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**Petar Konjović:
Ženidba Miloševa [The Wedding of
Miloš] and Seljaci [Peasants]
Double Compact Disc
EDITION PROBUĐENI ARHIV
[AWAKENED ARCHIVE]**

Released by Musicological Institute of
SASA, Radio Belgrade Broadcasting
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Publishing Belgrade, 2012

After the Musicological Institute of the Serbian Academy of Arts and Sciences (SASA) had celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2009, and the Radio Belgrade in the same year had reached eighty years of activity, the two institutions joined their professional forces and initiated a cooperative project titled *Probuđeni arhiv* (Project Manager: Danica Petrović, PhD, Director of the Musicological Institute of SASA; Project Coordinator: Branka Vuković, Assistant Director of Radio Belgrade). The

first result of the project was released in 2011, with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia and the Institute for Textbook Publishing. It was a double compact disc with the recordings of works by the composer and academician Stanojlo Rajičić – the opera *Simonida* and the symphonic song cycle *Na liparu* [*In a Linden Grove*] – whose creativity and overall activity strongly marked the development of Serbian and Yugoslav music in the 20th century.

Pursuant to the main idea of the *Probuđeni arhiv* project – to eventually include/digitalize and suitably present all the important works of Serbian artistic music, as well as the continuous development of performance in Serbia – the cooperation between the Musicological Institute of SASA and the Radio Belgrade continued in 2012. The second CD release within the project contains two operas by one of the most significant Serbian operatic composers – Petar Konjović (1883–1970): *Ženidba Miloševa*, “romantična opera u tri čina” [“romantic opera in three acts”] and *Seljaci*, “narodna opera u tri čina” [“popular opera in three acts”].

Partial recordings of Konjović’s early opera, which was at the same time one of the first Serbian achievements in the genre – the composer revised his first draft of *Ženidba Miloševa* upon returning from his studies in Prague (1903/1904), at Miloje Milojević’s suggestion, then made further amendments prior to the premiere in Zagreb (25th April 1917), when the opera was renamed *Vilin veo* [*The Fairy’s Veil*] due to Austro-Hungarian censorship, and finally edited the work yet again, preparing a new performance in Zagreb (4th October 1922) – are presented on the first disc. Record-

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ings of *Ženidba Miloševa* kept in the Radio Belgrade Archive are incomplete; hence, instead of the first act, the first compact disc contains the orchestral suite (six movements) and three fragments, the second act performed integrally and the “Festive March” from the third act. The material was recorded in 1958 (three fragments from the first act, the second act), 1962 (orchestral suite from the first act) and 1969 (“Festive March” from the third act). The conductors were Oskar Danon, Živojin Zdravković and Milan Horvat; the ensembles were the Radio-Television Belgrade Choir and Symphony Orchestra and the Zagreb Philharmonic, while the soloists were Radmila Vasović-Bakočević, Drago Starc, Mirjana Vrčević, Žarko Cvejić, Dušan Popović, Dušan Cvejić and Zora Mojsilović.

The second compact disc of the *Probuđeni arhiv* edition contains the integral recording of Konjović’s opera *Seljaci*, written in 1951 after Janko Veselinović’s play *Đido* [*The Hero*], and premiered in 1952 at the National Theatre in Belgrade. The specific quality of this acoustic document is the fact that the overture (performed by the Radio-Television Belgrade Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Franc Klinar, in 1968) and the three operatic acts (the Radio-Television Belgrade Choir and Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Borislav Pašćan, in 1960) were recorded separately. The roles were sung by Žarko Cvejić, Nikola Jančić, Đorđe Đurđević,

Zvonimir Krnetić, Tomislav Reno, Nikola Mitić, Aleksandar Veselinović, Dušan Janković, Olga Đokić, Olga Milošević and Milica Miladinović.

The compact disc is supplied with a detailed and very expertly written programme booklet in the Serbian and English languages, supplemented with visual material, i.e. photographs from various performances of the operas, kept in the Archive of the Musicological Institute of SASA. The texts about the composers and their position in the history of Serbian music, the historical and stylistic aspects of the works and detailed synopses of the operas were written by Melita Milin, PhD, translation into English was done by Charles Robertson, graphic design by Milan Janić, and the sound design and mastering by Zoran Marinković. The entire preparation of this release was supported by the Ministry of Culture, Information and Information Society of the Republic of Serbia, and the manufacturing was facilitated by the Scientific Work Fund of SASA and the Institute for Textbook Publishing.

The new CD release within the *Probuđeni arhiv* project not only successfully continues the series of ‘overviews’ of paradigmatic works of Serbian (operatic) music, but also reveals, both to the domestic and foreign audience, the Radio Belgrade’s rich and unique sound archive.

Translated by Goran Kapetanović