

Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music
Doctoral School No.28 (History of Arts and Culture)

Mrs. Kekk Adél Horváth
Synthesis of tradition and modernity in the oeuvre
of Rudolf Maros
theses of the doctoral dissertation

Supervisor: Lóránt Péteri (PhD)

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1. Research History

The legacy of Rudolf Maros composer (1917-1982) has been the property of the Theatre History and Music Library of the National Széchenyi Library (further on: NSZL) since 2004. The documents left behind were handed over to the collection by the composer's widow, by Mrs Rudolf Jerry Harmat. The transfer of the documents was helped by the inheritance inventory of Katalin Tamás. Katalin Tamás was commissioned by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences Institute of Musicology to review the documents in 1998. She looked through the material in the composer's former apartment in Lepke Street which was unsorted and stored in bulk in a large cabinet. She divided the material into groups of documents and prepared a thematic register of them. I found the legacy material of Rudolf Maros consisting of three boxes when I was looking through the legacy register of the NSZL in 2015. After finding the documents I have started to process and classify them. The rudimentary nature of the rich source material led me to – beside the encouragement of Mrs Rózsa Éva Kelemen head of Music Library, László Vikárius the leader of the PhD doctoral program and my consultant Lóránt Péteri – to research further the oeuvre on the basis of these documents. Later this year I contacted the composer's children, Éva Maros and Miklós Maros who have accompanied my research and work from the first steps to the end.

They have helped the creation of the dissertation with a lot of stories and information during the personal meetings and correspondence since the summer of 2015. Besides this, their own sheet music, photo, document, and soundtrack collections were also available to me. This allowed me to create an image, about the personality, career, and composer's work of Rudolf Maros, based on credible information from sources that have not been known to date, with the claim of completeness. At the beginning of my research, there were only three pieces of literary work available: one important timeline document, the monograph of Péter Várnai (Rudolf Maros, 1967), which follows the life of the composer till the end of the 1960s, this book was written with the contribution of Rudolf Maros. The second book is a little monograph created by Anna Dalos (Rudolf Maros, 2001). Anna Dalos was able to look at the sources from the legacy in the flat of the widow when she was writing her book. The last literary work is a chapter in a book titled Hungarian Pictures (2014) written by Tibor Tallián (The start of career of Rudolf Maros). During my research, more scientific works were published, which also deal with the oeuvre of Rudolf Maros. (Anna Dalos: A door with a lock, 2020; and a thesis led by her (Laura Justin: The orchestral work of Rudolf Maros, Ferenc Liszt Academy of Music, 2015)

2. Research methods and the structure of the thesis

The starting point for research was the legacy material which can be found in the Theatre History and Music Library of the National Széchenyi Library.

I started to check and organize the material with the help of the inheritance inventory. I processed the remaining letters, which were mixed with other materials, into storage boxes and organized them alphabetically for easier searching. I have prepared a content extract or copied the entire text of the the survived documents and notebooks-among them were the material of small pocket calendars written between 1960 and 1966- into which Rudolf Maros recorded private, professional and compositional dates and events- and I organized them into a database. I used the latter method to record, for example, his teaching notes, reviewer's writings and the most important correspondence.

An important part of the systematization was the examination and comparison of existing art registers. It was important to compare the art registers of the inheritance inventory and the one found in the small monograph by Anna Dalos with Rudolf Maros' own handwritten list of works and manuscript sheet music from the legacy. After having looked through the inheritance material and art registers, I have planned which collections and archives I have to attend in order to get the most authentic sources which would help me to complement the writings of the literature to date. From the purpose of material collection and resource research I have visited the following institutions since 2015: The Hungarian Academy of Sciences Institute of Musicology, the National Archives of the Hungarian National Archives (the ones in Bécsi kapu Square and in András Hess Square), the Hungarian National Digital Archive and Film Institute (further on: HNDA), the Archives and Sheet Music Library of the Media Service Support and Asset Management Fund, the Baranya County Archives of the Hungarian National Archives, the Győr-Moson-Sopron County Archives of the Hungarian National Archives, the historical Archives of State Security Services, the South Transdanubian Regional Library and Knowledge Centre and the Janus Pannonius Museum in Pécs. The collection and processing of newspaper articles about the composer and his works (studies, analyses, critiques, album releases) were carried out in parallel with the help of the cut materials in the legacy sources and with the help of the documents in the database of the Pécs Knowledge Centre and the Arcanum Digital Science Library. One of the most important parts of the work was the playback and note-taking of verbal audio material found in different source locations, which was extremely time-consuming. I have found some interesting audio documentation in the Janus Pannonius Museum in Pécs, in the Archives of the MSSAMF, in the Archives of the HNDA and in the National Széchenyi

Library. I can be thankful to Miklós Maros who provided me with the Maros family's own collection of audio and video materials. In addition to collecting and organizing work in archives, during the years I have had the opportunity to meet and talk in person with the members of the Maros family. (in Budapest, in Keszthely, in Győr, in Szolnok and in Balatonalmádi). I had the chance to talk with István Láng in his home and the daughter of Ágoston Kollányi, Judit was also glad to share some stories about the relationship between his father and Rudolf Maros.

Thanks to the services of the National Széchenyi Library and the Hungarian National Digital Archive which help researchers, I was able to continue the further analytical-comparative work with the digitization of the manuscript notes of Rudolf Maros and of the video material of soundtracks even when I was obstructed in travel and presence research. During the analysis, I have tried to fully examine the manuscripts and the audio materials. The results of the research with many and varied innovations over the years have encouraged me to change my ideas about the form and center of gravity of the dissertation several times. According to my original plans, I planned to write an overview analysis of the poorly analyzed soundtracks written in the 1950s and 1960s.

In addition to analyzing the soundtracks of the era and a complex summary of film history, the film music of Rudolf Maros would have had a central role – as the results of his studio experiment-along with the parallel analysis of his individual compositions. However, as research was progressing, I have found such niche sources and additives that I thought it necessary to present the creative processes of the entire oeuvre in detail on the basis of an in-depth analysis of creative language and tools. This way, the film music of not negligible quantity and significance have been given a chapter in this thesis. During the analysis, the characteristic tools and topoi of the oeuvre took shape and on the basis of them the idea of the final form of the dissertation was born. I have regarded it essential to present the creative developmental line from the perspective of a musical phenomenon also along the lines of their overview analysis.

The main text of the dissertation is divided into two chapters. In the three sub-chapters of the first chapter, I sought a simple and objective division of the oeuvre, starting with the presentation of the years of study and with the early-stage years in Pécs. The earliest years mentioned only tangentially in the literature will be examined here. From the first known works, the most important elements of the composer's toolbar are highlighted in order to obtain a complex and transparent picture of the development history of Maros's language with the help of these tools at the end of the oeuvre analysis. The second subchapter is on the circumstances of his return to Budapest and on the musical life governed by a Sovietised cultural policy. I

also examine here the role of Maros in this environment and the compositions born under the pressure of the Zhdanovian principles. In this subchapter, I also tried to analyze the works in a demanding way by highlighting the most important musical elements and I also wanted to present the composer's life based on credible sources. In the third subchapter, I aimed to depict how music language was transformed after 1956. I think, this is the most innovative section of the thesis, which is based on the presentation of Maros's most productive and appreciated works. I made efforts to cite most of the sources from that era and also outline the important public activities of the composer. In the third subchapter, I intended to point out the sources and connections that are extremely essential from the point of view of the oeuvre. I consciously did not open a new chapter for the section on the works of the 1970s, highlighting with this, that for me the development of his individual language has been continuous and linear since 1959. I avoid the theories of detours and reversals. This way the third subchapter of the first chapter plays a central role from the point of view of form in the dissertation. The end of the first chapter includes the above-mentioned section on applied music in which I point out the types, genres and musical characteristics written by Rudolf Maros. I also deal here with the importance of film music composed by him as a field of experimentation.

In the second chapter, I write about mourning as a general musical phenomenon of the age among the three *topoi* (*scherzo*, *notturmo*, *mourning*) worth highlighting. The mourning *topos* plays a central role in the oeuvre of Maros which transformation is well illustrated in the analyses. In this chapter, I write about the toolbars, roots and changes of the mourning *topos* through the works. My aim was to embed them in the environment of the mournings of the period written by other authors, to highlight why the mournings of Maros are unique and to analyze the works and show how genre culmination was achieved in the composer's oeuvre. The appendices of the thesis contribute important data to the biography, analyses and public activities of Maros. They contain copies of documents, lists and databases of documents found in the inheritance and copies of photographs belonging to the Maros family.

The creation of the catalogue at the end of the appendix was a significant part of my work. The catalogue I have edited is an important addition to the version at the end of the above-mentioned small monograph of Anna Dalos-which needs to be clarified in some places due to the disorder of the inheritance – and the catalogue also contains the sheet music and discography. I tried to create a chronological order-based list of works to help to understand the chapters of the thesis and I also integrated the applied music, which I considered vital due to the topics covered in the thesis. In the material collection phase of the research, it provided significant assistance

that I won the Zoltán Kodály Musical Artist Scholarship supported by the Ministry of Human Resources three times between 2017 and 2019.

3. The Results of the Research

In my dissertation, I set the goal of presenting the biography of Rudolf Maros, his entire oeuvre, the circumstances of the creation of the works and the creative evolutionary process drawn on the basis of the analyses, in a demanding and full-fledged manner. Material collection, sorting and processing and analysis of sources have resulted in a significant amount and quality of information. To share this information is of great importance in the continuation and supplementation of the knowledge gained so far in relation to the oeuvre of Rudolf Maros. With the help of the personal documents found in the inheritance – for example: pocket calendars and a handwritten list of works – I was able to clarify a number of circumstances and dates. I was able to correct the archiving errors revealed during the examination of the manuscript music material kept in the National Széchenyi Library as a result of the material collection work involving several source sites at the same time. This was the case in connection with the analysis of film music in the research room of the Hungarian National Digital Archive which took place in parallel with the examination of the inheritance in the National Széchenyi Library. This is how it turned out that the composer's most important sheet music titled *Eternal Renewal* – due to incorrect indication of titles – was completely in the wrong place. But with the help of such comprehensive research, it was possible to clarify the controversy over the number of Maros's string quartets and the nature of works such as *Serenade in Five Movements* or a planned but unrealized *Divertimento*. Several unknown works from him were discovered, such as a viola piece with twelve-degree technique titled: *Three Sketches* which was composed during his most significant creative break – between 1957 and 1959.

The circumstances and sequence of the creation of several works made approximately at the same time have been identified with the help of his own catalogue and with the correspondence between Maros and Jenő Takács. Rudolf Maros's surviving notes for chamber music and composition lessons should be mentioned as an important source from which we can find out what works he considered worthy of analysis and what composers' works he wanted to teach to the growing generation.

The complete manuscript of his lecture to musicology students on Webern and the Second Vienna School is also notable within this rich legacy, as well as the complete documentation of his lecturer's notes. I have placed his lecture and his notes in database in the appendix of the thesis. Thanks to multi-directional archival research, I was able to fully present the public

activities of Rudolf Maros by incorporating them into a cultural policy environment based on credible sources. In this respect, I have found the richest source material in the Hungarian National Archives and in the Baranya County Archives of the Hungarian National Archives. I was able to listen to and took notes of several analyses and artistic presentation by Maros from the audio tapes preserved in the Archive of the Hungarian Radio (Media Support and Asset Management Fund) which helped me to write the second chapter of the dissertation on mournings. In addition to these sources, the most accurate data were provided by the criticism and analyses from colleagues, as well as personal conversations mentioned as an essential part of the material collection work. The latter ones largely complemented the literature; they brought me information and anecdotes that I could not have found written down anywhere.

The countless memories of Miklós Maros that have arisen freely during conversations and exchanges of letters or in connection with a specific topic, are of great importance to me. By the end of the research work, I have received a complete picture of Maros's creative development. I hope that I have been able to create a life work analysis based on the study of the musical instrument system, which avoids schemas and generalizations. During the work, it was a challenge for me to present the composer's life and oeuvre in parallel, illuminating the correlations. My original plan was to highlight all three of the above-mentioned topoi and to analyze them separately, taking them through the entire oeuvre. However, given that research has revealed more important data, sources and information than I had expected in the beginning, I thought it important to write the chapter titled Portrait and Career Picture with the need for completeness, and in the second chapter analyzing the topos, to identify the area where further research is worthwhile by highlighting only one phenomenon.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that during the years I spent researching the oeuvre, I was able to achieve some professional-public life goals. I was able to help several times with sheet music and information for musicians performing the works of Rudolf Maros. I considered the acquaintances made during the years of research and the organization of commemorations related to the birth and death of the composer important. Since 2015 I have had the opportunity to give lectures on the oeuvre of Rudolf Maros in Győr, in Sümeg and in Budapest. I was also able to organize two memorial concerts with the help of Miklós Maros. At a concert organized in December 2017, with the participation of the students and teachers of the János Richter High School of Music, a selection of Maros's choral works, chamber and orchestral works was performed on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the composer's birth. Among the works was the Concerto

Grosso as well, which was played for the first time after its premiere in 1948. Our most recent joint organization was established on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the composer's death, as part of a contemporary evening of the Szolnok Symphony Orchestra on 17 October 2022.

4. Publications on the subject of the thesis

“It was worth it! Rudolf Maros was born 100 years ago(1)” *Muzsika* 60/4, (1 April 2017) 6-12.

“Eternal Renewal. Rudolf Maros was born 100 years ago (2)” *Muzsika* 60/5, (1 May 2017) 13-18.