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The Organ +

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ABSTRACT

This article is intended to present the works of contemporary authors for organ solo or non-standard organ ensembles. Their artistic work in the field of modern organ music based on traditional musical influences, constantly seeking a new performing language, tools, formal construction, sound association and achievements, creating so a unique way to express the personal, most intimate feelings through the magic sound of the organ. This review presents you with five pieces I performed at my recital in Belgrade with a discreet intention, but a warm recommendation to indulge in the world of modern sound.

International Review of Composers was initiated in 1992 by the Serbian Composers Association. It is held usually in the October in Belgrade. It generally features 10-12 concerts, along with other events: meetings with composers, presentations of music periodicals, editions of scores, CDs, panel discussions, workshops etc. The principal part of the Review consists of works created over the preceding three years and selected by the jury. However, the Review spans a wider time period, as it generally features concerts devoted to music of various countries, concerts of anthological works, programs proposed by renowned soloists and ensembles. The 28 years of Review's history coincide with an extremely complex period in the history of Serbia: the transition from one-party to multi-party system, from the country known as the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Union State of Serbia and Montenegro, finally to the Republic of Serbia; from socialism to market capitalism; through the challenges of wars, isolation, sanctions, bombing, protests, coping with extreme circumstances. This notwithstanding, the Review has presented 680 compositions by 380 composers, performed by more than 200 soloists, 6 orchestras, 4 choirs and 34 chamber ensembles.

On October the 5th of 2019 I was honored with an organ recital at this festival, named THE ORGAN +. Each piece I played was chosen by Jury from a selection of eighty works made by international authors. Of course, all five pieces I've played, were premiered. For me, it was a truly exciting journey exploring the whole meaning of contemporary music and interpretation. Performing two compositions with nonstandard chamber ensembles was a particular

challenge – the main problem was how to harmonize the sounds of different instruments to support and create musical thoughts. In addition, modern musical language requires unusual playing tools to produce specific sound effects: the most unusual type of clusters, the effect of pushing back relevant stops, switching off the whole instrument, the effect of crescendo and decrescendo, impressive “harmonic chords” (held in the pressed position by small pegs), effects of whistling, ringing and much more... Professionally, I dared to embark on that artistic adventure that challenged me to explore and learn more about my instrument, the endless possibilities of performing organ music. With a great pleasure. This review presents you with five pieces I performed at my recital in Belgrade with a discreet intention, but a warm recommendation to indulge in the world of modern sound.

Expansion: une ode au Big Bang pour Raphaël Ashby (Laurence Jobidon, Canada), depicts the expansion of the universe and the “Big Bang”. Set on an initial cluster representing that initial moment where all matter is condensed to the highest degree; it soon starts to expand semitone by semitone, dynamic by dynamic. Before you know it, that once very hermetic, sterile tangle of matter has now become a suitable ground for life, creation and music. A simple airy question and its response, highly perched above those boiling grounds, mark the entrance of life, a life that is also caught up in the expanding motion of the universe. As the piece unfolds, it grows in complexity and dynamism, spans a wider variety of tempos, nuances of emotions, while always staying connected to the static eternity from which it arose in the first place; the dense quiet matter allowing life to embrace, arms wide open, the infinities of the universe. This highly demanding piece offers the player a great thrill of varied virtuosity and incredible sound. The contrasts of the musical material, the rhythmic texture, the chord structure represents the pure richness of musical inspiration.

Expansion
UNE ODE AU BIG BANG
pour Raphaël Ashby

Laurence Jobidon (1992 -)

1. *Avec souplesse* $\text{♩} = 60$
R. F1 #, F13
pppp
cresc.
2. *en rat. graduellement*
3. *simile*
F10, F11 #
pppp
cresc.

2

Expansion

12. *en rat. graduellement*
13. *simile*
14. *simile*
15. *simile*
16. *simile*
17. *simile*
18. *simile*
19. *simile*
20. *simile*
21. *simile*

G.O. & R. - Gued's E
Fol. - Gued's d
R. - Gued's
mp

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Expansion 3

Org.

Org.

Org.

Org.

Pos.

pppp

Marcato $\text{♩} = 108$

G.O., R., Pos. & Pod.: F, F, Z, x

Pod. 1st

Expansion 4

Org.

Org.

Org.

Org.

G.O.

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Expansion 5

Org.

Org.

Org.

Org.

R.

Expansion 6

Org.

Org.

Org.

Org.

G.O.

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Ninety Five for violin, trumpet in C, mezzo-soprano, baritone, organ and assistant, accordion and two percussionists (Lise Morrison [South African Republic/Netherlands]) is inspired by Joanne Kyger's poem *The Art of Living Slowly*. This interesting and unusual piece offers players and the audience specific peace of mind with constant changes in sound effects, based on an even rhythmic pulsation. Organ section is filled with "the «pitch bend» indication, which suggests that the assistant slowly pushes back relevant stops in order to hear a slow, descend in pitch followed by a predominantly air-like sound. This movement is sensitive to the speed in which it is executed. The air sound (if achieved) should not be sustained for very long (never longer than a crotchet beat). Rhythmic precision of the pitch bend is not the main aim – an audible downward pitch bend is more important", that is why you have to be very careful with the sound of percussion, especially in breaks. The sound requirements of the authors in this composition represent a great challenge for the performers, first of all in the selection of the instrument (compatible organ!) and then the pure joy of delicately harmonizing the pulse of this unusual ensemble.

Full Score in C

NINETY FIVE

Lise Morrison

① 4:50-60

M.S. *see the first staff for vocal*

Bar. *mm*

C Trpt. *pp*

Vln. *see title, notes and rests, watch dynamics*

Accord. *written at ascending pitch*

Org. *8-B stops - 8B see harmonic table*
push stop back slowly resulting in a pitch bend

Per. 1 & 2 *8-B tom tom - 8B tom*

E.D. *pp*

E.H. *superball mallets - placed on any drum with skin, eg tom or tympan*
slow glide with mallet towards the center of drum, creating downward pitch bend could vary in speed

2

②

M.S. *pp*

Bar. *pp*

C Trpt. *pp*

Vln. *pp*

Org. *8B stops - 8B see harmonic table*

Per. 1 & 2

E.D. *pp*

E.H. *superball mallets - placed on any drum with skin, eg tom or tympan*
slow glide with mallet towards the center of drum, creating downward pitch bend could vary in speed

3

Musical score for measures 1-14. The score includes staves for M.S., Bar., C.Tpt., Vln., Vcl., Cng., Pnd., R.D., and F.D. Dynamics include *pp* and *p*. A *ritard.* marking is present in the Vln. part.

15

Musical score for measures 15-24. The score includes staves for M.S., Bar., C.Tpt., Vln., Vcl., Cng., Pnd., R.D., and F.D. Dynamics include *p*.

25

Musical score for measures 25-29. The score includes staves for M.S., Bar., C.Tpt., Vln., Vcl., Cng., Pnd., R.D., and F.D. Dynamics include *pp*. Markings include *ritard.*, *rit.*, *rit. (a)*, and *rit. (b)*.

4

Musical score for measures 17-21. The score includes staves for M.S., Bar., C.Tpt., Vln., Vcl., Cng., Pnd., R.D., and F.D. Dynamics include *pp* and *p*.

22

Musical score for measures 22-31. The score includes staves for M.S., Bar., C.Tpt., Vln., Vcl., Cng., Pnd., R.D., and F.D. Dynamics include *p*.

30

Musical score for measures 30-34. The score includes staves for M.S., Bar., C.Tpt., Vln., Vcl., Cng., Pnd., R.D., and F.D. Dynamics include *pp* and *p*. A *rit.* marking is present in the Vln. part.

Angelus for organ (Zvonimir Nagy, Croatia/USA) is quiet and atmospheric piece with overt minimalist influences. The Angelus is one of the significant Christian devotions, and traditionally this call to prayer would be evoked by the ringing of a bell. In the music, one can hear the gently tolling, repeating patterns change gradually throughout. “Composed in three sections, Angelus gradually unfolds a simple phrase consisting of a few chords that, although similar in construction, create a transformative musical space. In a vocalized manner, the resulting melodies in the violin sound further support this harmonic design, conveying a sense of mystery”. At the first glance, a clear score, devoid of the usual virtuosity, requires an exceptional concentration of the performer that can follow the deep thinking of this piece, taking us to its endless heights.

for Nancy Thomas ... in memoriam
Angelus
 For Organ
 (2017)

I (Great Harmonic Flute 8'
 II (Choir) Bourdon 8'
 III (Swell) Cor de nuit 8'
 Ped. Bourdon 16' + II to Ped.

Zvonimir Nagy

Larghetto sostenuto ♩ ca. 70

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3

4

Épiméthé for organ was composed by Serbian author Vlastimir Trajković in 1977. Simplicity in modernity and effective expression characterize his entire oeuvre, including this work, his only piece for the organ. Inspired by the mysticism of Greek mythology, Trajković named this organ “Titan” of his – Epimetheus, who was one of Titan’s sons in Greek mythology. The conception of the opening movement corresponds to the mythological name of Epimetheus – “one who thinks afterwards”. The movement begins with a rhythmic motive that, according to the author’s indication should be played “gently, but not overly so”, which is relentlessly repeated another 54 times right to the end of the piece, where, in a four-bar pedal “collapse” it pours out into the final cluster (which, as the author specifies, “should scream like at the outset”). The melody in the right hand is accompanied by the following instructions from the author: “shouting, quiet violent and piercing, extensive and expansive, articulated as much as possible”. The melody, in sustained dissonant chords, is allocated to the pedal and, with its voluminous sonority, supplies an overall balance to the piece.

M 002

K1

ÉPIMÉTHÉ
Musique d'orgue
Vlastimir Trajković

I Épiméthée

cl. 1 ^{er}	fl. quinte 4	RE/GO.8	corde mixte
cl. 2 ^e	plein jeu. 4 rps	RE/GO.4	quinte au majeur 2
tr. G.O. 8	G.O. 4	G.O. 4	majeur 2 3/5
tr. RE. 8	G.O. 2		tierce 1 3/5
tr. RE. 4			

orgues

♩ = 48 BPM

The introduction to the second movement, **La Boite de Pandora**, harbors a strange kind of atmosphere, with notes sneaking around in high registers with pronounced harmonics, so that real pitches are avoided. Chordal-intervallic movements at this point call for a constant legato and their texture grows in complexity, “step by step”, from two parts, gradually culminating in a massive cluster. This cluster goes on for long enough to accommodate 14 instances in which, at regular intervals, the sound grows in intensity up until the moment when Pandora opens her box, unleashing all those sorrows and misfortunes to fly in every direction of the world. Trajković imparts a “terrible power” to this chordal section amid “tuning slowness”, as he wrote, and following just nine bars, suggesting thereby just how little time it takes to commit an irreversible mistake, he accelerates the tempo and takes us into the “animé”, which grows into a mighty song, a pacification combining not only Pandora’s curiosity and reconciliation with fate, but also that tiny ray of hope that stayed on the bottom of the jar.

003

K2

II La Boite de Pandora

tr. G.O. 4	basses	RE/GO.8	quarte de majeur 2
tr. RE. 8		RE/GO.4	majeur 2 3/5
tr. RE. 4			tierce 1 3/5

Le même Mouv. [Jusqu'au]

orgues

♩ = 48 BPM

(pp) étrange à pas de loup; fortissimo

Enjoints Legato

[boite toujours ouverte]

♩ = 120 BPM, 20/120, 4/120

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Keywords:

the organ • recital • modern music • International Review
of Composers

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