

---

---

## NEW WORKS

---

---

Article received on 5th May 2010  
Revised version 1st November 2010  
Article accepted on 3rd November 2010  
UDC 782(497.11)

*Branka Radović\**

University of Kragujevac

Faculty of Philology and Arts - The School of Music

### TWO FACES OF OPERA

#### Premieres of new Serbian operas: *Hasanaginica* by Rastislav Kambasković and *Mandragola* by Ivan Jevtić

**Abstract:** Two composers of different generations, stylistic and authorial poetics, Rastislav Kambasković and Ivan Jevtić attended the premiere performances of their operas in the same month of the year. Until now, neither of them has dealt with the opera genre: both operas are firstlings in their respective opuses, but the works differ in genre, style, type and character. *Hasanaginica* is a large-scale opera for a big apparatus, a psychological music drama written for eight soloists, a mixed choir and large orchestra. *Mandragola* is a comic opera without a choir, written for seven soloists. The former was performed on the stage of the National Theatre, the latter on the stage of the private theatre, the Madlenianum. It is interesting that both were commissioned: one by the national house and its institutions, and the other by a single person, Madlena Zepter, the owner of the Madlenianum Opera and Theatre.

**Key words:** Rastislav Kambasković, Ivan Jevtić, opera, libretto, drama, music language, main characters

---

#### HASANAGINICA BY RASTISLAV KAMBASKOVIĆ

It all began back in 1987, when the National Theatre Artistic Council decided to commission a new opera, from the composer Kambasković (1939). The opera director at the time was Konstantin Vinaver and he was expected to carry out the decision.

\* Author contact information: radovics@sbb.rs

The author immediately started to think about the libretto. Before he settled on *Hasanaginica* by Ljubomir Simović both the poet and the composer met on several occasions for talks with the opera director. Simović's only request was that nothing should be added, but he permitted the text to be shortened if and where necessary. The composer himself worked on the libretto. He composed by pieces. What emerged first were three monologues: *Hasanaginica's* aria, the monologue of bey Pintorović, *Hasanaginica's* farewell to her child ("What should I do now"). These parts were recorded for the purposes of Serbian Television in 1997, and were sung by Jadranka Jovanović and Slavoljub Kocić. The recordings were broadcast many times.

The author continued to work on the score and by 2000, a large part of it was completed, but the end was nowhere near. The libretto was taking shape alongside with the music.

The composer worked as a lecturer at the Department of Theory and his colleagues from the Faculty of Music were cooperative and granted him a two-year sabbatical in order to complete the work. Thus, he submitted the completed score to the Department in 2001. Then, from 2001 to 2009, there followed the "ordeal" of persuading a whole array of directors and managers who, as soon as they had agreed to execute the deal, would be dismissed, or would resign, or would be reassigned.

The opera had taken nearly twenty years to complete, and the effort was interrupted several times, so in the meantime the author composed *Balkanski rekvijem* [*Balkan Requiem*], then *Lamento za Jefimiju* [*Lamentation for Jefimija*], and *Šest preludijuma* [*Six Preludes*] for piano. However, his thoughts were constantly with *Hasanaginica*.<sup>1</sup>

The history of the work's inception is, in a certain sense, a continuation the author's story about the roots of inspiration and the sources of his bond with operatic art.

Namely, as a child Kambasković had watched a Russian film about Glinka's opera *A Life for the Tsar* (*Ivan Susanin*), which left a deep impression on him, especially the mass and choral scenes. However, he did not want to compose a Russian-type heroic opera; he had something completely different in mind – the language, the harmony, the orchestration of Richard Strauss's *Salome*. Thus, in a certain way, his *Hasanaginica* is our *Salome*. It contains dramatic, epic and lyric qualities, the music follows the story of a tragic woman's destiny... While the work was finally being prepared for the performance, caustic comments appeared about the sources of the text, the direction of the story, the environment and

---

1 The opera *Hasanaginica* had its premiere performance at the stage of the National Theatre in Belgrade, on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2009. Directed by Ivana Dragutinović Maričić, stage design Boris Maksimović, costume design Katarina Grčić Nikolić, choreography Konstantin Tešea, conducted by Mladen Jagušt. Principal roles: Jasmina Trumbetaš Petrović, Vuk Matić, Janko Sinadinović, Nataša Jović Trivić, Nenad Jakovljević et al.

people who do not belong to our milieu and our nation etc. Everything was just one step away from becoming engulfed in day-to-day politics and thus, provocative.

Nikada ni u jednom trenutku i u drami i u pisanju muzike nisam pomišljao na versko ili nacionalno obeležje niti sam to imao kao inspiraciju. Interesovalo me samo ljudsko osećanje i kao takvo, univerzalno.<sup>2</sup>

In this respect, giving a big and significant support, not only as a conductor but also as a great music expert, "Hasanaginica" was conducted by the bard among our conductors, Mladen Jagušt, who put his unreserved faith into the score and the work.

The drama which the author wanted to present is the psychological drama of a woman in a certain primitive milieu, which has its own norms, prejudices, customary laws and so on. Simultaneously with the main protagonist, the drama takes its toll on Hasanaga and bey Pintorović, as well as both mothers. The libretto can be considered the composer's adaptation of the eponymous drama by Ljubomir Simović.

The earliest origin of Simović's drama and Kambasković's libretto reaches back to a folk poem, a ballad, which Vuk Karadžić included in his *Srpske narodne pjesme* [Serbian Folk Poems]. After its first translator, Alberto Fortis in 1774, it was translated by Herder and Goethe; in the poem they discovered all the beauty of the folklore they previously knew little about, yet have celebrated across Europe ever since. Its translators came from all sides of the world and from various language areas: Walter Scott, Prosper Mérimée, Alexander Pushkin and Adam Mickiewicz.

The relationship between the folk poem and Simović's drama would be a separate issue, because the drama largely digresses from the poem: there is more to it than verses, rhymes, imagery, metaphors. Interestingly, Serbs, Bosniaks and Croats all lay claim to the famous ballad.<sup>3</sup>

The drama of an unhappy woman, a wife and, above all, the drama of a mother being separated from her child, a suckling in a crib, is a drama about the lack of understanding, lack of romantic emotions, unrequited love, but also about the vitality of existence which, right to the bitter end, until it becomes overwhelmed

---

2 "Either while reading the drama or writing the music, I never, not for a moment, thought about the religious or national features, or drew my inspiration from that. I was interested only in human emotion, that is to say universal in itself." From the conversation with the author.

3 A few years ago a composer from Sarajevo, Bosniak Asim Horozić, wrote and performed his opera *Hasanaginica*, after the eponymous folk poem. It uses completely Romantic, perhaps even early Romantic music language, with many national, mostly Moslem characteristics, both in the melodic lines and in the orchestral apparatus, exploited very modestly. For the most part, it is reminiscent of early national operas of the Slavonic peoples, created in the 19<sup>th</sup> century: a kind of song-and-dance play, with simple melodies all based on Bosniak folklore. It is also labelled as "the first Bosniak opera". However, it may be the best one, the most original, the most national and "the most Bosniak", but it is not the first one - that is *Jazavac pred sudom* [The Badger on Trial] by Vlado Milošević.

by the greatest of temptations, searches for life's energy, and dreams about happiness and love... On the other hand, the issue of shame became the subject of many texts which dealt with *Hasanaginica* as a poem, and all three main characters have been treated in numerous studies.

Apparently, some problems during the opera performance seem to stem from the very fact that the composer used Lj. Simović's lexis which, no matter how it is transposed into an opera and vocal genre, cannot be either understood or sung properly, because the obligatory adherence to the correct stresses in the Serbian language leads to a complicated rhythmic-metric structure, which often sounds chaotic in the choir. The musicality of the folk poem's verses is extraordinary. We quote only the key moment in the plot, when Hasanaga sends a message to his wife:

*Ne čekaj me u dvoru bjelomu  
Ni u dvoru ni u rodu momu<sup>4</sup>*

*[Wait not for me in our white home  
Neither in the home nor in my kin]*

No matter how indisputable we find the music of the verses, it is possible that the author strived for harsher expression and language.

Rastislav Kambasković's opera is composed in three acts and five scenes.

The first act is introductory, with mass and choir scenes: it is based on the choir of soldiers in a military hospital on a mountain, wounded, tormented, and far away from their homes after four months of warfare.

It is a male choir where the parts interweave in irregular rhythms, on a dissonant and atonal harmonic basis, with biting chords and tension in the orchestral apparatus. The soldiers are angry with Hasanaga, who appears with Jusuf, the main executor of his decisions. Hasanaga tells Jusuf that he does not want his wife to wait for him at home. The reason seems to be both slight and unconvincing – because she did not come to visit him while he was wounded in the mountain. Jusuf sides with her, saying that she was abiding by the custom to preserve his honour and his good name, but Hasanaga sees only unrequited love combined with the imperiousness of the house of bey Pintorović, an old lineage and family of lofty rank, proud and ready to scorn anything unworthy of their position. Persuasion is futile and Jusuf is obliged to carry out his master's will. Jusuf's and Hasanaga's duet has sharp lines and wide leaps in a basically fragmentary melodic structure.

The first act consists of two scenes: the mass scene in the mountain, with an array of soloists, and the other in Hasanaga's home with four characters, built firstly upon the dialogue between Jusuf and Hasanaginica, and then between bey

---

4 Vuk St. Karadžić, *Srpske narodne pjesme*, Prosveta, Belgrade, 1969.

Pintorović, her brother, and Hasanaga's mother, who can only offer insanity and temporary mental derangement as an explanation for her son's irrevocable decision to drive his wife from their home, the child and himself. The second act begins with the same scene the previous one ended with: three characters on stage, in the room and house of bey Pintorović – the bey himself, his mother and sister, Hasanaginica. The preparations for the unfortunate woman's wedding are in progress, and no matter how much she opposes her brother, he is relentless, because he does not only want to marry her off well, but also to exact his revenge on Hasanaga.

In our opinion, it would be quite logical if those two scenes belonged to the same act and the curtain and the intermission brought the change in the stage ambiance.

The great monologue and aria of bey Pintorović build his character as one of the most significant in the opera. One senses that there is a great deal of tense and restrained suffering and misfortune, both his own and that of the family name and house, for which he feels personally responsible.

The third act is the sublimation of the whole work, a majestic finale in the spirit of the great Romantic operas. All operatic elements are used. The choir is divided, all the main characters are on the stage, and the ballet leaves a special impression – with wedding round dances for the upcoming marriage ceremony of Hasanaginica and the *cadi* of Imotski. The drama gradually reaches the climax, foreshadowed by several ensembles (duet, trio) and the fierce dispute between the relentless Hasanaga and bey Pintorović. The folklore framework of the opera is mostly provided by the dances, as well as the female choir number, which has the same meaning as the choir of *Polovets* girls from Borodin's *The Prince Igor*. This act also includes a very interesting *Glamoč* round dance with female dancers and added text, based upon several different folk melodies, in 2/4 time. The most striking is the quotation "Sini, sini sjaj meseče" ["Shine, Shine, Glittering Moon"], taken from Zorislava Vasiljević's records, noticeably homophonic, scored for the female choir, tender, melodious, as if it belongs to some stylistic and expressive world. This quotation is sung by the wedding guests and accompanied by a female dance.

The tastefully applied polyphony stems from a subject and two countersubjects, and appears in numerous ensembles (duets, trios and quartet). The most convincing is the duet of Jusuf and Hasanaga in the first act, which introduces the issue to the stage. The next ensemble, a quartet (Hasanaginica, Hasanaga's mother, bey Pintorović, Jusuf) focuses the subject and the issue, while the trio of Hasanaginica, Hasanaga and bey Pintorović puts all three characters in the same place and resolves the final meeting, in the last act, completely differently from the musical and psychological standpoint – as a conflict and difference of views upon the work's issue. Hasanaga indignantly looks at the jewellery and gems on his wife, who is marrying another man, and hurls cynical and bitter remarks, which are sharply stressed. Hasanaginica recognizes the wall, the walnut tree, the windows of her home, and she is in a lyrical gamut, while the angry bey Pintorović wants everything to be over and to fulfil his intention as swiftly as possible.

The main ensembles, by themselves, form the dramaturgical skeleton of the entire opera and the whole dramaturgy can be followed just with them. The vocal language of the work is of a recitative-arioso type, and if a certain monologue becomes more developed and rises to an aria, the orchestral accompaniment is full of added-second chords and dissonances which sharpen the acoustic impression.

The arias, few in number, are characterized by melodic lines full of leaps, without cadences, with no particular challenges from the coloratura or virtuoso department, but with great demands for clarity of intonation and expressivity. Hasanagica's final aria "Šta sad da radim" ["What should I do now"], occupies a special place, when she bids farewell to the child and dies over the crib. Lyrical, charged with emotional energy, tragic as it can be, somewhat sentimental as well, but deeply moving too, the scene does not fail to draw tears from the audience.

The third act covers the large amplitude of wedding songs and dances, quotations of folklore melodies, "female" and "male" scenes, conflicts between the main characters and their simultaneous appearance on the stage. The direct confrontation, Hasanaga's scorn, his implacability, mistrust of the deepest maternal emotions, the "crucifixion" of the mother's soul and her farewell to her child, which leads to her death – are the resolution to the whole drama.

An unhappy woman, mother and daughter, Hasanaginica is also married to an unhappy man ("Sve što poželim meni postaje kazna" ["Everything I wish for turns into a punishment for me"]), who endures the fate of his milieu, is a slave to his own short-tempered nature and customs, faces the hardship of military life and – only suggested in the opera – the problem of his impotence as the motive for abandoning his wife. Of course, in the folk poem there is not even a hint of this issue: on the contrary, conflict breaks out among the characters in the poem much earlier, while in the drama the confrontation is postponed until the end. Both mothers, Hasanaga's and Hasanaginica's, are unhappy too, as well as the brother, bey Pintorović, who has no other purpose or interest in life than to get his sister remarried, save her honour and the honour of the family.

Everyone had been waiting for seven years for offspring, an heir, and that finally happened, as it seems, only through Hasanaga's violence rather than love. Thus, the bitterness of an unloved and rejected husband is all the more dreadful. And when Hasanaga kisses his dead wife, it is for the first time that she did not turn her head away, that she did not rebuff him. Only when she was mute and cold, could he hold her in his arms without resistance.

Stylistically, the opera travels from neo-Romanticism to Expressionism, i.e. from the German type of late Romanticism through a combination with Slavonic national-type opera. A large part of the opera uses atonal harmonic language, but there are some short moments of tonality. The scale and chord structure of the chromitized major-minor system also originate from the language of Richard Strauss.

## MANDRAGOLA BY IVAN JEVTIĆ

For the first time in his very fruitful career of a composer, Ivan Jevtić (1947) undertook the opera genre, choosing comedy as a fitting expression. Here he demonstrated his best traits: a frolicsome Rabelaisian spirit, colourful orchestration, witty twists, fun that does not exceed the limits of good taste, sometimes frivolous, markedly erotic, but also a naïve operatic story. His characters arise from the Italian *commedia dell'arte*, but also from the modern theatre of Prokofievian provenance; at the same time they are prototypes – they combine Figaro, Almaviva, Leporello and Don Giovanni.

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527), a Renaissance figure of the Italian 16<sup>th</sup> century, a renowned thinker, statesman, historian, poet and writer, wrote *Mandragola* (1518), a character comedy in five acts with a versified prologue. This version is known to our readership (published by Prosveta, 1965, translated by Vera Bakotić-Mijušković) as one of the rare Florentine comedies of its time, which, with a lot of satire, swoops down on the church and the entire rank of friars, exposing them to ridicule and derision. The subject was frequently treated in all types and genres: it revolves around an old husband with a beautiful young wife who attracts men; in this comedy it involves an infertile couple who, after many years of marriage, want an heir, a child, but cannot have one.

A magic potion called *mandragola* solves the infertility problem in a somewhat intricate and complicated, but effective way. A young wooer, handsome and rich, and a beautiful married woman join their passions, bringing happiness to the old, infertile husband who longs for a child (an heir). The servants, neighbours, even the mother, and most of all, the esteemed friar – a corrupt man who, under the motto “the end justifies the means”, is the prototype of the unscrupulousness known as “Machiavellianism” – contribute to the immoral deed.

The Serbian version of Machiavelli’s comedy in verses was adapted by Vesna Miladinović, preserving all the elements of the source and adding some of our typical, well-known symbols so that the comedy would gain in credibility, recognizability, topicality of the time, region, language and milieu where the opera came into being. The ending was changed. In Machiavelli’s text, everyone goes to the church for a family lunch. At the end of the opera libretto, the babies multiply, adding significance to the times we live in, with the birth-rate declining drastically.

Jevtić’s comic work is a chamber opera, without a choir, but with numerous ensembles that replace it and with a very elaborate and developed orchestral part that takes over certain roles from the comedy subject and upgrades them in a very specific way.

The opera begins with an overture, which we would rather call a prologue: unlike orchestral overtures, it is not only played but sung as well, and it also represents an introduction which announces the whole flow, plot and resolution of the comedy.

At the very beginning of the work, in the vocal parts of Kalimako and Siro, we recognize all the elements of a developed vocal language: starting from speaking-

reciting and recitativo-parlando, via both kinds of operatic recitative and arioso, we arrive at completely self-contained numbers such as an aria. The author does not follow the flexions of the spoken word, but complies with the laws of the inner impulse, rhythm and melodic texture.

The Renaissance sound in the vocal parts and the orchestra is quite discreet at some points, and associative or fully open at others. The instrumental combinations in the orchestra are coloured by the harpsichord and the saxophone, apart from the harps and percussion. There is a Brazilian instrument among the percussion, the *cuíca*, which attests to the presence and influence of Brazilian music on the author's procedure.

The numerous melodic lines, either vocal or instrumental, consist of leaps and consecutive fourths, less often fifths; however, the chord structure is tertian, the harmonic language tonal, somewhere modal too, with unusual harmonic connections and turns, designed for the purposes of a Renaissance story and the plot.

The typified characters have their particular vocal lines: the stupid old cuckold Niča, as well as the swift, clever and resourceful Ligurio, a real "deus ex machina". The agile and skilful servant Siro, the corrupt friar Timoteo, the infatuated, rich and experienced Kalimako, who stops at nothing; the characters of the two women, Izabela, loyal, religious, devoted to prayers and God, who soon falls in love, but becomes lecherous, while her mother Sostrata, who entices her into debauchery and promiscuity, fits into the typified characters of older procuresses, also ridiculed by Machiavelli.

Ornaments, trills, glissandi emphasize the humorous content in the plot, on the one hand, while on the other evoke the particular style and time: the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The purity of the lines points to the stylistic prerogatives of the Neo-Renaissance, but the whole layer of quotations, neither small nor unimportant, indicates the typical treatment of the quotation in the Post-Modern art of our time.

Some instruments have been used very effectively, so they alone become leit-motifs of certain situations, e.g. the tuba, saxophone and bass clarinet.

The harmonic language owes a lot to the Orthodox Christian and secular Balkan tradition, with a bridge to Brazilian folk music, which the author listened to and met with at the source. Brazilian inspirations and associations can often be discerned in the melodic and rhythmic elements of the opera.

Apart from predominant diatonicism and pure harmonic structures, there are numerous polyphonic moments in several short sections of the work, as well as in the fugue at the very end.

The opera is divided into two larger parts. The first ends with a grand finale, as befits the older type of opera, with the participation of three out of the seven characters. However, this vocal-instrumental ensemble, which replaces a choral number, leads to general hysteria and happiness ("Bez ikakvog truda i muke, stiže muško iz prve ruke!" ["Without any exertion or pain, a healthy little son we will gain!"]) Everyone has a vested interest: the duped husband to get an heir,



the crafty servants to get on the good side of their masters, the infatuated Kalimako to get his beloved Izabela, and friar Timoteo to wheedle out his gold pieces.

Although the comedy touches on buffoonery, the burlesque, the situation comedy, it has many layers, hence, one that is more intimate and lyric, because Kalimako is honestly in love with the most beautiful, most faithful, most virtuous woman who ever lived in the world, and that exaggeration of his is echoed in the lyric aria from the beginning of the second act, introduced by an exceptional bass clarinet solo which, by its own timbre and the melody of the romantic flow and sound, paints the young man's sincere emotions.

At suitable moments, we hear musical quotations connected with our region ("Nais banja, topla voda"), or reminiscent of some of the most popular melodies, such as the aria "Nessun dorma" (Puccini, *Turandot*), sung by the greatest world tenors, and which was a kind of a trademark for Pavarotti. Even the ending of the aria ("Vincero, vincero!") interferes with the nocturnal action, so the ambiguity of the text ("I will win!") which is directly related to the amorous goings-on in Niča's house, leads to the culmination of the scene, achieved with all the expressive means available. From a tenor part, here it is transferred to the bass line, sung by friar Timoteo. Even the quibbling, gullible and corruptible priest has an excuse for himself and the world for what he wholeheartedly takes part in ("jer je pad nataliteta propast za budućnost sveta" ["since the birth-rate fall is the undoing of us all"]). However, his care for the soul and a guilty conscience are easily assuaged by the clinking of gold pieces in his pocket.

The orchestral intermezzo, entitled *Intermezzo Sexualis*, leads to the Duetto Amorooso of the two young people who, after a wild night, have no intention of parting ways, but want to continue their love idyll.

While everyone is waiting for the newborn, the music carries quotations from all of Antonio Vivaldi's *Four Seasons*, and the very end of the work is a fugue upon the subject "Prava je bajka postati majka" ["Being a mother - a fairytale rather"]. In a particular and ecstatic way, the alto saxophone colours the heat of the summer which cannot end soon enough for the impatient Niča who yearningly awaits the happy event and "his" baby. This is one of the opera's most beautiful numbers: with its Latin melodic lines and sensitivity, it connects our tradition and the Brazilian one.

The epilogue, where all seven characters take part in the grand, almost "choral" ending of the work, glorifies the joy of giving birth, the joy of life, comedy as such ("Nema patnje, nema bola, / Život je smešna zgoda, kao naša Mandragola" ["No suffering, no scare, / Like our Mandragola, life is a funny affair"]), removing all doubt in honest intentions ("Igra ova nije neugodna Bogu..." ["This game does not displease God..."]), but the epilogue's irony, satire and even grotesque also reveal the other face of life, deceit, immorality, corruption - and also love ("Igra ova priča o ljubavi / Jer da do nje stigne, čovek čuda pravi" ["Love is the subject of this story / 'Cause man will stop at nothing to reach its glory"]).

Ivan Jevtić's comic opera *Mandragola* occupies a very special place in the history of Serbian music and the history of opera literature in our region, because at-

tempts at reviving a character comedy are extremely rare. Even on a world scale, the examples of this genre are very scarce and seldom composed in our time (Shostakovich, *The Nose*; Gotovac, *Ero s onoga svijeta*).

Jevtić is witty, the purpose of his language is purely comic, the element of humour as such, the buffoonery which gladdens one's heart, is warm, sincere, close to the Renaissance era and Renaissance man just as much as it is necessary and mellowing in our traumatic 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The hedonistic attitude towards music, achieving a relaxed quality and easiness of expression, kindred to the old masters, in a classical work which retains the author's personal and original procedure, recognizable from his other chamber and concert works, is sublimated in this work in a special, authentic and extraordinary way. The expressive means are mainly focused on the melody in all its assets, partly in the vocal lines, but also in the occasional solo entries of the orchestral instruments, and then in the luxuriant rhythm which lends an inner dynamic to the entire event.

With masterful orchestration and interesting harmonic turns, worthy of the masters and classics of 20<sup>th</sup> century music, Jevtić joins those authors in the world who brought comedy and the comic to the stage as a new theatrical quality of the time, corresponding with human flaws and weaknesses as much as with the values seen in love and giving birth, which are eternal human desires and needs, be they in the 16<sup>th</sup> or in our century.

The better intelligibility of the text would help achieve a greater comic effect, and special care in giving prominence to the melodic lines, particularly the vocal ones, would contribute to the buffoonery having its self-contained sections and numbers, without which an opera is inconceivable. The vocal parts are mostly led in an instrumental way, without pauses in the text or the music, without oases of the vocal element, which should take precedence in an opera. The great demands on the singers refer both to vocal expression and their stage movements, particularly acting. This means that the work poses numerous problems for the *mise-en-scène* and stage realization, which were successfully overcome at the premiere performance in the Madlenianum.<sup>5</sup>

## INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION

After a long while, through a combination of various circumstances, at the end of 2009, two very different domestic operas appeared on our stages less than a month apart: *Hasanaginica* by Rastislav Kambasković and *Mandragola* by Ivan Jevtić. Both works are firstlings in their authors' respective opuses, completely

---

5 The premiere of Jevtić's comic opera *Mandragola* took place on the stage of the Madlenianum Opera and Theatre, on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2009. Directed by Slobodan Unkovski, stage design Meta Hočevar, costume design Angelina Atlagić, the Orchestra and the Choir of the Madlenianum Opera and Theatre conducted by Olivier Grangean, soloists: Miodrag Miša Jovanović, Snežana Savičić, Vladimir Andrić, Tanja Obrenović, Ljubomir Popović, Nenad Jakovljević and Saša Štulić.

different in character, form, language and artistic achievements. Their premieres drew great attention in Belgrade, but serious texts and remarks from expert and musicologists' circles are still scarce.

With the intention to encourage them, and debate with others and put forward various opinions, we did not present only personal views, but were guided by the success and reception of the works by the Belgrade audience.

Interesting, and with a multitude of meanings and layers, the works were staged differently too, but essentially, they took a long time to prepare and were created with high artistic ambitions. Such an attitude towards domestic art and domestic works – either in the directing-production sphere or the performing dimension – merits special reference and special attention.

Translated by Goran Kapetanović

Бранка Радовић

ДВА ЛИКА ОПЕРЕ  
Премијере нових српских опера *Хасанагиница* Растислава  
Камбасковића и *Мандрагола* Ивана Јевтића

РЕЗИМЕ

После дуго времена, стицајем различитих околности, на нашим сценама су се у року мањем од месец дана, крајем 2009. године појавиле две сасвим различите домаће опере, „Хасанагиница“ Растислава Камбасковића и „Мандрагола“ Ивана Јевтића.

Оба дела су првенци жанра у опусима својих стваралаца, сасвим различита по карактеру, форми, језику и уметничким донетима. Њихове премијере су у београдској средини изазвале велику пажњу, а у круговима стручњака и музиколога тек прве озбиљније написе и оцене.

У намери да их подстакнемо, полемишемо са другима и сучељавамо мишљења, нисмо експлицирали искључиво личне судове, већ смо се руководили успехом и рецепцијом дела код београдске публике.

Занимљива, вишезначна, слојевита, дела су доживела и различите поставке на сцени, али обе у својој суштини дуго припремане и рађене са великим уметничким амбицијама. Такав однос према домаћој уметности и домаћим делима, било да се ради о режијској и продукцијској или о извођачкој димензији, заслужују посебан осврт и посебну позорност.

**Кључне речи:** Растислав Камбасковић, Иван Јевтић, опера, либрето, драма, музички језик, главни ликови