

ment's function, that is, its deconstruction of sorts. Namely, instead of clearly shaped themes, Marković used minimalist tools to generate the musical flow in this section of the piece, repetition and gradation that, through dense and dissonant sonorities, grow into a culmination, realized by means of expressive piano arpeggiations and rather intense orchestra dynamics. Finally, another interesting feature in *Kammerkonzert* is the author's decision to use a musical quotation to strike up a dialogue with another *concertante* work, one from the standard repertoire. The quotation is a motive from Brahms's *Second Piano Concerto*, which in Marković's piece appears twice – at its first appearance, it is easily recognizable, whereas the second time it is partly obscured by a torrent of fiery passages in the piano part.

What one might criticize regarding Beljaković and Marković's works is their insufficient work on defining concrete thematic materials – they generate the tissue of their works primarily by layering (cluster) sections and repetitive figurations one on top of another, whereas in the preceding pieces one could clearly hear their authors' need to shape concrete thematic entities in constructing the overall sound picture. That is why in *Concerto da camera* and *Kammerkonzert* it seemed, at times, as if form had taken precedence over content. However, that certainly cannot diminish their overall quality, which truly raised these two works above the rest of the repertoire and thus marked the 11<sup>th</sup> *KoMA* festival.

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## NIKOLA PEJČINOVIĆ

### The 24<sup>th</sup> International Review of Composers

The 24<sup>th</sup> International Composers' Review was held in Belgrade between 24 and 30 September 2015 under the title of *The Music Box*. In some 67 featured works by authors from 18 countries (countries of the former Yugoslavia, the United States, Netherlands, Cyprus, Greece, Poland, Great Britain, China, Romania, Sweden, Italy, Lithuania, and South Korea), last year's festival developed its chosen thematic framework in various ways, but for the most part in conceptual and mimetic terms, by evoking the sonic and timbral qualities of music boxes. Thus drawing inspiration from this mechanical instrument, the composers sought to realize their creative potentials and explore how the workings of a musical box might be transferred/posited in the discourse of art music.

A possible answer to that question was offered already on the Review's opening night, on 24 September, on the Raša Plaović stage of the National Theatre in Belgrade, with a concert programme titled *Kaleidoskop (za decu i odrasle) Nade Kolundžije* (Kaleidoscope (for Children and Grown-ups) by Nada Kolundžija). The presentation of the Mokranjac Award to composer Svetlana Savić for her work *Zarobljena* (Trapped) for women's choir and electronics was followed by a multi-

media programme conceived by American director Scott Fielding. It comprised 16 pieces, most of which were premièred that evening, for piano, toy piano, musical boxes, and electronics, performed by pianists Nada Kolundžija, Jovana Đorđević, and Darja Damjanović, with the participation of Bojan Barić, an animator, and Miloš Milić, a pantomime artist. Indeed, pantomime was the tool the artists used to lend the entire evening, right from the start, the character of a performance with a critically driven narrative as a commentary on our time. Milić's character is one who lives quickly, in monotony, and without much thinking. One day, he stumbles upon a musical box under his bed, which changes his life and way of thinking – by setting its mechanism in motion, he, along with the audience, enters the world of music, that is, the concert. And there we were greeted by a repertoire whose mechanical musical flow sent us, in a peculiar way, a message similar to the message of Milić's acting. In the first place, we would locate in that category pieces that featured toy pianos: *Preludijum* (Prelude) and *Nađino kolo* (Nada's Round Dance) by Miloš Raičković, the *Suite* by John Cage, *Satie Blues* and *Nightmare Rag* by Toby Twining, *The Memory of Roses* by Louis Andriessen, as well as pieces featuring musical boxes: Andriessen's *Deuxième chorale*, *Fofi & Michalis* and *mobylette* by Yannis Kyriakides, *Trace* by Richard Barrett, *Mehanička tema* (Mechanical Theme) by Ivan Elezović, and *Verbatim* by Miroslav Savić. Especially noteworthy were Barić's *Iz dečjeg ugla – Serenada za lutku, klavir, Debisija, mikrofon, Logic, dva zvučnika i teremin* (From a Children's Angle: Serenade for a Doll, Piano, Debussy, Microphone, Logic, Two

Speakers, and Theremin) and *Odbrojavam* (And Counting) by Irena Popović, because they offered a sublimation of two elements that were woven together throughout the concert: repetitive sound environments and the concept of a children's theatre play. Thus, in Barić's work we could see a doll "playing the role" of a performer and, connected to the Theremin, "performing" music on that instrument, while Irena Popović based her piece on a synthesis of the multi-layered sound of musical boxes and a simple repetitive text similar to a nursery rhyme. However, despite having sought to offer a more potent artistic concept, the entire repertoire left the impression of unpretentiousness and simplicity and it is certain that the programme of *Kaleidoscope (for Children and Grown-ups)*, which opened the 24<sup>th</sup> Composers' Review, afforded the greatest pleasure to the youngest members of the audience.

On the second day, September 25, the Hall of the National Bank of Serbia hosted *The Construction Site Ensemble*, who performed Aleksandar Perunović's *Metalglasswork* for piano, Darija Andovska's *DOrMIRNO* for flute, clarinet, and piano, Dimitris Maronidis's *Anthems* for flute, clarinet, piano, violin, and violoncello, *Drei Musikhomoeopathistucke* for violin, clarinet, and piano by Dragana Jovanović, *Melanolija* (Melancholia) for oboe, violin, violoncello, and piano by Milan Mihajlović, and Katarina Glowicka's *Favola* for piano and electronics. Regarding these pieces, one should take special note of *Metaglasswork*, *Anthems*, *Melanolija*, and *Favola*, primarily on account of their notably postmodernist approach to the treatment of musical material. In *Metalglasswork*, Perunović offers the listener a

peculiar, deconstructivist take on Philip Glass's *Music Box* (the opening track of the horror film *Candyman*). Perunović accomplished this by varying the melody and accompaniment of Glass's piece, whilst retaining the steady movement and repetitiveness of the original material and making changes to the melody, rhythm, and tempo, evoking the sound of a music box. Maronidis took a similar approach in his *Anthems*, a postmodernist artistic pun on the subject of national anthems from various countries. Since anthems are usually serious in character, this new musical environment lent them a more subtle sensibility. By contrast, instead of focusing on working with musical materials, it seems that the authors of *Melanholija* and *Favola* concentrated on re-examining sonorities and portraying various moods. In the musical tissue of *Melanholija*, the main motive – a descending minor third (B-flat–G) – is used in various combinations of colour and changes of character. In *Favola*, Katarina Glowicka re-examined the sonic potential of an entire medium – the piano – by placing it in conflict with an electronic sound environment.

The next day of the festival, day three, was marked by two concerts. The first was the concert by the Belgrade-based *Mixed String Quartet*, featuring Vuk Kulenović's *String Quartet No. 6*, Ana Kazimić's *Pirouettes of Emerald* for oboe and string quartet, Đuro Živković's *Psalm XIII* for string quartet, Hadi Ayanbod's *Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil* for oboe and string quartet, and Man-Ching Donald Yu's *Head on Vortex*. It seems as if these works, in terms of their sound qualities, had little in common with the thematic concept of last year's Review, since they are based on ele-

ments such as a chromaticized musical tissue (*Head on Vortex*), changes of timbre (*Tree of the Knowledge...*), and a melodic line supported by a pedal point (*Psalm XIII*). In that sense, the only piece that stood out was Ana Kazimić's *Pirouettes of Emerald*, implementing the same material in three different characters and accelerating and decelerating the musical flow as a way to allude to the mechanism of a musical box.

On the same night, the main event featured a concert of the Romanian ensemble *devotioModerna* from Bucharest, who presented works by Romanian composers: *Sonata* for solo clarinet by Tiberiu Olah, *Sonorities and "Forget-me-not"* for flute and piano by Ulpiu Vlad, *Mithya I.* for solo flute by Doina Rotaru, *Four Inscriptions* for piano by Adrian Iorgulescu, *den der Tag war noch ganz* for flute by Carmen Maria Cârnci, *Triplum* for clarinet, violoncello, and piano by Ștefan Niculescu, *apfelStrudel* for flute, clarinet, violoncello, and piano by Mihai Murariu, as well as a work by a Serbian composer, *Dejan Despić's Manchester Trio* for clarinet, violoncello, and piano. The most memorable aspect of this concert was its repertoire, featuring works by Romanian composers from various periods, including the 1960s (*Sonata* for solo clarinet), 1970s (*Triplum* and *Four Inscriptions*), and 2000s (*Sonorities and "Forget-me-not"*, *Mithya I.*, *den der Tag war noch ganz*, and *apfelStrudel*). The overall sound picture of the concert, except the more moderate and coherent *Manchester Trio*, was extremely expressive, primarily because the Romanian composers' works are for the most part predicated on avant-garde compositional devices, as well as on re-examining the

potentials of various non-standard performing techniques.

In their second performance at the 24<sup>th</sup> Composers' Review, The Construction Site Ensemble held a concert on Sunday, 27 September 2015, at the National Bank of Serbia Hall. The concert featured the following works: *Wreck of Silence* for mezzo-soprano, baritone, violoncello, and electronics by Ivana Ognjanović; *Buka u unutrašnjoj tišini* (Noise Amid Internal Silence) for flute, oboe, clarinet, percussion, and piano by Miloš Zatkalik; *I Do Not Love You – Except I Love You* for soprano and flute by Jasna Veljanović; *Kapričo* (Capriccio) for solo clarinet by Ante Grgin; *Odmrzavanje* (Thawing) by Božo Banović; *Trag* (Trace) for soprano, clarinet, and piano by Aleksandar Vujić; *Phyllody. Quiescence* for flute, piano, accordion, violoncello, and double bass by Ana Gnjatović; and *Klanjalica* (Bowling Song) by Nina Perović. The concert began with Ivana Ognjanović's *Wreck of Silence*, a piece realized by combining an electronic sound layer, comprising short and slowed down musical fragments of an ordinary music box melody and a vocal-instrumental part. In his piece, Zatkalik produced an interesting play of silence and an expressive type of musical flow in a series of contrasting movements, whose titles – *Vrisak* (Scream), *Krici i šaputanja* (Screams and Whispers), *...kao da je sama magla kliknula...* (...as though fog itself were shouting...), *Glas onoga što više u pustinji* (The Voice of One Crying Out in the Desert), *Buka i bes* (Noise and Rage), and *Ostalo je ćutanje* (All That Remains Is Silence) – are already an indication of a rather dramatic musical tissue. As for Grgin's *Kapričo*, Banović's *Odmrzavanje*, and Vujić's *Trag*, one could

hardly say that they attracted much attention, mostly due to the unpretentious expression, as well as simple but insufficiently developed conceptions. By contrast, Ana Gnjatović's *Phyllody. Quiescence* and Nina Perović's *Klanjalica*, which finished the evening, featured a more carefully conceived structure and a more dynamic musical flow resulting from ideas full of imagination.

The main attraction of the festival's day four was *The Box*, a performance conceived by the Swedish *Themus Ensemble*, comprising Tony Blomdahl, Andreas Hall, and Mansoor Hosseini. In a sort of theatrical performance based on improvisation, this ensemble sought to explore the possibilities of using everyday items – mugs, spoons, newspapers, and a wooden box – to generate sound. The overall impression of the entire performance was one of absurdity and shock, due to its seemingly incoherent form, as well as the content itself and the way it was realized. Playing with objects onstage, the artists generated sounds and rhythmic patterns, without a clear dramaturgical plan. The climax of the show was the smashing of a mobile phone that had ostensibly started ringing in the audience (in fact, this was part of the show), which was followed by breaking the wooden box and the table, which marked the end of the event itself. With this performance, *Themus Ensemble* offered the audience the freest treatment of the concept of "music box" in last year's Review.

The fifth day of the Review likewise offered two concerts. First, we had an opportunity to attend the concert promotion of a CD at the Ceremonial Hall of the Belgrade City Assembly. The CD was a release by pianist Vladimir Gligorić, featur-

ing piano works by Serbian composers: *Intime* (Intimacies) by Vasilije Mokranjac; *Empromti* (Impromptus) op. 12, Nos. 1 and 2 and *Komad* (Piece) op. 9, No. 2 by Vlastimir Trajković; *Impromptu* by Ivan Brkljačić; and *Il circo* by Isidora Žebeljan. That final piece was precisely the one that attracted the most attention. In it, the author sought to relay the sonic experience of a mechanical piano providing the musical accompaniment to a scene from a piece of musical theatre. This was accomplished by fragmenting the musical flow, by constantly changing its pace, as well as by using dissonances to allude to an out-of-tune mechanical piano, and it seems that the entire musical reference to the sound of a musical box in *Il circo* was quite convenient in terms of promoting Gligorić's release at last year's Review.

The second concert on the festival's fifth day was held at Radio Belgrade's Studio 6. It gave us an opportunity to hear works for the violin, clarinet, and piano, interpreted by *Movement Trio: Come un Ricordo* by Ada Gentile, *Rondeau* by Vladimir Tošić, *Kroz kutije zvuka* (Through Boxes of Sound) by Srđan Hofman, *Shaken from a Crane's Bill* by Ivan Božičević, *Šetnja sa Rinom* (A Walk with Rina) by Tatjana Milošević, and *Tempo mobile* by Svetlana Savić. The evening began with Ada Gentile's *Come un Ricordo*, a melancholy work of a lyric sensibility, whose overall sound picture rests on a synthesis between a subtle sonic environment in the piano part, violin harmonics, and prolonged soft tones in the clarinet's high register. With this kind of three-layer texture the author enables the audience to experience various colours of each of the three instruments. As for Vladimir Tošić's *Ron-*

*deau*, originally written for a symphony orchestra, concert-goers in Serbia have had opportunities to hear it in various instrumental combinations; *Movement Trio* performed it in an arrangement for violin, clarinet, and piano. The best quality of their interpretation of *Rondeau* was playing in such a way as to generate dynamically flat layers of sound, void of all emotion and expression, just as they should be in a musically repetitive and reductionist work. And that was reflected in a clear differentiation between minimalist thematic blocks, primarily by means of changes in timbre and dynamics. Among the works performed that evening, the best impression was made by Srđan Hofman's *Kroz kutije zvuka*. The work is based on a few simple motives, taken through several "boxes" featuring various musical stereotypes and ending with sound "trapped" inside a real box – a speaker. The work's material is first processed through a rhythmically developed tissue, realized by means of horizontal polymetre, whereupon its sound picture gains neo-impressionist contours, produced by chordal structures in the piano part. The work's entire musical flow then undergoes intensification through neo-expressionist means – treating the piano as a percussion instrument and fragmenting quasi-folkloric clichés in the violin and the clarinet; finally, the repetitive pattern breaks down to an ambient drone, realized in the electronic medium.

On the sixth day of the festival, *LENsemble* (Lithuanian Ensemble Network) presented a selection of works by Lithuanian composers at the Hall of the National Bank. The concert opened with *Rain for Cracow* for violin and piano by Osvaldas Balakauskas, a piece characterized by a

simple musical flow based on developing a single piece of motivic material. By contrast, Vytautas Germanavičius's *Cadenza* for violin and accordion was much richer, primarily in terms of colour and form, and applying experimental performing strategies, such as striking the body of the instrument, whistling and hissing, which pushed the music out of its traditional sound context. Compared to Germanavičius's piece, Vykintas Baltakas's *Recitativo* for violin and piano and *Commentum* for violoncello and piano did not offer very imaginative compositional solutions, featuring an inadequately elaborate treatment of musical material and simple dramaturgy, with gradation around the middle and an anticlimactic ending, in both works. By contrast, *Borderline* by Sonja Mutić made a more favourable impression, with a dramatically rather well constructed musical flow, enriched with constant ups and downs, and a more intense kind of expression. The concert ended with two more pieces by Germanavičius, *Stone's Suite* for solo accordion and *Chanson* for violin, piano, and accordion. *Stone's Suite* was especially well received, based on juxtaposing two layers, the first of which rests on developing a repetitive minor-third motive in the bass and the second on long, extended notes in the right hand. Those two mutually contrasting parts then come together in the middle section's cluster texture, only to come apart once again toward the end of the piece.

The final day of the 24<sup>th</sup> Composers' Review took place in the same venue that hosted the *LENsemble* concert. This time, the honour to close the festival went to the *Metamorfosis* string ensemble, with the following repertoire: *Kazivanje* (Narration)

by Anica Sabo; *Scene III* by Moon Young Ha; *Canti di vita e morte* by Predrag Repanić; *Bajka* (Fairytale) by Milica Paranosić; *Diamond-Meadow* by Szilárd Mezei; and *Melanholične svetkovine* (Melancholy Feasts) by Draško Adžić. The overall impression is that the concert was by and large dominated by Repanić's piece, featuring a genuine postmodernist musical web comprising various quotations and references – artefacts taken from the “box” of music history. The composer thus used the procedures of paraphrasing and parodying within a mostly polyphonic texture in order to develop musical materials by other composers in a rather free fashion. Among those materials, already at the start of the piece, one could recognize motives from “Frère Jacques”, Niccolò Paganini's *Capriccio No. 24*, the Kyrie from Mozart's *Requiem*, and Bach's *Art of the Fugue*, which form the basis of a canonical musical flow, first in the major and then in the minor mode. Set in this way, that soundscape then intensifies in a contrasting cluster texture, with references to the stylistic idioms of mostly expressionist and avant-garde composers, such as Alban Berg and György Ligeti. The dramaturgy of the entire piece rests on a conflict between a tonal and atonal sonic environment, where, in the end, in the struggle between life and death, suggested by the title of the piece – *Canti di vita e morte* – death triumphs.

The overall impression of the 24<sup>th</sup> Composers' Review is that the participants, inspired by the festival's thematic conception, managed to offer a heterogeneous and extensive repertoire of works. Thus, over the course of the festival, which went on for seven days, we could see the various faces of the sound world of musical boxes.

This was initially demonstrated by Nada Kolundžija's *Kaleidoscope (for Children and Grown-ups)*, with direct allusions, in terms of timbre and sound, to music boxes, and then in a series of performances where the music box was used as a conceptual source of creative potential (the performance by the Swedish ensemble *Themus*; Vladimir Gligorić's concert and those of *Movement Trio*, *Construction Site*, *Metamorfosis*, and *Mixed String Quartet*). Another peculiar feature of this Review was that two concert evenings were devoted to two national musical scenes: the Romanian, presented by *devotioModerna*, and Lithuanian, presented by *LENsemble*.

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#### **Back to the Future: Popular Music and Time (18<sup>th</sup> Biennial IASPM Conference in Campinas, 2015)<sup>1</sup>**

The International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM) is the main in-

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ternational professional society for popular music research. As an interdisciplinary organization, it gathers researchers mainly from areas of ethnomusicology, musicology and media studies who are interested in various problems of popular music (mainly Western/global music). IASPM held its 18<sup>th</sup> Biennial conference in Campinas (São Paulo, Brazil) at Universidade Estadual de Campinas from 29 June to 3 July 2015. The organizers claimed that approximately two hundred participants of various academic levels came from all over the world to present and discuss issues of “sonority, styles, performances, contents, production contexts and consumption”.

The conference topic was “Back to the future: Popular music and time” which included the sub-themes such as: ageing times (memory, archiving, ageing, recycling), historical and social times (history, genealogy, revitalization, timelessness), modern times (contemporary, new, future time), and phenomenological times (creative process, performance, listening). In addition, several papers were devoted to structural times (rhythm, tempo, ‘groove’, flow, periodicity, repetition, synchronization). Such themes provided enough breadth for scholars devoted to various materials and simultaneously, directed them to the extremely important topic for music research in general – temporality.

The symposium was organized in parallel sessions (five to eight sessions), which was challenging to follow, especially because some of the sessions were in the Portuguese language. Surprisingly, the sessions were not chaired, but luckily, on most occasions that enabled equable discussions among the participants. My listening schedule consisted of following the leading