

## THE LYRICAL MOTIFS IN THE SONGS FOR VOICE AND PIANO BY LŪCIJA GARŪTA

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### Summary

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Looking through the music of Lūcija Garūta, one can see that the prevalent genre proves to be that of a song for voice and piano, comprising more than 200 of such compositions. In the epoch of national romanticism songs have been significant in the music creations of her contemporaries as well, among them Alfrēds Kalniņš, Jāzeps Vītols, Jānis Zālītis and Jānis Mediņš.

However, contrasted to other music pieces of the relevant genre, Garūta's songs stand out in most cases for her own lyrics, thus highlighting her not only as a composer but as a poetess, too. In this respect Lūcija Garūta has no rivals among representatives of Latvian academic music. Songs of Lūcija Garūta like the compositions of Mikalojus Konstantinas Čiurlionis (musician and painter) or Marģeris Zariņš (musician and prosaist) prove to be a rewarding and interesting material for finding out how one and the same personality can manifest itself in different genres of art.

One of the principal themes of her poetry is juxtaposing her own emotional experience to eternal nature. Her traditional symbol of nature is either the sea (*Jūras skūpstis/The Kiss of the Sea*, 1926, *Nāras dziesma/The Song of the Mermaid*, 1928, *Krusts jūras krastā/The Cross on the Seashore*, 1940) or mountains (*Šūplā dziesma kalnu bērnam/The Lullaby for the Mountain Child*, 1928, *Kaukāza bērna dziesma svešumā/The Song of the Caucasus Child in Foreign Parts*, 1932). Another romantic trend is her seeking for the ideal, the symbol of which is light in its most diverse manifestations, such as the sky, the sun, stars and flames. It can be exemplified by her song *Kvēlot, liesmot, sadegt/To Glow, to Blaze, to Burn* (1929) and others.

Garūta's songs are characterized by lyrics of two kinds – the so-called *vers libre* (*Draugs/Friend*, 1926; *Mans sapni/Mon rêve*, 1926; *Svētā mīla/Sacred Love*, 1929; etc.), acquiring its value in the musical context, while the rest can be separated from music and regarded as independent poetry (*Vakara blāzmā/In the Evening Glow*, 1932; *Tautai/To the People*, 1932; *Aijā dziesmiņa/Aijā Song*, 1943; etc.). The second type of lyrics stands out for its symmetry, repercussion, rich and expressive language. Music complies with the text, allowing for either symmetrical, clearly structured forms or for a continuous streaming, predetermined by an instant impulse. Analysing the lyrics and music of separate songs I have found out the following regularity: the more intense, exuberant and independent the text, the simpler and more accompanying is its representation in music (*Aijā dziesmiņa/Aijā Song*,

*Vakara blāzmā/In the Evening Glow* and *Dzimtene pavasarī/Motherland in Spring*, 1935). And *vice versa* – the more exuberant, saturated with harmonies and expressive the music, the less independent and separable from music is the text. This second tendency manifests itself in such songs as *Mans sapni/Mon rêve*, *Svētā mīla/Sacred Love* and others.

The language of music in Lūcija Garūta's songs is basically rooted in the traditions of romanticism. Firstly, it refers to the lyrics of lovesongs (the latter are predominantly based on her own poems and to some extent can be regarded as autobiographical). At the same time her songs within the context of her chamber music stand out with a unique stylistic diversity, starting with impressionistic nuances and ending with barocal accents. They permeate Lūcija Garūta's most extended musical pieces both with intonation and contents. So, for instance, the theme of stars and outer space (Lūcija Garūta was the first Latvian composer to use it so extensively: here one can feel her likeness with Fricis Bārda, the Latvian poet, she appreciated) is later developed into the opera *Sidrabotais putns/The Silver Bird* (1938) and cantata *Viņš lido/He Is Flying* (1961). Interlacing of the religious and patriotic themes in her songs, written in the early forties and rather frequently influenced by the poetry of Andrejs Eglītis, gives rise to her cantata *Dievs, Tava zeme deg/Lord, Thine Earth is Burning* (1943). The above-mentioned flames and other light images in Lūcija Garūta's songs, culminations in particular, later find way into her oratorio *Dzīvā kvēle/Living Flame* (1966). Thus, songs for voice and piano both from the standpoint of lyrics and music should be regarded as a miniature reflection of the basic ideas of Lūcija Garūta's music creations.

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