

un ka ne vienmēr viņš man spēj palīdzēt manā ceļā, tāpēc viņš man atstāja brīvas rokas. Plakidim bija sajūta – tā joma, kur viņš man var palīdzēt un kaut ko ieteikt, ir orķestrācija un tas, ko viņš apzīmēja par *akadēmisko bāzīti*. [..] Viņš kā komponists bija izteikts praktiķis: komponējot domāja par to, kā mūzika izskatīsies no atskaņotāja puses. Šai ziņā mums bija domstarpības par ritma struktūrām – man tai laikā patika eksperimentēt un iet samērā tālu komplicētu ritmu izmantojumā, bet viņš no interpreta viedokļa mēģināja to kaut kādā veidā apšaubīt, [sakot,] ka tas nenolasīsies, bet tiks izspēlēts citādi. [..] Kad strīdējāmies, Plakidis prasīja: kas manā mūzikā veido tematismu? Kas ir tas, kas aizstāj tematisma lomu? Viņam bija svarīgi, lai es to muzikālo materiālu, ko es atnesu un pie kā es strādāju, kaut kādā veidā vai pakāpē varētu nospēlēt. Viņam gribējās skanisku, dzirdes iespaidu par to, ko es rakstu. Viņš nebija vērsts uz to, lai skatītos partitūru bez skanējuma. Saklausāmības moments ir palicis atmiņā kā visbiežākā diskusiju tēma.

Jautājums ir par to, cik un kādā mērā mēs kā komponisti kontrolējam to, ko mēs rakstām, skaniski, ar ausi. Kad es strādāju pie kaut kā, viņš šaubījās, vai es to kontrolēju. Pēc tam, kad tas izskanēja, viņš pārliecinājās, ka es to kontrolēju. Viņš teica – jā, tur ir tā dzirdes kontrole, bet tieši, kādā veidā es to panāku, to viņš nesaprot, taču atzīst, ka gala rezultātā ir jūtams, ka materiāls ir kontrolēts un pārbaudīts. Tā ir izteikta praktiķa pieeja – [..] viņu interesēja, kā tas beigās atskaņojuma brīdī izpaudīsies skanējumā. (Petraškevičs 2018)

IN MEMORIAM PĒTERIS PLAKIDIS

Mārīte Dombrovska

Summary

Keywords: composer, pianist, professor, musical duality, neoclassicism, neoromanticism, Latvia, Greece

This paper is dedicated to the memory of Pēteris Plakidis (1947–2017) – composer, pianist, and long-time professor at the Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music. For those who knew Plakidis, he will always remain in their memories as an erudite musician with refined tastes, and a witty aristocrat in spirit, who was a notable figure for many. He never gave ready prescriptions to his compositional students, but encouraged them all to find their own path, to develop their own characteristics and individuality. Many of his students have become internationally known composers.

Plakidis' music combines a classicistic balance and a romanticized world view, rationalism and a youthful exuberance, dramaticism and the spark of humour. His former student Gundega Šmite characterizes Plakidis' music as laconic, though at times multi-faceted. She stresses:

"The key to his creative work is 'duality' – games with the modern and the past, an existential harshness and a humorous lightness. From the perspective of musical language, it also brings to life the usage of polymodality, combining two modal or tonal centres, as well as tense contrasts. [...] As a pianist, Pēteris had a very refined sense of the composition from the perspective of the interpreter. His scores were written with a deep understanding of the specifics of all the instruments. He never wrote music that would go against the essence of a musical instrument." (Šmite 2018)

Plakidis' active involvement as an accompanying pianist in chamber music performance and as a member of varied ensembles has significantly influenced his creative work and inspired him to compose many notable chamber opuses. Among them are vocal cycles written for his wife, the singer Maija Krīgena – *Trejžuburis* ("Three Branches") with lyrics by Imants Ziedonis (1967), *Trīs Māra Čaklā dzejoļi* ("Three Poems by Māris Čaklais", 1975), *Trīs Ojārs Vācietis dzejoļi* ("Three Poems by Ojārs Vācietis", 1980), the chamber cantata *Ezers* ("The Lake", lyrics by Knuts Skujenieks, 1989). Instrumental works like *Romantiska mūzika* ("Romantic Music", 1980), *Veltījums Haidnam* ("Dedication to Haydn", 1982), *Bezmiēgs* ("Sleeplessness", 1998), among others, have already become Latvian chamber music classics.

Plakidis has also made a significant contribution to the symphonic music genre. In 1969, for his *Music for Piano, Strings and Timpani*, he received the All Soviet Union Young Composer Review Award, and this work also received praise from Dmitri Shostakovich. Additionally, in 1996, the composer was awarded the Latvian Great Music Award for his *Variācijas orķestrim* ("Variations for Orchestra"). Among other enduring contributions to Latvian symphonic music are *Leģenda* ("Legend", 1976), *Dziedājums* ("Canto", 1986), and several concertos: the neoclassicistic Concerto for orchestra and piano (1975), as well as the folk-inspired *Sasaukšanās* ("Interplay"), for soloist group and symphony orchestra, 1977, and the Concerto for two oboes and string orchestra (1982). There are also the witty stylistic games of *Vēl viena Vēbera opera* ("One More Weber Opera") for clarinet and orchestra, 1993, and *Pasticcio à la Rossini* for cello and orchestra, 2006.

Even though the composer did not strive for publicity and international attention, his music became highly regarded outside of Latvia quite early on. From 1970 to 1980, Plakidis' music was performed not just in Latvia, but also in many of the then Soviet republics. Beginning in 1990, it was performed in many countries worldwide: Sweden, Germany, England, the Netherlands, Finland, Greece, Malaysia, Australia, the United States, Canada, and elsewhere. Many

international organizations commissioned new works, for example, the Paris publication house *Alphonse Leduc*, the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, the Zealand Symphony Orchestra (Denmark), and the Latvian Song Festival Association in Canada.

Plakidis' music received much significant international praise, for example, the British *Gramophone Awards* review of the London music label *Toccata* release of the CD *Music for String Orchestra* (2007), which praised the earliest opus on the album:

"Music for Piano, Strings and Timpani (1969), in which the composer features as pianist, was Plakidis's diploma work. A typically well crafted product of this early style, the single span, multi-section work shows considerable aural imagination (albeit with a debt to Bartók) within a postmodern tonal idiom and plays not unlike a set of variations. Based on the folksong "Ej, saulīte, drīz pie Dieva" ("Go, sun, soon to God"), in which "Latvian peasants rail against oppressive German landowners", there is clear subtext protesting the Soviet occupation of Latvia." (Rickards 2007: 89)

Beginning in September of 2017, in the Jāzeps Vītols Memorial Room at the Latvian Academy of Music, one can find the composer's private archives. Among the materials collected are previously unknown opuses.

Based on interviews and archive materials, this paper offers a broad view of Pēteris Plakidis' aesthetic beliefs, the composers that were close to him, as well as his own personality.

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