

The Liszt Academy of Music
28th Doctoral School of Arts and Cultural History

Anasztázia Razvaljajeva

HARP AS SOLO INSTRUMENT
IN THE MUSIC OF 20th AND 21st CENTURIES

Thesis of DLA dissertation

Supervisor: László Tihanyi

2018

I. Research background

It was during my studies when I realized my interest towards the music of 20th and 21st centuries, during which the harp, which had gradually become accepted as a solo instrument since 1810, fulfilled its repertoire with works different in style and compositional technique. Apart from learning and performing the pieces, I was interested in their historical background, but while searching for related literature I had to realise that there was lack of research done in this field. Most of the sources I found were very important from general historical point of view, introducing the development of the instrument, like the book of Roslyn Rensch *Harps and Harpists*¹ or Andrea Vigh's dissertation: *Sokoldalú hangszerünk, a hárfa*². However, most of them didn't satisfy my wish for a deeper analysis of compositions. Naturally, I also found some exceptions: articles, PhD dissertations and books which deal in details with the life and work of harpists-compositors, like the work of Jeffrey Lee Parsons about Marcel Grandjany,³ or the book⁴ written by four harpists – Mathilde Aubat-Andrieu, Laurence Bancaud, Aurélie Barbe, Hélène Breschand – which introduces the notation and playing techniques developed since the 20th century.

It became clear to me, that while there are many harpists all over the world who research in this field, there is still a great need in overviews and detailed analyses as well. This dissertation includes the information that I got to know during the years of research and that I would like to share.

¹ Rensch, Roslyn: *Harps and Harpists*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.

² Vigh Andrea: *Sokoldalú hangszerünk, a hárfa* DLA-disszertáció. Liszt Ferenc Zeneművészeti Egyetem, 2008.

³ Parsons, Jeffrey Lee: *Marcel Grandjany's harp transcriptions and editions*. PhD dissertation, Texas Tech University, 2004.

⁴ Aubat-Andrieu, Mathilde – Bancaud, Laurence – Barbe, Aurélie – Breschand, Hélène: *La harpe aux XXe et XXIe siècles*. Clamcey: Minerve, 2013.

II. Sources

My main sources were articles, books and dissertations written by French, English and Russian researchers:

Sources dealing with harp music of 20th-21st centuries:

- Aubat-Andrieu, Mathilde – Bancaud, Laurence – Barbe, Aurélie – Breschand, Hélène: *La harpe aux XXe et XXIe siècles*. Clamcey: Minerve, 2013.
- Dulova, Vera: *Isskusztvo igri na arfe*. Moszkva: Szoveckij kompozitor, 1975.
- Glattauer, Annie: *Dictionnaire du répertoire de la harpe*. Paris: CNRS éditions, 2003.
- Inglefield, Ruth K – Neill, Lou Anne: *Writing for the Pedal Harp. A standardized Manual for Composers and Harpists*. Bloomington: Vanderbilt Music Company, 2006.
- Podguzova, Marina Mihajlovna: *Arfovoje isskusztvo Rosszii pervoj polovini XX veka*. Moszkva: Editusz, 2010.
- Pokrovszkaja, Nagyezsda Nyikolajevna: *Isztorija Iszpolnyityeltsva na Arfe*. Dissertation. Novoszibirszk, 1994.
- Rensch, Roslyn: *Harps and Harpists*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.

Detailed analysis:

- Halfyard, Janet K.: *Berio's Sequenzas. Essays on Performance, Composition and Analysis* London/New York: Routledge, 2016.
- Poeschl-Eldrich, Barbara: *Modern and tonal: An Analytical Study of Paul Hindemith's Sonata for Harp*. Dissertation. Boston University College of Fine Arts, 2005.

Works introducing important performers:

- Owens, Dewey: *From Aeolian to Thunder. A biography of Carlos Salzedo*. Chicago: Lyon & Healy Harps, 1992.

- Parsons, Jeffrey Lee: *Marcel Grandjany's harp transcriptions and editions*. PhD dissertation, Texas Tech University, 2004.
- Inglefield, Ruth K.: *Marcel Grandjany. Concert Harpist, Composer and Teacher*. Bloomington: Vanderbilt Music Company, 2006.
- de Montesquiou, Odette: *The Legend of Henriette Renié*. Bloomington: AuthorHouse, 2008.

Methods written by harpists:

- Renié, Henriette: *Méthode complete de harpe*. Paris: Leduc, 1946.
- Salzedo, Carlos: *Modern Study of the Harp*. New York: G. Schirmer, 1921.
- Salzedo, Carlos – Lawrence, Lucile: *Méthode pour la harpe, exercices fondamentaux avec illustrations et explications techniques*. New York: G. Schirmer, 1929.

Further historical sources in English and Hungarian languages:

- Burt, Peter: *The Music of Toru Takemitsu*. Cambridge: University Press, 2001.
- Dalos, Anna: *Maros Rudolf*. [=Berlász Melinda (szerk.): *Magyar zeneszerzők 15.*] Budapest: Mágus kiadó, 2001.
- Kroó, György: *A magyar zeneszerzés 25 éve*. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1971.
- —————: *A magyar zeneszerzés 30 éve*. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1975.
- Nyman, Michael: *Experimentális Zene. Cage és utókora*. Budapest: Magyar Műhely Kiadó, 2005.
- Solymosi Tari, Emőke: *Két világ közt. Beszélgetések Lajtha Lászlóról*. Budapest: Hagyományok Háza, 2010.
- Ujfalussy, József: *Debussy*. Budapest: Gondolat kiadó, 1959.
- Várnai, Péter: *Maros Rudolf*. Budapest: Zeneműkiadó, 1967.

During my research I also used reliable online sources. The following list contains the most important ones:

sites.siba.fi/web/harpnotation/harp

www.lucianoberio.org

www.istvanlang.com

www.tihanyilaszlo.hu

www.ferencfarkas.org

III. Method

My approach to the subject is mainly historical, analytic and practical dealing with the performers' experience. The dissertation can be divided in 3 main sections:

1. general historical overview introducing the development of the harp repertoire of 20th and 21st centuries mentioning some important composers, compositions and historical events.
2. detailed analysis of Luciano Berio's *Sequenza II* – one of the most significant works for the harp in the 20th century
3. role of the harp in Hungary in the 20th century represented by 5 Hungarian composers with different composition style.

Since chamber music and solo repertoire is strongly connected I decided to mention some of the important chamber pieces while focusing on the solo repertoire.

Education and performers play important role in the history of the instrument, this is why a brief introduction of two institutions – Paris Conservatoire as well as Liszt Music Academy – and several harpists – Carlos Salzedo and Marcel Grandjany, as well as Ursula Holliger, Francis Pierre – is included. There are also 4 interviews attached to the dissertation with Frédérique Cambreling, Gunnhildur Einarsdottir, Éva Maros and István Láng to which I refer in the main text.

IV. Results

Summarizing the results of my research I understood the following issues:

- A great part of the repertoire of 20th and 21st centuries deserves more attention and should be known and performed more often
- There should be a greater focus in education on enlightening the connections and analogies between different compositions, composers, techniques, historical events, etc.
- There is no age limit for getting to know contemporary music – younger generation should be more acquainted with it

- In order to understand the connections one should know music and art history more profoundly as well as be more open to the novelties

In the dissertation I tried to keep a good balance between general and detailed view by analysing *Sequenza II* in the 2nd chapter, and presenting the variety of the 20th century's repertoire through several composers' works in the 1st and 3rd chapters.

V. Documentation of the Activities Relevant to the Topic of the Dissertation

In my work as a university teacher I am lecturing on and presenting the characteristic features of 20th and 21st century music. Researching and writing the actual dissertation has not just strengthened the already studied facts and aspects but helped me both to get closer to the subject and to understand it more profoundly.

Since 2012 I have premiered several works with my colleague, saxophonist Erzsébet Selejto, with whom we established a saxophone-harp duo called Duo SeRa. In 2014 we started a series of concerts at FUGA Architecture Center which premieres each year a new set of pieces for saxophone and harp commissioned by our duo from Hungarian contemporary composers. This project is called „Encounters”, as the contemporary pieces are mixed with renaissance songs in the program.

Pieces commissioned and premiered by Duo SeRa:

- Máté Balogh: *Kikaku & Basho* (2015)
- Bálint Bolcsó: *Metszéspon pillanat* (2017)
- Gyula Fekete: *Pyramus & Thisbe* (2015)
- Samu Gryllus: *SeRa-nade - Vorspiel & Herzstück* (2017)
- Bálint Horváth: *DEAC Nr. 2* (2015)
- Balázs Horváth: *kábé 10* (2017)
- Márton Levente Horváth: *Litany* (2014)
- Márton Illés: *Én-kör II* (2017)
- Csanád Kedves: *Levitation in a Bright Thought* (2015)
- Bence Kutrik: *Divergences* (2017)
- István Láng: *Lüktető szálak* (2016)
- Katalin Pócs: *Két noktürn* (2016)
- Pál Rózsa: *SeRapsodia* (2016)
- Árpád Solti: *Why Are You So La Violetta?* (2014)
- Péter Tornyai: *Narcissus* (2015)
- András Gábor Virágh: *Waves* (2014)
- Mátyás Wettl: *My Favourite Instruments* (2015)
- Ákos Zarándy: *Bethin* (2015)

- Péter Zombola: *Choral* (2014)

Further premieres and performances (solo, orchestral, chamber music) :

- 2013 MÜPA, Üvegterem – premiere of Árpád Solti: Harp Concerto, Budapest Strings
- 2014 Pécs, Kodály Center / MÜPA, Bartók Béla Concert Hall – Ede Terényi: Jazz Harp Concerto with Pannon Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Ola Rudner
- 2014 Liszt Music Academy – recital
- 2015 Liszt Music Academy – Bálint Karosi: Triple concerto for guitar, harp and dulcimer (premiered by András Szalai, Miklós Környei, and Anima Musicae Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Balázs Horváth)
- 2016. october 19, Pesti Vigadó – concert with Polish harpist Zuzanna Elster performing work by Marta Ptaszyńska, Pacioriewicz, Tournier, Faure, Andres, including world premiere of pieces by: Bartosz Kowalski, Márton Levente Horváth and Gábor András Virágh.
- 2017 Fészek Artists' Club – Duo SeRa
- 2017 Liszt Music Academy – participation in Debussy chamber music concert series
- 2017 Hungarian Institute of Musicology – chamber music concert in the memory of Lajtha László