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Olha Hurkova (Kyiv, Ukraine)

**NEO-ROMANTIC TENDENCIES IN THE CHAMBER
INSTRUMENTAL WORKS BY I. KARABYTS
(ON THE EXAMPLE OF “LYRICAL SCENES” FOR VIOLIN
AND PIANO)**

This article introduces the chamber-instrumental piece “Lyrical Scenes” for violin and piano by I. Karabyts into scientific discourse, analyzing it in terms of genre and narrative guidelines of the composer in the period of 1960–1970’s, manifestations of neo-romantic tendencies and features of instrumental theatre.

The period from the late 1960’s to the early 1970’s was a turning point and a significant time for the famous Ukrainian composer, conductor, musician and public figure Ivan Fedorovich Karabyts. He had just graduated from the Department of Composition at the Tchaikovsky Kiev Conservatory and became a student of a graduate school. In 1968, after the death of B. Liatoshinsky, I. Karabyts takes a composition class taught by the great Ukrainian composer M. Skorik. At the time I. Karabyts had already had a significant amount of artistic discoveries and achievements in symphonic, chamber vocal, chamber instrumental and piano music: Sonatina for piano (1967), Sinfonietta for strings (1967), Sonata for cello and piano № 1 and № 2 (1968, 1972), Scherzo for flute and piano (1964), Quintet for flute, two violins, viola and vello (1965), Concertino for horn and piano (1967) and Concerto № 1 for piano and orchestra (third prize in the National Competition for Young Composers of 1968).

A new stage in the life of the artist began in the 1970’s – an independent path, full of his own philosophical musings and social

awareness, which gave way to a new genre palette, a modern composing technique and approach. Thus, the years 1970–1971 witnessed the emergence of such vibrant works as: Poem “Vivere memento” based on the work by I. Franko (1970), Concertino for chamber orchestra (1970), “Lyrical Scenes” for violin and piano (1970), vocal cycle “Pastels” based on the poetry of P. Tychna (1970), score for the movie “Commissioners” (Dovzhenko Kiev Film Studio, director – M. P. Mashchenko) (1970), Concerto for choir, soloists and symphony orchestra “Garden of Divine Songs” with lyrics by H. Skovoroda (1971). Most of Ivan Karabyts’ works have already found their musicological interpretation in the works of A. Tereshchenko¹, L. Melnyk², L. Ryazantseva³, I. Tarkova⁴, A. Vilchynska⁵ et al. However, many of I. Karabyts’ works still have not received musicological interpretation. One of such pieces is “Lyrical Scenes” for violin and piano (1970), which draws our attention by its bright, lyrical, romantic orientation. The scientific novelty of this analysis lies in implementing the first musicological reading of the piece from the original manuscript of I. Karabyts, kindly provided by the composer’s widow M. D. Kopytsa.

The subject of this work is the chamber instrumental piece of I. Karabyts which has the most apparent neo-romantic tendencies. The aim is to study the manifestations of neo-romantic tendencies in the chamber works of I. Karabyts on an example of “Lyrical Scenes” for violin and piano. This aim requires the establishment and realization of the following tasks: to identify the genre and thematic priorities of I. Karabyts in the period of 1960–70’s; to reveal the stylistic innovation of I. Karabyts in the chamber instrumental genre; to find manifestations of neo-romantic tendencies and features of instrumental theater.

¹ “Vocal-symphonic works of Ivan Karabyts in the context of genre development of Ukrainian music in the 70s – 80’s of the 20th century” and “Ukrainian Soviet cantata and oratory. Evolution of the genre varieties” [8].

² “Garden of Divine Songs” by Ivan Karabyts in the context of European and Ukrainian neo-baroque [8].

³ “Garden of Divine Songs” by Ivan Karabyts – the rebirth of the ancient genre [8].

⁴ On composition and modal organization of the finale of the Concerto for choir, soloists and orchestra to the words of H. Skovoroda (“Garden of Divine Songs”) by Ivan Karabyts [8].

⁵ Ivan Karabyts. “Catherine’s Prayer”: history, genre and dramaturgy of the piece [8].

Our attention goes to the genre chosen by the composer for “Lyrical Scenes” for violin and piano. This case reminds us of the definition of the genre of Tchaikovsky’s opera “Eugene Onegin”. Perhaps, the composer wanted to celebrate the special role of theatricality in this piece, where the violin and piano are akin to two actors revealing their theatrical skill in four contrasting miniatures through the prism of their own worldview and life experiences. On the other hand, the “lyricism” highlights the neo-romantic tendencies of the composer. “Lyricism”, incidentally, became a characteristic feature in the art of the composers working in the 1970’s of the 20th century as a counterweight to the “acute and continuous struggle of stylistic guidelines in the area of polarity and pluralism of imagery and meaning” [11, 17]. Interestingly, it was in the 20th century that the first attempts at scientific comprehension of lyricism in the musical arts appeared. In particular, I. A. Tatarintseva treats *the lyrical* as “a special way of artistic rethinking of the human condition, the process of perceiving human experiences through the prism of personal feelings, impressions and thoughts, that exists on multiple levels” [11, 4].

H. Hrihorieva also describes neo-romanticism as a phenomenon of the 1970’s of the 20th century: “The most important feature of modern romanticism (*neo-romanticism*, italics by me – O.H.) is its desire to restore the properties and parameters of the musical fabric that experienced a deep crisis at the turn of the century and in the mid-20th century: the previously prevalent distortion of key had now been reborn at a new level of artistic thought, which during its complex evolution went through a crisis and a struggle of multiple phenomena in imagery and style, and turned out to be the most viable and in tune with eternal laws of musical beauty, its imagery, emotion and meaning” [2, 116]. Let’s try to comprehend this with detailed analysis.

Some musicologists (M. Kopytsya, G. Ermakova) include “Lyrical Scenes” into a period of the composer’s total fascination with a modern composing technique – dodecaphony. Indeed, the piece is largely dodecaphonic. It has four parts: I – *Moderato capriccioso*, II – *Andante rubato*, III – *Allegretto*, IV – *Andante espressivo*.

The first part *Moderato capriccioso* is written in three-part form. The imagery of *Moderato capriccioso* can be characterized by two psychological principles: external and internal, which exemplify the implementation of the features of “method” theater (based on the concept of K. Stanislavsky⁶) in the instrumental genres. The embodiment of the

⁶ It is known that K. Stanislavsky divides his own theoretical system of theatre into art of presenting and art of experiencig. Art of presenting is the

external – the “social environment” of human life – is an expressive, emotionally charged music. The *internal* or *personal* has a lyrical representation of the musical material: recite, conversationalism, and chamber sensibility – the embodiment of a human voice.

The first section, *Moderato capriccioso*, is a period by volume (5 bits + 5 bits). The first sentence is compact and complete in its thematic material. Even at the beginning of the piece one can see the level of interconnection of both instruments’ parts, their dialogue. The second sentence smoothly transitions to the middle section in three-part form. In terms of genre, this section, due to the 6/8 time signature, its texture and wide melodic flow can be described as a quasi-waltz or a nocturne. The technique of the violin part is smooth, with wide intervals of cantilena type and a variety of articulation marks: legato, staccato, grace notes.

Middle section *Meno mosso* is something of a psychological immersion. In the piano part I. Karabyts uses the principle of polyphonic imitation, first in the right hand’s part (b. 10-15), and then the left (b. 15-20). In the violin part the melody intensifies in dynamic and expands in range, resulting here in the top (b. 18-20).

The third section – *tempo I* – takes only five bits, where the last two (*Maestoso*) are the coda and the culmination of the section. The composer enhances the technical base of the violin part by introducing double-accents and a wide range of melodic movement.

The second part of the “Lyrical Scenes” – *Andante rubato* – is a new step in the formation of psychological nuances in the two-dimensional image of the violin: elegiac, contained and philosophical (which receives an extended characterization) (b. 7-10, 15-17) and lively, expressive and sharp (b. 1-5, 14). These two elements comprise the two sides of the author's identity, and are embodied in the three-part structure with introduction and coda, which are sharply delineated by the composer with tempo notations: *Andante rubato* – introduction (b. 1-6), *Andante* – part I (b. 7-10), *Piu mosso* (b. 11-14) – part II (it ends with a single-bit violin cadenza – *Cadenza. Animando*), *Piu mosso* – reprise (b. 15-17) and *Tempo I* – single-bar coda (b. 18).

ultimate result of the actor and director laid out for public assessment, and the art of experience is the instant, impulsive creation of human emotion and feelings of the actor on the stage. This theoretical system found its place in the musical arts as well. In music, the theatre of “experience”, or “method” theatre, is inherently dramatic in its conflict of two images: a romantic hero and the outside world (for example “Symphony-concerto for trumpet and orchestra” by A. Krasotov).

It is interesting that such a filmic, colorful motif structure of the musical material in the second part is already an example of theatricality. It is akin to a conversation, or at least some spoken phrases of an actor (in this case it is the violin). Dialogism of this part manifests itself in both parts “echoing” each other and complementing each other.

It should be emphasized that the special declamatory construction of both parts moves with not very wide intervals, almost with a special appreciation of the same notes or repetition of certain sounds. Relatively speaking, it is an alternation between recitative and aria, embodied by the part of the violin, with the piano in the role of an orchestra.

The most technical part is the violin. Here the composer uses the polyrhythm principle (complex rhythmic groupings – lengths of 3, 5, 6, 9) and sometimes changes in time (3/4, 6/4, 3/4, 4/4, 3/4). This is natural, as it creates the effect of human speech in the music. The technical complexity of the violin part also manifests itself in the double notes (not just the octaves, but sixths, fifths, quarts), the complex dynamics in the cadenza of the middle section and so on.

The third part of the “Lyrical Scenes” sounds attacca after the second, and it also has a three-part construction. *Allegretto* is a new phase of development of the two main patterns of the piece: expressive and lyrically elegiac, the two sides of the composer’s identity. The violin part is again at the forefront, and that is highlighted by the presence of a complex virtuosic recitative cadenza. The conversational quality is revealed in a dichotomous presentation: filmic, motif-driven style of presentation, framed by constant pauses, fermatas, very agile dynamics (from *mf* to *p*), melodic range (from low *g* to *d* second, or the average range of the human voice), certain complexity of performance (double notes – seconds, fourths, fifths, sixths, sevenths, glissando, etc.). The juxtaposition of the two elements of the theme – glissando seconds and the jumps between pairs of intervals – creates the effect of a dialogue. This was most likely influenced by the instrumental tradition of Bartók (particularly in the second part of “Game of Pairs”, Concerto for orchestra).

The previously mapped out violin solo gets a continuation in a shortened reprise of *Allegretto* (lasting 10 bits). Middle section also continues the line of the dialogue of two parts of the theme joined by septoles. It is characteristic of the piece that the piano part acts as glue: the presence of a complex rhythmic organization, the opposing movement of the violin part, nuances, dynamic lines, etc.

Andante espressivo or the finale of “Lyrical Scenes” has the scale and the artistic expression to indeed serve as the final part of the cycle. This is

confirmed by the following properties:

- In this part the composer presents his own generalized philosophical worldview, which is the embodiment of human existence. This is emphasized by the stylistic allusions to the works of Romantic composers, like Chopin (Polonaise *cis-moll* op. 26, № 2 – Introduction; indirectly – Scherzo *b-moll*). I. Karabyts' style parallels the XVII–XVIII centuries, in particular, the sacred music of Bach, especially with its signature choral texture. Texture and timbre of this part is in correlation with the composer's pieces for piano – Prelude № 20 from the cycle “24 Preludes” for piano (1967);

- The principle of leitmotif, which manifests itself in the appearance of two bars with a characteristic rhythmic pattern on the edges of the musical form (intro – b. 1-3; after the first section – b. 14-15; b. 39-44 – epilogue or coda);

- The three-part form with an extended reprise, violin cadenza and coda;

- Unity of both parts (violin and piano) in imagery and musical material.

Andante espressivo is a prime example of I. Karabyts' appeal to modern compositional techniques of dodecaphonic type (without a particular selected series: the theme consists of 16 different sounds, mostly chromatic with variant repetition of certain sounds twice in different octaves – *c, h, g, fis, e, d*), with a polyphonic method of thinking (imitation, inaccurate canon, mirroring, etc.).

Sections of the finale are separated by the appearance of the main violin theme in one case because of the bar (b. 6-7 – Part I), in another – because of a strong beat with a shift of the accent (b. 25 – reprise), which means that the author refers to the principle of reducing the time of deployment of the material, hence the dynamization of the last section of the finale.

In the finale the texture of the piece also undergoes development: from static chord-oriented choral piano (Part I – b. 1-15; b. 25-29), bi-leveled structure of “bass- chord” and the quasi-dance melody of the violin part (middle section – b. 16-24) to the accompanying, arpeggi-esque (b. 31-33), and then chordal texture in the piano part (b. 34-44). The quasi-dance sensibility is like a continuation of the second lyrical image of the piece, and becomes a new quality of the theme of “Lyrical Scenes”.

In terms of technique, the violin part is filled with constant register switches, double notes, trills, quintoles, sixtoles, septoles, and a descending chromatic passage that is also cadenza.

In conclusion, the “Lyrical Scenes” for violin and piano by I. Karabyts is an important, virtuosic, comprehensive, technically diverse piece. The author uses theatrical scenes in the structuring (hence the picturesque

quality of the cycle) and dialogic presentation of the material; ensemble performing (violin and piano) and stylistic allusions to different eras – Baroque, Romanticism, contemporary. The lyrical “as a special way of rethinking art” and as an expression of neo-romantic tendencies in the piece revealed itself in the emotional states of the actors/performers as a reflection of the composer’s internal identity; in the dialogic nature of the violin and piano parts, and at the same time in the autobiographical monologues of the spiritual inner worlds of the actors/performers; in the human-like quality in the timbre of the instruments (conversationalism, recite); in the concise nature of utterance; in the principle of deployment of musical material – gradation between the expressive and the lyrically elegiac, etc.

The features of musical thinking identified in this piece apply to other chamber works of I. Karabyts from the 1970-80’s – “Music player” for violin (1974) and “Concert divertissement” for piano and string quintet (1975), which are the apparent examples of I. Karabyts’ implementation of the principles of instrumental theater, and in which the composer has outlined the main trends and types of theatricalization not only of his own work, but of the Ukrainian musical culture in general.

Keywords: lyricism, “method” theatre, instrumental theatre, the principle of ensemble performance.

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