

AESTHETICS OF VOLFGANGS DĀRZIŅŠ IN HIS COGNITIONS AND WORK

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Summary

Volfgangs Dārziņš (1906–1962), son of the famous Latvian romantical composer Emīls Dārziņš, has principally expanded the stylistic spectrum of Latvian music in two directions. Firstly, he is one of our first representatives of neo-classicism. Secondly, the most outstanding works of Volfgangs Dārziņš are marked by new, non-traditional interpretation of folklore, which has sometimes been characterized as *barbarian* and is similar to the archaic, pagan layers of folk music typical for Béla Bartók and Igor Stravinsky. The emigration period of Dārziņš' work is especially marked with intensive and fruitful stylistic revitalization. However, some early signs of these styles are noticeable already in the works of 30-ties (which still are generally dominated by the link to the styles of romanticism and impressionism), as well as in critiques of this period. In this article I would like to give a broader insight in the aesthetic views of Volfgangs Dārziņš, which are revealed both in his critiques and letters, and also help to conceive the intentions of several of his musical works.

Already in his early writings the composer acknowledges his sympathies to the music which is *full of life, fervor, sharp and strong experiences* [13]. In his opinion, the European music of that time lacks vitality, therefore it looks for new impetus. Volfgangs Dārziņš as the representative of the *third generation* of Latvian composers definitely associates himself with the opinion of such composers of the 20th century as Igor Stravinsky, Sergei Prokofiev, Béla Bartók and Carl Orff, that folklore is the expression of the vital, *Dionysus-type* optimism. Also in the neoclassical style he was attracted by the same features as in the new interpretation of folklore – the aspiration of bright and vital sense of the world.

One of the first compositions, where the sights of the new interpretation of folklore appear, is the *Suite of Latvian dances (Latoju deju svīta)* for the symphonic orchestra from 1932, which is written in the spirit of *national primitivism* or *rusticism*. Here Dārziņš' music has a tendency of frequent changes of time-signature, irregular meter, use of non-symmetric motives, elements of poly-rhythm, specific variation of rhythm. Folklore influence is also reflected in the folk song arrangements from 30-ties; his mainly buoyant and, as said by Emilis Melngailis, drastic harmonies are a valuable contribution to this genre.

However a real turning-point in the musical style of Dārziņš takes place in the 40-ties. Its first manifestation is the *Variations on original theme (Variācijas par oriģināltēmu)* for piano from 1942.

Several compositions from the 50-ties have been acknowledged not only by Dārziņš' fellow nationals. It is evidenced by the American New Music Catalogue published by company *Dow Publishers* in 1960, which includes his *Sonatina in G, Suite in A, Triade de Préludes* and *Trittico Barbaro*.

The most remarkable Dārziņš composition from the 60-ties, the quintessence of his new style is the monumental series *200 Latvian folk songs for voice and piano*. The echoes of folklore studies are also present in the eight *Small suites* from 60-ties, *Trittico Barbaro* and other compositions.

Spiritual simplicity based on folklore seems to come from father Emīls Dārziņš to his son Volfgangs Dārziņš only in a new rational and reserved perception of the world.

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