

Related Sonorous Metaphors in the Lieds for Voice and Piano by Roxana Pepelea and Leonard Dumitriu, on Vasile Burlui's Lyrics

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Abstract: This research paper is focused on the compositional methods that the two music creators resort to, in a definitely unique project for the Romanian contemporary musical space, if not internationally. Taking eight poems by Vasile Burlui, as a starting point, Leonard Dumitriu and Roxana Pepelea write music on the same lyrics, roughly the same time, yet without discussing each other's creative vision. Members of the same generation, alumni of “George Enescu” Music Academy in Iași, late Vasile Spătărelu's composition class, in the 80's of the last century, the two protagonists of the voluntary experiment prove amazing resemblances (or perhaps less so ...) in their deep compositional thinking, and produce similar responses to many of the ideational problems raised by the lyrics. Since the very first audition of the lied, the two composers have noticed that, beyond Vasile Burlui's exquisite, unique feelings and emotions, which are unavoidable and can therefore only be mirrored in their music, they are bound by their former mentor's simple, human, bright soul depth. Especially in one of Roxana Pepelea's lied, the playful imagination of “Made”, as friends and students would call Spătărelu, brightly transpires and leaves no room for interpretations in terms of conceptual descent. The experiment outcomes are 16 lied in a mirror, which confirm the strength, reliability and viability of the compositional school in Iași.

Keywords: composer, style, lied, lyrics, resemblance

1. Introduction

If, in the scientific-research sphere, the existence of a team, many a time interdisciplinary, as well as the collaboration between team members, are only natural, regular matters, things are somewhat different in the artistic-creation field. The genesis of artworks is, not utterly, but in most situations, an individual enterprise. From the outset, it should be specified that the author of this study exclusively refers to composers, painters, sculptors, poets, playwrights, novelists, namely to those who “engender” artworks. Without diminishing the other artists' importance in disseminating the aesthetic “assets”, they do not create, but only re-create, perform, interpret what their

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predecessors “produced” beforehand. The musicians – both instrumentalists and singers, as well as the stage managers, the actors “play”, “perform” or “interpret”, sometimes exceptionally, at other times awkwardly, a given score or script. By directing the message, they can contribute to the momentary impression of the artwork; but, fortunately, they cannot change its content and intrinsic value.

In the music-creation sphere, if we consider opera, operetta and ballet, the composer’s collaboration with the librettist is natural and even advisable. In order to create concertante or lyrical works, certain composers (whereof Johannes Brahms and Giacomo Puccini) sought some performers’ advise, yet only in terms of instrumental or vocal technique, and not of expression, sensitivity, aspects whereon they left their own mark.

Amongst plastic artists, there are manifold examples of collaboration, mostly among painters. Their work together is rendered manifest in spirit, at the level of style, and not at the concrete level of the same canvas. For a little while, Paul Gauguin and Vincent Van Gogh painted together, each of them bringing to light a few masterpieces, which can be said to be in the same vein. Subsequently, two other great painters worked in tandem; when they embraced the same aesthetic ideas, Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque laid the foundations of Cubism, yet later on they went different ways.

I had the wonderful chance to admire, at Metropolitan Museum of New York, a small exhibition of canvases, six for each of the two great plastic artists who stood out in the first half of the last century. On a wall, three canvases by Picasso, and three by Braque were exhibited; on another one, the same. The onlooker could notice their source of inspiration which consisted in still nature. On the first wall, the works were almost identical, whereas on the second, one could clearly notice the authors’ stylistic distancing. All works are well known and can be admired in manifold albums of reproductions. Then, in the summer of 2000; and there, in a hall of the great museum in the American metropolis, the idea of collaborating with another composer dawned upon me, with a view to achieving in parallel a few lieds on the same lyrics, in an attempt somewhat similar to the artistic project I was contemplating. Back home, I contacted my good friend, the composer Ioan Dobrinescu, who was not, however, drawn in by the idea. Nevertheless, the idea germinated in my artistic self, until, in 2013, I decided to address my former colleague at master Vasile Spătărelu’s composition class, Roxana Pepelea, the one who ranked first in the promotion 1985 of “George Enescu” Music Academy in Iași. The challenge was accepted; these were the beginnings of the artistic adventure unveiled below.

We chose together several verses from three poetry volumes by the poet originating in Iași, Vasile Burlui: *Solilocvii* [Soliloquies] (Burlui, 2014), *Interogațiile lui Așur* [Assur’s Interrogations] (2013) and *Rendez-vous Sidéral* (2013), more precisely eight poems whose musical transposition we decided to

commit to the mezzo-soprano's voice. After having agreed upon the details above, each of the composers worked individually upon the eight lieds, without knowing anything of the sonorous image forged by the other for the same verses.

2. Conceptual and stylistic particularities; similitudes and differentiations

This chapter is dedicated to analyzing each lied, in both composers' vision, but it also includes, prior to the musical references, the author's brief reflections on the poems of doctor, professor, manager and poet Vasile Burlui.

2.1. *Polenul sufletelor noastre* [Pollen of Our Souls]

The lyrical discourse unveils the poet's innermost thoughts, vested in hopes and endeavours germinating tears and seed, changed in a "tender whine". Hopes are nothing but vain illusions, which "shed, fall to the ground", "vanish".

2.1.1. Leonard Dumitriu

I dare say the most adequate expression for the nature of the lied, more than the tempo in itself, on which it has nevertheless a significant influence, is *Mesto* (sad, doleful). The compositional-construction technique is frequently resorted to, as far as I am concerned, for the vocal works, namely the one of harmonies ordered in a polyphonic range, without relating myself to a tonal-origin centre. The sounds of the voice are a part of this sonorous "bundle" wherein the arpeggio and the consonance are constant presences (Fig. 1).

Polenul Sufletelor Noastre

Muzica Leonard DUMITRIU
versurile Vasile BURLUI

Mesto
♩ = 48

Mezzo

Pian

pp

mf

mp

Po-le-nul ri-si-pit prin-tre pe-

Mezzo
Pian

ta-le Să-mân-ța so-ri- lor_ din u-ni- vers, Des-cân-tat tai-nic

mp *pp* *f* *mp*

pp *mp*

Fig. 1 Leonard Dumitriu – *Pollen of Our Souls* (fragment)

The piano generously plays with the registers, often intertwining with the voice, yet without prejudicing it in terms of sonorous transparency. There is mostly the vocal dynamics that enhances the lyrics subtlety; the instrument nuances being adapted to the discourse in which diction and implicitly the good understanding of the words and their message are my own pursuits. In terms of form, the scoring is continuous, without clear-cut delimitations of sections.

Polenul sufletelor noastre

versuri: Vasile Burlui

Roxana Pepelea

Tranquillo

Mezzo-Soprano

Piano

p *legato, uguale*

The image shows a musical score for a Mezzo voice and Piano (Pno.) accompaniment. The Mezzo part is written on a single staff in a treble clef, with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and a 3/4 time signature. It begins with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a quarter note and a half note. The lyrics "Po - le - nul ri - si -" are written below the notes. The dynamic marking is *mp* *fluente*. The Piano part is written on two staves in a bass clef, also in the same key signature and time signature. It features a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes and chords, with a triplet of eighth notes in the first measure.

Fig. 2 Roxana Pepelea – *Pollen of Our Souls* (fragment)

2.1.2. Roxana Pepelea

She adopts a music writing that resorts to armour, so as to outline the three sections of the form, which she forges according to the pattern A B A; and the beginning, by the chord-based technique, is somehow similar to the sonority I have imagined at the outset of the homonymous lied. A differentiation, which considers rather the nature of music than its speed, occurs once with the general indication *Tranquillo*, as against the *Mesto* of the lied in the mirror (Fig. 2).

In the external formal sections, the voice mostly uses the gradual progress, B also determining a greater leap from the third, along with a perceptible change in atmosphere. Likewise, the tonality A flat minor, in the opening, gives way to a less tense, almost serene minor B. The composer resorts to an extended sequence, constructing thereby two clear segments within the median surface of the lied. Polyphonic procedures, such as sequencing and inversion, underlie the overall melodic construction, similarly to a noticeable subtle layering of registers and rhythms.

2.2. *Irreparabile tempus*

Vasile Burlui does not rebel against the truth of the phrase in the title of his poem, therefore he does not search for loopholes in returns or re-experiences, of whose impossibility he is fully aware. Time's passage and one's incapacity to change its course are reflected by the sensation of cold, by the images of the winter's white and of the sad, doleful snowfall. The final verse manifests however a hope in salvation, where death becomes a repeatable phenomenon: "You have taught me to die, for many times and again!"

2.2.1. Leonard Dumitriu

The feature of the sonorous edifice imagined here is given by a technique of layers adapted to a polyphonic discourse. The piano track bears in itself

musical questions and answers differentiated according to register and dynamics, at least one of the paths being always complementary to the voice.

I have forged the musical development in the sense of some unrest, inner tension ready to burst, equally suggested by the melodic, rhythmic and dynamic tracks. The result is a tense music progress, in which the registering comes together and fans out, much as a fan, mirror of the musical emotions aroused by the painful sense of the lyrics. A few chordal measures render less tense these sonorous waters, so waved; yet for a short while, the discourse soon returning to its initial expression, a fact that may justify the form of A B A (Fig. 3).

Mezzo *f*
 Prea mul-te se-co-le sa'u scurs gra-bi-te

Pian *mp*

Mezzo
 — Și prea mulți sori ro-tin-du-se s'au stins,

Pian

Mezzo *mf* *f*
 — Prea mul-te nopti de su-fe-rinți cer-ni-te, Prea mul-te

Pian *pp* *p*

Fig. 3 Leonard Dumitriu – *Irreparabile tempus* (fragment)

2.2.2. Roxana Pepelea

Unlike the permanent agitation in which I expressed the feelings and experiences of *Irreparabile tempus*, my colleague Roxana Pepelea projects her imagination in an *Andantino semplice*. The right hand of the piano always intones clad chords, whereas the left hand relentlessly arpeggiates through various registers. This type of musical construction is identified in the external sections of the form specific to a simple lied, A B A, whereas the median surface is a wonderful example of compositional efficiency and imagination (Fig. 4).

Mezzo *mp*
Co - hor - te o - bo - si - te ur - mea - ză ferm că - ra - rea,

Pno.

Mezzo *p* *mp*
În al - bul ier - nii um - bre - le dis - par Si fi - e -

Pno. *fp* *fp*

Mezzo *mf*
ca - re'si a - flă in su - fle - tu'i sur - pa - rea, Ne - fe - ri -

Pno. *fp*

Fig. 4 Roxana Pepelea – *Irreparabile tempus* (fragment)

By the example above, the music creator proves once more that the simplicity of several compositional methods is, most times, inversely proportional to the sonorous result, as well as that there is no need of strenuous searches, destructive of all that is old, so as to obtain originality. Hence, a line of the piano doubles the line of the voice, whereas another one, at the lower octave, reverses the planes, a solution dating back hundreds of years, yet likely to produce wonderful effects, even in the 21st century. By the end, a major-minor undulation slips into the sonorous discourse.

2.3. *Văratec 2013*

The recalled place renders, perhaps, the poem verses warmer, less sad. “Honey” is a feeling of sweetness, of gentle autumn warmth, of “divine mysteries”. Reverie replaces illusion; and the forest vesting “brazen” and “silver” garments, is seen as a sky-support, the star-spangled “crystal vault”.

2.3.1. Leonard Dumitriu

After two lieds with polyphonic compositional expression, I felt the need for a change in sonorous syntax; hence I resorted to verticality in the pianistic discourse, and to prolonged repetitions of the same sound in the vocal track (Fig. 5).

Văratec 2013

Mezzo *mf*
Se as- cund_ în clo-po-te_ tris- teți_ de pes-te va- ră,

Pian *p*

Mezzo *mp* *mf*
— Pes-te gră-dini și u - liți_ îm-păr-tă - șind sme-re - nii, Che-

Pian *pp*

Fig. 5 Leonard Dumitriu – *Văratec 2013* (fragment)

The graphic representation in the example above reveals nevertheless, in the extreme voices, the use of a reversion, a procedure of conceptual continuity. At first, the general sonorous register is limited to the 1st and 2nd octave; then, along the way, it extends towards the 3rd octave in the acute, and the great octave in the low. In visual terms, the lied is characterized by a linearity which does not unveil particular aspects; yet the sonorous expression reveals an apparent peace, a quietness which, for the listener, may be serene, painful, resigned, even unsettling, or cumbrous. Concretely, the score encompasses less note values and rhythmic formulas, intertwined with discreet dynamics, dominated by constant nuances. The form expresses some music relentlessly moving, once with the lyrics.

2.3.2. Roxana Pepelea

She conceives the sonorous material in a complex-lied matrix, and thinks the opposite in terms of dynamics, which is luscious with variable nuances, as well registers, in which leaps are ever present. The feelings are expressed in a direct, outward, straightforward manner (Fig. 6).

Văratec 2013

versuri: Vasile Burlui Roxana Pepelea

Andante

Mezzo-Soprano
Piano

Mezzo
Pno.

Fig. 6 Roxana Pepelea – *Văratec 2013* (fragment)

An ingenuous solution is the arpeggio: in uneven formal sections, the composer uses *arpeggiato*, to wit the successive, yet very rapid intonation of the chord sounds; whereas in even segments, she chooses the variant of the arpeggio in triolets of eights. The previously noticed efficiency is kept, the use of the various facets of the same element proving a constant pursuit (Fig. 7).

The image shows a musical score for a vocal piece. It consists of two systems of music. The first system, starting at measure 25, features a Mezzo voice line and a Piano (Pno.) accompaniment. The Mezzo line has the lyrics "gea - na in - se - ră - rii - mis - te - re - le di - vi - ne." and is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic and a tempo change to "poco rit.". The Pno. line features arpeggiated chords, marked with piano (*p*) and pianissimo (*pp*) dynamics, and includes triplet markings. The second system, starting at measure 28, is marked "Tempo I". The Mezzo line has the lyrics "Se ves - te - jes - te frun - za'n pă - du - rea" and is marked with forte (*f*) and mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamics. The Pno. line features arpeggiated chords, marked with forte (*f*) and mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamics, and includes triplet markings.

Fig. 7 Roxana Pepelea – *Văratec* 2013 (fragment)

The vocal track is tormented by leaps to a fourth, fifth and even seventh-interval, which dominate over and overshadow the gradual melodic surfaces.

2.4. *Mea maxima culpa*

For the failure of a universe made of “diamonds of melted snow”, “shed poppies”, “lost hopes”, “unhurt tears”, “flowers’ silent cry”, “orphan comets”, Vasile Burlui holds himself liable, with an anti-Demiurge’ feeling, whose creation is wholly in the wrong. Here, the poet makes an unexpected and thrilling statement of penance: “I am guilty of everything that surrounds me”! A poem equally difficult to transpose into music as Eminescu’s verses...

2.4.1. Leonard Dumitriu

The music of this lied is a return to polyphony, the favourite procedures, imitation and inversion, being suggested by the obstinacy wherewith the poet asserts his “guilt”. The sensation I intended to convey is of a restless sonorous surface, in an ongoing movement and transformation, with dynamic waves of various sizes, where the pause is a rare presence. An agglomeration of sounds and rhythms, the musical conception illustrates and unveils to the audience, the ideational restlessness, the ongoing torment lacerating Vasile Burlui (Fig. 8).

Fig. 8 Leonard Dumitriu – *Mea maxima culpa* (fragment)

This is the creed which subsumes all the elements of the melodic-rhythmic track, sometimes led to the heights of the mezzo-soprano’s register, with great nuances accrued from accumulations over extensive surfaces. The vocal display abounds in altered sounds, which is significant for the refusal of centrist thinking, a dimension naturally present in the pianistic material. This is a “dough” I made and spread without restraint, the only objective being the merge of my musical ideas with the metaphysics of the poet’s inner experiences; hence its form is, once again, open, loose (Fig. 9).

Mea maxima culpa

$\text{♩} = 52$

mf

Sunt vi - no - vat de di - a - man - te - le ____ ză-pe-zii

3 *f*

To-pi te'n vâ-n-tul cald__ de pri-mă-va-ră, De ra - za ră-tă-ci-tă__ din

5 *mf*

soa-re-le a mie-zii Pier - du - ta In a-mur-gul din-spre sea - ră. ____

7 *mp* *mf*

Sunt vi - no - vat de cân-te-cul de cio-căr-li - e Ce'l port pi-tit In si-pe-te as

9 *f* *mf*

cun - se, De ma - cii scu-tu- rași__ înfrea - măt de căm - pi - e, Sunt vi - no -

11 *f*

vat de gân - duri ____ ne - pă - trun - se.

Fig. 9 Leonard Dumitriu – *Mea maxima culpa* (fragment)

2.4.2. Roxana Pepelea

The poet's permanently expressing guilt makes the composer return, throughout the work, to a few matrix formulas, exposed from the outset (Fig. 10).

Andante cantabile

Mezzo-Soprano

Piano

mf *p*

Mezzo

mp

Sunt vi - no - vat de di - a - man - te - le ză -

Pno.

Mezzo

p

pe-zii to - pi-te'n vîn - tul cald de pri-mă-va - ră,

Pno.

pp *p*

Mezzo

lor in u - ni - vers prit din mers.

Pno.

tre corde

subito f

Fig. 10 Roxana Pepelea – *Mea maxima culpa* (fragment)

The descending step from the perfect fifth, to the same interval, or to another one, is a constant, we dare say an *ostinato* of the entire lied, a procedure which constantly appears in all formal sections of the work. Sometimes, the sounds of the fifth take the opposite direction, towards an interval whose notes range in the previous harmonic distance, as we can well see in the example below, where we can also see how the voice intones, after a gradual progress, some leaps which require special accuracy from the performer (Fig. 11).

40
Mezzo
lor in u - ni - vers
prit din mers. *tre corde*

40
Pno. *subito f*

43
Mezzo *subito f*
Fac ME - A CUL - PA pen-tru ra - za lu - nii, Ti-mid as -

43
Pno. *subito f*

Fig. 11 Roxana Pepelea – *Mea maxima culpa* (fragment)

Roxana Pepelea remains faithful to the traditional form of lied, to its conceptual efficiency and simplicity, without falling, at any moment, into banality or superficiality. The pages of the lied look well, they denote a solid compositional thinking, which protects the voice, highlights its qualities and advantages diction. The melodic, rhythmic and dynamic tracks, the registration of both voice and instrument keep a permanent balance, seemingly inviting one another to follow the trail of the lyrical message.

2.5. *Îngerul nopților* [Night Angel]

The exquisite metaphor of the title subtly projects the peculiar opposition of white (angel) and black (night); hence the two poem sections express utterly contrasting feelings. Thus, the contentment, the glee of a serene life lived in communion with the “dew of the fields”, “firs of the snow”, “coolness of the mountains” and the suavity “white apricot flower” in the former part, are almost undone, dissolved by the “angel of the lacerated nights”, who brings the poet, in the latter section, “an ocean of tears”, the painful experience of poetry lived in “tears and blood, /in love and suffering”.

2.5.1. Leonard Dumitriu

I would rather the sonority of this lied illustrated the aforementioned white; therefore, the major third and the major chords prevail in a syntactic expression of harmonic origin, exposed, below, only by the piano track.

Fig. 12 Leonard Dumitriu – *Night Angel* (fragment)

As against the previous lied, intensely chromatised, the sonorous formulation is here diatonic, despite its galore use of alterations, whose nature is consonant. A fragment comprising the first measures of the voice, precisely the ones whose pianistic track I illustrated above, clearly proves this statement.

Fig. 13 Leonard Dumitriu – *Night Angel* (fragment)

Now we are no longer dealing with an apparent serenity, as in the music of the lied *Văratec 2013*, but I chose to straightforwardly express, even enhance the poet's feeling of joy in front of nature. A second section of the lied is temporarily shadowed by the poet's sombre inner state and accordingly expressed by minor sonorous strokes; for the optimist and audacious chord to return in the measures of the coda. I dare say music transforms Vasile Burlui's message, from an implacable, unfair, resigned and, above all, sad sound, in verses, into a caressing sound, of hope and salvation, in lyrics (Fig. 13).

34 *mp*
 Mezzo ...Și a - șa a fost să fi - e!
 Pian *pp*

Fig. 14 Leonard Dumitriu – *Night Angel* (fragment)

Vivo
 Mezzo-Soprano *mf* *aperto*
 Cio - căr -
 Piano *mf* *mp*
 Mezzo
 4 *mf* *mp*
 li - a di - mi - ne - ti - lor de
 Mezzo
 8
 va - rî Mî'a a - dus ro - ua, ro - ua căm - pu -
 Pno. *mf* *mp*

Fig. 15 Roxana Pepelea – *Night Angel* (fragment)

2.5.2. Roxana Pepelea

Once more, my colleague's imagination differs from my own, in imagining the music for *Îngerul nopții*. Roxana Pepelea does not start from colours, but from another type of sensations, rather motor, metronomic, as her music sounds cadenced, obviously not in a soldierly sense, but of a systematic sound sequencing. Even the development speed is *Vivo*, indicating a life-pulsating tempo and especially nature (Fig. 15). There is pulsatory, in its turn, the permanent movement of the piano eights, the play with both harmonic and melodic intervals, the leaps which, reduced to the complementary interval, also lead towards the second; the voice intoning meanwhile repeated eighth fragments (Fig. 16).

Fig. 16 Roxana Pepelea – *Night Angel* (fragment)

Of the entire cycle of lieds, *Îngerul nopții*, by Roxana Pepelea, mostly contrasts both with its homonym, and with all other, bringing a welcome sonorous-attitude change, even if, as easily noticeable, the used procedure is still an *ostinato*. A closer analysis makes clear that a four-sound grouping in a scale, within a perfect fourth, is the starting point of this play, which, beyond the above noticed sensation of motor actuation, can produce, both visually and auditorily, almost synaesthetically, the image of a children's game.

2.6. *Menuet de toamnă* [Autumn Minuet]

Of an obvious musicality, the poet's verses do not have at all an obsolete shade, even if they remind a dance, very popular in former times, yet period piece, in our days. The morbid and implacable, hopeless melancholy, is straightforwardly uttered by Vasile Burlui: "and I remain lonelier than I have ever known myself".

2.6.1. Leonard Dumitriu

Even from the poem title, the music sonority has almost made its mark, and the indication at the beginning of the score, *Malinconico*, refers, once more, rather to character than tempo, and has its roots in the autumnal season evoked by the poet. A novelty, amidst the eight lieds of mine, is the form, conceived on the pattern A B C A, and articulated on the four stanzas of the text. The music of the first section discreetly transmits a certain ceremonious spirit, joined to the melancholic, sickly one, of the verses (Fig. 17).

Malinconico
♩ = 68

mf

5

f mp

9

mf

A - fa - ră'i toam - nă,

p mp

Fig. 17 Leonard Dumitriu – *Autumn Minuet* (fragment)

Section B, corresponding to the second stanza, brings a change, a darkening of the atmosphere, and an extension of the piano discourse to three registers, the highest reaching the second octave; a pedal being at its basis. These elements are joined by a repeated game of triolets in eights, present at the centre of the instrumental score, and by a gradual, persistent dynamic accumulation, whose peak is the tensional culmination of the work (Fig. 18).

The image displays a musical score for Leonard Dumitriu's *Autumn Minuet* (fragment), measures 31 through 37. The score is written in 3/8 time with a tempo marking of *Mesto* and a metronome marking of 60. It consists of three systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line is in a soprano register, and the piano accompaniment features a prominent triplet pattern in the bass register. The dynamics range from *mp* (mezzo-piano) to *ff* (fortissimo). The lyrics are in Romanian and describe a scene of autumn rain.

31 *Mesto* $\text{♩} = 60$ *mp* *mf* 37
S'au dus spre al - te zări iu - bi-ri-le de-func - te,
ppp
34 *mf* *f*
Stre-coa-ră ploa-ia a - ri - pa prin ra - muri,
p
37 *f* *ff*
Pe-rechi prin par-curi nu stau s'o mai as - cul - te,
mp

Fig. 18 Leonard Dumitriu – *Autumn Minuet* (fragment)

An even greater register extension is acquired by the piano in section C, where the pedal descends in counter-octave, and the acute register ascends to

the heights of the third and fourth octaves, the centre being occupied by a progress in small sixths, whose peak sound accompanies the voice in unison. The sonority unfolds over ample, orchestral surfaces, of an austere, gothic monumentality (Fig. 19).

48 *mf*
În-spre a - murg co - co-rii au dus vi-se-le

ppp sempre *p* *pp sempre*

52 *f*
me - le În lu - mea de Ne - un - de,

mp

Fig. 19 Leonard Dumitriu – *Autumn Minuet* (fragment)

The final stanza corresponds, in content and spirit, to a resumption of the A, which fulfils an impressive, solid, suggestive musical construction.

2.6.2. Roxana Pepelea

My colleague's descent from Vasile Spătăreanu's compositional school is strongly proved by this lied, clearly recalling a fragment from *The Precious Ridiculous*, our professor's wonderful musical farce. The metric garment in which the author vests the ternary rhythm is binary, an ingenious and unexpected solution. The origin of the melodic-rhythmic solution is a pastiche of the Second Minuet at the outset of *Album for Anna Magdalena Bach* (Fig. 20).

Tempo di minuetto

Mezzo-Soprano

p sotto voce

Toam -

Piano

p lontano

Mezzo

mp mesto

nă, vânt, A - fa -

Pno.

Fig. 20 Roxana Pepelea – *Autumn Minuet* (fragment)

The structure of the minuet as a court dance supposes reprises of motifs and phrases, which also happens in Roxana Pepelea's lied, where the imitation, inversion, sequence are frequently encountered. The form unveils a pattern A B A, where B has a marked harmonic expression, despite its not abandoning polyphony (Fig. 21).

25 *mf quasi parlando*

Mezzo

func - te, Stre-coa-ră ploa-ia a - ri - pa prin ra-muri, Pe-rechi prin par-curi

25 *mf*

Pno.

Fig. 21 Roxana Pepelea – *Autumn Minuet* (fragment)

Quite naturally, the second A resumes the musical expression at the beginning of the lied, with small and almost imperceptible transformations.

2.7. Concert vespéral [Vespéral Concert]

The translation in French strongly emphasizes the musical resonances of the poetic ideas and states. Characteristic of Molière, the presence of vowels mitigates the inner pains, which become “subtle harmonies” of a universal concert unfolding in the shadows of the evening. The silhouette of the beloved appears and disappears as scent of flowers and brightness of stars.

2.7.1. Leonard Dumitriu

In the attempt to sonorously imagine the verses of this poem, I had to choose between several possible paths, a few of them fitting perfectly with the delicacy and brilliance of French. Eventually, I opted for the canon... Therefore, the sonorous discourse consists of three planes, whereof two of the piano, distanced at double octave, the voice being placed in the middle, and the canon is a permanent presence between all the three elements that make up the whole, the only variable being their ordering in the successive entries (Fig. 22).

Moderato ♩ = 60-62

mf

Les pas me font re - ve -

mp

mp

3
nir dans l'a - llée de la soi - ré - e

3 p mp

4
Et je me traîne ab - sent, mon es - pé - ran - ce n'est plus vi - ve...

mf 3 mp mp <

Fig. 22 Leonard Dumitriu – *Vespéral Concert* (fragment)

The discourse in the canon is interrupted a few times, for a short while, and the voice does not always assume the leaps of the instrument, which constitutes a challenge for the informed listener, in the sense of recognizing or not the persistence of the same method of polyphonic construction. The consistent preservation of the successive entries leads to fluency, including in terms of form, which is open, totally subordinate to the course of the lyrics. I emphasize the richness of the dynamics and the rhythms, the permanent movement of a varied and expressive sonorous organism, its concordance with the poetic ideas and feelings, the robust complexity established on simple bases.

2.7.2. Roxana Pepelea

There is from the same principle of repetitiveness, but from completely different premises than those of the polyphonies in canon that Roxana Pepelea's imagination sets off, in the first lied on French lyrics. The

fundamental constructive element is the verticality of the instrumental discourse (Fig. 23).

Grave

Mezzo-Soprano

Piano

Mezzo

Pno.

Les pas me font re-ve-

nir dans l'a - llée de la soi - rée, Et je me

mp *mesto*

mp legato

mf

poco f *mf*

Fig. 23 Roxana Pepelea – *Vesperal Concert* (fragment)

Poco mosso

Mezzo

Piano

Mezzo

Pno.

Fen-tends de nou-

Fen-tends de nou-

p

sempre pp
(una corda)

The image shows a musical score for a Mezzo voice and Piano accompaniment. The Mezzo part is on a single staff with a treble clef, starting at measure 25. The lyrics are 'veau' and 'de sub-tiles har-mo-ni-es chan-'. The Piano part consists of two staves, with the upper staff in a treble clef and the lower staff in a bass clef. The piano part features complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and a 'simile' marking. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'p' and 'pizz'.

Fig. 24 Roxana Pepelea – *Vespéral Concert* (fragment)

In the example above, the piano resumes, almost obstinately, a four-eighth formula, with the uneven values in harmonic octaves of extended fourth, while the voice covers a gradual track, accumulating register. The research of the score emphasizes the permanence of the gradual track for the vocal line, and the apparition, in the B of the simple form ABA, of instrumental chords of several sounds (Fig. 24). As it has already accustomed us, the final A is a slightly modified reprise of the first section of the lied.

2.8. Chant rompu

Both the reading and the audition of the poem send us back in time, to Charles Baudelaire and Paul Verlaine. We are witnessing a delicate symbolic, where the apparition of the flowers in the “fatigued constellations” resembles “cohorts of reproaches” which “dissipate in my consciousness”. Although interrupted, the song, more precisely its symbol, keep on existing in the poet’s soul: “I bear it, as Christ the crown of thorns”.

2.8.1. Leonard Dumitriu

For the last poem, I decided on a massive sonorous expression, quasi orchestral, in which, on a third instrumental portative, I marked down a piano pedal. It is interesting how the principle of repetitiveness, used by Roxana Pepelea in the previous lied, should serve myself in this lied, where the first six piano measures are identical (Fig. 25).

Allegretto ♩ = 68

The musical score is in 3/4 time and features a piano accompaniment with a vocal line. The piano part consists of two staves: the upper staff has a melodic line with triplets and a lower staff with a rhythmic accompaniment of triplets. The vocal line is in the treble clef and includes the lyrics "L'o deurdes fleurs du til leul, de cire et d'encens Sim prég-". The score is marked with dynamics such as *f*, *mf*, *p*, and *mp*.

Fig. 25 Leonard Dumitriu – *Chant rompu* (fragment)

The higher lines of the piano move in a horizontal mirror, a fact that does not create however a strong polyphonic sonorous sensation, perhaps even due to low sound, doubled in octave, which marks out each accentuated time. As a brief intermezzo, seven measures are placed between two sections where the piano pedals appears. These are chords of the instrument, which leave greater freedom of expression to the voice, whose note values, although *giusto*, may lead towards an unrestrained expression, of *rubato* type (Fig. 26).

The voice is protected in terms of register, by the piano lines, which evolve in the low and supra acute register, a fact that increases the sensation of amplitude, even if the nuances do not follow the same tendency. The extension of registers sounds well, especially due to the profusion in harmonics of the pedal sounds and of the plays between remote formulas. The end brings back the chords, with prolonged sounds, in great nuances, specifically orchestral

Fig. 26 Leonard Dumitriu – *Chant rompu* (fragment)

2.8.2. Roxana Pepelea

A brief vocal melody, with a bucolic, almost idyllic tone, inaugurates the sonority of this lied, evoking the flowers whose perfumes “impregnate” in the poet Vasile Burlui’s senses. The fragment falls under a very concise introduction to the form of lied (A B A Coda) whereto the composer resorts again, an aspect of continuity, balance and conceptual consistency (Fig. 27).

Fig. 27 Roxana Pepelea – *Chant rompu* (fragment)

A new play with the intervals gives the distinctive note to the first formal articulation, from second into third, by dialogue between the piano registers, a

procedure, once more, as simple as it is efficient, similar to the gradual treatment of the vocal melody (Fig. 28).

The image shows a musical score for a vocal piece. It is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 4 through 7. The vocal line begins with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic and then transitions to piano (p). The piano accompaniment mirrors this dynamic shift. The lyrics for this system are "S'im-prég-nè-rent en moi pour tout le res-te de ma". The second system contains measures 8 through 11. The vocal line starts with mezzo-piano (mp) and ends with mezzo-forte (mf). The piano accompaniment also starts with mp and ends with mf. The lyrics for this system are "vi-e, J'ai en-core dans l'à-me le be-soin le ma-gi-c'".

Fig. 28 Roxana Pepelea – *Chant rompu* (fragment)

The contrast between A and B comes to light by the chords of the instrument, companions of a descending vocal melodic line, a sense frequently used by the composer in the previous lieds, too (Fig. 29).

A specificity of music is the rhythm, which oscillates between binary and ternary; hence the chosen meter in order to vest an evolution which, many a time, leads towards the perception of freedom, of unrestraint. The resonance of the last sounds gradually and quietly dims, as the verses which unveil the poet's reconciliation with his fate, calmly, serenely, without resentments, but ... with many regrets.

The image shows a musical score for a vocal and piano piece. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system (measures 15-18) features a Mezzo voice line and a Piano accompaniment. The Mezzo line starts with a *p* dynamic, followed by a *f* dynamic. The piano accompaniment has a *p* dynamic with the instruction *(una corda)*, which changes to *f* with the instruction *(tre corde)*. The lyrics are: "s'é - lan - ce. Dans mon pe - ti coin,". The second system (measures 19-22) also features Mezzo and Piano staves. The Mezzo line has dynamics of *mp*, *mf*, and *p*. The piano accompaniment has dynamics of *mp*, *mf*, and *p*. The lyrics are: "pleu - rent des con - ste - lla - tions fa - ti - guées,". The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Fig. 29 Roxana Pepelea – *Chant rompu* (fragment)

3. Conclusions

In addition to their belonging to the same generation, the two creators' origin in the same composition school is obvious, not only through what brings them close, but, perhaps paradoxically, including through what differentiates them. Individually imagined, in Iași and Sibiu, approximately in the same period of time of the year 2014, the undersigned's lieds and Roxana Pepelea's lieds, on Vasile Burlui's verses, are the outcome of a complex of factors consisting of sensitivity, and of patiently polished craft, over time, starting from the accumulations of their study years, under Vasile Spătărelu's watchful eye, and of extensive musical experience (at the chair, in the orchestra) as well as of indisputable compositional achievements, prior to this project.

The research of the two scores clearly demonstrates to what a high extent the two composers cherish the human voice. Both of them treat the voice and the piano as equal partners, but the bearer and conveyer of the word is protected at all times and under all aspects. Even if, in terms of the instrument, Roxana Pepelea prefers a rather harmonic expression, whereas Leonard

Dumitriu walks more on the path of polyphony, the instrumental discourse is permanently protective, enables the voice to be in a comfortable intensity range, which creates for the vocal performer, the preconditions of displaying her own qualities, as well as an adequate diction.

The leaps are quite rare apparitions in the mezzo-soprano's melodic lines, in the 16 lieds, the prevalence of the gradual progress being a common conceptual feature. As regards the extensions of the registers, my colleague seems sometimes more "audacious" (see *Irreparabile tempus* or *Îngerul nopților*) compared to myself, a little more "balanced"; yet what brings us closer is an obvious concern for melody, for the musicality of the sonorous material entrusted to the voice. Nothing is far-fetched, nothing destroys its mission of bearer and conveyer of the word, of the deep message in the poetic text. Furthermore, I dare say our musics pave the listener's way towards one's coming closer to, comprehending, and even empathically experiencing the torments, suffering and pains that the poet's verses are replete with. Vasile Burlui himself confesses another vision of his own verses, after the experience of hearing them in two compositional variants.

The rhythms and metres slightly differentiate, as there are perceptible differences in terms of the musical registers imagined for certain text fragments. Polyphony stands out by imitations, inversions and specific processing, one particularity being the canon that I myself resorted to in *Concert vespéral*. The harmonic expression differs in its turn, several times, yet it is situated, for both composers, in a neoclassical area with impressionist strokes.

At the end of the research of the lieds for mezzo-soprano and piano, on Vasile Burlui's lyrics, by Leonard Dumitriu and Roxana Pepelea, one can definitely state that both creators have a highly personal compositional expression, and do not hesitate to advance on paths that some people might consider obsolete. If the melody, the beautiful sonorous display of equally wonderful poetic thoughts, torments, and hopes, as well as the appeal to extensively verified constructive solutions are outdated matters, which no longer represent the contemporary human and his aspirations, then my colleague and I myself willingly assume the label of nostalgics of the bygone era, and attempt, even succeed in proving that those values are perennial and immortal.

So far (October 2016), our artistic project has been presented in Iași, Sibiu and Timișoara, and has come to life due to the mezzo-soprano Claudia Codreanu, the pianist Vasilica Stoiciu Frunză and the actor Mircea Dascaluiuc, outstanding performers, particularly gifted and highly sensitive, who have inspiringly identified themselves with the lyrics and music.

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