

Article received on: November 7th 2017
 Article accepted on: November 13th 2017
 UDC: 785.7(086.76)(049.32)

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CD Release

**Nataša Danilović: Kompozicije
 [Compositions]
 (Sokoj – Serbian Music Authors’
 Organization; NATAN production
 Belgrade, 2016
 ISBN 978-86-918625-1-0, COBISS.
 SR-ID 225954316)**

An album with the recordings of compositions by Nataša Danilović (1969–2014) is a unique sound testimony of the composer’s small, but rather inventive and well thought out oeuvre. Released on the initiative of her husband, ethnomusicologist and composer Dimitrije O. Golemović, and with the support of the Serbian Music Authors’ Organization – Sokoj and the NATAN production, it represents a significant acoustic document about the youthful aesthetics of the prematurely deceased author.

Bearing in mind that Nataša Danilović withdrew into silence after her studies at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade, and that her music has been absent from the concert stage for almost two decades, this release is not only a tribute to the composer, but also a significant contribution to the contemporary Serbian music discography.

The release encompasses Danilović’s seven works created during her formal

studies, between 1994 and 1998: *Duel* for violin and violoncello (1996), *Nebo [Sky]* for voice and piano (1994), Klavirski trio [Piano trio] (1997), *Bizzaria* for flute, marimba and piano (1996), *Arcobaleno* for string orchestra (1996), *Affects* for wind quintet (1995) and *Horror vacui* for a tre symphony orchestra (1998). These pieces, presented through the studio and live recordings, and performed by prominent ensembles and artists – such as the Serbian Broadcasting Corporation Orchestra with Biljana Radovanović conducting, the St. George Strings, soprano Svetlana Vranić, Nataša Danilović herself as a pianist, etc. – have been preserved predominantly in a private collection and recorded mostly by the composer’s professor Srđan Hofman (recorded all works except *Horror vacui*).

Since the author left behind only her student works, the CD collection clearly presents the development of her compositional skill and competence from the first compositions (*Nebo [Sky]*), dated from the beginning of her studies, to the quite mature graduate work written for symphonic orchestra (*Horror vacui*). Simultaneously, the CD content demonstrates all the main characteristics of her poetics, revealing the postmodernistic nature of her creative output. Thus, the CD reflects a subtle and powerful creator at the same time, an imaginative and highly talented composer, who creates without the modernist fear of expression, but also without the commonly postmodern predilection for quotations. Striving to reconcile the requirements of the composition major on the one hand, and the inner musical world on the other, Nataša Danilović captivates the listener by her uniquely refined sense of music drama-turgy and her delicate play with musical

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time, which is emphasized by the relationship between the vertical and horizontal dimensions of the score. This is particularly noticeable in *Horror vacui* – the most extensive and challenging work on this release, and the pinnacle of the author's art – where the composer forms various aspects of the sonic space, by confronting the melodic and dynamic principle with the chordal and static one.

Although very modest in design and equipment, the accompanying booklet of the CD (written by the author of this article and translated in English by Miloš Zatklik) sheds light on various aspects of the composer's creative act. Thus, the booklet offers an insight into Nataša Danilović's professional career that arose apart from composing, but, most importantly, for the first time it provides basic information about the collected compositions – their dramaturgy, formal aspects, texture, the relationships between the vertical and horizontal dimensions, the extended and accelerated musical time... The text also appraises the social context in Serbia during the last decade of the 20th century, in which the author formed her artistic *credo*,

and sheds light on the composer's critical attitude toward reality, especially evident in *Horror vacui* where she built an intimate tone poem of fear, anxiety and consolation.

Eventually, we have to note that it is regrettable that the CD does not include all the necessary information either about the recording date of most of the pieces, or about the names of all the performers. Presumably, because the composer's early works were performed by her friends and colleagues during her student days. So, she may have assumed who had performed them and when, and who had recorded the compositions and when. It is possible that she did not feel the need to note down the precise information.

The album “Nataša Danilović: *Kompozicije* [Compositions]” is, actually, the musical portrait of a lucid and intelligent composer, and also a tribute to a deeply responsible and self-critical creator who was reconsidering the meaning of the creative act and an artistic existence. In that sense, the CD release is a pledge that Danilović's pieces will not remain locked away somewhere and, as such, it makes an extremely welcome contribution to Serbian music.