

Architecture and language in the *seven String Quartets* by Iulia Cibișescu-Duran

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Abstract: Written between 1990 and 2009, my seven works for string quartet: *Poems for string Quartet* and *6 numbered Quartets* approach different modal languages, from prepentatonic or pentatonic structures to heptachordic or dodecaphonic configurations, sometimes overlapping musical languages, generating those polymorphous languages, with moments of overlapping or juxtaposing of syntaxes, with a motivic cycling determinant of a conceptual unit of works linked to synthetic, elaborate thinking. Pluripartite, seen as suites of miniatures (*String Quartet No. 3, Poems for string quartet*), tripartite (*Quartets No. 2, 4, 5, 6*) or monopartite (*Quartet No. 1*), the *7 String Quartets* are written in the sphere of formal patterns caused by construction based on dramaturgy inspired by literary works (see *Quartet No. 5* inspired by *Winter at Lisbon* by Antonio Munoz Molina, see *Poems for string quartet* and *Quartet no. 3* inspired by my own poems from the volumes *Hiding places of Masks* and *Egyptian Mystery*), from the contemplation of the chordal sonorities of some tonal-functional relations or of some jazz sonorities (*Quartet No. 4*), of a Byzantine song or children's songs (*Quartet No. 3*), of philosophical meditations (see *Quartet No. 1*), of sonorities belonging to the Romanian song and dance (*Quartet No. 6*) or of some concision and refinement as reflections of Webern's music, overlaying on small temporal spaces different musical languages belonging to different tuning systems (*Poems for string quartet*). The first audition of *String quartets* was at the International Festivals of the *Musical Autumn of Cluj* and *Cluj Modern Festival* (1990, 1993, 1999, 2001, 2003, performers: *Concordia Quartet*: Albert Markos, Grigore Botar, Olimpiu Moldovan, Adalbert Torok), as well as at the International *Meridian Festival*, Bucharest (2018, *Quartet No. 6* played by the *Ad Hoc Quartet*: Vlad Răceu, Diana Man, Ovidiu Costea, Vlad Rațiu, musical management: Matei Pop).

Keywords: architecture, language, dramaturgy, poems, quartet

1. Introduction

Occupying a central place in my own creation, along with *Symphonies*, *Violin Concertos* (*Concerto No. 1 for violin and orchestra, Concerto No. 2 for violin and chamber orchestra, Concertante Suita for Violin and orchestra*), *Concerto for flute, Cello and orchestra, Concerto for bass saxophone and chamber orchestra, Concerto for Viola and string orchestra, Concerto for*

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violin, viola and string orchestra, alongside the four *Cantatas*, *The Light Songs* for ensemble, the cycles of the lieder *An Altro Settembre* for mezzosopran and ensemble, *Crammers light* for baritone and piano, *3 Sonatas for violin and piano*, *3 Sonatas for viola and piano*, *Dixtuor for ensemble* etc, the seven works for string quartet: *Poems for String Quartet* and 6 numbered *String Quartets* (written between 1990-2009) use modal languages, sometimes polymorphies of musical languages, with moments of overlapping or juxtaposition of syntaxis, with a motivic cycling determinant of a conceptual unit of the work connected to synthetic, elaborative thinking.

2. Quartets analysis

String Quartet No. 1, composed in 1990 and performed in premiere at the *Cluj Autumn Music International Festival 1991* by the *Concordia Quartet*: Albert Markos (violin I), Grigore Botar (violin II), Olimpiu Moldovan (viola), Adalbert Torok (cello), proposes a musical discourse belonging to a modal language, connected to the bi-thematic sonata form, consisting of one part. The first theme, mensural, trichordal, repetitive, minimalist, presented in the low register of the viola on a cello ison, reminds one of an ancient Byzantine song.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for the first theme of String Quartet No. 1. It features four staves: Violin I (V1), Violin II (V2), Viola (vlna), and Cello (vcll). The tempo is marked 'Largo' with a quarter note equal to 40 (♩ = 40). The time signature is 4/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score shows the first three measures of the piece. The Viola and Cello parts play a repetitive, trichordal melody in the low register, while the Violin parts are mostly rests. The score is signed 'Cibișescu Iulia' and 'Nr. 1'.

Fig. 1 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 1*, first theme, mm. 1-3

Juxtaposed with the first theme, the second theme covers the chromatic range through its free mensural configurations in a free rhythm, like Messiaen's *Oiseaux*, brought into the high register of the violins. There is a polymorphic juxtaposition of different musical languages: the Byzantine, repetitive, and melodic, modal-chromatic song, ornamented with triples and fermate, genus *Oiseaux*, which represents two distinct facets of the nostalgic feeling of

contemplation: the dark gaze, directed at the material, serious area of existence and the hopeful, airy, refined freedom of the spirit.



Fig. 2 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 1*, second theme, m. 8

A conclusive segment of the overlapping of these two themes concludes in a diminution of the exhibition of the sonata form. The development, carried out in eight stages, processes, debates, confronts the material of the two themes through a polymorphy of musical gestures (stage I), by polyphony of attacks with *trills* specific to the second theme, but with a precise rhythm (stage II),

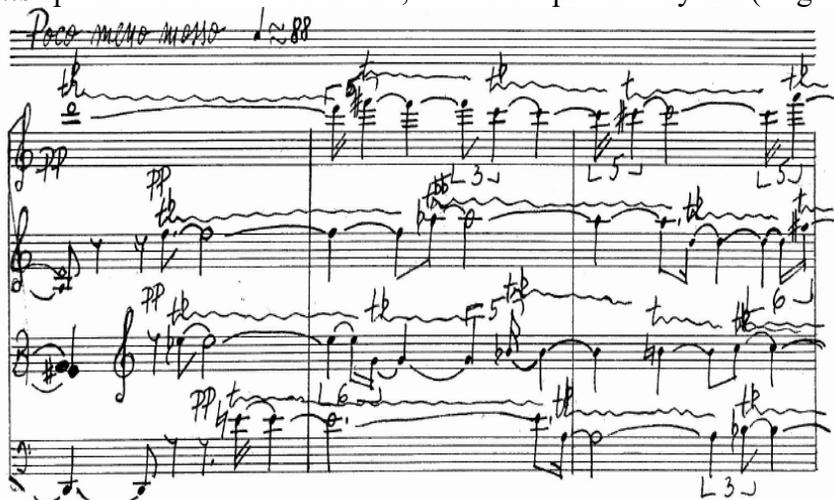


Fig. 3 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 1*, mm. 45-47

by a chromatic evolution of the first theme in a free rhythm, continued with a pointillist variant of the motivic material (stage III), by a polyrhythmic culmination in *tutti* (stage IV),

Fig. 4 Iulia Cibîşescu-Duran, *String Quartet No.1*, mm.104-107

by an elaborate monodic solistic variant of the second theme (stage V), through synthetic thinking of the polymorphic overlapping of languages and sonorous plans belonging to different tuning systems (the harmonic system in a sonorous plain of the high voice described by violins in a free rhythm and the temperate system, in a plain of pizzicato in a written rhythm, at viola and cello)

Fig. 5 Iulia Cibîşescu-Duran, *String Quartet No.1*, mm. 158-160

by multi-layered conglomerates of arpeggiated agreements *alla gitara* (stage VII).

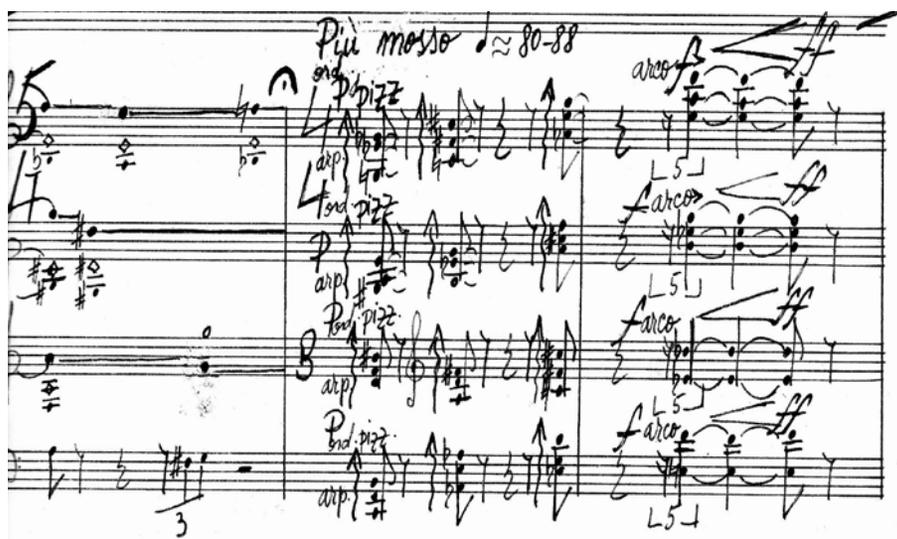


Fig. 6 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 1*, mm. 182-184

The reprise, a natural continuation of the last stage of development (stage VIII), brings again the material of the two themes in a varied way, the last phrase of violin I suggesting the ethereal disappearance in the acute register of theme II, corresponding to an ontological conclusion of the melodic expressiveness dominated by the spiritual.



Fig. 7 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 1*, reprise, mm. 215-216

Written three years later, *Poems for String Quartet* (1993) was performed in first audition at the *Autumn Music Festival* of Cluj – 1993, by the quartet with whom I collaborated most, the *Concordia Quartet*. Consisting of seven short pieces written as reflections on the brevity and refinements of Weberian music, inspired by my own lyrics, belonging to my first volume of poems, *Hiding places of Masks*, published at *Editura Mesagerul* in Cluj-Napoca two years later, *Poems for String Quartet* overlap on small temporal spaces different musical languages belonging to different tuning systems: the system of the harmonics brought in divergent movement to violin I and the viola and the temperate system, also viewed in divergent movement, to violin II and the cello (see piece VII)

Fig. 8 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *Poems for String Quartet*, piece no. VII, mm. 1-3

or realizes polymorphous musical gestures by overlapping different types of writing at the four instruments (the 6th piece).

Fig. 9 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *Poems for String Quartet*, piece no. VI, mm. 9-11

At other times, the pieces have a homogeneous, minimalist, repetitive construction, the musical text being presented in the form of repeated modal sections in different configurations, unmeasured, in a random rhythm at all instruments, as can be seen in the second piece, where the sections of two or three sounds distributed to all four instruments belong to the pentatonic hemitonic mode, having the scale *C-D-Eflat-G-Aflat*,



Fig. 10 Iulia Cibîşescu-Duran *Poems for String Quartet*, piece no. II, mm. 1-6

thus creating stately music, nostalgic, repetitive, about absence, nothingness, inspired by my own poetry *Minus infinity*: “It’s white. / Lime near lime, / every centimeter covered with white / No trace of error / mistake - imperfections. / Glossily illuminating six walls / Silence - / Hopeless despair / In centimeters of plaster / Empty room / Not dark / Non-illuminated / Waiting for the prisoner / Who does not come. / Lime near lime / Plaster centimeters / empty / Between six walls / Without the despair of a mistake / No darkness / Unlikely lucid / Empty silence / That none exist / Nothing.”

From those seven miniatures, the third and the fifth pieces, bi-strophic type AB, with a fast tempo and a tense character, engraved on a rhythm in small values, have homogeneous writing inspired by my own poems of the same volume: *Hiding places of Masks* (“To go down in the labyrinth / Without turning around / among the white wax statues / immobile / walking on unpaved streets / without names / leading / only on other streets without names, / running on sidewalks / without exit / what? Go on other sidewalks / without exit, / bypassing silent houses / framed by thick / impassable pillars, / shouting after someone / who is not / on the streets without names / draped with motionless sidewalks / among white wax statues, / shouting after someone / on the sinuous streets / running on the sidewalks / without exit / shouting after someone / on the sidewalks / without exit / shouting without exit / shouting.”),



Fig. 11 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *Poems for String Quartet*, piece no. V, mm. 13-15

in contrast to pieces I, IV and VI, which have heterogeneous syntaxes from the point of view of conception and conducting of the musical discourse based on different overlapping or juxtaposed musical languages.

Antagonistic, with hermetism suggested by rapid growths followed by an absence of voices, by continuations through solos sometimes accompanied by short portions of musical gestures belonging to different musical languages, highlighting large sections of harmonic growths, sometimes polyrhythmic, followed by *pianissimo* “al niente”, *String Quartet no. 2*, composed in 1999 and performed in first audition at the *Autumn Musical Cluj International Festival* (1999) by the same *Concordia Quartet*, is philosophical music, sometimes closed in the undeclared ideological sense of the substance of the artistic message. Part I of this quartet begins harmonically, with dissonant, heavy music, in the medium register (theme I).

Andante *Quartet de coarde nr. 2* *Iulia Cibișescu*

I

 A handwritten musical score for the first movement, first theme of String Quartet No. 2, measures 1-4. The score is for four instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. The tempo is marked 'Andante' and the time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score is written in a clear, legible hand. Dynamics include 'p' (piano) and 'mf' (mezzo-forte). There are some markings like 'mf' and 'p' under the notes. The score is divided into two systems by a double bar line.

Fig. 12 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 2*, first movement, first theme, mm. 1-4

The continuation with that high music in small rhythmic values, at violins (theme II), supposes another facet of the meditation directed this time to the sky, to the high sound of modal chromatic thinking, to the consonance.

Fig. 13 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 2*, first movement, 2nd theme, mm. 9-10

Written in the form of bi-thematic *sonata*, the first part of the 2nd *Quartet* proposes a treatment of material resulted by the overlapping of musical languages belonging to the two proposed themes, overlapping leading to a high culmination of the part. The inverse and varied recapitulation returns the material and the spiritual states of the beginning to other existential configurations (see the first theme which appears in harmonic partials).

Fig. 14 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 2*, first movement, recapitulation, mm. 70-73

Using the modal material of a pentachord composed of whole tones arranged heterophonically to all instruments in a polyphony of sound effects (*con sordino*, *flautato*, *sul ponticello*, *glissando*, *saltato*, *col legno*, *gettato*), later modifying to an hemitonic pentacord, section A of the second movement of the quartet is highlighted by delicate music, *con sordino*, in fine tones.

Ex. 15

Fig. 15 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 2*, second movement, mm. 84-85

Section B juxtaposes and then superposes music of arpeggiated chords *alla guitarra* at viola and cello with improvisatory music in pizzicato and non-mensural rhythm, at violins, following the A's reprise to restore the heterophonic writing of sound effects arranged in the acute register of all instruments, with a high final volatilization.

Fig. 16 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 2*, 2nd movement, mm. 140-142

The 3rd movement, written in a pentastrophic chain form, type **ABCDE**, begins with a very dynamic section in *Allegro* and *ff*, with a polyrhythmia arranged in quintolets and sextolets, which will subsequently be homogenized in an isorhythmia leading to a large culmination.

Fig.17 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 2*, third movement, mm. 146-147

Part of contrasts and juxtaposition and overlapping of polymorphic syntaxes, of imitative or non-imitative polyphonies at different levels of organizing the sound material, the third movement is imposed by a fast, explosive, culminating agogic of the whole speech, being shaped as a final part of the quartet. Section IV, *Epilogue*, is a meditative conclusion, a meta-level reminder of the material of the second part, an expressive melody of the viola accompanied by the rest of the instruments in the *pizzicato*, in a free, unmeasured setting.

Fig. 18 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 2*, fourth movement, mm. 250, free section

Response given at a distance of eight years to *Poems for string quartet, String Quartet no. 3* (2001), published at *Editura MediaMusica*, Cluj-Napoca in 2002, is a work made up of six short, modal pieces, very different in construction and message. The poetic inspiration based on lyrics belonging to my own second volume of poetry, *Egyptian Mystery* (Editura Cogito, Oradea, 1997), is retained in the miniatures of this cycle.

Some of the pieces of the cycle have homogeneous construction – pieces nos. 2 and 5 - fast and virtuosic, achieving spectacular growths and rapid climaxes, illustrating two of the poems in this volume.

The first of them is *Fair*, after a painting by Venceslav Melka, and is used in the second piece of the quartet:

“Fair / And noise / And clouds / Scribble on the towers / Gypsies / Screaming / In the baskets / Wares/ Kids running away / Screeching / Playing, / It's fair / And the bulls / They rebelled / Thirsty, / In the fireplace/ Fire / And song / Red / Of the roof/ Head scarves / Put on the table / At daylight / To hang / A trick / In the tail / Axles / Creeping/ Soar, / It's fair / And the morning / Laughs /In tail.”



Fig. 19 Iulia Cibîşescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 3*, piece 2, mm. 19-21

The second poem is *You* and is found in the piece no. 5: “Surround me flying reptiles / The land of darkness / Shouts of litany / In collapse of pilgrims / Shouts / Snatched wings / Rabid / Hurricane meetings/ Under vaults / Losses / Yesterday's beliefs / Falling wind / Dancing alleys / In the circle / Red / Red / The land of darkness / Rotated in yesterday / Flying reptiles / What they grow / Litanies / Screaming / Crashes / Litanies of pilgrims / Screaming / Litanies / Pilgrims / Crashes / Screaming. / Country of darkness / Enters / Flying reptiles / You.”



Fig. 20 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 3*, piece 5, mm. 114-115

Other pieces have a heterogeneous construction proposing changes in syntax and flow. Thus, piece no. 1 changes the massive syntax of the polyphony of attacks (illustration of the poem *Noah*: “The strainer filters men and women / Rafters with gold in their eyes / And crying babies / In the Ark / Noah on his knees / With the unbelieving son / In prayer towards him / Building himself / In the grounds / Church becoming / Thinking / Of clemency / In eternal doom.”),



Fig. 21 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 3*, piece 1, mm. 1-3

with the monodic syntax brought in harmonic sounds to a single instrument (corresponding to the end of *Noah's* poem: “And the earth swallowed its water / And the sky softened its punishment / Forgiveness.”).

Fig. 22 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 3*, piece 1, mm. 19, free section

The 4th piece, also heterogeneous as a construction, having an **ABA** lied form, changes the harmonic syntax of the modes with the same *finalis* with the syntax of the monody accompanied by a chromatic modal language originating in waltz music, finally returning to the harmonic syntax of modes with the same *finalis*.

Fig. 23 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 3*, piece 4, mm. 87-92

The third piece polymorphically superposes two different musical languages: a Byzantine song that I processed (the first state of the Song of the Lord's funeral intoned in the Great Friday service: “In the grave life / You were laid, Christ / And they frightened / The angelic armies / Your great reverence /

We adore it.”) for viola and cello, superposed with a children’s song - at the two violins, thus achieving a meta-level of semantic comprehension of the ontology of the work.



Fig. 24 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 3*, piece 3, mm. 75-77

The last piece of the quartet, the sixth (a synthesis piece) overlaps with the material of the preceding parts: the monody of harmonic sounds (of the first piece, at violin I) with the children’s song (taken from piece 3, at violin II), with the expressive tension melody of the 4th piece (on cello) and with the massive writing in doubles, taken from piece 1 (on viola).



Fig. 25 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 3*, piece 6, mm. 184-186

In the *String Quartet no. 4* (2003), the compositional temptation from which I started was the contemplation impact of the chordal sound of some tonal-functional, modal relationships or jazz sounds. It is the most widely played and the most accessible conceptually among all my own quartets, his premiere audition taking place in 2003, at the *Cluj-Modern International*

Festival (performed by *Concordia Quartet*), with subsequent performances at the *Romanian Music Festival*, Iași, 2010, performed by the *Ad Libitum Quartet*: Adrian Berescu (violin I), Șerban Mereuță (violin II), Bogdan Bișoc (viola), Filip Papa (cello), in the *Author Recital – Iulia Cibișescu-Duran*, March 2004, at Music Academy “Gh. Dima” from Cluj-Napoca, performed by *Concordia Quartet* etc.

The work is structured in three parts, the first part being written in the form of a bi-thematic sonata, with a first theme representing chords in tonal-modal relations.

Fig. 26 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 4*, first movement, mm. 1-5

The expressive second theme, as an unanswered question, is presented as a monodic tune at the cello and imitated in its second phrase at the viola.

Fig. 27 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 4*, first movement, mm. 23-28

The varied and abbreviated recapitulation brings new sounds by the revival at another level, the spiritual one, of the first theme, by that “sul ponticello” and “con sordino” rhythmically dissonant chords, having a progressive ascending, transcendent drive. The laconic and concise *Coda* (only three measures) in the *pizzicato* gives a satirical air to the whole part.

The second part, written in the lied form - **ABA**v, brings the expressive atmosphere of melodious music born out of a short motif of two polyphonic notes imitated at all instruments, and which creates an appropriate framework for a cumulative elaboration.



Fig. 28 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 4*, second movement, mm. 178-181

The median section, dominated by a single pentachordal motif of two measures, repeated in “ostinato” in the acute registre (violin I) and counterpointed with derived motives brought in a row, in scale, by the other instruments, which will undergo variational transformations each time they appearance, will create the impression of a *ciaccone*, above which a new thematic motif will be superposed at the first violin, belonging to a new musical language with a chromatic profile, antagonistic to the diatonic theme of the *ciaccona*.



Fig. 29 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 4*, second movement, mm. 205-209

The impact created by this polymorphism of musical languages will be solved only by a sublimation of their antagonism in the harmonic register, by an ontological change of meaning and flow. The varied reprise brings back the melodic motif of two notes from the beginning in inversion, as well as its imitative and evolutionary processing, followed by a short *Coda* that reminds one of the *ciaccona*'s theme, presented this time conclusively, in the low register of the cello.

Figure 30 shows a musical score for the second movement of Iulia Cibișescu-Duran's *String Quartet No. 4*, measures 230-233. The score is written for four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello) in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The music features a melodic motif of two notes (G and A) that is repeated and processed in various ways. Performance instructions include "espressivo, vibr." and "vibr." written above the staves, and dynamic markings "mp" (mezzo-piano) are present. A circled number "230" is at the top left, and "- 18 - mp" is at the bottom center.

Fig. 30 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 4*, second movement, mm. 230-233

The 3rd part begins with a tritonal jazz theme in syncopated rhythm and a dynamic profile, presented in an imitative polyphonic way on the violins and accompanied by viola and cello in *pizzicato*.

Figure 31 shows a musical score for the third movement of Iulia Cibișescu-Duran's *String Quartet No. 4*, measures 247-252. The score is written for four staves (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello) in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The tempo is marked "Andantino". The music begins with a tritonal jazz theme in syncopated rhythm. Performance instructions include "mp" (mezzo-piano) and a circled number "250" at the top. The score shows imitative polyphonic passages on the violins and accompanying parts on the viola and cello in *pizzicato*.

Fig. 31 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 4*, third movement, mm. 247-252

Formally, it is a bi-strophic of type **AB + Coda**, where the middle section represents an elaboration of the initial material, bringing at the same time soloist passages of virtuosity at all the instruments, presented imitatively polyphonically and harmonically accompanied, in syncopated rhythms, by the

other instruments, all leading to a culmination followed by a polyrhythmic resolution of fast descending passages. The *Coda* returns the initial tritonal motif in a slow tempo as a meditation on the creation of consonant music today.

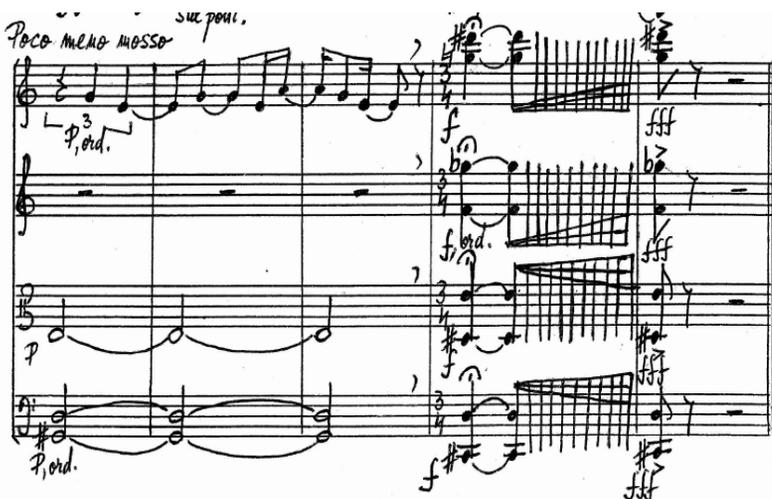


Fig. 32 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 4*, third movement, mm. 304-308

Programmatically, having as literary basis Spanish writer Antonio Munoz Molina's novel – *Winter in Lisbon*, *String Quartet no. 5* (composed in 2004, the premiere audition being at the *Autumn Musical Cluj International Festival 2004*, performed by *Concordia Quartet*) is a philosophical work, meditating on the theme of “great love”, which in Molina's conception is definitive and impossible at the same time.

Beginning with a part of antagonistic overlays between a dissonant harmonic language played *indifferently* and a solo melody of virtuosity taken imitatively at temporal distances from all instruments,



Fig. 33 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 5*, first movement, mm. 29-31

String quartet no. 5 is profiled as polymorphic (heterogeneous) music at all levels of elaboration: conceptual (being music of the big questions), syntactically (proposing sometimes unexpected overlapping and juxtapositions of syntaxes, such as, for example, the strange appearance of a monody with imitations from one instrument to another in *sul ponticello* and *glissando* as a smoldering groan at the end of the part),

Fig. 34 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 5*, first movement, *Coda*, mm. 105-109

harmonically (by polymorphic overlays of geometric and gravitational agreements), of musical languages (coexisting in the same first part choral music with voluble music of virtuosity, with neo-tonal *waltz* music - section **B** -, with fast-culminating music in *tremollo* of sextolets - section **C** -, with music of great expressive contrasts and nuances, with overlapping of gestures and different musical languages).

Fig. 35 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 5*, first movement, mm. 78-80

Thus, the first part of the quartet has, from a formal point of view, a chain construction of the type **ABC + Coda**, where the reprise of the first section, A, will be made remotely into the *Coda* of the second part, having this time a Sicilian rhythm.

Continuing the enigmatic framework of the sudden growths followed by agogic silences and tense bursts dilated in quiet oases, the second part proposes the same kind of heterogeneous structures, polymorphic both in the musical languages used, in the proposed syntax (harmonic moments juxtaposed with polyphony attacks, with heterophonic, isorhythmic or pointillist sections) as well as the unique effects (of harmonic chords in the high register with sprayed *glissandi*).

Formally, the second part is a tetrahedral type **ABCD + Coda**, where segments C and D represent elaborations of the material of the first sections.

Fig. 36 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 5*, second movement, mm. 180-183

The 3rd part, dynamic, with a *scherzo* character, is a rondo with a theme of modal profile,

Fig. 37 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 5*, third movement, theme, mm. 214-218

where the component segments contain dynamizations of the thematic material, elaborations (through *fugato* imitations, “*strettos*”), overlays of plans generating an architecture that combines evolution with contrast in a conclusive culminating construction. This 3rd movement is like a liberation from the burden of questions and dilemmas, it is a decision of the joy of living every moment of life with maximum intensity.

Written during the compositional residence in Connecticut, USA, in 2009, *String Quartet No. 6* is a work from which there emerges the longing for my country, this being evidenced by the sounds that I composed in the spirit of the Romanian “*doina*” (part I, the second section), but also in the spirit of Romanian folk songs and dance, which are impregnated and refined through the quartet from the beginning till the end.

The premiere audition took place in November 2018 at the *Meridian International Festival*, Bucharest; there performed Vlad Răceu (violin I), Diana Man (violin II), Ovidiu Costea (viola), Vlad Rațiu (cello), members of the *Ad hoc Ensemble* of the “Gh. Dima” National Academy of Music from Cluj-Napoca, the musical leadership belonging to composer and conductor Matei Pop. Written in a multipartite form, type **ABABCDA**, the first movement is an energy burst with polyrhythmic overlays on a modal chromatic structure with movable sounds.

Cvartet de coarde nr.6

Iulia Cibîșescu-Duran

The image shows a musical score for the first movement of String Quartet No. 6. It is written for four instruments: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Violoncello. The tempo is marked 'Allegro' with a quarter note equal to 90. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score shows the first two measures of the piece, with various fingering and dynamic markings (f) for each instrument.

Fig. 38 Iulia Cibîșescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 6*, first movement, mm. 1-2

This will generate a diverse syntaxis such as the polyphony of attacks, the accompanied monodies and subsequently the izoritm *ostinato* (in the final culmination of section A) that will suddenly dissolve in an harmonics cantilene, similar to the folkloric “*bocet*” in the second strophe.



Fig. 39 Iulia Cibîşescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 6*, first movement, mm. 26-30

In the middle elaborative section C, the isorhythmia of the *giusto-syllabic* rhythm conceived in an *accelerando* and *crescendo* “poco a poco” leads to an accumulation of tension, which will erupt in section D with that monody accompanied by isorhythmic fast structures predicting the rhythmic constructions of the *Toccata* (the third part) and which will culminate with the dynamic reprise of the initial section.

Tetraprophic ABCB in type, the second part of the quartet begins with the syntax of the imitative polyphony applied to a trichordal modal-motif cell (seen in different hypostases)



Fig. 40 Iulia Cibîşescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 6*, second movement, mm. 126-132

later juxtaposed with a structure of the accompanying monody, the monody being like a long, a sinuous song, with increments and decreases, with breaths, continuations and cadential stops, as a song accompanied by a pedal-engulfed feeling of longing.

Fig. 41 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 6*, second movement, mm. 139-143

The middle section, characterized by the speed of the writing, proposes the syntax of imitative polyphony at all voices and a modal-chromatic language engraved on a fast-paced *parlando-rubato* rhythm, processing the material of the preceding verses and leading to the expressive culmination of the part.

Fig. 42 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 6*, second movement, mm. 157-159

The reprise of the second section restores the grief, the longing, to a new dimension: the creation of an immaterial, spiritual world, by spraying the modal material in the super-high register of harmonic sounds.

The 3rd movement of the quartet, *Toccata*, dynamic, in a *scherzo* character, brings the melody and the rhythm of Romanian popular dance seen in a new dimension, as an *ostinato* isorhythmic development.

III- Toccata

23

179 **Allegro molto**

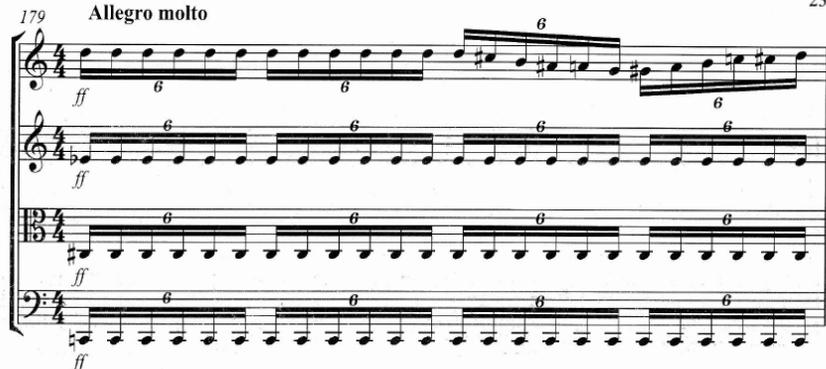


Fig. 43 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 6*,
third movement, m. 179

Formal framing as a trithematic rondo (ABACDEBDA type) of the musical discourse, alternating isorhythmia (section A) with polyrhythmia, homophony (section D) with imitative polyphony (section B),

196 **Meno mosso**



198 *p subito* *simile*



Fig. 44 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 5*, third movement, m. 198

or with the accompanying monody (section E),

Fig. 45 Iulia Cibișescu-Duran, *String Quartet No. 6*, third movement, mm. 337-342

the fast sections (A, B, C) with the expressive ones, in slower tempo (sections D, E) generate music in which the elaboration, the contrast and the polymorphism have an important role in the architectural construction of a conclusive edifice.

3. Conclusions

Composing these string quartets, I was convinced that this chamber genre defines fundamentally a creator and stands, alongside symphonies and instrumental concerts, at the top of composers' works.

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