

## ***Tears*** **the lied by Felicia Donceanu**

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**Abstract:** *Considering the complex landscape of Romanian music during the second half of the 20th century, -and the first half of the 21st century, and the richness of artistic solution offered by various forms of representative Romanian composers of this period of time, this paper proposes to highlight the artistic portrait of composer Felicia Donceanu, reflected in the vocal-chamber paper „Tears”, a complex portrait painted under the influence of collateral talents in the music field. Although it is a miniature paper in its essence, this lied called „Tears” is composed with unique lyrics, it is offering us a sound landscape born from moral criteria, by personal methods and means, crossed by syncretic thinking, assembled in an assumed stylistic freedom. The modal-diatonic sonority of the work and the popular lyrical verse are just a few Donceanu’s style features found throughout the vocal-chamber creations.*

**Key-words:** *Poetic features, methods and composition means, style elements.*

### **1. The birth of the artistic act in our composer’s view, Felicia Donceanu**

The composer Felicia Donceanu approached almost all the traditional music types and less traditional according her vision from the esthetic and style point of view, without being concerned about belonging to some pattern, already used, and very well familiar in other performers of music art. With a very kind and gentle behavior, but strongly structured, her inside spiritual reflections can be seen in all her creation, music is nothing but the composition of her existential principles, principles reflected as well in her personal work, but in her compositions, plastic and literature work or directing work.

Her main two principles that we meet constantly in her work are very tied by sensitive and full freedom, at the soundtrack level. She has always rejected the idea of putting something against her will, just because it was a “must”. These principles that she applied in her technique compositions have created her own style, with influences of other plays but still so differently done.

### **2. *Tears* the lied on lyrics by Felicia Donceanu – the poetic source**

The literary text has a lyrical character of popular inspiration, its theme being based on moral criteria, the lessons or the parables of these verses being addressed to all age groups. Even the title of this work feels a sense of sadness - tears, feeling felt by the lyrical ego in a continuous presence, due to the realization of certain reversible, conscious mistakes. The lyrics can also be characterized by a subjective lyricism, the incipit being marked by the use of the personal pronoun, my person, it grew me a rose..., I jumped in the path of a baby goat/kid... , I saw a wheat on the road...

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The poem has stanza organization, all the three stanzas have a symbolic element on which are based educational stories, like: the rose- the symbol of beauty and refreshment; the babygoat/ kid- tenderness and innocence of childhood; the wheat- the wealth.

Another important element found in her lyrics is the use of chorus on the final of each stanza, the sound of the lyrics and the use of symbolical elements, as the symbolic period is featured, but in the Doncene art as well.

The reversibility of the facts on one's own person is indicated in all three stanzas, in the final part of the chorus, by using the opposing conjunction but: But I also laughed when a thorn pierced me; But I also laughed and I laughed hard; But I bitterly cried without bread today at noon. Moreover, the reflexes of these chorus reveal the theme or theme of the literary context - tears, an element that contains deep moralizing meanings. Also, certain elements of the text, as well as others of a compositional nature, bring this vowel miniature closer to a doina without being able to label it in the end. Still, there are enough elements specific to this musical genre of popular creation such as: lyrical load and the expressiveness of the text in full accord with the sound of musical language; the use of a short monodic fragment in the introductory subnote, the particular importance of the horizontal melodic plan, having different ornamental formulas, close to the popular ones, often doubled by the accompanying piano, precisely to show it. Last but not least, the strophic organization of the musical structure, having an obvious popularity, combines with the folklore inspiration of the text.

The phrases of one's own personality and the relationship with the world, the morality of the text, the way of construction and the specific approach (a general possible situation that could be reflected in the personal life) along with the literary language used, in full agreement with the modal structure of the play, with unmistakable expression of musical parameters, from harmony to dynamics, from registration to melodic and rhythm, to a confessing air and the general feeling clarified in the title itself (or in the modal structure), lead to a literary-musical construction of a great refinement and unity in expression, with subtleties that can only be revealed through a careful, detailed analysis.

### 3. Methods and means of composition

*Tears*, the Lied, written in an original text, is published in several vocal versions, this one is used for the tenor, in fa# (minor, actually aeolic). It is used a modal diatonic – an aeolic on fa#, having two moments in which a sol becar (in the fifth measure/extent and the sixth too) modifies the modal structure, and it becomes cold.

#### 3.1. The Melody

The monodial debut does not clarify the modal structure, nor the first reason, a cadence on the fac but frigic, appearing at the end of the first sentence. The second phrase, began in the frigic context, and then it ends in the eolian solution. One can speak of an eolic-frigic, frigic-eolic organization within the two phrases question-answer types.

The construction is a like a stanza, in which a period of 9 measures is repeated three times, in a different literary context. There are two antecedent-consistent phrases at the level of the stanza, the first having an introductory (subnote) measure, as such, with 5 measures, the second one with four measures being symmetrical. However, at the level of the period, the initial sub-motif proves essential for the asymmetry of the form, for the departure from the classical quadrature, which is not specific to this approach of folkloric inspiration. The introductory measure is monodic, like in a doina (a folkloric mourning song, love or revenge

type) , piano preparing the original reason for the actual discourse (voice and text), made up of two submotives of a measure.

The first of these sub-motives has two very close cells, based on an ascending tetracycline. The second sub-motive, keeping in the ambitus and writing of the previous one, uses two related cells. The debut cell profile is different from the previous submote, with the V-shaped, ornamental drawing, on a tricorder, and the second on the same profile, but reduced to a bicortism. However, there is a repeat of the peaks of the 4 cells , do#-si, do#-si and even a reduction of ambitus, from five sounds to two.

The second motive (measures 4-5) has a similar structure to the first, with the last cell modification, with a concluding and cadenceal role, using a descending tetracycline, symmetrical by free recurrence with the initial one. However, quite consistent differences appear in the harmonic structure and in the writing of the accompaniment, to the original reason. The second sub-motive of the second sentence, the sixth repeat measure, takes over with an ascending view, the last submotive of the first sentence, also showing fine differentiation in rhythm and intonation (total quintet ambitus instead of quince). After repetition, the final sub-motive, cadence, which involves a double melodic line, appears in the voice of the piano sopranos, one second below the sub-reasonf, in the human voice a new structure, but close to the final submotives of the first sentence.

### 3.2 The Harmony

At the level of the harmonic logical point of view, after the introductory sub-motive, monodic (suggesting a plague-like harmony centered on note Si), from the beginning of the melody, it slides gradually, once in a measure, to La#, Sol#, Fa#, using tetrasons , with seventh bass in the first phase (IV2, III2, from the perspective of the center Fa#) then on stressing of the mode, a pedal on it with movable, ornamental elements, on the upper voices.

The step/cadency from the end of the first phrase is very simple one, a parallel slide (qvintit parallel on the external voices) of the first and the seventh step agreement and backward, with a very expressive archaic sonority, using the second lower step (natural Sol) goes to a modal structure to a cold moment.

The second sentence (from the sixth measure to the end) is constituted on a fa# pedal, left just for a single moment, otherwise rather ornamental, in the second motif (by leaving from step I on the IIInd, with immediate return, having the effect of harmonic embroidery rather than of a plagatory cadence).

It is noted in the first reason the reconstruction of the agreement with the second at the base, but this time with a different structure (initial agreement with the Fa# sol#r # - and - mi#, agreement without generating interval, modern specific, possibly interpreted as a mi major with second added), having an apogiatic role for the solver (fa # -sol # -la#-do #, minor accord with second added with modern origins, possibly jazz influences). In the final reason, the onset of a first-seventh deal with the seventh, sliding to the sixth stage with the seventh, in the overturning first, leads to a seventh agreement of the second stage, from which it returns to the first stage with septimate (in direct state), the end bringing an ornamental quartsextacord solved to the final sonority, but without a third party.

The cadency from the end of the first sentence (trison parallelism sliding down to the downward one), successive parallels of the last motive, the downward gradient of the second stage, entering a frigid solution with a halftone above the finale and final stopping on a quill perfect (or incomplete agreement, elliptical third) are arguments of a modal approach of popular archaic origin.

### 3.3 The syntax of composition

After the monodic debut, the written paper has an used syntax, like a homophonous one, presenting subtle polyphonic suggestions, by differentiating the tenor plan of the piano, and especially by a short attempt to counter the melange of the piano soprano to the voice, to the last degree. This moment can also be seen from a heterogeneous perspective through the two melodic unions between the two planes.

The piano is used in the medium area, on a restrained ambitus, in a complex but not complicated way, and has the main role to clarify the rhythm and armonical part, making a continuity of metro rhythm pulsation, assuring the fourth continuity. Doubling the voice melody assures the highlight and clarify of the melody itself. In the rhythm plan, of the piano internal voices, on repeated notes, generally, we can see polymorphism and polymetry aspects both vertically (compared to other plans, a concluding example being even the second measure) and horizontally, oscillating between the various divisions of the 6-stroke metric structure.

The variation in the second motif of each phrase, in the tenor (piano), by the use of short apogiatrics, has the gift of an ornamental enrichment that preserves the interest, the quantity of information under the conditions of monothematism and tristrophic.

The melody structure is a vocal one, with a stress on walking gradually, using a rather small ambitus within the first sentence (a perfect quadrant), which extends to an octave through the submute transponder ascending at the beginning of the second. The general melody profile proposes multiple changes of direction, but a predominance of the descending approach confirms both the popular influence (this trend is known in the Romanian folk culture) and the sad, depressing message of the literary text.

### 3.4. The rhythm and the shape of the paper

The monothematic, given by the related cells, of acquiring (with certain freedoms) of microstructural elements from one reason to another and from the first to the second sentence, not least the one-piece (triple-exposed) structure are arguments of an unquestionable unit of musical discourse, which is not so simple as to risk becoming boring during the three stanzas. Alongside the modal-harmonic structure, temporal aspects constitute at the musical level the main element of interest in the play.

The six-foot measure is marked by the author as being structured 4 + 2, which is confirmed by stopping the song in a doze (or two-fourths - one note duration, the other breathing pause) along the whole piece. However, such a metric construction would mean either two metric accents in a six-stroke, arriving at times 1 and 5 - an absolutely atypical and asymmetric solution, or the existence of three metric accents, at times 1, 3 and 5, in which case the author wanted to emphasize the greater importance of time 5 versus 3, to an extent that could have been noted as three halves.

The first measure, with a preparatory role, proposes two groups of three times (ie 3 + 3, specific to the six-time measures). The following measures may be structured in 3 + 3, but the literary text indicates a much more complex reality in the two groups (simple measures):

- the first time is a preparation, an anachronistic formula for the second time (the third time being a metacruse);
- Fourth time is an anachronistic formula for time five (last time is a metacruse, with durations only in accompaniment);

Starting from this observation of the rhythm of the accents of the literary text, the music could have been written in six-quarters, but anacruistically, with the bars moved a measure of time to the right. However, the composer counterposes this record of the text

(supported by the melody and rhythm profile) through harmonic changes that validate the measures as they appear. At the end of the third measure, the harmonic change occurs four times, as well as the second phase (the sixth measure).

A compromise solution could be to think of a 3 + 1 + 2 solution, specifying that in the theory of music the measures of a time are considered atypical, remnants of discourse, but will have any emphasis on this unique time, while the entity time four is anachronistic, preparatory.

Under these possible multiple conditions of interpreting, which is an important source of a poetical side of the paper, the conclusion belongs to a polymetrical between the various coordinations in the paper: 4 + 2 of the harmony side, 3 + 3 inside the melody, (1 anachronistic + 2) + (1 anachronistic + 2) inside the poem's rhythm, where we can add other elements, subtle present at the inner voices (uninteresting apparently). For example the two motives of the initial phrase (measures 2+3, respectively 4+5) bring the alto voice of piano the rhythm solution: [(1,5+1,5)+(2+1)]+[2+2+2], suggesting an alternance between a measure of six eighths, one of three fourths and one of three halves. Inside accompaniment there can be seen a continuity of pulsation of the fourth measure, which is missing only at the end of the introductory measure. Along each motive, it appears like a desire or a possibility to make it more dynamic to the eighth pulsation, but which doesn't repeat.

The final sub-motive of the first phrase practically repeats the introductory motive at the rhythm level, in a way to create a micro structure of arch. By equalizing the durations of second and third time in the second sentence creates a differentiation from the first subsection, emphasizing the complementary character of the second sentence's answer.

The extensive use of the rhythmic cell - creates correspondence with dancing areas (slow, ceremonial dances, in certain areas), but even with the Baroque period (in which the formula is so common that it is also a stylistic marker), the latter statement can be supported by monothematic thinking, with continuous processing of some initial microstructural elements. Moreover, a certain affinity of the composer with Baroque music can be felt on many occasions without the music becoming neo-baroque.

### 3.5 Dynamics and the agogic theory

The simple dynamics, with changes at the motive level, underlines the literature text's message, by relating dual relations:

- between the first and the second motive (mf-mp), as well as the third and the fourth (f-mf), the debut motive is the strongest at the end of it, underlining the initial situation and the regret of not having a personal reaction at the end; as well as the depressing feature of the message (featured presented and recognized in the predominantly descending project of the melody);

- between the first and the second phase, with a general growth, underlining the impact over personal condition (according to the initial available situation in general), as a possible of a space interpretation, where the first person expresses herself (inside the second phrase) it produces an approach, stressing the dynamics level; this second relation at the dynamics level is a contrary one, complementary to the previous one;

The final decrescendo is merely a common form of concluding and expressing regret.

## 4. Conclusions

Inside music context of the second half of the 20th century and of the modern one, Felicia Donceanu is one of the composers who had a major contribution in developing contemporary-composition Romanian school, offering a model of free style, able to

express the deepest artistic intentions. Her uniqueness finds not only in her way of creating the sound universe but inside personal features, being a complete artist herself, able to recite, sing, direct, paint and perform/interpret. All the knowledge and feeling so close to all the artistic fields and her personal touching and feelings, made the composer Felicia Donceanu to be offered a possibility to express at the sound level in the most creative motives, conquering step by step each and every listener, no matter how old is he.

## 5. References

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