

V. Documentation of the actions related to the
dissertation's domain

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DLA Thesis

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**THE ORIGIN OF THE TINTINNABULI
SYSTEM, ITS DEVELOPMENT AND
FORMS OF APPEARANCE IN ARVO
PÄRT'S WORKS**

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I. The Premises of the Research

I already became acquainted with Arvo Pärt's music in the secondary school. Since then I have studied his entire life and work minutely. Besides scores, international technical literature and audio materials - as Pärt is one of those lucky authors whose one single piece can be published even in 33 different CD recordings¹ - I also got to know a large number of films to which his music was used. Most of the foreign technical literature on Pärt's life emphasize and analyze only few pieces by presenting the characteristics of tintinnabuli style of the given composition or discussing the history of tintinnabuli style. Practically there is no Hungarian technical literature, altogether only one thesis,² a few articles and one criticism published in a journal, called Muzsika, specialize on this topic. For this reason the aim of my

I have found that the origin of tintinnabuli style is in the Gregorian canto and the renaissance chorale. Within the latter I primarily meant Ockeghem's and Palestrina's works and their technique of composing which I felt is similar to the tintinnabuli style and Pärt's works constructually as well as in reasoning. This system can be seen throughout the presented pieces of work. I tried to put the results into a broader context which makes up one whole unit together with the careful and extensive analysis

¹ www.amazon.com - Cantus in memory of Benjamin Britten, PH 555

² Mészáros, Péter: Idő – Ember – Zene. Időkapcsolatok Arvo Pärtnél a Sieben Magnificat-antiphonen című darabjának tükrében, Liszt Ferenc Academy of Music, 2006

works, the works with collage technique and the first tintinnabuli piece, Für Alina.

The detailed presentation of the tintinnabuli system can be found in the *third chapter*. Point by point I examine its sound system, voice types, scoring, rhythmic and all the other possible segments.

In the most lengthy, *chapter four*, I analyze the most significant pieces of tintinnabuli style from the vocal and orchestral work through the chamber music till music written for recital instrument all the important pieces of work take their place in this chapter.

In the *fifth chapter* I briefly review the application of tintinnabuli works in related arts primarily in cinematic art.

In the second part of this chapter I transpose the general approach of analysis with a rather music psychological approach meaning putting up questions which might be asked by several contemporary artists for themselves but might not be answered. I can not promise to give answers in all instances but I will try to come up with more aspects – principally mine – based on Arvo Pärt's music and the system of tintinnabuli style.

doctorial dissertation is to at least partially make up this shortage.

II. Sources

The main source of my dissertation was Paul Hillier's book on Arvo Pärt which seems to be the only relatively comprehensive work on the author's life and the method of tintinnabuli editing.³ This book follows the author's career till the mid 90's. Besides the official website edited by David Pinkerton the official website of Universal was great assistance to me.

Further information was provided by the Hungarian sources and official movie websites I have mentioned before. In connection with the basic questions and notions of tintinnabuli style I used the Brockhaus-Riemann, the Bohm musical dictionaries and the online Hungarian Explanatory Dictionary. I compliment my appendix with aesthetic and psychological approaches to which I used books and studies of Ehmann Bea and Eric Berne.

³ Hillier, Paul: Arvo Pärt, Oxford University Press, 1997

III. Method

My first and at the same time most important step was the analysis of the composer's pieces of work. The Universal published all of Pärt's work thus I could collect them from musical libraries, colleges and music shops of Vienna and Amsterdam. I have made an effort to gather not only the necessary scores but also the recordings available. A lot of recordings of Pärt's mostly played pieces of work have been published and for this reason I certainly have not managed to get them all. However I still have enough sources to get a full picture of his entire life work.

Apart from the analysis of the scores and recordings I also read the technical literature with special regard to the above mentioned book of Hillier. In connection with the origin of tintinnabuli system it was inevitable to examine the music of previous periods, most importantly the works of Renaissance composers. Besides musical examples related arts are mentioned such as architecture and cinematic art. I regularly carried on discussions with the Hungarian lecturers and experts of Arvo Pärt's work

like Cser Ádám, the choirmaster of Victoria Kamarakórus, Mészáros Péter, the conductor of the Arpa d'Or Énekegyüttes, Nagy Bernadett and one of the leaders of Discantus Énekegyüttes. In the appendix I examined two other aspects of Arvo Pärt's music. First of all I write about the movies which used his music or were inspired of that. To these analyses I got great help from my friends who are outstanding talents of the latest generation of film directors. Finally I outlined the psychological reference of his music to which my psychiatrist and psychologist friends and their recommended books were of a great help.

IV. Results

In the *first chapter* I start with a brief introduction to Arvo Pärt's life since the technical literature in Hungarian has not been published yet.

In *chapter two* I am going to write about the development of tintinnabuli style and the pathway leading to its development. This includes the early scerilist