

Belgrade) *Davorin Jenko (1835–1914): fragments from the life of a famous composer*, published in the *Ilustrovana politika* weekly magazine. Both texts were published in 2014, and were included in these Proceedings with the intention of completing the picture of the attention paid in Serbia to marking the centenary of Davorin Jenko's death.

In the last segment of the Proceedings under the heading *Archival testimonies*, a representative selection was published from the collection of Jenko's scores (piano compositions, songs from plays with singing, piano excerpts from orchestral overtures) and documents (The Testament of Davorin Jenko) which are kept in the archive of the Institute of Musicology of the SASA Belgrade.

In shedding light from different aspects on the creativity of a prominent figure from the Serbian musical past, the Proceedings *Davorin Jenko (1835–1914). Contributions to cultural remembrance* represents a significant contribution to the expansion of the body of knowledge about this versatile artist. We believe that with its content these Proceedings will activate the currently, rather faded memory of Davorin Jenko in terms of new interpretations of his role and importance in our music history and lead to a growing interest in the performance of his music.

Article received on April 27th 2018

Article accepted on May 16th 2018

UDC: 786.2.083(086.76)(049.32)

785.78.036(086.76)(049.32)

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**Nada Kolundžija, *Breathing In/
Breathing Out: A Little Anthology of
Piano Music (1914–2014)*, Ivana
Miladinović Prica (ed.), Belgrade:
Vertical Jazz, 2017, 3CDs, 207 pp.
ISBN 978-86-86037-17-6**

Pianist Nada Kolundžija has been tirelessly exploring the disparate and diverse world of music created in a contemporary context for decades. Seeking a specific poetic framework that would satisfy her artistic requirements, she reveals her own sensibility and aesthetic credo by her choice of program. In that sense, Nada Kolundžija manages to build an *aura* of authenticity already on the primary level of material selection, which most often moves between a tendency towards specific, often intimate and extremely sensitive treatment of the instrument, and an examination of new sound and experiment. In addition to being inclined towards unique authorial approaches she shows great courage in her own artistic endeavors – instead of *reproduction* she chooses interpretation, i.e. performance. However, although transgression might be a common

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feature of her performances, it is not for the sake of excess itself. On the contrary, she actually seeks out and finds transgression within contemporary music, which leads to inclusion rather than exclusion of her audience.

We can register all the above in Nada Kolundžija's latest musical effort – a compact disc triptych published under the title *Breathing In/Breathing Out, A Little Anthology of Piano Music 1914–2014*.¹ This project is related to a cycle of performances held on 27 May, 7 June and 7 August 2014 under the title *My Little Concert Anthology of Piano Music*, in which Nada Kolundžija presented the pieces that found their way to this CD release. It is evident from the very title of the CD triptych – An Anthology – that this represents a personal choice of her own work based on specific criteria and aesthetic taste. As stated in one of the definitions of the term 'anthology': "the taste of time and the awareness of (...) the past is manifest in anthology".² In this sense, when viewed through the prism of her affinities, the works presented by Nada Kolundžija are *witnesses* of one time. Bearing in mind the choice of compositions, it presents us

with a specific past – a history that begins with Éric Satie and then branches off in several directions with divergent end points. Although we can recognise certain common features of the work in terms of often simplified and repetitive structure, reduced and transparent factures, as well as an aesthetic that leans towards (post)minimalism, all works are based on specific poetic bases that lead to different sound results – Cage-like experiments, Pärt-like 'confessions'... This anthology also presents us with a history of disparate auditory atmospheres from coffee cabarets (with Satie) to the informational 'noise' of contemporary media (with Jacob TV); as well as with the history of 'experimental' music, which is represented through several somewhat connected pieces, focalised through the work of John Cage. On closer inspection a certain dramatic logic and thematic connection becomes evident, at least at a micro-level.

In this sense, the first CD contains works dedicated to someone,³ i.e. with a certain melancholy character, as well as works containing a prayer atmosphere, communicating a certain mysticism.⁴ The piece that distinguishes itself by its charac-

¹ About the title of the CD, Nada Kolundžija wrote: "I took the title of the anthology *Breathing in/Breathing out* from the eponymous film. In the period when I was conceiving the project, I was very involved with the practice of conscious breathing. Not only is breathing, of course, inseparable from life, but also from the performance of a piece of music. Inhaling, exhaling, I brought to life these scores that can choose their own paths". Nada Kolundžija, *Breathing In/Breathing Out: A Little Anthology of Piano Music (1914–2014)*, Ivana Miladinović Prica (ed.), Belgrade, Vertical Jazz, 2017, 120.

² <http://www.enciklopedija.hr/natuknica.aspx?id=3144>

³ Miloš Raičković: *Nadjino kolo, Waiting for C-A-G-E*; Janis Kyriakidis: *Fofi and Michalis*, for music box; Arvo Pärt: *Für Alina, Für Anna Maria, Variationen zur Gesundung von Arinuschka*; David Lang: *Wed (In Memory of Kate Ericson)*.

⁴ George Gurdjieff/Thomas Alexandrovich de Hartmann: *Meditation, Holy Affirming, Holy Denying, Holy Reconciling, Prayer and Despair, Religious Ceremony*. Although Galen H. Brown's piece *God is a Killer*, for piano and tape, is based on the speech of a religious preacher, it is actually a kind of postmodernist game played in a post-minimalist technique.

ter is Cage's Sonata III, which has its meaningful function in the context of the idea of a *personal anthology*, as a personal dedication to the author whose oeuvre marked the work of Nada Kolundžija.

The second CD mainly contains works that follow patterns of popular genres or classical forms,⁵ with the kind of resting spots in the works of Ivana Stefanović and Meredith Monk. The third CD is dedicated to piano transgressions – a prepared piano⁶ (or for two pianos tuned a quarter-tone apart in Jasna Velickovic's piece *Sputnik*) or a combination of piano and electronics⁷ i.e. a boombox (in the work by Jacob ter Veldhuis: *The Body of Your Dreams*). The work of Conlon Nancarrow is distinctive in this context, although he also treats the instrument in a specific way, insisting on its mechanics and artificiality.⁸

What constitutes a special curiosity of this album is a program booklet, which has the features of a kind of monograph. Musicologist Ivana Miladinović Prica, as the editor of this edition, committed herself to preparing a book aimed at shedding light

on the poetic views of those authors whose compositions are on discs, through their own personal statements, while the creative positions of Nada Kolundžija are represented with several essayistic notes.

As stated in the introduction to the book, the questions the composers were asked were: "How did you work on the piece that is included in this Anthology? What place does piano music occupy in your entire compositional output and what is your general attitude towards the piano? How would you describe your compositional method? In your opinion, what is the most interesting characteristic of contemporary music?"⁹

While some authors did not answer all the questions, the insights obtained from their answers are extremely important for understanding their poetics and the works on the CD. The carefully selected questions and answers bring readers closer to the creative intentions of the composers, but also provide us with a wider picture to comprehend the time in which they were created. The views of composers of contemporary music are especially important in this sense, since they reveal to us the prevailing attitude that contemporaneity is fluid and un-centralised, i.e. as Ivana Stefanović emphasises, that in music "nothing and nobody dominates. Only the wealth of diversity".¹⁰

This book also brings readers closer to the work of Nada Kolundžija through texts by Ivana Miladinović Prica, Nikša Gligo, Zorica Premate, Ana Kotevska and Miodrag Šuvaković. Through an extremely in-

⁵ Louis Andriessen, *Deuxieme chorale*, for music box; William Duckworth: *Tango Voices*, Eric Satie: *Le Tango perpétuel* (from *Sports et divertissements*), Scott Pender: *Tango: Ms. Jackson Dances for the People*, Toby Twining: *Nightmare Rag*, for piano and toy piano, Satie *Blues* for piano and toy piano, Anton Bagatov: *Waltz, E minor*, Lola Perrin: *Piano suite 1*, Philip Glass: *Etude No. 1, Etude No. 5, Etude No. 6*, Leon Miodrag Lazarov Pashu: *Waltz*.

⁶ John Cage: *Sonata XIII*, Vuk Kulenović: *God with the Moon in His Hair (One Appearance of God Shiva)*.

⁷ Miroslav Savić: *For Nada*, for piano and electroacoustic ambient live, Katarina Miljković: *Forest IV*.

⁸ Canon A and Canon C.

⁹ Nada Kolundžija, *Breathing In/Breathing Out...*, op. cit., 125.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 145.

formative text, entitled *Music as a Living Space – On Nada Kolundžija’s Pianism*, Prica drew a map of the rich and very unusual creative path of Nada Kolundžija. She moved from piano studies with professors Dušan Trbojević and Zoltán Kocsis, to large projects of performing Schoenberg’s integral piano opus, as well as Sonatas and Interludes for prepared piano by John Cage, to intensive engagements at the Zagreb Biennale and cooperation with the generation of so-called ‘other new music’ authors, to thematic concerts she gave in the 2000s. Prica describes Kolundžija’s versatile music interests in a lucid way, pointing out that she never lost touch with the traditional repertoire, but that “(...) by performing primarily the music of her time, whilst changing herself in the course of more than four decades of creative work, Nada Kolundžija passionately and lovingly untangles and unwinds the ‘skein’ of contemporary art music; she follows the interconnected threads, the nodes of musical events, some loose ends. Like a nomad, she moves through various musical landscapes and cultures, exploring the fringes, ‘empty spaces’, isolated ‘pockets’, and then returns to the familiar, already traversed paths, illuminating them with new light”.¹¹

In her text *A Little House Made of Music* musicologist Zorica Premate notes the interconnections of the album program, pointing to the pianist’s artistic manner of “treating a concert like a mosaic which is built around the first chosen piece [...],

with all the other works brought into relation with it; and while the interrelationship of the musical works grows and flourishes, the creative powers of the artist also open up to comprehension, understanding and enjoyment”.¹²

Nikša Gligo also wrote about this ‘creative power’, emphasising the long-standing cooperation he had with the artist at the Zagreb Biennale; and Ana Kotevska who, through an intimate, informal epistolary form summarised her friendship with Nada Kolundžija and the experiences of listening to her performances.

Finally, Miodrag Šuvaković’s text *Experimental and/or Tactical Pianism!* points to the position of the artist as an “accomplice of contemporaneity”, whose commitment ranges from “the piano performance towards playing the piano in performative conditions, and then, occasionally, returning to the canonised pianism in the manner of a piano reformer”.¹³ In fact, Šuvaković points to ‘transgression’ as an important determinant of the interpretive practice of Nada Kolundžija, who in the manner of a ‘comrade of time’ (as Boris Groys defined contemporary artists) achieves consistent, multilayered communication with contemporaneity.

Without a doubt, this anthology represents a significant testimony of Kolundžija’s creative poetics and of a possible view of our time, expressed in sound with an authentic and anthological selection of musical vignettes.

¹¹ Ibid, 179.

¹² Ibid, 193.

¹³ Ibid, 198, 199.