

DLA - thesis

Tamás Dávida

Variations of using the trumpet after 1950 reflected in the concertos of Hungarian
composers

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Theses

I. Preliminaries of the research

As a trumpet artist and trump teacher my activity in the Hungarian and international modern musical life increased in the past more than two decades. During my contribution in the UMZE and the Klangforum Wien ensembles I could monitor from closer the relationship between the authors, the performers and the audience. I experienced how significant the getting to know the author's intentions and thoughts is – the attainment from the perspective of the performers and the acceptance by the audience. During my research I could see the musical variety that makes the Hungarian literature of the 20th-21st centuries written for trumpet so exciting.

I had an important reason to study the topic mentioned in the title, namely that the information deriving from Hungarian areas with rich specialised literature is rather scarce. I was interested how the trumpet literature reflected to the development of musical instruments, the spreading of the playing technique that turns to be colourful and expanded? What artistic and aesthetic trends and influenced the authors? How many paths did the authors and their pieces have? Having a look at the masterpieces of certain composers I had the question due to what impact or inner force did certain authors change their style, and sometimes radically turning their back to a part of their lifetime achievement? What is the aesthetical colourfulness that nowadays characterises the Hungarian trumpet literature? I did not received answers to my questions from the existing sources.

Regarding the choosing of the topic it was an important fact that besides the known trumpet concerts of Sándor Szokolay, Ervin Jereb, László Dubrovay and Frigyes Hidas the pieces of Sándor Balassa, Tibor Kazacsay, Emil Petrovics are almost unknown for the trumpeters and the musical historians are dealing with them only at mentioning level.

In the title of my thesis I selected 1950 as the starting year, in regard of the year of appearance of the discussed pieces, based on my preliminary research. However during my work I suddenly discovered the forgotten trumpet concerto of Tibor Kazacsay which is from 1946.

II. Sources

If I am correct there is no comprehensive study about the trumpet works after the 2nd World War and their stylistic variations. Therefore I did not find patterns to be followed or reference points to my thesis.

Regarding the historical preliminaries I used mostly the trumpet-related chapters of the volumes of the Hungarian history of music. When perusing the works – besides the studying of the special literature, the musical critique, the press news, the notes, the sound material and personal-related documents (pictures, letters) – I thought it is of basic importance to discuss with authors in person and exchange some thoughts. In the past period I had the opportunity to interview Kamilló Lendvay, Sándor Balassa, Péter Eötvös, László Dubrovay, Balázs Horváth, Pál Rózsa, Miklós Malek and Roland Szentpáli. I often illustrated my thesis with the – sometimes handwritten - notes received from the authors.

Since from the perspective of my research area the performer is great importance, therefore I often talked to trumpet artists who performed these pieces and served as inspiration for the authors. János Schubert, the solo trumpeter of the Hungarian Radio's Orchestra was such a performer to whom many authors offered their works. Schubert is not among us any more but his son, Ferenc Schubert keeps a lot of period documents in connection with his father. The other outstanding personality of the 20th century is György Geiger, Kossuth-awarded trumpeter with I was lucky to talk several times in person.

Frigyes Varasdy supplied me with sources of outstanding significance who – beginning from the fifties – documented the entire history of the trumpet education at the university of music. The material prepared by him – together with the academic annals – helped me a lot during my research. I also found valuable source material in the musical archives of the Hungarian Radio. During my regular visits I encountered several notes and recordings there.

Nowadays one can't disregard the wide range of the Internet-based searching possibilities but I tried to filter strictly the data from there and be based on the information if it is confirmed by several sources. In the footnotes of the thesis I tried provide the exact source of the main statements in order to be able to check the verity of my data and the related conclusions.

III. Methodology

My dissertation aims to list all the concertos written for trumpet in the past decades, the presentation of the lives of the authors, the detailed presentation of the works shown as examples. I tried to provide a review a process, highlighting the authors of the 21st century and their works that – from the perspective of the analysis meaning the variations of using the trumpet - seem to be important and significant.

The authors and their works that are included in the thesis or are missing were not discussed or left out based on a certain system of values. The dissertation focused at authors and works who and what represent well the stylistic change following the 2nd World War in the area of trumpet literature.

I built up my thesis in for main chapters. In the first part of the thesis I considered it is important to shortly present the appearance and role of the trumpet in Hungary being followed by the history of trumpet teaching from the beginning. Also in this chapter I am discussing the lives of two trumpeters - that serve also as inspirational sources for the authors.

In the second chapter I intended to give a comprehensive picture about the Hungarian trumpet concertos of the 20th century. I divided this chapter into subchapters based on a chronological order. I wanted to present the lives of the various authors and through the presentation of their works to give an insight into the variety of using the trumpet.

In the third chapter I proceeded similarly in regard of the 21st century save that the analysis of the works is slightly more detailed respectively it also contains the material of the meetings with the authors.

In the last (fourth) section of the thesis I established a set of criteria that is listing into the well separable categories the musical phenomena that can be observed in the 21st century's trumpet works. These are as follows:

- Traditional and extended register use
- Traditional and extended sound-making techniques

- Applied means and instrument preparation
- Space and musical parameters
- Notation

IV. Results

After the studying of several Hungarian trumpet works the clearest statement of my dissertation may specify that regarding the oeuvres of the Hungarian composers we can't talk about clearly defined stylistic sets. I could also find that the authors who from stylistic perspective kept creating unchanged in the past decades were also monitoring (and are still monitoring) the novelties and the new solutions. This shows that the Hungarian music-creating society – let it belong to any generation or musical-ideological group – keeps monitoring and reflecting to its age, the international trends and the works of each-other.

Maybe the main value of the thesis consists of presenting a summary about the Hungarian trumpet concertos of the 20th-21st centuries that is filling a gap. Several works featuring in my thesis were performed only once or they were not performed at all, they were recorded for the radio only. Simultaneously I want to emphasise that although I did not intend to provide a complex picture about that age from trumpet perspective, I don't think at all that my thesis is finished. My main intention was to raise the attention and to serve as base for eventual further research. The dissertation helps the readers in realising the greatness of certain authors that did not deserve to be forgotten as well as the importance of performing their works and inserting them into repertoires.

My research is primarily studying the performance possibilities of the discussed works, thus it is based expressly on practice. This is especially true to the works of the 21st century where I am analysing the musical phenomena based on the above-mentioned system of criteria.

V. The documentation of the activity related to the subject of the thesis

In my thesis I discussed the Hungarian concertos and works of the 20th-21st centuries written for trumpet. During my studies – in the eighties and nineties – I played none of them but in the past years I was able to perform a few at the beginning of my research.

- Frigyes Hidas: Trumpet fantasy, Verbier, Verbier Music Festival, July 11, 2015, contributed on piano: Simon Crowford-Phillips
- Emil Petrovics: Trumpet concerto, Miskolc, “Béla Bartók” Institution of Musical arts, Trumpet faculty concerto, November 27, 2015, contributed on piano: Molnár Mónika Molnárné
- Sándor Balassa: Trumpet concerto, Miskolc, “Béla Bartók” Institution of Musical arts, Trumpet faculty concerto, March 17, 2016, contributed on piano: Molnár Mónika Molnárné
- Kamilló Lendvay: Senza Sordina, Verbier, Verbier Music Festival, July 23, 2016, contributed on piano: Simon Crowford-Phillips

In the future I plan to perform the works of Hungarian authors, with special regard to the trumpet concerto of Attila Bozay. This piece is interesting because my former professor, András Kamerrer presented the work that was actually the basis of his diploma from 1962. Although the sound recording of the concerto was prepared 2 years later in the Hungarian Radio with the trumpet solo of János Schubert, but the work has never been performed before an audience. I intend to play this work at my DLA closing concert – with the approval and professional support of the board of trustees of the Bozay Foundation.