.

Moreover, to answer the second question, "what kind of music would the constraints facilitate?" Due to the stylistic vagueness in the constraints as an infrastructure, as it turns out, it is not a valid question to ask and there is no answer to this. Since the constraints do not function as a prescriber for music, it is up to the composer to decide how the initial "un-stylized" material should be "dressed up" and framed into music that they want to write. It is worth noting that this stylistic ambiguity mirrors Lerdahl's original intention for the GTTM to be a "universal listening grammar" but in a completely different way. Lerdahl's GTTM consists of an exhaustive list of preference rules that deals explicitly with Western Classical music. His idea of universality is rooted within the assumption that there is something inherently natural about cognizing the characteristics of classical music. Here, the stylistic ambiguity is a result of the incomprehensiveness of the constraints, which necessarily calls for the composer to intervene to turn material into work. In writing *Stillness*, I found that the "perfect" material that fulfils every constraint is akin to a musical stick-figure, or a basic maquette. My task as a composer was then to find a solution of framing the pre-determined material as a piece of work in a way that makes sense within the broader compositional context. If the musical maquette can be described as basic, "un-stylized", and "unproblematic", then my creative responsibility is solely to enact some sort of musical interest without altering the pre-determined pitch. For *Stillness*, it was a subjective decision to mould the material into a Feldmanesque slow piano piece. But if other composers were to work with the maquette-enacting approach based on the constraints, I can imagine many other ways of adapting these materials into a variety of genre and styles. In that sense, the maquette is stylistically ambiguous and can facilitate practically any styles and genres of music.

To answer the final question, what can the constraints tell us about the relationship between composition and cognition in general? The experience of working with the constraints has led me to reconsider the potential conflicts in the notion of "consulting psychology" in composition. It is important to note that music cognition is aesthetically neutral, and at the end of the day, it is entirely up to the composer to decide how the theory can be embodied

in a way that relates to its broader compositional context. Initially, I was consciously dependent on the algorithm to make decisions so I could test what the constraints might lead me to write. But consequently, I was faced with results that I described as "un-stylized" and maquette-like because the theory was aesthetically neutral, so it required my stylistic preference as intervention to formulate the material into a piece. It is precisely this tension between adhering to the stylistically neutral material and "stylizing" it into a more completed work that is most intriguing in the process of using the constraints. There are uniquely only the most basic infrastructural structures that are specified in creating the maquette, and there is plenty more scope to explore how new musical ideas can be enacted out of these maquette-like materials in the future.

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Summary

Fred Lerdahl's "Cognitive Constraints on Compositional Systems" is a rare example of a theoretical model that attempts to apply music cognition directly into composition. The article defines a compositional grammar of how composers compose in terms of a listening grammar of how listeners listen. Hypothetically, the constraints present a framework for composers to build artificial systems that is informed by the listening grammar. Since Lerdahl never composed with the constraints himself, the focus of this paper will be on the practical reflections from attempting to use the to compose. In doing so, I hope to 1) demonstrate the usefulness of the constraints, 2) find out what kinds of music can be facilitated, and 3) to reflect on the notion to use psychology theories for composition in general. A generative algorithm that follows all constraints has been built using Max/MSP. The first problem I encountered is that the algorithm is far from being able to compose autonomously. The constraints are inherently incomprehensive where they consider compositional syntax in an abstracted sense of pitch and rhythm, thus are insufficient for autonomous music generation. The second problem is that even after manually implementing the missing parameters, the generated material still felt too "basic" and "un-stylized" to be called a complete piece. This issue is discussed in terms of phenomenology where we as humans are naturally attracted to problems in the experiential world. By fulfilling every constraint, the material is analogous to an unproblematic maquette where basic structures are present, but the material requires further stylization to become a piece of work. On one hand, the constraints in themselves are too ambiguous to function as a prescriber for algorithmic music. But on the other, this ambiguity presents the potential for composers to enact on the maquette to create music in all sorts of styles and genres. This paper began with a focused aim to reveal the practical limitations of

using Lerdahl's constraints, but as a by-product of this study, I am inspired by the compositional process where I omit decisions in the note-to-note level and focus on enacting some sort of musical interest out of maquette-like materials in a way that deliberately tries to relate to the broader compositional tradition.

REVIEWS

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ZORICA PREMATE*

Prof. Dr. Tijana Popović Mladjenović, Asst. Prof. Dr. Ivana Petković Lozo, Asst. Prof. Dr. Ivana Miladinović Prica, *Diffractions of Berislav Popović's Compositional, Music-Theoretical, Pedagogical, Social and Cultural Creation*. Belgrade: University of Arts, Faculty of Music, Department of Musicology – Serbian Musicological Society, 2022, 678 pp.

ISBN 978-86-81340-54-7; ISMN 979-0-802022-26-3

The collective monograph titled *Diffractions of Berislav Popović's Compositional, Music-Theoretical, Pedagogical, Social and Cultural Creation* is a collection of papers presented at the eponymous conference that took place in Belgrade between 30 November and 2 December 2021, marking what would have been Prof. Popović's 90th birthday and the 20th anniversary of his death, complemented with several texts about his work and activities that have come out in music and other periodicals over the decades and were selected here as reference readings. One may say that the result is a rich and *diffractively* oriented (in terms of its viewpoints and analytical and factual accomplishments) collective monograph penned by several renowned musicologists, composers, music theorists, ethnomusicologists, physicists, and historians from Serbia and abroad. Also, the monograph is furnished with a DVD recording of a concert featuring works by Berislav Popović, titled *Sempre e con tutta la forza,* which took place under the auspices of a scholarly conference, as well as a documentary film, *Berislav Popović: A Lived Counterpoint*, based on memories of Popović evoked by many of his former colleagues and students.

The monograph is practically and transparently organized in two "books", which are symmetrically positioned inside a single volume. The Serbian-language version, which comprises a larger number of contributions and therefore occupies a dominant position in the book, covers a total of 410 pages, while the English-language version (containing the English translations of the most relevant studies published in the Serbian-language part of the book, as well as four texts that were written and are available

* Contact details: premate@gmail.com

only in English) comprises 268 pages. Apart from a large number of notated music examples, the volume also includes relevant black-and-white and colour photographs.

Berislav Popović (1931–2002) "was one of the most significant music figures in recent Serbian history, a dedicated creator, distinguished professor, music theorist with a highly original *handwriting,* and a prominent carrier of music life in every community [where] he worked" (p. 9). Almost all of the authors included in this book refer precisely to the extraordinary, erudite, "renaissance" personality of Berislav Popović, as well as to the term *diffractions,* borrowed from the title of one of his orchestral works and resignified into the metaphorical title of this scholarly conference and monograph, as well as serving, primarily, as the central axis of his comprehensive compositional-poetic, figural, and theoretical-aesthetic creativity and social activity. Also, the authors of the studies included in the book likewise agree that Popović's work in composition, painting, theoretical and philosophical thinking formed multiple faces of one and the same creative essence, supporting and permeating one another, developing and announcing themselves to the world through music, painting, and photography, as well as through *Music Form or Meaning in Music*, a unique theoretical-analytical scholarly study and a rare cardinal accomplishment in Serbian theoretical-aesthetic-philosophical thinking on music.

The monograph is divided into several chapters, in line with their main themes and fields of activity. The opening chapter, "*Diffractions* of the Compositional Creation", is focused on Berislav Popović's musical compositions and, apart from a 1986 study by Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman reprinted from the journal *Zvuk* ("*Diffractions*… A Sketch of Berislav Popović's Musical Poetics", which, in a way, also served as a model for many of the authors who discussed Popović's works here), comprises excellent, highly complex studies that are analytically and aesthetically focused chiefly on Popović's musical as well as visual and theoretical creativity. It is surveyed as a "diffractive beam of unified, synchronized, and interferential currents and fields of thought and energy", discussed here by the musicologists Neda Nestorović ("Continuum of Flow of Coloured Fields: Of Sound-Visual Art Identity of Berislav Popović"), Milica Lazarević ("Interference of Berislav Popović's Compositional and Music-Theoretical Thinking"), Ivana Petković Lozo ("À la recherche du temps vécu... *A Universe of Musical and Figurative Space-Time*: *Medium Tempus* and *Autoportret* by Berislav Popović"), Marija Simonović ("*Interferences* between the Creative Poetics of Berislav Popović and Gaston Bachelard"), and Ivana Miladinović Prica ("Signifying Play in *A Shadow Play* by Berislav Popović"). The chapter closes with a contribution by one of the most faithful successors and translators of Popović's theoretical poetics, analytical work, and pedagogy, Miloš Zatkalik ("Berislav Popović: A Ballad about Lost Tonality"), reprinted here from the *New Sound* journal of music (2007).

The following chapter ("Diffractions of the Music-Theoretical Creation") is dedicated to Popović's greatest single contribution to music theory, aesthetics,

and philosophy, *Music Form or Meaning in Music* (Belgrade, 1998). It opens with reviews that were published in musicological journals at the time, penned by Srđan Hofman ("Berislav Popović, Music Form or Meaning in Music", 1999) and Zorica Premate ("Musical Form: A Model of Energy in Time", 1999), and continues with an original view of musical form from the perspective of contemporary physics by the composer's son Marko Popović ("A Narration about Musical Form or Meaning in Music through the Language of Modern Physics"). This is followed by a comparative-analytical survey by Nemanja Sovtić ("Theses on Musical Discourse: A Foucaultian View of Berislav Popović's Theoretical-analytical Thought"); an essay by Anica Sabo, a close colleague of Popović and follower of his pedagogical and analytical poetics ("The Conception of the Phenomenon of Musical Flow in Berislav Popović's Theoretical Writings"); and a successful testing of Popović's theory in ethnomusicological scholarship by Mirjana Zakić ("Aspects of Determining the 'Structural Focal Point' / 'Morphological Dominant' in Ethnomusicology").

The monograph continues with a chapter focused on Popović's work in the institutional and societal sphere: "Diffractions of the Socio-Cultural and Academic-Institutional Engagement". It includes a study by his grandson, the historian Dimitrije Mlađenović, and his colleague Aleksandar Puškaš ("Berislav Popović in the Cultural, Social, and Political Context of His Time"), followed by the contributions of Valentina Radoman (which also offers an excellent critical insight into the past and present of World Music Day celebrations in Serbia; "Composer Berislav Popović as Chairman of the Yugoslav Organizing Committee for the European Year of Music 1985 Festival"), Ivana Medić ("Constructive Engine of Music: Berislav Popović and the Series Music Today / Musical Modernism of the Third Program of Radio Belgrade"), as well as a valuable (reprinted) analytical article by Dragana Stojanović-Novičić, focused on the author's many (other) writings ("The Written Word of Berislav Popović – Intellectual-Artistic Credo", 2006–2007).

The chapter titled "Diffractions of Pedagogical Creativity" features two invaluable insights into Popović's pedagogical practice and ethics of working with students: "From the Pedagogical Practice of Berislav Popović: Archival Sources on the Teaching of Musical Forms and Styles at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade") and "The Pedagogical Work of Berislav Popović", a joint study by Popović's colleagues at the Faculty Anica Sabo, Ana Stefanović, Ivana Vuksanović, Ivana Ilić, and Sonja Marinković.

The memories of Popović's contemporaries, divided between the chapters focused on his socio-cultural and academic-pedagogical work, are located at their respective endings, under the titles of "Diffractions of the Imperative Programmes of 'Can' and 'Must'" (including the recollections of Petar Bergamo, Marija Koren Bergamo, Nikola Rackov, Miloje Nikolić, and Dubravka Jovičić) and "The Diffractions of a 'School Man'" (the recollections of Ana Kotevska, Ivana Stefanović, and Snežana Nikolajević).

The concluding section of this expansive monograph features some addi-

tional studies, which are classified in its title as follows: "Diffractions *avant la lettre:* Berislav Popović's Native Town in His Early Youth and the Early (Pre)history of Discussing Musical Form in Serbia". It includes an invaluable study by Milan Milojković, "Berislav Popović and Zaječar's Musical Life after World War II" and Ivana Perković's study "On Views of Musical Form in Serbia's 'Second 19th-century' (Digitalized) Periodicals".

The monograph concludes with a short biography of Berislav Popović as well as those of the authors featured in the collection. It is a shame that the authors did not include a list of Popović's musical compositions (although it would not be a very long list, admittedly), with basic information about their year of composition and performing forces required, or a bibliography of Popović and other authors' published works, although all of that, with a little additional trouble, may be found within the studies included in the monograph.

Apart from the translations of almost all the studies included in the main chapters of this collective monograph, the English-language part features another four texts that are available only in English: "The Contribution of the Scientific Work of Berislav Popovic to Understanding the Deep Connection between Music and Psyche: Meta-Analysis of Music and Libidinal Flow" by Nada O'Brien; "Form or Meaning. Form and Meaning. Form as Meaning: Reflections on Music Form or Meaning in Music by Berislav Popović" by Miloš Zatkalik (a post-Husserlian discussion of ideas expounded in *Music Form or Meaning in Music*); "Music Form as Resistance: Some Reflexions about the Precompositional Budgets" by Federico Eckhart (the role of musical material in the pre-compositional procedure); as well as "Frédéric Chopin's *Preludes* op. 28 as a Cycle: Berislav Popović's Deliberations on the Phenomenon of Directionality of Complex Music-Formal Entities", a study co-authored by Tijana Popović Mladjenović and Ivana Petković Lozo (an application of Popović's analytical method to Chopin's *Preludes* cycle op. 28).

In his lifetime, Berislav Popović did not divert too much attention to his creative work in music. He acted as a fully committed pedagogue, as one of the best-loved professors at the Faculty of Music and a reliable and honest social worker who supported the creativity of his colleagues more than promoting his own. Carried by his own interests and professional destiny, he gradually replaced composing with researching the fundamental problems of music theory, establishing a unique interdisciplinary system of analyzing and understanding music and the world in his extensive study *Music Form or Meaning in Music*. It took a long time for his music not only to secure concert performances, but also to attract the attention of contemporary musicology. Now, coupled with a full awareness of his oeuvre in painting and especially his analytical universe, "because nothing is isolated and everything has its place in an even larger system", a substantial and scholarly established body of work is emerging in Serbian musicology, wherein Berislav Popović is beginning to occupy his rightful place.

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GORDANA KARAN*
University of Arts in Belgrade
Faculty of Music
Solfège and Music Pedagogy Department

Ivan Brkljačić: *From Musical Flow to Musical Form*. Belgrade: Faculty of Music – Rights and Royalties Publishing Company Ltd., 2022, 353 pp.

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The author of the book-length study *Od muzičkog toka do muzičke forme* [*From Musical Flow to Musical Form*] is the composer and music theorist Ivan Brkljačić, D.Mus. The book was issued by the publishing division of the Faculty of Music in Belgrade in September 2022. Originally, it was intended to serve as a textbook for undergraduate students taking the course in Musical Forms and it is therefore primarily meant for and dedicated to "former, current, and future" students of music (p. 5). However, bearing in mind that the book's contents and architecture rest on a rationally structured system elaborating relevant concepts, phenomena, and laws pertaining to musical forms, and given its discussion of the problems encompassed in the formal divisions of the book,[1] as well as its constant surveying of the causal links underpinning musical flow and musical form, one may argue that the book constitutes not only a worthy addition to the literature used in the teaching of Musical Forms at institutions of higher education in music, but also qualifies as a sort of theoretical study. However we choose to view this book, its author's guiding idea was the following: "the sooner we accept that we can only follow the musical flow, and that we certainly should not violate it, seeking to translate it into our own ostensibly more logical modus operandi, that is, our own language, the sooner we will understand that musical flow" (p. 9).

Bearing in mind that sound, when it is situated within a certain musical context, becomes a musical flow, and that the latter in turn generates a musical form, "which represents a logical consequence of everything that takes place inside that musical flow, within the confines of a certain amount of musical time" (p. 10) – the narrative thread of this book captures their symbiotic connection and proceeds by elaborating the concept of *musical*

* Contact details: karan.gordana@gmail.com

[1] Chapter I: "Definitions", 15–107; Chapter II: Formal Types", 111–308, and Chapter III: "Aspects of Analysing 20th-century Music", 311–342.

flow observed in the interaction between the various grounds of a musical structure. At one point, this subject converges with defining the concept of *musical form* and thereafter continues on its journey toward the interpretation of musical form, that is, musical forms.

musical flow – musical form

The paramount aim of teaching functional music literacy, including musical forms, is to enable the student to understand musical contents in the broadest possible context, in two directions: from a musical score to sound and back – from sound to the score. Audio examples play an important role in the process of acquiring musical experience, which in turn forms a repository of understood and memorized music. Although the book labels them as audio illustrations of certain definitions and interpretations, the works that were selected and stored on the USB drive that forms an integral part of the publication essentially constitute a sort of musical models, which are invaluable in teaching and training students to form and argue their views about musical forms analytically and express them as such. Therefore, it forms a contribution to an educational process of many years that strives to equip its students with a reliable capability for critical thinking in this domain.

Formally, the book comprises three chapters that are further subdivided into subchapters, themselves comprising smaller thematic sections/divisions. In addition, the final section includes two appendices. Also, the book comprises a list of notated and recorded examples, an Index, and a bibliography list. The USB digital memory storage contains sound recordings of works from a rich selection of musical literature covering almost every musical style as well as multiple genres.

Apart from addressing his readers in person, the author also fashioned his Foreword as a sort of introduction to the subject matter discussed in the book. Above all, he asserts that the purpose of the book is to highlight "the numerous processes that occur on the path that starts from initiating any musical flow whatsoever, its development and attainment of a compact and well-rounded form" (p. 10). Seeking to formulate the main purpose of teaching musical forms, he underscores his book's contribution to understanding a work of music in aural, visual, and analytical terms, that is, the entirety of its musical flow.

Discussing the concepts of musical flow, musical form, musical components, elements of musical forms, and the structural grounds of a piece of music in the first chapter, titled "Definitions", Brkljačić also provides explications and definitions of various modalities of segmenting a musical flow, the concepts of equivalence and musical contrasts, and points to different types of (musical) exposition. According to one of the book's reviewers, Miloš Zatkalik, "the contents of this chapter exceed its title and offer a detailed discussion of elements of form […]".[2] Moreover, the author uses generally established terminological interpre-

[2] Miloš Zatkalik, "A Review of Ivan Brkljačić's Book *From Musical Flow to Musical Form*", Arhiv Centra za izdavačku delatnost, Belgrade, Fakultet muzičke umetnosti, 2022, 2.

tations of relevant concepts and phenomena, expanding and systematizing them in certain segments.

In the second and largest chapter of the book, titled "Formal Types", the author elaborates on concepts, phenomena, and laws pertaining to musical forms in 18th- and 19th-century music. In this chapter, he discusses the form and formal typology of musical works ranging from Baroque binary and ternary forms, via Scarlatti's sonata form, the song form, variations, sonata form, rondo, so-called "unclassified formal types", to the suite and cyclical, that is, multi-movement formal types. At the same time, Brkljačić is consistent here in implementing his methodology in an "itemized" way, which includes defining the formal type under consideration, its application, history, and formal characteristics. His text includes instructions and suggestions of requisite analytical steps one must take in order to identify and interpret a given musical form.

In the third chapter, the author discusses "aspects of analysing 20th-century music". Without delving into the issues of categorizing and systematizing 20th-century musical forms, in two subchapters titled "General Remarks" and "Analytical Understanding of Select Examples from 20th-century Music", he discusses musical works composed in a timeframe extending from before the Great War (1914–1918) to the 1990s, following the idea that "on the eve of World War I certain works of music were written that changed the world as it was at the time" (p. 311). Interestingly, this chapter provides no musical examples, unlike the preceding two chapters. Brkljačić "replaced" them here with corresponding schematic representations, using them to direct the reader at the sound content of the pieces he chose. Only in this chapter did the author include appendices: the first appendix deals with the "Classification of 20th-century Music" – extended tonal and modal music, atonal music, serial music, punctualism, electronic music, chance music, reductionist music, and spectralism – while the second appendix surveys the musical oeuvres of Serbia's leadings 20th-century composers.

For decades, Serbian-language literature for teaching Musical Forms as a university-level course has boiled down to the well-known and well-regarded textbook *The Science of Musical Forms* [3] by Dušan Skovran and Vlastimir Peričić, which first came out as early as 1961. Another book that was often included in the curriculum was Berislav Popović's *Music Form or Meaning in Music*,[4] published in 1998, but on account of its content and purpose it has tended to figure as an additional or supplementary reading in the teaching of Musical Forms. By contrast, the book by Ivan Brkljačić, as a result of his multiple decades' worth of accumulated theoretical and empirical knowledge and experience, is shaped in line with the current syllabus for teaching musical forms, attesting not only to his profound familiarity with musical form

[3] Dušan Skovran, Vlastimir Peričić, *Nauka o muzičkim oblicima* [*The Science of Musical Forms*], Belgrade, Univerzitet umetnosti, 1961.

[4] Berislav Popović, *Music Form or Meaning in Music*, Belgrade, Clio – Belgrade Cultural Centre, 1998.

as a discipline of music, but also to his accomplishments as a creator of music whose pieces invariably feature well thought-out and solid micro- and macro-forms. According to the author himself, who is therefore a composer in terms of his professional training and primary vocation, his process of working on this book was identical to that of creating his musical works. It begins from an initial idea and a vision of the whole, proceeding through the construction of a macro-whole, working with motives informing the micro-divisions of the text, all the way to "listening out" for and choosing the most representative audio examples. Last but not least, there is the knowledge and experience of Ivan Brkljačić as a pedagogue of music. This breadth of a musical author and pedagogue helped him "form a general view on issues in musical form, which informs this textbook" (p. 9).

From a linguistic perspective, the book is characterized by precision in expression, which is a key factor in enabling one to "understand the aims of the course, survey a musical flow within musical time, and define the specific formal type in a given example from musical literature" (p. 10).

By defining the concepts of musical flow and musical form, their interaction, ways of segmenting them and systems of their (mutual) operation, as well as by interpreting concepts, phenomena, and laws pertaining to musical forms, their characteristics, boundaries, equivalences, musical contrasts, types of (musical) exposition and ways of using them, Ivan Brkljačić fashioned the mosaic of his book, *From Musical Flow to Musical Form*, for the benefit of students studying at the Faculty of Music. In doing that, he left them with the following motto:
In music, 2+2 does not equal 4, but 3.

> Whenever we find something in a musical flow that seems illogical, we should return to the equation shown above. It will always remind us that music simply follows different rules (p. 9).

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TATJANA MRĐA GERDEC*
Doctoral candidate in musicology
University of Novi Sad
Academy of Arts

Dr. Ira Prodanov, Dr. Nemanja Sovtić, Dr. Milan Milojković: *The Composers' Association of Vojvodina – 50 Years of Existence*. Novi Sad: The Composers' Association of Vojvodina – The Academy of Arts in Novi Sad, 2022, 178 pp.

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Few and far between are professional associations in our country that have managed to achieve continuity in their activities over a substantial period of time and to make during that period a major contribution to their local cultural environment. This exclusive club includes precisely the Composers' Association of Vojvodina, which last year celebrated its golden jubilee. In anticipation of the jubilee, the musicologists Dr. Ira Prodanov, Dr. Nemanja Sovtić, and Dr. Milan Milojković compiled a body of materials relevant to the Association and published a monograph titled *Udruženje kompozitora Vojvodine – 50 godina postojanja* [*The Composers' Association of Vojvodina – 50 Years of Existence*]. The printed version of the book was published by the Association itself, whereas the electronic version was a joint publishing effort with the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad.

This monograph on the Composers' Association of Vojvodina comprises two parts. In the opening part, the authors present the history and heterogeneous activities of the Association undertaken by its founders and, later on, other members of the Association during its half-century of activity, while the latter part of the book is reserved for a lexicographic survey of almost a hundred composers, writers on music, and musicologists who, in Vojvodina and beyond, made lasting contributions to their local environments either with their musical oeuvres or media appearances, publications, and lectures focused on those works.

The opening part of the publication comprises four chapters. The first chapter, "A History of CAV", presents key moments in the history of the Association, such as its founding documents, the formation of its steering committee, and selection of members of the Association. Out of the "mighty few" who initiated all these activities, the only one who is still active is Jovan Adamov, the Association's current president. It was thanks to his

* Contact details: tanjagerdec@gmail.com

recollections, supported by ample documentation from private collections and archives, that the authors managed to reconstruct the Association's initial steps as well as key aspects of its activities. Thus the second chapter is focused on CAV's publishing activity. It discusses the publication of over 90 scores for various performing forces, which suggests that the Association took over an important aspect in the affirmation of the oeuvres of contemporary authors from Vojvodina by publishing their works, which was a rather marginalized pursuit during the former Yugoslav era as well as subsequently. The ensuing chapter provides information on the Association's activities in publishing sound recordings of music. It concerns almost 40 releases that CAV made over the past 50 years, despite the fact that its state, that is, provincial government support kept declining every year. Similarly to the preceding chapter, this chapter likewise discusses the dynamic of the Association's publishing activities, foregrounds the authors and works whose recordings were released, and analyses the design and joint publishing efforts that CAV undertook with PGP RTS (the music production arm of the Serbian Broadcasting Corporation) and Radio Novi Sad. The fourth chapter is focused on CAV's activities in the new millennium. Modernizing the Association has meant focusing on project planning, which has enabled the Association, in addition to its publishing activities, to stage regular annual concerts. Thanks to the conductor Tamara Adamov Petijević, these concerts have provided not only public performances of works by composers from Vojvodina, but also their permanent recordings, audio and visual alike.

The second part of the monograph contains lexicographic units on the membership of CAV. Given that the Association comprises a large number of composers and writers on music, musicologists, and ethnomusicologists, the authors decided to include only the most crucial facts, such as those concerning their education, employment, membership in professional organizations, main works, major performances, sound recordings, and published scores. In this way, out of the dense web of heterogeneous activities that each member of the Association has engaged in, they sought to highlight the most important ones. The information gathered here will certainly serve as an initial impulse for those who decide to undertake more thorough research of the individual oeuvres of composers from Vojvodina.

The publication *The Composers' Association of Vojvodina – 50 Years of Existence* was made possible by funding assistance provided by Sokoj and the Municipal Authority for Culture of the City of Novi Sad, while the electronic version was supported by the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THE ISSUE

Mina Božanić, a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade. Her articles have been published in several journals, including *New Sound* (2015, No. 46; 2016, No. 47), *Zbornik Matice srpske za scenske umetnosti i muziku* (2016, No. 55), *Zbornik Akademije umetnosti u Novom Sadu* (2016, No. 4), *Muzika* (Sarajevo, 2016). She has also participated in several conferences and round tables in Belgrade (2013, 2014, 2015, 2016), and was a contributor to the two issues: *Istorija umetnosti u Srbiji XX vek* (vol. III, ed. by Miško Šuvaković, Ph.D., 2014) and *Srpska enciklopedija* (vol. III, book 1).

Paul Cassidy, viola player, has spent his entire working life with the Brodsky Quartet. Together they have played over 3000 concerts in more than 60 countries and made in excess of 70 recordings. Paul is a prolific arranger. In addition to his countless works for strings, he has collaborated with Elvis Costello, Bjork, Sting and many other eminent composers. Examples of these can be found on Brodsky albums such as Petits Fours, Moodswings and The Juliet Letters, also on Bjork's Family Tree.

Borislav Čičovački took both a degree and a master's degree in oboe from the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad, as well as finished postgraduate studies at the Conservatorium in Amsterdam. He also obtained a degree in biology from the Faculty of Natural Sciences in Novi Sad and PHD degree in musicology from the University of Amsterdam. As a soloist and a chamber musician he has performed across Europe and in Israel. He appeared as a soloist with symphony and chamber orchestras such as the Belgrade Philharmonic, the Zagreb Philharmonic, and others. Čičovački has given first performances of about eighty pieces by Serbian, Dutch and German composers. CD label Oboe Classics from London released his solo CD with music of Isidora Žebeljan. He published eleven books of novels and stories in The Netherlands and has written the libretto's for five opera's by Isidora Žebeljan. He directed the first Serbian production of the opera *Maratonci* by Isidora Žebeljan 2023. At the Faculty of Art and Philology in Kragujevac he holds a position of Professor in oboe and chamber music.

Tatjana Gerdec Mrđa a secondary school teacher of solfeggio, music theory, choir, an accompanist, employed at the Musical School "Josif Marinkovic" in Vrsac. During her pedagogical work she has shown special interest and affinity in teaching solfeggio at the Jazz Music Department. She is a student representative of the Academy of Arts in Novi Sad in the international Erasmus+ project DEMUSIS. She has submitted a doctoral thesis at the University of Arts, Academy of Arts in Novi Sad in the field of Musicology: *The Works of Karel Napravnik and His Contribution to Serbian Music.*

Kenrick Ho is a third year PhD researcher in composition at the University of Leeds, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures, School of Music. His practice-research, supervised by Prof. Martin Iddon and Dr. Freya Bailes, investigates the interdisciplinary intersections between music composition and music cognition. As a composer, Kenrick has collaborated with many acclaimed musicians domestically and internationally, including Siwan Rhys, Stephanie Lamprea, Brian Archinal, Seth Josel, Heather Roche, Carla Rees, Ensemble LINEA, Konzeptmusik, The Hong Kong New Music Ensemble, and the Hermes Experiment. He is expected finish his doctoral thesis by the fall of 2023.

Tijana Ilišević is born in Belgrade. She obtained her master's degree in musical theory after which she went on to complete a specialist degree, both earned from the Faculty of Music, Department of Music Theory, University of Arts in Belgrade. She has been a Teaching Associate at the Department of Music Theory at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade since 2017. She has presented papers at international conferences on music theory and analysis in Serbia (2017, 2019), England (SotonMAC2019), and Italy (2022). Her research interests include the narratological, semiotic, semantic, psychological, and hermeneutic analysis of 20th-century post-tonal music.

Gordana Karan, PhD, Vice-dean for science, Professor of Solfeggio and Solfeggio teaching methods, Head of the Publishing Center at the Faculty of Music, University of Arts in Belgrade.

Biljana Leković, PhD, musicologist, Assistant Professor at the Department of Musicology, Faculty of Music in Belgrade. She is also a Lecturer at the Interdisciplinary Master Studies of the Department of Theory of Arts and Media, University of Arts in Belgrade. She is a Vice President of the Centre for Popular Music Research. Her fields of interest include contemporary music, new media practices, sound art, sound studies, and acoustic ecology. She is the author of two books: *Modernist Project of Pierre Schaeffer – From Radiophony Analysis to Musical Research* (2011) and *Sound Art/ Zvukovna umetnost: Musicological Perspective – Theories* (2019).

Ivana Miladinović Prica, PhD, musicologist, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Music, University of Arts in Belgrade, and head of the Department of Musicology's Counsel. She is also the secretary of the *International Journal of Music New Sound*. Her research is in the area of contemporary music, with special emphasis on neo-avant-garde and experimental practices in American, European, and Serbian music.

Sanela Nikolić, BA in Musicology, PhD in Theory of Arts and Media is an Associate Professor of Applied Aesthetics, Faculty of Music, University of Arts in Belgrade. She is one of the editors of the *AM Journal of Art and Media Studies*. In addition to numerous scholarly papers, she is the author of two books. She was the International Association for Aesthetics' Delegate-at-Large (2019–2022) and is a member of the Serbian

Musicological Society and Serbian Society for Aesthetics of Architecture and Visual Arts. Fields of interest: avant-garde art schools and practices; applied aesthetics as a critical history of the humanities; interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity in the humanities; digital humanities.

Ivana Petković Lozo, PhD, is a musicologist, employed as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Musicology of the Faculty of Music at the University of Arts in Belgrade. She teaches in the Interdisciplinary Studies in Art and Media Theory graduate program at the University of Arts in Belgrade. Her fields of scholarly interest include European fin de siècle music, relations between music and painting as well as music and literature, the philosophy of art, and the philosophy and aesthetics of music. Articles by Petković Lozo have been published in prominent national and international musicology journals, monographs, and collections of essays. She has participated in international conferences, roundtables, forums, student symposia, and radio broadcasts. She is the author of two books: *The Late Oeuvre of Claude Debussy: "Truths" about the French Myth* (Belgrade: Department of Musicology at the Faculty of Music, 2011) and *Stevan Mokranjac in The Writings of "Others"* (together with Olga Otašević; Belgrade: Serbian Musicological Society and Musical Youth of Belgrade, 2014). She is a member of the Serbian Musicological Society, the International Musicological Society, and the Music Writers' Chapter of the Composers' Association of Serbia.

Sara Pinheiro graduated in Cinema (Lisbon, 2008) and holds a Master of Music in Sonology (The Hague, 2012), where she is a guest lecturer. She has been part of the teaching committee at CAS – FAMU since 2013. Her academic work is practice-based research under the name of "Acousmatic Foley". She is currently a PhD student at The School of Music and Media in the Bangor University (UK), under the Parry Williams scholarship. She does sound recording, editing, foley and mixing for film and video-art. In her solo practice, she makes acousmatic pieces, usually for multichannel performances, radio broadcasts or installations.

Zorica Premate, musicologist, music editor at Radio Belgrade 2 (retired), where she authored various broadcasts in the domain of art music (2002–2017). She served as secretary of the *New Sound International Journal of Music* (1992–2000) and secretary-manager of *Dušan Skovran Belgrade String Orchestra* (2000–2002). Articles by Premate have appeared in *New Sound*, *Muzički talas*, and *Treći program*, and she has written concert reviews for the culture section of the Serbian daily newspaper *Politika*. She is a laureate of the *Pavle Stefanović* prize for writings on music (2017) and the *Musica classica* award for music criticism (2017).

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