

COUNTERPOINTS AND FUGUES IN MUSIC  
OF TĀLIVALDIS ĶEŅIŅŠ –  
PROFESSOR OF COUNTERPOINT AND FUGUE  
Georgs Pelēcis

**Summary**

Tālvāldis Ķeņiņš is one of the most significant Latvian composers who spent all their creative life in emigration. From the very beginning of his professional career contrapuntal texture and fugue became rather typical for his style. Jāzeps Vītols, his first teacher of counterpoint and fugue, estimated with the highest mark his examination tests in our conservatoire. However the young man was still scarcely grounded well in this field. The composer remembers that lessons of counterpoint and fugue were insufficient since managed without any analysis of classical music. The young composer continued his education in Parisian conservatoire where theoretical subjects were studied more seriously and deeper. The highest level of his comprehension of contrapuntal and fugal theory and history was reached later, in Toronto where he moved from Paris and became professor in the local university and conservatoire. It is really portentous that Tālvāldis Ķeņiņš dealt with counterpoint and fugue very intensive all his life as a teacher and composer.

We can see the masterful contrapuntal technique in a great number of his choral works. Sometimes this technique is used in the central link of the piece contrasting with its extreme links (*Latvijai*, 1944, for a mail choir; *Zelta zirnis*, 1978, for a female choir; *Kristus roze*, 1955, *Nogrimušā pili*, 1989, for a mixed choir). Sometimes a final phase is stressed by this technique (*Dieva kalpa vakars*, 1954). Sometimes this texture marks the initial impuls (*Alleluia*, 1981). A mode of invertible counterpoint can be found in *Zachaeus Arborum Ascendit* – the last movement but one of *Piae Cantiones Novae* (1969).

But in chamber music of T. Ķeņiņš the contrapuntal methods and fugues are stated especially rich. Only the most important examples will be listed.

- First piano sonata (1961) – the central fragment of the first movement;
- *Folk Dance, Variations and Fugue* for two pianos – 8 hands (1963);
- *Concertante* for flute and piano (1966) with a final fugue;
- A piano fugue from *Variations* by eight composers for two pianos (1967);
- Two piano canons (1971);
- Three fugues for accordeon or organ;
- Piano sonata fantasie Nr. 2 (1981) – one of epizodes in the first movement;
- Concerto for 14 instruments (1982) – the third movement;
- *Adagio and fugue* for alto, cello and organ (1985).

The third group of T. Ķeņiņš' contrapuntal methods and fugues can be seen in his orchestral scores. We enjoy the greatest skill and weight of these principles in his First symphony (1959) where the elaboration in the final movement is written as a free fugue; or his Third symphony (1970) where

the first movement contains five complex contrapuntal knots, but the second one uses constantly the principle of canon (when the main theme sounds); or his Sixth symphony (*Ad fugam*), 1978, which is based on the *cis moll* fugue by J. S. Bach, or his Seventh symphony (1980) which realizes a principle of *passacaglia*.

Some ideas presented by T. Ķeniņš polyphony seem really unique in the art of music of the 20th century – such as *sinfonia parodia* for example (his Sixth symphony) which recalls the Renaissance *missa-parodia*, or principle of isomelia (the Third symphony).

The large share of counterpoint and fugue in Tālvāldis Ķeniņš's style is very obvious and varied.

#### **Literatūra**

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