

FESTIVAL MUSIC IN SERBIA

The first festival **Music in Serbia** (November 15-19, **1976**) featured four chamber concerts with a selection of the most valuable composition of the chamber genre by authors of diverse creative profiles, from Stanislav Binički to Josif Marinković, Petar Konjović, Josip Slavenski, to Aleksandar Obradović, Petar Bergamo, Mirjana Živković etc. The closing evening was an orchestra concert to mark the 80th anniversary of the birth of Josip Slavenski and twenty years from the death of Jovan Bandur.

The second festival (November 18-27, 1977) featured nine events, performed by Collegium Musicum Choir, Belgrade Chamber Ensemble, Radio Belgrade Jazz and Symphonic Orchestras, and numerous soloists. While reviving some of masterpieces from the past (choral works by Stevan Mokranjac, Marko Tajčević, Vojislav Ilić, Petar Konjović), the emphasis was on contemporary achievements and premieres. The concept was expanded so as to include an evening dedicated to composers from Kosovo and Vojvodina (the concert of the Chamber Orchestra of Novi Sad was cancelled) and a jazz evening. The Opera of the National Theater from Belgrade premiered the opera *Đurađ Branković* by Svetomir Nastasijević, and Opera of the Serbian National Theater from Novi Sad gave the premiere of *Jama* by Nikola Hercigonja.

The six concerts of the third festival (May 12-24, **1978**) comprised a broad spectrum ranging from renowned achievements to the most recent pieces. The opening evening featured the Artistic Ensemble of Yugoslav Armed Forces (conductor Angel Šurev), and the works performed included Stevan Hristić and Stanojlo Rajčić, as well as two premieres: Sixth Symphony by Aleksandar Obradović and *Ad vivum* by Slobodan Atanacković. Of the two chamber concerts, the first presented the youngest generation of composers (Ingeborg Bugarinović, Vuk Kulenović, Svetlana Maksimović), whereas the other was chiefly devoted to already well established compositions. The program of the Radio Belgrade Choir (Borivoje Simić) spanned across several generations from Josif Marinković, Stevan Mokranjac, Stevan Hristić to Dušan Radić, Rajko Maksimović and Minta Aleksinački. There was also an evening of the Radio Belgrade Jazz Orchestra and one devoted to the Composers Association of Vojvodina.

The fourth festival (May 24-June 12, 1979) brought some interesting genre innovations. Along with due respect paid to confirmed authors of the middle generation, more room was left for young composers (Žarko Mirković, Jugoslav Bošnjak, Dragoljub Ilić, Milovan Filipović, Vlastimir Trajković, Zoran Erić), and for the first time an evening of electroacoustic music was organized. An entire festival evening was devoted to excerpts from stage works by Stanislav Binički, Stevan Hristić, Petar Konjović, Nikola Hercigonja, Stanojlo Rajčić and Mihovil Logar. The closing concert was also rich genre-wise, striking a balance between classical and moderns works, ranging from Kosta Manojlović, Predrag Milošević, Ljubica Marić to Ingeborg Bugarinović, Vera Milanković, Ivana Stefanović. Jazz composers were also allotted an evening of their own, with Radio Belgrade Jazz Orchestra (conductor Zvonimir Skerl). A novelty was introduced in the form of Musicological Panel, in collaboration with the Musicological Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. Papers dealing with various topics were presented by Danica Petrović, Nadežda Mosusova, Mirjana Veselinović, Roksanda Pejović, Melita Blagojević and Petar Bingulac. This festival was organized in collaboration with the Serbian Association of Performing Artists, whose members took part in a greater number than before, and made possible the performance of a large number of works.

The fifth festival Music in Serbia (December 9-17, 1980) saw numerous changes in the realization of announced programs, with many cancellations on the part of performers. Faithful to domestic production, the harpsichord player Olivera Đurđević devoted her whole concert to composers both older and younger, including works by Nikola Hercigonja, Radomir Petrović, as well as Ivana Stefanović and Ingeborg Bugarinović. The balance between classical and recent creative production was achieved with the performance of the ballet *The Legend of Ohrid* by Stevan Hristić. The concert of the Radio Belgrade Symphony Orchestra and Choir premiered the composition *Cantus de morte* by Srđan Hofman, while Zemun String Quartet presented works by composers both older and younger. The evening of jazz and popular music was dedicated to Ilija Genić. An important segment of the festival was the celebration of Mihajlo Vukdragović's 80th birthday and commemoration of 25 years from the death of Josip Slavenski. Musicologist Marija Koren presented a paper about the academician Mihajlo Vukdragović, the man and composer; four of his *Vocal Lyric Songs* were performed by Aleksandra Ivanović and Olivera Đurđević, while Zemun String Quartet performed his String Quartet. Homage to Josip Slavenski was conceived as a musicological panel with overviews of various aspects of his work presented by Petar Bingulac, Roksanda

Pejović, Mirjana Živković and Eva Sedak (from Zagreb). Collegium Musicum performed several previously unknown choral works by Slavenski, and pianist Dubravka Kovačević played two recently discovered miniatures.

Due to financial contingencies – a chronic malady of the Festival – the Sixth Music in Serbia Festival held in December 1981 was partly made up of programs previously performed during the regular season. Born out of necessity, this fact also had a positive side, testifying to exceptional endeavors and dedication of a number of performing artists to domestic creative achievements. Among them were the singers Irina Arsikin and Slobodan Stanković, pianist Dušan Trbojević and Serbian String Quartet. With piano accompanist Stanko Šepić, Irina Arsikin performed songs by Miloje Milojević, whereas Slobodan Stanković with pianist Aleksandar Kolarević marked the 70th birthday of Nikola Hercigonja by performing his *Six Satirical Poems by Jovan Jovanović Zmaj*. Serbian String Quartet contributed several pieces by younger composers, already presented at the ensemble's tenth anniversary. Exploring and enriching his repertoire with works from Serbian musical heritage, pianist Dušan Trbojević titled his recital "An Anthology of Piano Music in Serbia", devoting the historical part of the recital to Robert Tolinger, Isidor Bajić, Predrag Milošević and Josip Slavenski, by no means neglecting more recent music from the 1970s with *Three Movements* by Ivan Jevtić, *Echoes* by Vasilije Mokranjac and *Bells*, a piano cycle by Vlastimir Trajković. An important place in the festival program was allotted to the commemoration of the 130 years from the birth and 50 years from the death of composers Josif Marinković. The concert was held on December 16 at the Kolarac Foundation Hall, an introductory lecture was delivered by Professor Vlastimir Peričić, followed by songs performed by Dorotea Spasić, Zvonimir Krnetić, Jovo Reljin and Velizar Maksimović, while selected choral works were performed by the Belgrade Madrigal Choir, conducted by Dušan Miladinović.

The Seventh Music in Serbia Festival, with its nine concerts in Belgrade (December 4-24, 1982) and in eight Serbian cities (Priština, Novi Sad, Zrenjanin, Niš, Čačak, Titovo Užice, Požarevac, Kragujevac) foreshadowed a new festival profile with active participation of the Composers Associations of the provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina. Besides two concerts of chamber and one of solo music, concerts of popular and jazz music (Radio Belgrade Jazz Orchestra and Marković-Gut Sextet), two evenings devoted to students of composition, the two festival peaks were dedicated to two anniversaries: the 80th year of the

doyen among our composers Mihovil Logar, and forty years from the death of Vojislav Vučković.

Among the participating artists and ensembles there were a large number of those who regularly performed domestic music. The dominating place at chamber concerts was allotted to the most recent works. With the exception of Josip Slavenski's *Wind Quintet*, the works performed were composed over the previous two years and almost all of them dedicated to the ensembles that performed them. The two chamber concerts covered a spectrum of genres ranging from string orchestra (*Music for the 13* by Ludmila Frajt), *Musica Concertante* for Clarinet and Strings by Josip Kalčić, *Raskovnik* by Vuk Kulenović), flute choir (*Polyphony 9* by Vladan Radovanović, *Dirge* by Minta Aleksinački, *Choral Fantasy* by Ingeborg Bugarinović and *Funeral Rites* by Slobodan Atanacković), string quartet (Jugoslav Bošnjak), two pianos (*Messages* by Dejan Despić and *A Play of Shadows* by Berislav Popović), and clarinet and piano (Predrag Repanić). The concert of soloist music juxtaposed the most recent output of composers from Vojvodina Miroslav Štatkić, Ivan Kovač and Zoran Mulić, with works written by composers of various generations: Mirjana Živković, Vera Milanković, Vlastimir Peričić and Ivan Jevtić.

Mihovil Logar's jubilee was celebrated within the rather modest confines of a chamber concert. After an introductory work by Aleksandar Obradović, the String Orchestra Dušan Skovran performed *C Major Sinfonietta*, piano duo Valdma-Rackov two *Toccatas*, baritone Slobodan Stanković *The Legend of Maru*, Ivan Dinić piano miniatures (*Goldfish*, two *Grotesques*), and Jadranka Jovanović Fema's monologue from *Nouveau Riche*. Serbian String Quartet concluded the chamber portrait with *Suite* for String Quartet.

The concert of the Belgrade Philharmonic conducted by Oskar Danon was appraised as the most ambitious event of this Festival, featuring First and Second Symphonies by Vojislav Vučković (orchestrated by Petar Ozgijan), music for the ballet *The Man Who Stole the Sun* (orchestrated by Petar Bergamo) and *Bequest of Modest Mussorgsky*. The importance of Vojislav Vučković's activities was reviewed by Ivo Vejvoda, and Serbian Composers Association published ten Vojislav Vučković's scores.

The Eighth Festival Music in Serbia (December 9-21, 1983) was very rich in content, comprising not only the usual chamber concerts, but also two concerts of the Belgrade Philharmonic, an opera premiere, choral music performed by Collegium Musicum, Radio Belgrade Children's Choir and Radio Priština Choir, as well as two jazz concerts. Several panel discussions were organized, to commemorate anniversaries of Petar Konjović, Vasilije Mokranjac, Oskar Danon, Dragutin Gostuški, Radomir Petrović and Zlatan Vauda. Again, the

concert venues were not only in Belgrade but also in Novi Sad, Priština, Kragujevac, Niš, Zrenjanin, Pančevo, Titovo Užice, Kruševac and Požarevac.

An outstanding event that marked the whole festival was a centenary of the birth of Petar Konjović, which commenced with the Belgrade Philharmonic. Under the leadership of Oskar Danon, the orchestra performed Konjović's works: the symphonic poem *Makar Čudra*, Concerto for Violin and Orchestra *Adriatic Capriccio* and a symphonic triptych from the opera *Koštana*. This concert, as well as a musicological panel, also served to celebrate the seventieth birthday of Oskar Danon. Belgrade Opera also joined in by premiering Konjović's last opera *Fatherland*, and a musicological panel was organized to honor the composer.

Chamber concerts featuring works by established Serbian composers threw new light on certain turning points in the post-war period of Serbian music. The first chamber concert featured works by Stanojlo Rajičić (two *Dances* for piano), Petar Bergamo (*Variazioni sul tema interroto*) and two vocal cycles: *Four Praises* by Mirjana Živković and *Séances III* by Zlatan Vauda, as well as a vocal-instrumental composition *Pentaptych* by Vladan Radovanović. The second concert consisted of works by Ljubica Marić (*Ostinato super thema octoicha* and Ludmila Frajt (*Eclogue*), and the second concert of the Belgrade Philharmonic, under the baton of Horst Förster, was devoted to Milan Ristić (*Suita giocosa*), Aleksandar Obradović (*Microsymphony*) and Vasilije Mokranjac (*Poema lyrico*). The side-events in the form of musicological discussions and round tables devoted to anniversaries of Petar Konjović, Vasilije Mokranjac, Oskar Danon and to award-winning works by Dejan Despić (*Musical Dictionary*), Zoran Erić (*Off* for Double Bass and Strings) and Milorad Kuzmanović (*Concerto for Strings*), as well as two students' concerts complete the festival. An important contribution to the Festival were two concerts organized in cooperation with the Composers Associations of Vojvodina and Kosovo, with chamber works by Fahri Beqiri, Zeqeria Ballata, Bashkim Shehu, Kiraly Ernő, Dušan Radić, Miroslav Štatkić) and choral composition by Lorenc Antoni, R.Mulić, Esad Rizvanoli, Radomir Petrović, Vincent Đini, Zeqeria Ballata, Akil Koci, Bahri Jashari, Rafet Rudi.

The Ninth Festival *Music in Serbia* brought about a substantial change by expanding the festival to the entire concert season of 1984/85. A twenty two-concert cycle during the season assembled a large number of outstanding performing artists and chamber ensembles from Belgrade, Novi Sad and Prishtina and the venues were not only in Belgrade but also in a number of Serbian cities. This overstepping of the boundaries of a limited review served to enhance the "working" rather than "festive" character of the festival, providing new

incentives to performers to include domestic composers into their repertoires. Thus, part of the program was based on repertoire works already established through performances by the festival participants: Belgrade Wind Quintet, String Orchestra "Dušan Skovran", Piano Duo Kršić-Nikolajević and Radio Belgrade Mixed and Children's Choirs. Special attention was devoted to the premieres of works receiving the Composers Association Annual Award. The festival was also expanded genre-wise by including the Representative Wind Orchestra of the Guard, concerts of jazz, traditional music and mediaeval Serbian music. This served to reinforce the organizers' concept pointing to the "indissoluble bonds between the old and new, the archaic and modern, the presence of the traditional in the contemporary".

The concert of the Belgrade Philharmonic, December 7, 1984, alongside works by Miloje Milojević (whose centenary was observed), Petar Bergamo and Predrag Milošević, featured the premiere of the award-winning *Violin Concerto* by Milovan Filipović, with Dragutin Bogosavljević as a soloist. The Radio Belgrade Symphony Orchestra gave a concert on December 18, with the reprise of Enriko Josif's *Out of My Loneliness* and the well known Clarinet Concerto by Aleksandar Obradović, as well as the premieres of awarded works by the youngest generation of composers: Katarina Miljković, Ivan Božičević and Jugoslav Bošnjak. A third symphonic concert took place on March 4, 1985 with the Artistic Ensemble of Yugoslav Armed Forces. The works performed were *Dramatic Overture* by Vasilije Mokranjac, *Third Piano Concerto* by Stanojlo Rajičić and, in connection with the anniversary of the First Serbian Uprising against the Turks, the cantata *Skull Tower* by Dušan Radić.

The centenary of Miloje Milojević was observed through a series of his composition of various genres featured on the programs of almost all ensembles, and a musicological round table organized in cooperation with the Faculty of Music and Musicological Institute of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts. The scientific conference "Miloje Milojević, a composer and writer on music" was held on December 12 and 13, 1985 with 15 participants from Belgrade, Novi Sad and Zagreb who dealt with Milojević as a composer, music critic, organizer of musical events and ethnomusicologist. Ljubica Marić, Predrag Milošević, Mihovil Logar and Nikola Petin gave their personal recollections of Milojević.

The Tenth Festival *Music in Serbia* took place between January 17 and April 22, 1986 with Ivana Stefanović as the selector, retaining the expanded season-long version. The stylistic range was again broad, from Stevan Mokranjac to composition students, from demotic creative achievements to electronic studio. The opening concert of the Belgrade Philharmonic (Živojin Zdravković) commemorated the centenary of the birth of Stevan

Hristić with his compositions: *A Poem of Dawn*, *Symphonic Fantasy* for Violin and Orchestra (Fern Rašković), *Rhapsody* for Piano and Orchestra (Darinka Mihajlović) and Third Suite from *The Legend of Ohrid*. The Festival, up to that time under the patronage of the Composers Association, gradually became part of program planning by ensembles and other concerts organizers. Such was, for instance, the concert of the Serbian String Quartet, one of the foremost chamber ensembles whose rich and diverse repertoire includes about a hundred quartets by domestic composers and which celebrated its 15th anniversary on February 24, 1986 at the Atrium of the National Museum. The program featured *Third String Quartet* by Vuk Kulenović, *Silver Sounds* by Ludmila Frajt, and premieres of *Liturgical Quartet* by Svetislav Božić, *Pathways* by Ivan Božičević and *Third String Quartet* by Dejan Despić. Genre extensions refer to *Ensemble for Other New Music* with works by Vladimir Tošić, Marjan Šijanec, Miroslav Savić and Miodrag Lazarov-Pashu, concert “All That Jazz” featuring Radio Belgrade Jazz Orchestra, Zoran Jovanović Quintet, “Jazzy” Band, Furda Band and Jovan Maljoković Ensemble. There were also evenings devoted to songs by composers from the Province of Kosovo, concerts of folk music and the early music ensemble “Renaissance” with the chanter Dragoslav Pavle Aksentijević, performing not only ancient Serbian music but also new works by Vladimir Tošić, Zoran Hristić and Miloš Raičković. Choral music was represented by the “Branko Krsmanović” Choir with new works by Rajko Maksimović (*The Testament of Bishop Rade*), Radomir Petrović (*Tempest*), Svetislav Božić (*At the Source*), Milan Mihajlović (*See*) and Zoran Erić (*Artes liberales*), and Radio Belgrade Children’s Choir. Radio Belgrade Electronic Studio presented works by Srđan Hofman, Vladan Radovanović, Zoran Erić and Žarko Mirković. An interesting thematic evening was the concert titled *Musica Nocturna*, held on March 18 at the Atrium of the National Museum, with Serbian String Quartet and Belgrade Wind Quintet, soloists Rita Kinka, piano and Ernest Ačkun, clarinet, as well as the Flute Quartet, with compositions by Vlastimir Trajković (*Five Nocturnes*), Enriko Josif (*Dream Visions*), Dejan Despić (*Three Nocturnes*), Vasilije Mokranjac (*Prelude for Clarinet Solo*), Vuk Kulenović (*Voces noctirnae VI*) and Milan Mihajlović (*Notturmi*). An extensive program was performed at the concert of solo and chamber works by composers from Kosovo and Vojvodina; the concerts took place in Prishtina (April 9), Belgrade (April 10) and Novi Sad (April 11). The National Theater from Belgrade also made a contribution to the Festival by premiering the ballet *Jelisaveta* by Zoran Erić, April 21.

The tendency towards thematization brought the 1987 festival *Music in Serbia* back to a more concise form. Oriented towards keyboard music (harpsichord, organ and piano), the Festival took place at the Faculty of Music, lasting full three days, March 13, 14 and 15, 1987. Its novelty was the selection of 55 works, spanning the period of 1927-1987, motivated – according to the words of the selector Zoran Erić – by “an abundance of highly valuable achievements for keyboard instruments, as well as by all means an exceptional situation in the domain of keyboard playing – a real ‘pianistic boom’, both within and outside this area.” Twenty five excellent pianists participated in the program. A specific research dimension was added through panels, lectures, open rehearsals, related to certain issues like “Meaning and communicative values of texture in piano pieces by Josip Slavenski” (Arbo Valdma), “Romanticism in Serbian piano music (Dušan Trbojević), “Piano duo in Serbian music“ (Snežana Nikolajević) and “Construction of keyboard instruments (Mario Bjelanović). Open rehearsals under the motto “artist-creator, artist-performer and the art of listening” were held by composers and pianists, the latter members of the Belgrade Keyboard Studio. Beside historical cross-section of 20th-century piano music with all its stylistic diversity with an emphasis on recent achievements from the 1970s and 80s, the appeal of the sound workshops was secured by compositions whose expressive component was expanded by including concrete sound (*Landscape* for Harpsichord and Tape by Ivana Stefanović), by using all available means of sound production on two pianos (*Moving Mirrors* by Srđan Hofman), or by bizarre sonorities in *Formes differantes de sonneries de la Rose+Croix* by Nataša Bogojević for Two Pianos and Harpsichord. The festival closed with *Echoes* by Vasilije Mokranjac, one of the creative peaks of Serbian piano music, embodying a supreme conjunction of professionalism and creativity both in composing for the piano and in the performance of the artists of different generations.

Music in Serbia 1988 comprised three very intensive days, April 21-23, with three concerts daily. The diversity of programs presented in the form of carefully chosen, highly valuable chamber compositions for smaller or larger ensembles; some of these works had already become true “repertoire pieces”, and therefore open to multiple interpretations, whereas others were short-lived, or were presented for the first time: all this helped crystallize the motto of the Festival “Aspects of interpretation” (selector Mirjana Veselinović), and served as grounds for a musicological conference. The topic thus formulated allowed almost all profiles of people involved with music to ponder over it and to go into greatest possible lengths in elaborating the concept. The topic “Aspects of

interpretation” was challenging particularly in matinees at the Faculty of Music, with triple performances of compositions *Concerto abbreviato* by Petar Bergamo, *Echoes* by Vasilije Mokranjac, *Bucolics* by Vuk Kulenović and *Slavic Sonata* by Josip Slavenski, each played by three different performers. Beside a broad range of performing programs and theoretical contributions, the most interesting were those who coupled theory with their own practice. Among them were Snežana Nikolajević who shared her experience of working on new pieces for piano four hands in a lecture titled “Piano duo – problems and experiences of interpretation”; other lectures were “My experience in performing church music” by Dimitrije Stefanović, “The relationships between the individual and collective by Dimitrije Golemović etc. It is of particular importance that an outstanding achievement of Serbian piano music – Vasilije Mokranjac’s *Echoes* – drew special attention and served as evidence for aesthetical considerations of three conference participants: musicologist Tijana Popović, pianist Arbo Valdma, and as the most interesting, the pianist to whom the composition was dedicated, Dušan Trbojević, who spoke about his experience that proceeded from the first encounter with a new work and from frequent subsequent performances.

Despite enormous problems which upset the organizational – and in particular financial – structure of the Composers Association, the Festival Music in Serbia was held in November 1989 with only two concerts out of the four originally planned. The theme of the Festival was music for string instruments, and the selector was violinist and conductor Aleksandar Pavlović, whose goal was to “offer to the performers an opportunity to present to the audience those compositions with which they managed to establish the liveliest artistic contact” demonstrating through the participation of our supreme professional performers the vitality of such an approach. The first concert with works by Vuk Kulenović *Archo Bach*, Vlastimir Trajković *Arion*, Milan Mihajlović *Elegy*, Zoran Erić *Talea*, Dejan Despić *Intrada and Passacaglia*, Ivana Stefanović *Lullaby* and Katarina Miljković *Rondo*, was performed by the Belgrade String Orchestra “Dušan Skovran”, while the other, performed by the Serbian String Quartet presented string quartets by Josip Slavenski, Ivan Božičević, Dejan Despić and Svetislav Božić.

The last of *Music in Serbia* festivals was held on May 23, 24 and 25, 1990, and it focused on electroacoustic music. Although occasional electroacoustic concerts were part of previous festivals, according to the selector Vladan Radovanović “the time was ripe for the Festival to devote itself for the first time to the activities in this field, intensified only with the

establishing of the Electronic Studio at the Radio Belgrade Third Program, which made possible the creation of numerous works in this genre; the opening of the Electronic Studio at the Faculty of Music further broadened these possibilities. In his introductory word, Radovanović also concluded that this genre did not “represent an exclusive musical style but a medium which facilitates the promotion of diverse styles; there is a relatively wide circle of composers who are seriously engaged in electronic music, a sufficient number of works have been created so as to enable us to single out a few that deserve to be called anthological”.

The selection included Vladimir Tošić, Slobodan Atanacković, Ludmila Frajt, Miroslav Savić, Arsenije Jovanović, Josip Kalčić, Boris Despot, Dušan Radić, Ivana Stefanović, Milica Paranosić, Zoran Erić, Vladimir Jovanović, Marjan Šijanec, Katarina Miljković, Miloš Petrović, Zoran Hristić and Srđan Hofman; the compositions were either played from a tape or as a combination of tape and live performance.