

Cornel Țăranu – The Symphonics of the New Millenium. Part I –Programmatic orchestral works

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Abstract: The present study sets out to analyze and to present the main aspects of composer C. Țăranu’s symphonic works in the 21st century. The fourteen symphonic works composed from 2005 to 2018 represent an important contribution to the contemporary symphonic landscape. Due to the extremely extensive material, I divided the work in two parts: in the first one, I presented the symphonic works with historical-cultural references and in the second part the concertante works for the saxophone and the symphonies themselves. To the diversity of chosen there themes corresponds an enormous variety of means of expression in which we detect the permanence of a complex post-serial “post-Enescian” language of synthesis of the most innovative compositional procedures of the 20th century, with essences of ancient Romanian or universal music. The conclusions include a synthesis of the strategies of musical dramaturgy, comprising common elements of language that configure composer C. Țăranu’s original, unique and unitary style in the seven symphonic works on display.

Keywords: Cornel Țăranu, symphonic works, chromatic modalism, contemporary Romanian music.

Introduction

A composer belonging to the “golden generation” of the Romanian musical creation, Cornel Țăranu (b. 1934) has asserted himself since the fifth decade of the 20th century as a continuator of the Enescian language imposed in the creative consciousness of many Romanian musicians through the cultural genealogical value and the authority of this national genius. Educated in the Transylvanian school by personalities such as Marțian Negrea and Sigismund Toduță in the 1960s, Cornel Țăranu benefited from advanced training courses in Paris with Nadia Boulanger and Olivier Messiaen, and at Darmstadt with György Ligeti (musical analysis), Bruno Maderna (conducting) (Cosma, 2006, p. 121) in a period of relaxation of the restrictions implemented by the communist regime and of opening the borders of the country for the young artists captive in the Eastern Bloc. The adoption of a serial musical language, forbidden by censorship and the public outcry as bourgeois and decadent,

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constituted for this generation of composers an attitude of protest and rebelliousness against the perceptions of “Soviet realism”, the only aesthetic direction accepted by the authorities, but also the placement in the artistic avant-garde (Anghel, 1997, p. 22).

The perfect connection of the chromatic language of the Enescian *Chamber Symphony* with the serial language generated the phenomenon of the „diffusion” of the chromatic in all the works of the young people who rejected the modal neoclassicism “stuck” in “folkloric” clichés. The division of the dodecapronic series into free serially treated sections as well as its camouflage in a discourse bearing the imprint of a strongly abstracted folklore ethos, constituted one of the original syntheses and a way of asserting the identity of a Romanian avant-garde manifested through a modal-chromatic language of serial-modal synthesis, which was also manifested in all Cornel Țăranu’s works. Subsequent adoption of other compositional techniques such as pointillism, controlled aleatorism or heterophonic textures, quotation and collage, extended vocal or instrumental techniques, enriched the palette of expressiveness of the composer's works (Mercean-Țârc, 2007, pp. 11-12).

Cornel Țăranu’s symphonic works can be divided in two stages: the period of the 1960s - 1980s, when he wrote eight symphonic works and four symphonies with programmatic titles (*Brevis Symphony*, dedicated to George Enescu, 1962; the second symphony is *Aulodica*, 1976; the third symphony is called *Signs*, 1984; the fourth symphony is *Ritornele*, 1987) and the second period, between 2005-2018. In the „new millennium”, C. Țăranu composed no less than fourteen symphonic works, fruits of a period of synthesis of all means of expression and of an aesthetic and philosophical depth of maturity.

This intense fathoming of the particularities of the symphonic in the second period can be systematized according to the theme, but also with the genre formula (quite volatile, resistant to rigid classifications), as follows:

- programmatic orchestral works (symphonic poem): *Rimembranza*, 2005; *Saramandji*, 2008; *Yang & Yin* 2013; *Cantus Gemellus*, 2014; *Heraldica*, 2014; *Jeux de Palindrome* 2016; *Bachiana*, 2016;
- works in a *symphony-concerto* symbiosis dedicated to saxophone, and Daniel Kientzy: *Sax Sympho*, 2006, for saxophone solo and orchestra; *Diferencias*, 2010, for saxophone baritone and orchestra; *Semper Idem*, 2015, for saxophone solo and orchestra.
- symphonies: *Simfonia da Requiem*, (*Symphony of Requiem*) for choir and orchestra, 2005; *Memorial Symphony*, 2010; *Hetero(Sym)phony*, 2014; *Aphoristic Symphony*, 2018.

Due to the large extension of the research, but also to the desire to present the particularities of each work, I will divide my study in two parts: the first one is dedicated to the programmatic symphonic works, while the second is

reserved for the concerting works for saxophone and orchestra, as well as for the symphonies themselves.

1. Themes and contents

1.1. Works in G. Enescu's honor

The category of programmatic symphonic works opens with *Rimembranza*¹, a work composed in 2005, on the occasion of the commemoration of 50 years since the death of George Enescu, the spiritual father of the constructivist “golden generation” of which C. Țăranu is a part and dedicated to his remembrance. The analysis carried out by Gabriel and Ecaterina Banciu 2011, p. 227-240 on the work underlined the “elective affinities” with the language of the post-Enescian generation that is claimed from that of the *Chamber Symphony*, conceived by Enescu as if it was a testament to the young composers of the 60's, who were willing to embrace the avant-garde ideas in Romanian music. According to Ștefan Angi, “the obsessive line of variations intertwined on the motif of the cross, on Bach's name, contours the musical metaphor of the portrait of Enescu on the dark background, full of memories of a life, both toilsome and sad and too few in flattering achievements” (Angi, 2014, p. 74). Another work composed in the same year and dedicated once again to Enescu is *Simfonia da Requiem*² for choir and orchestra composed in the mass-symphony symbiosis genre (the work will be analyzed in the second part of my study). Common to them are the modalities of expression and construction (one-part sonata form) which, as the composer confesses, through “modal-chromatic language, melodic drawings and orchestral colors, tries to conjure up, allusively, echoes of the Enescian ethos that guided our steps” (Țăranu, 2005, p. 37).

1.2. Historically and culturally relevant works

Starting in 2008, the symphonic creative springs found their fulfillment in a series of programmatic works placed under the same thematic dome, works which reflect the composer's need to fathom the great themes of universal spirituality.

Composed in 2008³, *Saramandji* is a sonic translation of the Sanskrit words “to be together”. The god Shiva that appears on the cover is the god of love, too, so the composer confesses that this work is dedicated to his wife: “it is a form of affection and a form of being together if we want, and under the sign of Shiva” (David, 2012, p. 13). Shiva, the god of creation and

¹ Completed in February, 2005, and performed in October, 25th, at the Romanian Athenaeum by the “G. Enescu” Philharmonic Orchestra from Bucharest, conducted by Cristian Mandeal.

² An order of the Romanian Radio Broadcasting Company, it was performed in premiere in 2005, in Bucharest, by the Choir and the Orchestra of the same.

³ First performed on March, 27, 2009, by the Transylvania Philharmonic from Cluj-Napoca conducted by György Selmeczi.

of family love understood on the cosmic level, but also the god of destruction and death, dances an eternal dance with a double function of beginning and ending. The first theme is brought out of nowhere and bursts into the solos of the horns, having a melodic drawing of signal, with distanced intervals of the melodic design (seventh).



Fig. 1 Cornel Țăranu, *Saramandji*, mm. 7-11

“There is in *Saramandji*... a song of love – a cantilena of chords – which becomes a hymn of joy at the culmination.” (David, 2012, p. 12) Cantilena, which seems to be embodied from the first theme, is a second lyrical theme exposed in unison.

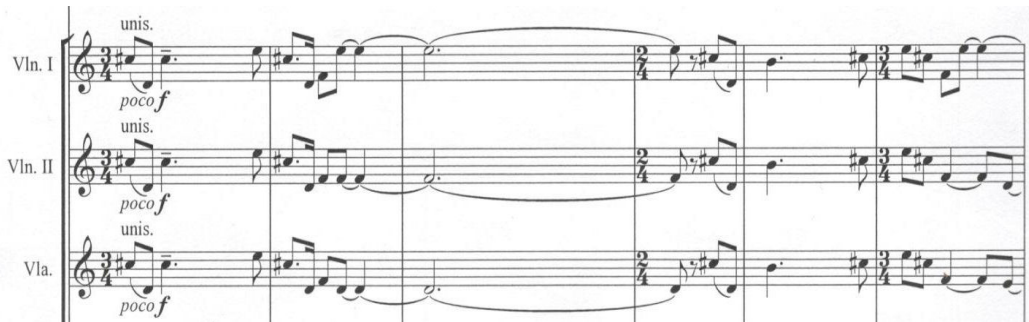


Fig. 2 C. Țăranu, *Saramandji*, mm. 131-136

In the interview conducted by Cleopatra David – a musicologist with studies concerning Indian music –, the composer detailed some of the construction elements and their symbolism “I used in *Saramandji* two rhythms that are familiar to me, *Chitra* and *Teka*. The rhythms appear obsessively at certain moments of percussion” (David, 2012, p. 12). These are interwoven between the free variation moments and bring a *giusto-syllabic* pulse – a rhythm also characteristic for Romanian dances.



Fig. 3 C. Țăranu, *Saramandji*, m. 106

I identified in the form of the free sonata with variations a third theme that appears in development. “I have introduced another deviation, that moment of *alla zingara* fiddler music which evokes the travel of our Gypsies. (...) Departing from India, they settled in this geographical area and created the modal, fiddler music that, in a way, became Enescu’s obsession. The *Caprice Roumain* [Romanian Caprice]⁴ (...) is an homage to the fiddlers who swayed his childhood. I introduced in my work this modal fiddled music, accomplishing an itinerary from India to this Balkan-Danube area” (David, 2012, p. 12).

The violin solo revives echoes of the Enescian *Lăutarul* [Fiddler] through the recitative melos in the spirit of the free *parlando-rubato* adorned with suggestive appoggiaturas. The piano accompaniment imitates the dulcimer, as the composer confessed to us (talk in 2019).

Fig. 4 C. Țăranu, *Saramandji*, *Moderato, rubato alla zingara*, m. 205,
the piano, the percussion and the strings

From among the modalities of variation processing, we present succinctly:
- vertical accumulation of sounds of melody constituting a *cluster*

⁴ One of G. Enescu’s works, reconstituted by C. Țăranu.

Fig. 5 C. Țăranu, *Saramandji*, *Quasi Moderato*, mm. 36-38, the strings

- melodic-rhythmic structure varied by recurrence

Fig. 6 C. Țăranu, *Saramandji*, mm. 37-42

The work is entirely conceived on the basis of an “Eastern-European modalism (...) interwoven with modal post-serial thought (...) As for time, movement and rhythm, there is an alternation of contemplative passages with more violent elements of rhythm. Life and death are suggested in this way. (...) An oscillation between the improvised rhythms, the free repetitive elements and the very strict pulsations gives birth to a mixture of variations with sonata elements, largely in a variational, very free type of work” (David, 2012, p. 12).

The finale is composed of a complex texture of *ostinato* melodic-harmonic rhythms and structures that also contain the *Chitra* formula, suggesting a pulsation of the universal rhythm of the dance of life and death under the sign of Shiva.

Composed in 2013⁵, *Yang and Yin* proposes a new historical foray into Chinese traditional culture and philosophy. The title represents the two

⁵ Completed on November, 3, and first performed at the “International Week of New Music”, in Bucharest, May, 28, 2014.

complementary primordial forces Yang, the masculine, solar, extroverted principle representing the elements of fire, air, wind, and Yin, the feminine, nocturnal, introverted, represented by water and earth. From the musical standpoint, they are presented in the opposite direction, being symbolized by two contrasting and, at the same time, complementary themes in a balance of forces that constitute the dynamic infrastructure of the sonic universe of the work. Like an *ostinato* bass, on double-bass and piano, the first theme, persuasive and continuously varied, consists of the addition of sounds and continuous dialogues until it reaches completion in a melodic design of signal type in the brass, constituting a dynamic energetic culmination at the end of the first exposure.

Molto andante $\text{♩} = 54$

P-no

ppp

Molto andante $\text{♩} = 54$

V-le

pizz.

pizz. „bartok”

p

Vlc.

pizz.

pizz. „bartok”

Cb.

p

8

1

P-no

V-le

Vlc.

Cb.

Fig. 7 C. Țăranu, *Yang & Yin*, mm. 1-13

The second lyric theme, diatonic with a swaying melodic formula, in minor thirds and seconds / ninth, reminds a lullaby song by Ying, the symbol of the night, of interiority, of the obscure and of melopoetic ripples. The solo of the violins takes up the theme in succession, conjures up the uniqueness

and the introversion in *piano* tones, delicately accompanied by *tutti*, a metaphor of the One reflected in the Multiple.

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a string ensemble. The first system includes staves for 'I. Solo', 'Vl. I', 'Gli altri', 'I. Solo', 'Vl. II', and 'Gli altri'. The 'Vl. I' staff shows a transition from 'pizz.' to 'arco' with a hairpin crescendo. The 'Gli altri' staff below it features dynamics of *f*, *p*, *f*, *p*, and *f*. The 'Vl. II' staff includes 'pizz.' and 'div.' markings, with a *mf* 3-measure triplet. The second system continues with 'I. Solo', 'Vl. I', 'Gli altri', 'I. Solo', 'Vl. II', and 'Gli altri'. The 'Vl. I' staff has a *tutti* 3-measure triplet and 'pizz.'. The 'Gli altri' staff below it has dynamics of *p* and *f*. The 'Vl. II' staff has a *tutti* marking and 'unis. arco' with a *mf* 3-measure triplet. The bottom 'Gli altri' staff has a *mf* dynamic and a 3-measure triplet.

Fig. 8 C. Țăranu, *Yang & Yin, Andante rubato*, mm. 105-116

The continuous variational transformation drives the musical discourse to passages in free imitations in *stretto*. I noticed two musical planes: the thematic plane at piano, cello and double bass, and the aleatoric texture, at the violins and viola.

Fig. 9 C. Țăranu, *Yang & Yin*, mm. 38-43

The unison, as a form of monody, is also present, this time in heterophonic suggestions.

Fig. 10 C. Țăranu, *Yang & Yin*, *Moderato*, mm. 49-52

The effects of *frulatto secco*, *glissando sulle corde* at the piano and *tremolos senza suono* only from the keys of the flute grant further mystery to the coloristic of the first sector of the form.

tremolo clef (key)
senza suono

2 Fl.
p

tremolo clef (key)
senza suono

2 Ob.
p

tremolo clef (key)
senza suono

2 Cl.
in Sib
p

2 Fag.
p

frull. secco

2 Trp.
in Do
p

frull. secco

2 C-ni
in Fa
p

frull. secco

Trb.
ten.
p

Fig. 11 C. Țăranu, *Yang & Yin*, m. 104

The reappearance of the second theme, “dissipated” in continuously varied rhythmic-melodic formulas, is done before the reprise, in the second stage of the development, also in suggestive unison.

166

2 Fl.
f

VI. I.
f

Fig. 12 C. Țăranu, *Yang & Yin*, mm. 166-171, unison flutes and violins extracted from the manuscript

In the reverted reprise, *Quasi Andante*, the metaphor of the femininity of the second theme manifests itself in the complementarity of “feminine voices” (violins, flutes) / “masculine voices” (double bass, cello - wind instrument).

The first theme appears metamorphosed into “sigh cells” detected by pauses and glissandi of the *lamento* type.

The image shows a musical score for five string parts: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violin Cello, and Contrabass. The music is in 2/4 time and features a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped in triplets. Dynamic markings include *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *div. arco* (divisi arco). There are also markings for *méta pizz.* (metá pizzicato) and *pizz.* (pizzicato). The score is divided into four measures, with the first measure starting at measure 177 and the last ending at measure 181.

Fig. 13 C. Țăranu, *Yang & Yin*, mm. 177-181

In the Coda, the two themes are synthesized vertically harmonically in “rhythmic unison” [the rhythmical sequence: 1-2-3; 2-1-2; 3-2-3; 4-5-6, Fig. 14), which symbolically represents a union of the complementary forces from the melodic with which the work begins towards the vertical-monolithic coagulation, from diffused to concrete, from night to day, from dream to real and so on.

The image shows a musical score for four woodwind parts: 2 Flutes, 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets in SiBb, and 2 Bassoons. The music is in 2/4 time and features a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped in triplets. Dynamic markings include *ff* (fortissimo). The score is divided into four measures, with the first measure starting at measure 294 and the last ending at measure 298.

Fig. 14 C. Țăranu, *Yang & Yin*, mm. 294-298

Heraldica was completed in 2014 and published in 2016 under the aegis of the Romanian Academy. The symphony is a tribute to this prestigious institution of the country (of which Cornel Țăranu is a member) on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of service to the Romanian Nation. The title is inspired by the effigy of this institution, which represents goddess of wisdom Minerva, patroness of poets, artists and teachers. The seal of this institution was Gh. Barițiu’s proposal in 1866 and represents the goddess with the Earth globe in her right hand, above which is the personification of winged Victoria. Minerva is depicted with a spear in her left hand, having at her feet the shield and the owl, a bird that symbolizes wisdom in many cultures.

The victorious triumphal character is embodied by the signal motif played by trumpets in the *Risoluto* indication, a first thematic “utterance” of the sonata with variation elements. This first thematic motif, together with “tower chords” containing the melody sounds vertically and flanking the melodic interventions and will constitute the scaffolding on which this first section of the form is founded, based on variation processing.

The image shows a musical score for the first six measures of the piece 'Heraldica'. The score is for a full orchestra, including woodwinds, brass, and piano. The tempo is marked 'Risoluto' with a quarter note equal to 72 (♩ = 72). The key signature has one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The instruments listed are: 2 Flutes, 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets in B-flat, 2 Bassoons, 3 Trumpets in C, 4 Cornets in F, 2 Trombones, and Piano. The score shows various musical notations such as dynamics (f, mf), articulation (accents), and performance instructions like 'a 3.' and 'gliss.'.

Fig. 15 *Heraldica*, the wind instruments and the piano, mm. 1-6

Displayed at the oboe, the second theme brings the melos of the “Carpathian melodies” consistently represented in the composer's creation through the diatonic, swayed, minced aulody, with appoggiaturas, underlining the filiation with the *doina* and the dirge by the *glissando* of the lamentation type, present in these “tender” melodious “waves”. The minor second and the major third are the germinal intervals from which the continuous variation processing of the second thematic sector of the form starts.

The image shows a musical score for the second theme of 'Heraldica', measures 59-61, for the oboe. The tempo is marked '1. Solo legato'. The key signature has one flat. The score shows a melodic line with various ornaments and articulation, including a 'gliss.' (glissando) and a '3' (triple). The notation includes slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Fig. 16 C. Țăranu, *Heraldica*, The second theme, mm. 59-61

The entire unfolding of the free sonata form is brimming with variation processing of the two theme-motifs that are unitary from the intonational standpoint.

The treatment begins with a sonic ground composed of oscillating cells that form mobile clusters on the harmonic vertical, suggesting the swayed song

of the second theme, interspersed with the heraldic pillars of the clusters in *tutti*, as well as the dialogues containing the signal motif of theme 1.

Figure 17 shows a musical score for five instruments: V-ni I, V-ni II, V-la, V-celli, and Cb. The score is in 3/4 time. The V-ni I and V-ni II parts are in unison (unis.) and feature a series of eighth notes. The V-la part is also in unison (unis.) and features a series of eighth notes with some triplets (3) and quintuplets (5). The V-celli and Cb parts are in unison (unis.) and feature a series of eighth notes. The V-la part has 'div.' markings at the end of the score.

Fig. 17 C. Țăranu, *Heraldica, Moderato*, mm. 118-122

From among the themes processed, we mention:

- the large interval spacing of the minced “aulody” displayed in unison and suggesting monody

Figure 18 shows a musical score for two instruments: V-celli and Cb. The score is in 3/4 time. Both parts are in unison (unis.) and feature a series of eighth notes with some triplets (3) and quintuplets (5). The V-celli part has a 'div.' marking at the end of the score.

Fig. 18 C. Țăranu, *Heraldica*, mm. 180-185

- the gradual addition of sound:

Figure 19 shows a musical score for five instruments: V-ni I, V-ni II, V-la, V-celli, and Cb. The score is in 3/4 time. The V-ni I and V-ni II parts are in unison (unis.) and feature a series of eighth notes with some triplets (3) and quintuplets (5). The V-la part is in unison (unis.) and features a series of eighth notes. The V-celli and Cb parts are in unison (unis.) and feature a series of eighth notes. The V-ni I and V-ni II parts have 'div.' markings at the end of the score.

Fig. 19 C. Țăranu, *Heraldica*, mm. 169-173

- unisons with a symmetrically vaulted melodic profile, “minor-major play”, having modal origins.

The image shows a musical score for five instruments: Violin I (V-ni I), Violin II (V-ni II), Viola (V-la), Cello (V-celli), and Contrabass (Cb.). The score is for measures 187-189. The Violin parts feature unison melodic lines with a vaulted profile, marked 'unis.'. The Viola part includes a triplet and a quintuplet, with markings for 'pizz.' and 'arco'. The Cello and Contrabass parts also feature unison lines, with the Cello marked 'div. pizz.' and 'arco'.

Fig. 20 C. Țăranu, *Heraldica*, mm. 187- 189, violins only

The continuous alternation of these two configurations will lead, by accumulation, to a climax in *fff* on “tower cluster-chords” before the coda. Coda, *Libero*, is improvisational, based on models of conclusive motives, wind instruments, pedals to strings and effects to the brass, the end vanishes away into effects of *tutti con le palme*.

The image shows a musical score for wind instruments in the Coda section, measures 350-352. The instruments are Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet in Bb (Cl in Bb), Bassoon (Fag.), 3 Trumpets in C (Trp in C), 4 Cornets in F (Cors. in F), and Trombone (Trb.). The Oboe and Clarinet parts feature melodic lines with markings for *mf* and *p*. The Bassoon part has a triplet and a quintuplet, marked *p*. The Trumpet, Cornet, and Trombone parts feature rhythmic patterns with markings for '1.2.3 kiss', 'palme', and 'frull'.

Fig. 21 C. Țăranu, *Heraldica*, from Coda, mm. 350-352

Cantus gemellus or “Twin song” was composed in 2014⁶ and makes multiple references: both to the medieval rudimentary polyphony and to the composer’s birth in the Sign of Gemini (talk in 2019). It is a work characterized by a gloomy internalized atmosphere, with moments of heart-breaking pathos. In this work, the composer introduces the timbre color of two blockflötes that intone the Hungarian children’s song *Debrecenbe kéne menni*, reminiscent of his childhood. The thematic material of this fragmented “cantus gemellus” is the generator of the whole musical discourse. Finally completed, *Cantus gemellus* is preceded by an epilogue with a deadly message recited by an actor: *E meglio sedere che camminare/ Giacere che sedere/ Dormire che vegliare/E la morte e meglio di tutto*⁷.

The intonations of the quoted theme are found both in the orchestral melodic drawings and in the chord aggregates, whose obstinacy interrupts the threatening, implacable lyric-pathetic unfolding of the solo that circulates at all instruments.

Fig. 22 C. Țăranu, *Cantus gemellus*, mm. 10-15

The second theme, *Largamente-rubato*, is marked by the descending drawing, leaning and glissandi, which give to the speech of the strings a pathetic expression of suffering, begging, crying, falling...

⁶ ...and first performed at the “Cluj Modern” Festival, on April, 24, 2015 by the Transylvania Philharmonics, conductor Horia Andreescu.

⁷ *Walking is better than sitting./ And lying better than sitting./ Sleeping is better than watching,/ But the best of all is dying.*



Fig. 23 C. Țăranu, *Cantus gemellus*, mm. 76-78

The atmosphere of cold, bloated strangeness is rendered by effects as *frulatto secco coll palme*, *frulatto senza suono*, harmonics for wind instruments, attacks *sulle corde* at piano, *vibrato lento*, attacks *sull ponticello* at violins, effects of percussion.

The children's song is completed at the end of the work, quoted entirely with chromatic "distortions" displayed on the pedals of the strings.



Fig. 24 C. Țăranu, *Cantus gemellus*, mm. 184-196

The increase of texture and tension in the final culmination is meant to highlight the recited text, flanked by cluster-towers, whose attacks signify the implacability of death, culminating with *tutti* in *fff*. The *ad libitum* coda brings back the memory of childhood or, maybe, a new beginning.

Bachiana is a tribute with which we halt in the musical Baroque. Composed in 2016, the work has as an inspirational material the fugue in C# minor of J. S. Bach's *Wohltemperiertes Klavier*, volume I, a 5-voice tri-thematic fugue. The composer uses this material as a *collage* of six orchestrated Bach quotes, interspersed between the variation "comments" of his themes.

- Exposition of the fugue, mm. 11-28 (in fugue, mm. 11-16)
- Fragment from the counter-exposition, mm. 65-88 (in fugue, mm. 17-31)
- Fragment of tonal reprise, mm. 182-193 (in fugue, mm. 73-84)
- Fragment from the evolution of the exposition III, mm. 254-261 (in fugue, mm. 66-72)
- Short fragment from the final reprise, mm. 276-285 (in fugue, mm. 94-103)
- The finale, stylized and harmonically essentialized, in character of choral, mm. 336-345 (the finale of the fugue, transformed coda, mm. 94-115)

The use of quotations represents a meta-type reference, to the Bachian masterpiece presented here in the form of a "slice of nature" or "art", which it

integrates into the “body of the own sonic playwright”. It is the postmodern attitude of a composer who considers himself at the forefront of the serial modal language; we identify here what Anatol Vieru calls „the art that uses quotation marks ... the art that takes art as its object...” (Vieru, 1994, p. 14), or what Irinel Anghel defines as meta-music by looking “from above at a decontextualized sonic object, which is metamorphosed by renewing re-contextualization” (Anghel, 1992, p. 88).

About this C. Țăranu told us: “Quotes are a kind of parallel worlds, to which we refer, in the sense that, on the one hand, Bach’s music quoted quite accurately, sometimes, is interrupted by the comment of today’s world. (...) my music is inspired by the thematic core of the fugue, a core that, by adding, reaches up to twelve sounds. Bach’s quotes are just cuts, some hachures through which we temporarily enter Bach’s music, but that was, so to say, the source of inspiration of his own music” (talk with the composer).

The three thematic generating motives correspond to the tri-thematic form of the original fugue. Thus, to the thematic motif of the fugue, sounds are gradually added, thus constituting the first theme in the introduction.

Fig. 25 C. Țăranu, *Bachiana*, mm. 1-7

The second thematic motif is composed of major seconds and minor thirds, forming a cyclical melodic drawing present in the other symphonic works also. It is largely tuned by brass, a sonority that gives it a majestic, triumphant character.

Fig. 26 C. Țăranu, *Bachiana*, mm. 7-10

Its punctuated rhythm, as well as the melodic design, hints at a jazz theme, as the composer confirms: “It is widely used in jazz. I thought of jazz musicians such as Jacques Loussier and the *Swinger singers* vocal group, whom I heard in several concerts in Paris, in the 50s, and who were making furores

with jazz-style performances after Bach. I really liked the idea that the audience was approaching Bach in this way” (talk with the composer).

The form is one-part sonata with variational free episodes and quoted episodes that mark each sector: the introduction, the exposition, the development of the reprise and the coda. Thus, we encounter the following scheme:

Exposition

Introduction themes (A-B) Bach quoted 1 – Var 1 (themes C, A, B) **Quoted 2 – Var 2 (A) Var 3 (C)**
bars 1-----42 65-73 74--88 89-104 105-174

Development

Var 4 (A) quoted 3 **Var. 5 (C, B)** **Var. 6 (theme B. A. C. H.)** **Var. 7 (C-D) quoted 4**
175---182 183---193 194- ---215 216—237 238-253 254---261

Reprise

Var 8 (A/B/C) quoted 5 **var 9 (D/C/B)** **var 10 (Av) quoted 6** **Coda (Count Basie)**
262-276 277--285 286-301 302-331 336-345 346-finale.

Some of the variational processing techniques are as follows:

- the permutation and transposition of melodic drawings, oscillators with progressive addition of sounds and imitation of theme A

Fig. 27 C. Țăranu, *Bachiana*, mm. 34-41

- *Stretto* entries of the overturned, “rolled” permuted melodic formulas, cumulated in chordal structures.

Più mosso $\text{♩} = 76$

Vlni I
Vlni II
V-le
Celli
Cb

f
p
f
cresc.
div.
gtr.
Solo

Fig. 28 C. Țăranu, *Bachiana*, mm. 89-95

- coloristic effects achieved through extensive instrumental techniques. Agglomerated textures encompassing pedals, *stretto*, *glissando* effects on piano chords, *ostinato* on repetitive free formulas, *glissando* arched on strings, sounds with air on the brass

s. corde

Pno.
Vlni I
Vlni II
V-le
Celli
Cb

mp
f
f
arco
pizz. arco
arco
pizz. arco

Fig. 29 C. Țăranu, *Bachiana*, m. 327

The overlapping of the theme quoted (the Bachian fugue) with the modern “commentary” created by C. Țăranu.



Fig. 30 C. Țăranu, *Bachiana*, mm. 65-71, theme of the *fugue* combined with the thematic - motif 1

The final Bachian choral, impressive, grand, solemn, that configures the Coda, followed by a last intonation of the first theme and a brief motif *à la Count Basie*, as a playful personal signature, concludes this work, surprising by the variety of expression modes relatively to a quote from Baroque music.

Jeux de palindrome is a work composed in 2016⁸ and built on the principle familiar to the composer, that of the technique of melodic recurrence, of the harmonic / polyphonic / rhythmic asymmetries naturally derived from its modal, geometrical-serial thinking. The strategy of mirror games encompasses the entire range of musical expression from recurring microstructures to the entire sound edifice, a bi-thematic sonata, with reverse reprise, representing the archetype of the formal palindrome.

Thus at the microstructural level, we encounter “mirrors” with the vertical axis made by attacks in *stretto*:



Fig. 31 C. Țăranu, *Jeux de palindrome*, mm. 9-12

⁸ First performed at the “Cluj-Modern” Festival, April, 12, 2019, by the Transylvania Philharmonic, conducted by Cristian Mandea.

Simultaneous harmonic mirrors made by *glissandi* with three horizontal axes:

Fig. 32 C. Țăranu, *Jeux de palindrome*, mm .94-96

Rhythmical mirrors:

Fig. 33 C. Țăranu, *Jeux de palindrome*, mm. 121-122

Conclusions

The seven symphonic works composed between 2005-2018 are the emblem of a unitary compositional style in which common language elements can be detected, musically semanticized according to the needs of expressing the discursive process subordinated to the themes chosen by the composer.

The formal archetype of the idea of symphony-symphonic is in composer Cornel Țăranu's works the monolithic, bi- or multi-thematic sonata with developing variational episodes, with reverse reprise, introduction and coda.

The principle of continuous variation applied to the whole thematic material generates interlaces of the sonata pattern with that of the variations, this being predominant in some symphonic works. Thus, a rhetoric of continuous variational dialogue is born through the repetitiveness of melodic-rhythmic formulas in multiple permutational variants subordinated to the serial-modal organization.

An enumeration of compositional strategies includes an arsenal of variation techniques used for expressive coherent play. Thus, we meet:

- the completion of some rhythmic melodic structures with a thematic function by the gradual addition of sounds (*Yang & Yin*, *Saramandji*, the introduction) and / or the gradual elision of others until the thematic physiognomy dissipates and a point writing is achieved;
- various interval combinations: inversions, recurrences, augmentations, decreases, permutations, symmetrical intervals, the distancing of the melody intervals up to the seventh, ninth, tenth;

- the chromatic distortion of the diatonic state of some melodic formulas (*Cantus gemellus* – simultaneously);
- the thematic forming role of the reversed chromatic formula and of the diminished 8th as a result of the major-minor synthesis of modal essence;
- the use of mixing drawings of seconds, mirrored sevenths, sometimes with glissando, which has an expressive function of lament (*Heraldica*, the second theme) / effect of subtle irony (or a slip to another world, see in *Bachiana* the quoted passage);
- attacks in *stretto* with ascending geometric configuration, descending, convex, concave, symmetrically horizontal or vertical (*Jeux de palindrome*);
- chordal aggregates whose sounds are transformed into rhythmic-melodic structures (Theme 1, *Heraldica*) and conversely, the coagulation of the melody in achordic-type pillars, with attacks in *tutti*, meant to give a certain drama to the works (all works);
- syntactic pendulums from unison suggesting monody, to imitative polyphony, from *stretto* to heterophony or texture, or vice-versa, from tensional-textural accumulations to unisonic statements with maximum rhetorical effect. The pedals on the cluster for the strings are usually meant to support a solo performance on wind instruments;
- the rhythm and the metric are free (in the parlando-rubato spirit), the time of the musical dramaturgy being articulated in moments of strict organization and in moments of improvisation, free on given structures. There are specific rhythms such as *Chitra* and *Teka*, meant to give a certain character to the works but also *ostinato* rhythmic formulas specific to the composer's language that appear cyclically with a semantic coagulated dramatic function (in the spirit of the giusto-syllabic);
- of the two thematic states in contrast, the first theme usually has a heroic character through the signal configuration exposed in the sound of the brass, and the theme 2, *cantabile*, usually displayed at the chords, brings irisations of lullabies (in *Yang and Yin*, *Cantus gemellus*), the hymn of love in *Saramandji* or *doina-like melopoeia* in *Heraldica* etc.
- there are integrated themes with symbolic character which give specificity to the theme mentioned in the title: the *alla zingara* theme from *Saramandji*, the theme of the Hungarian children's song displayed at blockflöte in *Cantus Gemellus*, the quotes from *Bachiana*;
- timbre effects of a very large variety, expressed by means of extended instrumental technique: *col le palme sur l'embouchure*, *frulatto secco senza suono*, *pian sulle corde*, *sordina con dite*, *con bach timpani*;
- percussions such as: flexatone, bongos toms wood blocks, plates, vibraphone;
- the introduction of the recited voice with an impressive dramatic effect (*Cantus gemellus*);

- a postmodern attitude by re-contextualizing the quotation of historical referentiality in the spirit of the idea of meta-music.

The seven works presented reflect the anxieties of a spiritually young composer, in continuous search for resonances with the great themes of the Romanian and universal culture. His works reveal to us a unique laboratory of creative alchemy, a living sound world, in which both the vibrations of the nostalgic referent and the tensions of the present throb.

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