

MUSIC WRITING FOR THEATER PLAY „NIȘTE... NĂROJI” (SOME FOOLS)

Author: *PhD candidate Adrian – Mihai HASNA-PREDA*

Abstract

I chose to write about the freshest and one of my best stage music works. A work that is appreciated by the audiences and critics. Good stage music must have the ability to support the drama and through the years I believe that my experience has grown and helped me to create a picturesque musical atmosphere, blending folklore, jazz and electronic music.

Keywords: *Contemporary music, stage music, theater play, fusion music, postmodern*

This project represented a first for the theater scene in Constanta because it was the first time a piece based on Marin Sorescu's work was staged in Constanța. "Niște...năroji" is a dramatic adaptation of Iulian Enache after "La liliaci" (At the bats neighborhood). I began the work for this play in the spring of 2014 when director Iulian Enache asked me to write the music for a show inspired by Marin Sorescu's creation. Initially, folk music was predominant, with traditional instruments and musical motifs inspired by Oltenia's folklore. Thus, I wrote three musical themes.

Bride's theme:



Dead woman's theme:



Old women's theme:



As I have worked on other projects, the director asked me to create sound elements that prove the truthfulness of the space. They were represented by: village sounds, dogs barking, church bells, horses pulling carts, poultry, donkeys, pigs, sheep, rifle shots, rain, entrance gates creaking, wind blowing in the barracks, old radio noise and so on. They have "furnished" soundtrack and emphasized some scenes. Last fall, when they began, Mr. Enache told me that they would like to do something into jazz music. For me, as a composer, it was the first time I faced with this situation, writing folk music with jazz influences. Earlier that autumn in September, I have attended to a concert of world music in Constanța, organized by Twin Arts, which was called "Colours of Maria Tanase" and which included musicians from Armenia, Spain, France, Turkey, Bulgaria, Iran and Romania, an event that fascinated me the richness of the sound spectrum. I used this experience to go out with writing the music for the play "Niște... năroji". With the reconfiguration style of music, the three initial themes were renamed TI, TII TIII respectively.

During the discussion with the director, we concluded that the timbre (at least for solo instruments) should refer to the geographical area where the action is carried out so that most songs written I used dulcimer, flute, harp, flute, ocarina. For the first pieces, I opted for the timbre in the first dulcimer tempo rubato interpreting the theme which was originally of the old women. The song that introduces the audience practically in the atmosphere of the show, starting just before the lights are turned off in the hall. In the second part of the song, the theme is played by the bassoon in the high register and serves as background discussion of the early part of the two old women. In my searches in order to find inspiration for composition approach, I've found some extremely interesting examples oltenian "rustem dance" in heterogeneous measures, which led me to make references more or less suggestive to this dance. The first piece using generic allusion to rustem is called "piesa trecere TI", based on the original theme of the dead woman. This piece appears in another scene of old women and village's policeman. The theme is played by caval whistle with dulcimer's ostinato formula accompaniment that illustrates the talks between the two ladies, talks noted by the policeman.

Ostinato:



The sound environment is filled by a fretless bass guitar and percussion, the piece is set 10/4 measure. For the third piece, entitled "piesă trecere TIII", Mr Enache suggested me to use "specific musical elements of police from the 70s and 80s", which meant ostinati formulas on percussion instruments with short bass guitar interventions. So, after writing an introduction in tempo rubato for ocarina on the bride's theme, I added an ostinato that accompanies improvisation around the theme. Regarding this play, I believe that I wrote the best music, considering the subject and, at least in the first act, many of the scenes have a very present music (in some places, the music even becomes a character) or extremely subtle music. The next musical moment and sound even called "piesa trecere TI calup" uses elements of "piesa trecere TI" - new dialogue scene between old women and policeman – the sound making the transition to the next scene, the love scene of bride and groom (unmarried yet!) from the fountain. Musically, this scene is written a 11/4 measure, in the spirit of conception to rustem dance on old women's theme played by the dulcimer.

The theme:



Ostinato:



In the next scene, the director asked me to write a voice song, which was meant to be sung by the old women. These verses would be sung by the two old women, played by Daniela Enache and Mirela Pană. Thus, adapting the theme of the dead woman, I have created "piesa babe lele" that in the first part is vocally sung and subsequently acquires strong electro-jazz influences, with the vocal improvisation from Mihaela Preda, which emphasizes the first scene occurrence of the village's crazy woman, the only character in the play that has bright colored makeup and costume, the other characters are being "treated" with non-colors in different combinations.

The theme:

5 Le le ver - de bob dă lin - te ce proas - tă fu - săi de min - te
Că bă - ia - tul ca bă - iat m-a iu - bit și m-a lă - sat

că bă - ia - tul ca bă - ia - tul m-a iu - bit și mi-a dat fran - cul
Cu cor - pul plin de pă - ca - te și cu oa - se - le-n căr - ca - te

The scene when Mitroacă narrates the dream of God appeared to him and asked "How are you?" is supported musical "piesa trecere TIII". This piece is probably the most serious, in addition to the final piece. Written in a B scale with the second and fourth lowered and highed sixth uploaded, is built around ostinato cello made by quint B-F# and the flute improvisation inspired by the theme of the dead woman. This piece is written to the measure of 17/4.

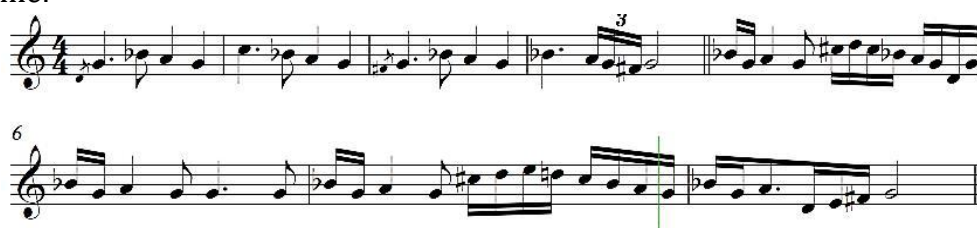
Ostinato:

Percussion instruments, like all piece in this play, have electronic origin, rather from specific genres of club music or sounds of classical instruments (violin, guitar) that have been electronically processed. So, in addition to the world of jazz that I sought to achieve through improvisation and the spirit of folk songs written, I most wanted to add another dimension, very popular among youths, that is electronic music. Sure, at first glance, this combination may give the impression of a kitsch sound mixture, but with the right ratio and with ostinato formulas or sound environments, I appreciate that i've created an original atmosphere that helped drama of the play. "Piesa țambal" appears in the scene when Ciurează (the groom) finds out that Saveta (the bride) had failed attempts to marry. The whole story is told by the sergeant Garoafă (policeman), Mitroacă (friend of the bridegroom), Lache (innkeeper) and Nița (mother of the bride). The theme used is that of the bride, on which improvises dulcimer. In the scene when Saveta meets Lisandra (crazy woman), I wrote a piece with an enchanting atmosphere, based on the 13/4 measure adaptation of old women's theme. The harmonic pedal on the bowed piano strings and a bass guitar rhythmic pulsation occurs first interpreted the theme of flute and then on dulcimer.

The theme:

The scene where the bride's girlfriends looking Mitruța's (dead woman) id card, along with the old women of the village, is supported musical "piesa 15 TIII", probably the jazziest piece I wrote for this piece. Old women's theme, played by the dulcimer is in dialogue with accompaniment consisting of slapping bass, electronic percussion and organ rhodes. The scale of the piece is with raised fourth and the lowered second and seventh, starting on the C note. Music aims to emphasize the comic spirit of the situation: they cannot burry the dead woman without the id card. From next scene we find out ultimately that Mitruța is eventually buried and without id card, so that the music scene portrays return from the cemetery. Music is centered around the dead woman's theme, which is supported by an drone sung by a men chorus. By the end, there is one return of "piesa 14 TIII", designed to emphasize the meeting of the bride and crazy village at the wedding. At end the show, I made a music different from everything I've done up to that point of the play. I adapted the dead woman's theme for piano solo, basically highlighting what's happening through crazy woman's eyes regarding Bulzești village.

The theme:



For this show, I believe I made a music very close to the filmscore approach, creating different facets of each theme throughout their action. I appreciate that this is my best stage music of the seven plays that I scored.

About the author

Adrian Mihai Hasna-Preda, graduated Bachelor and Master degrees within the "Ovidius" University - Faculty of Arts, Music Pedagogy Specialty. Currently he attends the Doctoral School of the University of Music in Bucharest under the guidance of Composer and Professor PhD Dan Dediu. He is also composer and lecturer assistant in the Faculty of Arts, Specialty of Musical Pedagogy. Professional study of the composition was made in college, with Professor PhD Mitică Lupu. During college, musical works won various prizes at national and international songwriting festivals. In parallel with the songwriting work, he tried to develop his personal musical language, addressing many styles, starting with electronic music. Musical experiments have been gathered into an album that he released in 2011. Adrian Mihai Hasna-Preda has several interdisciplinary projects including music for dance shows, for theater plays and for short films and so on.