

B. Bersa

*Sonata
(Appassionata)*

And^{te} molto meno Appassionato



BLAGOJE
BERSA

RUBEN
DALIBALTAYAN
KLAVIR

za klavir

RUBEN
DALIBALTAYAN
KLAVIR

BLAGOJE
BERSA
za klavir

CD I

- | | |
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RUBEN DALIBALTAYAN rođen je u Erevanu, Armenija. Nakon glazbene škole u klasi A. Shahbazyana školovao se u Moskvi na glazbenoj akademiji Gnesin pod mentorstvom A. Berngardta. Magistrirao je na moskovskom Državnom konzervatoriju kod V. Kastel'skoga. Profesionalno i osobno formirao se pod utjecajem izvanrednih glazbenika poput B. Berlina, L. Bermana i A. Weissenberga, koji mu je 2001. dodijelio svoju osobnu međunarodnu nagradu.

Tijekom studija i nakon njega dobitnik je nagrada na više međunarodnih pijanističkih natjecanja (*China International competition*, Peking, 1999; *Aram Khachaturian*, Erevan, 2003. i *Svetislav Stančić*, Zagreb 2003), a brojne je nastupe imao u državama bivšeg SSSR-a, Zapadne Europe i Dalekog istoka.

Nakon završetka studija Dalibaltayan 2000. započinje pedagoški rad na sarajevskoj Muzičkoj akademiji. Godine 2005. dobiva mjesto profesora na Muzičkoj akademiji Sveučilišta u Zagrebu i dolazi u Hrvatsku, gdje počinje plodno razdoblje njegova umjetničkog i pedagoškog djelovanja. Izveo je više od 100 solističkih recitala diljem Hrvatske i susjednih zemalja. Imao je brojne nastupe s filharmonijskim orkestrima Erevana, Almatija, Kišinjeva, Zagreba, Rijeke, Sarajeva, Kosova, sa Zagrebačkim komornim orkestrom, Varaždinskim komornim orkestrom te surađivao s istaknutim dirigentima kao što su P. Dešpalj, V. Šutej, T. Yonezu, V. Papyan, N. Marin i dr. Veliku pozornost posvećuje i komornom muziciranju. Od 2000. nastupa u klavirskom duu sa suprugom Julijom Gubajdullinom, surađuje s violinistom Markom Grazianijem, gudačkim kvartetom Sebastian i drugima, a 2009. zajedno s kolegama s Muzičke akademije Leonidom Sorokowim i Krešimirom Lazarom osniva *Amadeus trio Zagreb*, danas jedan od renomiranih hrvatskih ansambala.

Predano promiče djela armenskih skladatelja, zanimljivu i originalnu glazbu neodvojivo vezanu uz kulturu njegove domovine. Godine 2011. u Berlinu postaje laureat prvog festivala posvećenog armenskom skladatelju Komitasu te počinje sudjelovati u projektu snimanja klavirskih opusa Komitasa, Hačaturjana i Babadžanjan.

Ruben Dalibaltayan odgojio je niz mladih pijanista, među njima i finaliste i pobjednike više od 50 međunarodnih natjecanja, a dvojica njegovih studenata dobitnici su nagrade *Ivo Vuljević* za najboljeg mladog glazbenika u Hrvatskoj (Aljoša Jurinić 2010. i Ivan Krpan 2015). Redovito održava majstorske

radionice i seminare u Hrvatskoj i inozemstvu i čest je član žirija međunarodnih natjecanja. Godine 2005. osnovao je s Julijom Gubajdullinom klavirsku ljetnu školu u Makarskoj, koja je ubrzo postala jedan od najpoznatijih događaja za mlade pijaniste u Hrvatskoj i susjednim zemljama.

Blagoje Bersa (Dubrovnik, 21. prosinca 1873 – Zagreb, 1. siječnja 1934) jedno je od najznačajnijih imena hrvatske glazbe dvadesetoga stoljeća. Kao pripadnik hrvatske obitelji slavenskih, romanskih i germanskih korijena, čiji se europski životni put odvijao između rodnog Mediterana, austrougarske prijestolnice i hrvatskoga glavnoga grada, Bersa je gotovo simbolički povezao multikulturalne energije europske *moderne* na razmeđu stoljeća i svjetonazora s asimilacijskom otvorenosti i periferijskim specifičnostima hrvatskoga duhovnog prostora. Nije bio samo najsnažnija stvaralačka osobnost svoje skladateljske generacije, nego i profesionalni autoritet onima u dolasku, jer je uz stručno znanje imao i onu intelektualnu širinu po kojoj je njegova vrsta stilske sinteze prerasla u estetiku individualnog eklekticizma *par excellence*. Bersino djelo – njegove tri opere (*Jelka*, 1902, *Oganj*, 1907. i *Postolar iz Delfta*, 1913), tridesetak solo pjesama (antologijska *Seh duš dan*, 1918), desetak orkestralnih opusa (tri stavka simfonije i karizmatična *Sunčana polja*, 1926), više od dvadeset klavirskih te komorne i zbarske skladbe – nosi sve znakove vremena i duhovnih mjesta u kojima je nastajalo, ali su ti znakovi, potom, obilježili i njegovu daljnju sudbinu.

Ili, prema riječima Mila Cipre, jednog od najuglednijih iz plejade Bersinih učenika: “Bersa je prvi hrvatski kompozitor koji stoji na visini svog vremena. On unosi u noviju hrvatsku muziku nove uzore i nove modele: Wagnera, Puccinija, Gustava Mahlera, Richarda Straussa i – prvi put kod nas! – Debussyja. On je prvi upozorio na majstorstvo Rimski Korsakova. (....) Pitamo li se sada gdje je mjesto Blagoja Berse u novijoj hrvatskoj muzici? – mogli bismo sažeto reći: Bersa je m o s t između dotrajalog devetnaestog stoljeća i (...) novog (...) muzičkog internacionalizma.”

Eva Sedak

Glasovirski dnevnički zapisi Blagoja Berse

“Što mi duša šapće, to sam stavio u note.”

(*Dnevnik*, 28. XII. 1914)

Glasovirski dio opusa Blagoja Berse omogućava razotkrivanje temelja njegova glazbenoga govora. Prije svega zato što se prva materijalizacija njegove glazbene ideje, njezin prijenos u vanjski svijet i prvo oblikovanje iz, samo unutarnjim sluhom identificirane magme zvuka, uvijek zbivala u kontaktu s glasovinom. Oslanjajući se na nj, Bersa je glazbeno mislio i kada je koncipirao svoje simfonijske ili operne svjetove. Stoga zapis na glasoviru i onaj za glasovir ponekad nisu (ali u svakom slučaju ne bi smjeli biti) istorodni. U prvom času i sloju opredmećivanja zamisli zapis je mogao i kadšto bivao samo skica, tek uhvaćeni karakteristični motiv i ritam, zamišljeni harmonijski slijed napetosti i popuštanja, ili pak već u polazištu u pomoć dozvani, tradicijom odavno posvećeni oblik u koji se smještaju zvukovne progresije ili boje. Drugo: Bersin se unutarnji zvuk najčešće rađao iz imaginirane stvarne slike ili emocionalnog stanja, iz tenzijâ i sukobâ, ili – češće – iz maglovita, melankolična snatrenja koje se pod prstima vrsna pijanista (iz bečke škole Juliusa Epsteina) uobličavalo kako u manje zahtjevne doživljajne minijature tako i u – često tehnički virtuozno koncipirane – razvijenije oblike. Treće: proces koji skladatelj jest (ili nije) pokretao zato da bi trenutno imaginirano u zapisu doveo na razinu dovršene kompozicije sam je po sebi svjedočanstvo o mogućim razlozima i putovima njegova, sada već racionalnog modeliranja prvog nacrtâ: dotjerivanja, mijenjanja, oduzimanja i dodavanja, da bi naposljetku – često i mnogo godina kasnije – došao do (možda) konačnog izgleda djela. Kako to nije činio uvijek, mnogi su prvotni zapisi ostali nedorađeni. I četvrto: Bersina djela za glasovir nastajala su u dugom vremenskom rasponu: od prvih učeničkih dana u Zagrebu (1893–1895: *Valcer*, *Ballabile*), preko bečkih studijskih godina (1896–1899: *Rondo* – *Polonaise*, obje sonate), potom kratkih boravaka u Splitu, Sarajevu, Grazu (1899–1903: *Ora triste*, *Notturmo*, *Fantasia breve*) te ponovnog boravka u Beču (1903–1919: *Riso e lamento*, *Novelletta*, *Bizarna serenada*, *Stari mornar priča*, *Serenada* – *Barkarola*) do zrelih zagrebačkih godina (1919–1933:

Venecijanska barkarola, Valse mélancolique, Mélancolie, Balada, Na žalu i Po načinu starih "Airs de ballet" te obje skladbe za četiri klavira – *Ferije – nema više škole! i Priča moje bake*). Obično je – u predasima između rada na većim simfonijskim i glazbeno-scenskim djelima – skladao solo popijevke i glasovirske minijature. Možda su one plod trenutnih reakcija na događaje i stanja o kojima se povjeravao svojim dnevnicima, ali o kojima je običavao ponešto pribilježiti i na marginama notnih stranica ne bi li i riječima postvario misao, učvrstio krug asocijacija iz kojih se rađao zvuk. Autorova emotivna stanja i konkretne slike koje ga opsjedaju razrješenje nalaze u glazbenom izričaju; fiksirani tijekom gotovo četiri desetljeća mogu se stoga tumačiti i kao autoportret kojemu vrijeme mijenja poteze.

Iz Bersinih se klavirskih djela može jasno iščitavati njegova prvotna opčinjenost ZVUKOM kao pokretačem stvaralačkog procesa. Priroda toga zvuka može imati najrazličitije izvore, razasute po širokoj i raznovrsnoj paleti njegova slušnog iskustva. Nije to bila samo klavirska literatura koja je njegovu senzibilitetu bila posebno bliska (Mendelssohn, Chopin, Liszt, Grieg, Čajkovski, Rahmanjinov). Poticaji i tragovi modelâ, koji se poput lika na slici, maske ili Bersi toliko omiljenih utvarâ na tren ukažu i ušuljaju u njegov glazbeni prostor, stizali su i iz partiturâ Mahlera, R. Straussa, Respighia, Ravela, u *Baladi* i Stravinskog, ali i opera Bellinia, Verdia, Puccinia... Taj je suživot s *povijesnim duhovima* (Z. Kravar) bio vrlo intenzivan i u zapisima je često prepoznatljiv. U klavirskim se kompozicijama može pratiti ne samo tijek Bersina upoznavanja s njima nego i njihovo i njegovo mijenjanje kroz vrijeme. Kako se autor preobražavao imaginacijski i osjetilno, taj je prirodni suživot – izvan prvotna konteksta, i u procesu osobno obilježena oblikovanja – dobivao novi smisao, a skladateljevo asimiliranje senzacija iz okoline i raspored njegovih oblikovnih prioriteta ostajali su stabilni i autorski. Dok je u mladenačkim skladbama malo izvornih ideja, ali su modeli uvijek primijenjeni inventivno, u kasnijim je skladbama priprema duha uz pomoć poznatih modela doista samo poticaj za vlastite ideje.

A ta je vlastitost ponajprije dio Bersina PSIHOLOŠKOG USTROJA. Određuje ga i mediteranska i slavenska silovitost, svjesna *uronjenost* u sve boje života. ("Umjetnik je dijete života! Život je umjetnost!", zapisuje on u dnevniku već 1905) Glazbeni izričaj prožimlju kontrastna raspoloženja: od intimističke,

redovito melankolično intonirane lirike, do velikih, jarkih, sceni primjerenih gesta i efekata. Osnovni je ton izričaja stoga uvijek ispunjen nemirom i prožet skrivenim tektonskim nabojem koji se različito ostvaruje.

Te su ishodišne značajke uvjetovale postupanja skladateljskim sredstvima i odabir alata. Da bi uhvatio, *zabilježio* raspoloženje, sliku, scenu, zaustavio trenutak, Bersi su u FORMALNOM pogledu bile dovoljne inačice oblika pjesme. Njih je vrlo pomno proučavao u djelima najvećih majstora romantičnih minijatura. Ostajući vjeran izrazito *kvadratičnim*, strogo proporcioniranim strukturama, postavio je sebi čvrste okvire da bi na drugoj strani (prije svega u harmoniji, ali i u igri s motivima i u lelujavoj ritamskoj slici) mogao biti slobodniji. Mogući dojam statičnosti i previše vidljivih *šavova* među dijelovima forme često su zakriveni vehementnim ostinatnim harmonijama koje sugeriraju dinamičnost protoka i stupnjevanje *energije*, kao i promišljenim rasporedom gradacija i vrhunaca koji cjeline čine stabilnima. Male oblike znao je (primjerice u *Mélancolie*) pažljivo *brusiti*, dotjerati do savršenstva i u njima iskazati zavidno zanatsko majstorstvo. Najčešće je posezao za uobičajenim nazivima oblikâ (nokturno, serenada, valcer, barkarola, bagatela, noveleta, fantazija, impromptu, marš, ponekad s atributima: *trionfale, breve, mélancolique, venecijanska...*), a rjeđe za naslovima koji bi značenjski još bliže odredili minijaturu (*Ora triste, Riso e lamento, Stari mornar priča, Na žal*u) i koji se zapravo odnose na iste, poznate male oblike. Tim je odabirom naslovâ unaprijed odredio i za svaku od njih karakterističan i za obrazovanog slušatelja prepoznatljiv *ton*, izgrađen i učvršćen u mnogim varijantama unutar romantične tradicije.

MELODIJSKI CRTEŽI najčešće su reducirani na pregnantne motive. Njihova je *nosivost* ili ritamski upadljiva, ali pak omogućava harmonijska *preosvjetljavanja* koja mijenjaju i značenje. Očito je, naime, Bersa – na tragu hegelijanskog shvaćanja poetskog kao *jezika duše* – razvio strukturne melodijske i harmonijske uzorke koji su za njega ili označitelji nečeg konkretnog (slike, ispričane priče) ili nositelji općenitijeg estetičkog značenja. Takve *rječite* motive samo je iznimno razvijao ili provodio. Manje dijastematske ili ritamske promjene, sekvenciranjem uvjetovane izmjene, improvizacijski ornamentirane figure, prijenose u druge registre teško bismo mogli protumačiti kao istinsko variranje. Budući da se mnogi motivski *likovi* (naročito *aktivni* ritamski i melodijski modeli,

figure ili instrumentalne geste) prenose iz djela u djelo, oni su očito za autora imali semantičku vrijednost i obilježavali su njegova najčešća ciljna značenjska polja.

Bersino primarno izražajno sredstvo i njegov *najuvjerljiviji alat* je HARMONIJA. Kao da se već od samih početaka njegov glazbeni talent najsnažnije očituje upravo u vertikalni. Glazbena mu misao doduše ne teče procesualno-provedbenim tokovima, niti on ima potrebu za imitacijama, linearnim naslojavanjima i prepletima, postupcima koji su krajem XIX. st. naročito stupnjevali harmonijsku osjetljivost i složenost. Ipak, bujne, očito *programirane* harmonijske boje, svježi, često nenadani modulacijski procesi, povremeno modalna arhaizirajuća polja, *chiaro-scuro* efekti, harmonijski pedali, intencija da se i složene, *udaljenije* harmonijske veze još uvijek shvaćaju unutar tonaliteta, inventivna kombinatorika kako u građenju akordskih sklopova *obogaćenih* alteracijama tako i u njihovim međusobnim vezama, tretman disonance, koloristički efekti kromatizacije – sve to svjedoči da je Bersa suvereno sudjelovao u suvremenim promišljanjima tonaliteta. I premda bi se tu i tamo mogle zamijetiti naznake tonalitete dezintegracije, intuitivno je i na najsloženijim mjestima ipak ostajao u sferi integracije. Prepoznatljivo gestično kretanje motivâ gdješto uvjetuje promjenu akorskog sklopa, ali ne u mjeri koja bi ugrozila osjećaj tonalitete stabilnosti. Struktura je cjelovita, povezana, gravitacijske točke jasne, hijerarhija funkcijâ sluhom prepoznatljiva i analizom provjerljiva.

RITAM je povezan s motivskim karakteristikama. Strukturna je osnova ritma najčešće shematična, često zadana već naslovom skladbe, ali se neki intervali (npr. povećani ili skokovi preko oktave) udružuju sa sinkopama, nenadanim akcentima, suprotnošću između metra i ritma, kvintolama i kvartolama u trodijelnom metru. Shematičnost, naročito upadljiva u skladbama plesnog karaktera, biva prikrivena i vrlo razgibanom agogikom.

DINAMIKA I AGOGIKA važan su dio njegova instrumentarija i istaknuta podrška snažnoj harmonijskoj izričajnosti. Veliki dinamički rasponi, ili pak nijansiranje u okviru iste dinamičke razine i neprestana agogička lelujavost, oboje u okviru samo jedne sitne motivske fraze, rečenice ili dijela pjesme, sastavni su dio stalne uznemirene elastičnosti glazbenog protoka. Ona zapravo zamagljuje i čini manje primjetnom kvadratičnost forme i nevarirana ponavljanja. Oznake tempa stoga su samo općenite naznake, a samo kreativno, individualnom

interpretativnom energijom prožeto usklađivanje ritamski slobodnijeg čitanja zapisâ s učestalim ubrzavajućim *crescendima* i usporavajućim *decrescendima* može realizirati autorovu intenciju i uspostaviti ravnotežu između improvizacijskog tona i konstruirane strukture.

KONTRAST je u samoj osnovi Bersina osjećaja života i samoga sebe. ("Moj značaj je doista nešto čudno, sastoji se od stalnog bolnog kontrasta... borba osjećaja i težnji u meni! Zaljubljen sam u život i u prirodu, u sve ono što je lijepo i plemenito, ali životna radost zatrovana mi je strašnom tajnom zagrobnog života... vječna sumnja... S vremena na vrijeme obuzima me neka strašna tuga, crna." *Dnevnik*, 17. III. 1905) Svi su njegovi glazbeni projekti razapeti između krajnosti, a i u pretežno lirsko-melankoličnom svijetu klavirskih djela snažniji, čak violentni zamasi i siloviti akcenti zastupnici su druge strane njegove (dalmatinske) prirode. ("Lirika moja je nježna, intimna, slavenske mekoće /obratno od talijanske/, a dramatika je duboka, žestoka, impetuoza, skoro koj put brutalna; u moje glazbe ima dva ekstrema: nježnost i – silovitost ... moje more živi, plače, urla, grozi, prijeti, drma..." *Dnevnik* 5. II. i 9. XI. 1915) Minijturni okviri nekih klavirskih skladbi i mjestimične skladateljeve sugestije da cjelinu valja zadržati na jedinstvenoj dinamičkoj razini ne bi stoga trebali navoditi interpretu na pretjerano niveliranje protoka i smanjivanje kontrastnosti. I u okviru *propisane* razine izraza lelujavi su kontrasti neophodni da bi ekspresivna priroda tih skladbi došla do izražaja. Od pomoći su pri tome i skladateljevi iscrpni verbalni interpretacijski smjerokazi kada mu se agogički i dinamički napuci čine nedovoljnima.

NACIONALNO, koje je često izranjalo kao presudna i čak vrijednosna oznaka, danas nije više u središtu pozornosti. Konzistentnost Bersina glazbenog izričaja svakako podrazumijeva i vezanost za genetska ishodišta i izvore. I sam ju je otkrivao, motreći sebe okom drugoga. ("Ako u mene nema puno narodnih motiva i ritma /ali ih ima, jer ih samo gluh ne čuje!/, sve moje radnje imaju sve *karakterzüge* slavenske, a napose južnoslavenske glazbe." *Dnevnik*, 5. II. 1915) Nacionalni aspekt možda nije intendiran ni posebno istican, nego je prirodna sastavnica Bersine poetike.

Ni NOVO nije za njega bio imperativ. U vremenu kada je to *novo* sve više postajalo svjetonazorno, pa čak i političko pitanje, njegova se estetska volja hranila iz prostora šireg povijesnog iskustva čijim je dijelom želio biti. Ali

pripadnost imaginarnom polju toga šireg referencijskog sustava nije mu priječila da unutar njega istražuje i iznalazi nove zvukovne kombinacije i harmonijske veze. Prepoznavajući *znakove vremena*, očito nije smatrao iscrpljenima tehnike, postupke i sredstva kojima umjetnost mimetski prikazuje unutarnji i vanjski svijet. I prilagodbe onodobno aktualnim strujanjima, poput neoklasicističke skladbe *Po načinu starih "Airs de ballet"*, pokazuju da se autor i pod usvojenom dobro skrojenom vanjštinom nije bitno mijenjao. Namjeravao je taj ciklus podnasloviti kao *slobodnu imitaciju*, misleći u prvom dijelu na passacagliu, u drugom na kapricioznu burlesku, a u trećem na pastoralu. Uvodom (ponovljenim i na početku trećeg dijela) podsjetio je na orguljsku intradu, a naslovom i ustrojem prizvao geste francuskih dvorskih plesova XVII. i XVIII. stoljeća, ali u toj *slobodnoj imitaciji* prošlih načina ostao je u vlastitim zadatostima i u svom vremenu.

O Bersinu PIJANIZMU, zapravo sekundarnoj realizaciji ideje i strukturalne osnove *na glasoviru – za glasovir*, prosudbe će izricati pijanisti. Ali iz cjelokupnog Bersina glasovirskog opusa u redigiranom obliku, u kojem su otklonjene prevelike razlike među kompozicijama s obzirom na karakter zapisa, mogu se iščitati neke osnovne značajke. Prije svega suživljenost s instrumentom, vladanje njime, postupno razvijanje klavirskog sloga, širenje izražajnog, registarskog, artikulacijskog dijapazona i stupnjevanje virtuoznosti.

Marija Bergamo

BILJEŠKE UREDNIKA

Ovaj zvučni zapis Bersinih klavirskih skladbi donosi izvođačev izbor iz kojega su - u odnosu na izdanje *Djela za klavir* unutar projekta *Sabrana djela Blagoja Berse* (redaktor Petar Bergamo, urednici Marija Bergamo i Petar Bergamo, Zagreb: Hrvatski glazbeni zavod - 2010) - izostavljene skladbe: *Minuetto* op. 11, *Bagatella*, *Tema con variazioni* op. 15, *Sonata u C-duru* op. 19, *Marcia trionfale* op. 24, *Fantasie-Impromptu* op. 27 i *Fantasia breve*.

1. Balada, op. 65

Beč, 22. II – 8. VI. 1909 – Zagreb, 20. X. 1920.

Skice i prijepisi svjedoče o posebnoj pozornosti koju je Bersa posvetio ovoj kompleksnije razvijenoj skladbi, osobita, vitalističkom energijom prožeta pripovjednog tona te izvornih harmonijskih i ritamskih rješenja.

2. Notturmo, op. 38

Graz, 23 – 29. III. 1903.

Skladba nastala u jednakom raspoloženju kao i svega nekoliko dana ranija *Ora triste*. Skladateljev unutarnji sluh u melodijskim frazama čuje boju drugih instrumenata te u 25. t. bilježi: *quasi oboe*, a u 30. t.: *quasi fagotto*. Na tragu je Fieldovih i Chopinovih nokturna, a s talijanskim melodijskim ductusom.

3. Novelletta

21 – 22. V. 1910.

Skladba je na tragu Schumannovih *noveleta*.

4. Ora triste, op. 37

Graz, 21 – 23. III. 1903.

Ne samo naslov nego i oznake tempa i dinamike opremljene opisima intendiranog izraza i karaktera (*mesto abbandono e scoramento, molto triste, dolorosamente, con profonda mestizzia*) otisak su autorova depresivnog raspoloženja. Uzor su očito Chopin i Grieg.

5. Bizarna serenada

Beč, 9. XII. 1915.

Autograf je zapravo skica-particella, osnova za dio planiranog ciklusa simfonijskih pjesama *Moja domovina*; Bersa ju je 1926. instrumentirao i iskoristio na početku simfonijske pjesme *Sablasti*. (Autorov zapis o sadržaju djela: «Kompozicija sama mi priča sljedeće: noć – mauzolej iskače u slici noćnoga pejisaža sa svojim konturama – mjesec ga obasjava – more tiho, spava – tajanstveni, sablasni noćni

mir – građani Starog grada (Dalmacija) spavaju – sablasti, aveti dolaze, prave serenadu mrtvom gospodaru mauzoleja i plešu i pjevaju – zvono Avemarije ih rasprši ...« *Dnevnik*, 30. III. 1926)

6. Mélancolie

Beč, 22 – 23. V. 1919. – Zagreb, 9 – 11. XI. 1921.

Bersine bilješke uz naslov: *Tristesse?* i *Sjećanje?*. U zagradi pod naslovom dodaje: “Misleć na moju Majku, moju obitelj, žalosne moje sadašnje umjetničke prilike.” Uz početnu oznaku tempa (*Andantino triste*) naputak: “Cielo svirati u okviru piana, bez afekta, intimno, nikakav forte”

7. Na žalu

Zagreb, 11. XII. 1921.

Skladba trenutka, s mnoštvom autorovih dvojbi i prijedlogâ za naslov (u zaglavlju autografa) ocrtaava značenjsko polje imaginiranog zvuka ove barkarole: *Na moru, Na selu, Svijećnice, Krijesnice, Legenda o krijesnicama, U šumi, Barkarola, Notturmo*.

8. Po načinu starih “Airs de ballet”

Leipzig, 22. I. 1905. – Zagreb, 24. X. 1926.

Suita sastavljena od ranijih skladbi.

I – *Fantasia breve* op. 56, Leipzig, 22. I. 1905. Na toj prvoj verziji u Zagrebu 18. IX. 1926. olovkom dodaje izmjene i dopune, a u čistopisu (s oznakom A) za tisak provodi konačnu redakciju.

II – *Scherzo* op. 62, Beč, 30. XII. 1906. U toj prvoj verziji autor uzima u obzir i naslove *Capriccioso?* i *Burlesco?*. U drugoj verziji i prijepisu pripremljenom za tisak (označenom s B), tempo je od *Allegretta* promijenjen u *Vivo*.

III – *L'heure des rêveries...* Već je u prvoj verziji datiranoj u Beču 9. V. 1917. Bersa dopunjavao i mijenjao notni tekst, oznake tempa i metronomske oznake, kao i naslove: *Pastorale*, *L'heure des souvenirs* i *Suton*. U preradi datiranoj s 24. X. 1926, sada za 3. dio ciklusa *Po načinu starih “Airs de ballet”*, skladba dobiva kao uvod početnih 11 taktova iz čistopisa 1. dijela ciklusa.

1. Sonata u f-molu, op. 20

6. IV – 29. VI. 1897.

Nakon samo nekoliko mjeseci starije Sonate u C-duru op. 19, ova je skladba u jednom stavku novi pokušaj suočavanja sa sonatnim oblikom u okviru studija. I naslovom *Appassionata* i tonalitetom ukazuje na (možda i zadani) uzor u Beethovenovoj sonati. Kantabilna melodika i svježije harmonijske boje već odaju Bersin kasniji rukopis.

2. Serenada – Barkarola

Beč, 7. XI. 1917.

(Naslov u autografu: *Serenada? Barcarola?*) Upitnici u naslovu govore o dvojbi u pogledu što preciznijeg imenovanja tipa i karaktera skladbe, tipičnoj za autora, gdje se pojam barkarole odnosi prije svega na 6/8 metar i karakteristične figure pratnje.

3. Ballabile

18. XI. 1894.

Kao i *Valcer* op. 3 ovaj je plesni stavak u ABA formi nastao u okviru naukovanja u Glazbenj školi Hrvatskoga glazbenog zavoda u Zagrebu.

4. Valse mélancolique

Beč, 15. XII. 1915 – Zagreb, 21. XI. 1921.

Prvi je zapis autor doradivao unutar duga vremenskog raspona, a dvoumio se i oko naslova: *Danse mélancolique*, *Danse passionnée* – i ovdje povezujući svoj osjećaj melankolije sa strastvenošću i zanesenošću, a ne s klonućem i predajom.

5. Venecijanska barkarola, op. 58

Beč, 19 – 21. IX. 1905. – Zagreb, 27. XI. 1921.

Autografi pokazuju da je Bersa na samom notnom zapisu prve verzije, god. 1921. dopisivao i skicirao drugu.

6. Riso e lamento, op. 63

Beč, 8. III. 1908.

Bersa u podnaslovu bilježi i *Impromptu*, a kao oznaku početnog tempa *Tempo di Walzer*, određujući time pobliže *ton* i pokret skladbe.

7. Stari mornar priča

Beč, 10. XII. 1915.

Autograf je klavirska skica namijenjena instrumentiranju. Na njegovu kraju autorova primjedba: "Počet i svršit ovaj komad sa jednom ´tiradom´ od 16 takta na G-žici za sve gusle i Viole same na G-žici – svršit će na praznoj G-žici (kao naši seljaci kad pjevaju na secundi".

8. Rondo – Polonaise, op. 18

11. IX. 1895 – 2. III. 1897.

Djelo je već u prvoj verziji iz 1895. bilo zaokruženo te ga je autor najvjerojatnije u tom obliku smatrao završenim. Druga je verzija u odnosu na prvu razvijenija, kompleksnija i većih dimenzija. Dva su osnovna materijala iz prve verzije ostala nepromijenjena. Čini se da je autor ovu širu inačicu namjeravao i instrumentirati.

9. Valcer, op. 3

6. – 17. II. 1893.

Nastao je za vrijeme naukovanja u Glazbenoj školi Hrvatskoga glazbenog zavoda u Zagrebu.

Forma ovog vjenčića valcerâ nadovezuje se na srodne skladbe Franza Schuberta, Josepha Lannera i Johanna Straussa st.

Marija Bergamo

RUBEN DALIBATAYAN was born in Yerevan, Armenia. After music school in the class of A. Shahbazyan he trained in Moscow at the Gnesin Music Academy, under the mentorship of A. Bergardt. He took a master's at the Moscow State Conservatory, under the supervision of V. Kastelsky. He has been professional and personally formed under the influence of such outstanding musicians as B. Berlin, L. Berman and A. Weissenberg, who in 2001 handed him his personal international prize.

During his studies, and immediately afterwards, he was the winner of international pianistic competitions (the *China International Competition*, Peking, 1999; the *Aram Khachaturian*, Erevan, 2003 and the *Svetislav Stančić*, Zagreb, 2003), and also made many appearances in this period in the former Soviet Union, western Europe and the Far East.

After completing his studies in 2000, Dalibaltayan started to teach at the Sarajevo Music Academy. In 2005 he was appointed professor at the Music Academy of Zagreb University, and arrived in Croatia to begin another productive period in his artistic and teaching career. He has had more than a hundred solo recitals throughout Croatia and neighbouring countries. He has also appeared many times with philharmonic orchestras of Yerevan, Kishinev, Zagreb, Rijeka, Sarajevo and Kosovo and with the Zagreb Chamber Orchestra, the Varaždin Chamber Orchestra and worked together with leading conductors such as P. Dešpalj, V. Šutej, T. Yonezu, V. Papyan and N. Marin. Since 2000 he has also played as part of a piano duo with his wife Julia Gubajdullina, collaborated with the violinist Marco Graziani, the Sebastian String Quartet and others. In 2003, together with colleagues from the Music Academy Leonid Sorokow and Krešimir Lazar he founded the Amadeus Trio Zagreb, today one of the best regarded Croatian ensembles.

He devotes particular attention to the promotion of works of Armenian composers, interesting and original music that is inseparably connected with the culture of his homeland. In 2011 in Berlin he was the prize winner of the first festival dedicated to the Armenian composer Komitas, and started to take part in a project to record the piano works of Komitas, Khachaturian and Babajanyan.

Ruben Dalibaltayan has trained a number of young pianists, including finalists and winners in more than fifty international competitions. Two of his

students won prestigious the Ivo Vuljević Prize for the best young musician in Croatia – Aljoša Jurinić in 2010 and Ivan Krpan in 2015. Dalibaltayan also regularly gives master classes and seminars in Croatia and abroad, and is often a member of the jury in international competitions. In 2005 he and Julia Gubajdullina started a piano summer school in Makarska, which rapidly became one of the best known events for young pianists in Croatia and neighbouring countries.

Blagoje Bersa (Dubrovnik, December 21, 1873 – Zagreb, January 1, 1934) is one of the most important figures in Croatian 20th century music. A member of a Croatian family with Slavic, Romanic and Germanic roots, whose European path in life unfolded in his native Mediterranean area as well as in the Austro-Hungarian capital and the principal city of Croatia, Bersa might be seen to have symbolically linked up the multicultural energies of European Modernism at the turn of the century, on the cusp of differing worldviews, assimilated by the openness of the spiritual space of Croatia, specific in its nature as periphery. He was not only the strongest creative personality of his generation of composers but also a professional authority for those on the way up, for as well as his musical expertise he also had an intellectual breadth that enabled his kind of stylistic synthesis to develop into an aesthetic of individual eclecticism par excellence. Bersa's work – his three operas (*Jelka* of 1902, *Oganj* [*Fire*] of 1907 and *Postolar iz Delfta* [*Shoemaker of Delft*], 1913), his thirty or so solo songs (the anthology piece *Seh duš dan* [*All Saints' Day*], 1918), ten or so orchestral opuses (three movements of a symphony and the charismatic *Sunčana polja* [*Sunny Fields*], 1926), over twenty piano as well as chamber and choral compositions – has all the signs of the time and the spiritual places in which it was created, but these signs, then, characterised its subsequent destiny.

Or in the words of Milo Cipra, one of the most distinguished of the celebrated cluster of Bersa's pupils: "Bersa was the first Croatian composer to have been up to his time. He brought into recent Croatian music new exemplars and new models: Wagner, Puccini, Mahler, Richard Strauss and – for the first time in this country! – Debussy. He was the first to draw attention to the mastery of

Rimsky-Korsakov (...) Should we wonder now what the place of Blagoje Bersa in more recent Croatian music is, we might say succinctly that Bersa is a bridge between the depleted 19th century and (...) the new (...) musical internationalism.”

Eva Sedak

Blagoje Bersa's Piano Journals

“The things my soul whispers I put into music.”

(Journal, 28/12/1914)

The part of Bersa's opus written for the piano allows the very foundations of his musicality to be revealed. This is primarily so because the first materialisation of his musical ideas, their transfer into the outside world, and the first moulding of the magma of sound, hitherto identified only by his inner ear, always occurred, in contact with the piano. Bersa also relied on the piano to think music when he conceived his symphonic or operatic worlds. This is the reason that an outline notated on the piano and one written for the piano are sometimes not (and in any case should not be) one and the same thing. In the first moment and layer of the concretisation of an idea the graphic record could be, and often was, just a draft, only a captured, characteristic motif and rhythm, an imagined harmonic sequence of tension and relief, or perhaps an immediately summoned form, long consecrated by tradition, into which to place sound progressions or colours. Secondly, Bersa's inner sound was most often born out of a real image or emotional state transformed and sculpted by his imagination, out of tensions and conflicts, or – more frequently – out of misty, melancholic dreams, moulded by the fingers of an accomplished pianist (from the Vienna school of Julius Epstein) into both somewhat less challenging experiential miniatures, as well as into more complex forms, technically often artfully devised. Thirdly, the process that the composer undertook (or didn't) to bring that which was for

the moment only hinted at in his writings to the level of a finished composition, is in itself a testament to the possible reasons for and directions of his by now rational modelling of the first draft: reworking, modifying, removing and adding, eventually – often many years later – leading to the (perhaps) final version of the composition. As he did not do this every time, many of his original writings were left unfinished. And fourthly, Bersa's works for the piano were created over a very long period of time: from his first days as a pupil in Zagreb (1893-1895: *Valcer [Waltz]*, *Ballabile*, *Minuetto*), to his university years in Vienna (1896-1899: *Bagatella*, *Rondo – Polonaise*, both sonatas, *Tema con variazioni*, *Fantaisie – Impromptu*), his brief stays in Split, Sarajevo, Graz (1899-1903: *Ora triste*, *Notturmo*, *Fantasia breve*) and the return to Vienna (1903-1919: *Riso e lamento*, *Novelletta*, *Bizarna serenada [Bizarre Serenade]*, *Stari mornar priča [An Old Sailor's Tale]*, *Serenada – Barkarola [Serenade – Barcarole]*), to his mature years in Zagreb (1919-1933: *Venecijanska barkarola [Venetian Barcarole]*, *Valse mélancolique*, *Mélancolie*, *Balada u d-molu [Ballad in D minor]*, *Na žalu [On the Beach]* and *Po načinu starih "Airs de ballet" [In the Manner of the Old "Airs de Ballet"]*), as well as both compositions for four pianos – *Ferije – nema više škole! [Vacation – School's Out!]* and *Priča moje bake [My Grandmother's Tale]*). In the moments of respite between the creation of larger symphonic or stage works, he usually composed solo songs and piano miniatures. They were perhaps immediate reactions to events and conditions about which he confided to his diaries, but on which he also often made notes on the margins of his scores, in order to objectify the thought by verbal means as well, to fortify the cycle of associations that resulted in the birth of sound. The author's emotional states and the specific images that possessed him found resolution by being expressed through music; fixated over a period of almost four decades, they can therefore also be interpreted as a self-portrait in which time changes the strokes.

Bersa's works for the piano make obvious his initial enchantment with SOUND as the driving force behind the creative process. The nature of that sound can stem from the most disparate sources, scattered across the wide and diverse spectrum of his aural experience. These sources are not limited only to piano music that is particularly close to his sensibilities (Mendelssohn, Chopin, Liszt, Grieg, Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov). Rather, the inspirations and hints of

models, similar to a shape on a picture, a mask, or apparitions, so dear to Bersa, that appear for an instant and sneak into his musical space, were also drawn from works by Mahler, R. Strauss, Respighi, Ravel, in *Balada [Ballad]* also by Stravinsky, as well as from operas by Bellini, Verdi, Puccini... This life intertwined with the *spirits of history* (Z. Kravar) was very intense and is often recognisable in his writings. The piano compositions enable us to trace not only the progression of Bersa's gradual acquaintance with them, but also their and his changes over time. This natural coexistence obtained new meaning through the author's imaginative and sensory transformation – outside of its original context and in a process of a very personal remoulding – whereas the assimilation of sensations from the environment and the order of Bersa's formative priorities remained stable and personal. Whereas the compositions from his early years contain few original ideas, but always abound in originally applied models, in his later compositions the preparation of the spirit with the help of known models is truly just an incentive for his own ideas.

This *ownness* is primarily part of Bersa's MENTAL STRUCTURE, defined by both Mediterranean and Slavic forcefulness, a conscious *immersion* into all colours of life. ("An artist is the child of life! Life is art!" he noted in his journal as early as 1905). His musical expression is permeated by contrasting moods, ranging from intimist, always melancholically intoned lyricism to large, bright, stage-appropriate gestures and effects. The basic tone of his expression is therefore always filled with unrest and infused by the sometimes hidden, but always present tectonic charge actualised in different manners.

These initial features determine the handling of composing tools and techniques. FORMALLY speaking, the variants of the song form were sufficient for Bersa to capture, *make note of* the mood, image, scene, to freeze the moment. He thoroughly studied those forms in the works of the greatest masters of Romantic miniatures. While always remaining faithful to the *quadratic*, strictly proportional structures, he set strong frameworks for himself in order to allow himself more freedom in some other aspects (primarily in harmony, but also in playing with motifs and in the fluttering rhythmic image). The potential perception of staticity and too many visible *seams* between the formative parts are often hidden by vehement ostinato harmonies suggesting flow dynamism and *energy* gradation,

as well as by a meaningful arrangement of gradations and peaks that make the whole stable. He often *polished* the simple two- and three-part forms (e.g. in *Mélancolie*), bringing them to perfection and displaying enviable craftsmanship in the process. He most often used the common names for the forms (*nocturne, serenade, waltz, barcarole, bagatelle, novelette, fantasy, impromptu, march*, sometimes with attributes: *trionfale, breve, melancolique, Venetian...*), and less frequently titles that semantically better describe the miniature (*Ora triste, Riso e lamento, Stari mornar priča [An Old Sailor's Tale], Na žalu [On the Beach]*), and that actually refer to the same, familiar simple forms. By this title selection he gave each of them a predefined, characteristic *tone*, recognisable to the educated ear, worked out and consolidated in many variations within the Romantic tradition.

MELODIC DESIGNS are usually reduced to prominent motifs. Their *portability* is either rhythmically conspicuous, or it enables harmonic *reilluminations* that also change the meaning. It is obvious that Bersa, following in the footsteps of the Hegelian interpretation of the poetic as *the language of the soul*, developed structural patterns, both melodic and harmonic, that serve either as denominators of something tangible (an image, a story told) or as carriers of a more general aesthetic meaning. He only exceptionally developed or implemented such *verbose* motifs. It is unlikely that minor diastemic or rhythmic changes, modifications necessitated by sequencing, figures ornamented by improvisations, or transfers to different registers could be interpreted as true variations. Since many motivic *patterns* (especially the *active* rhythmic and melodic models, figures or instrumental gestures) are carried over from one composition to another, it is obvious that they held a semantic value for the author, and they are therefore indicative of his most common target areas of meaning.

Bersa's primary means of expression and his *most convincing tool* is HARMONY. It seems that from the very beginnings it was precisely in the vertical that his musical talent was most powerfully articulated. It is true that his music does not follow the flows of process and development, nor does it need imitation or linear layering and intertwining, procedures characteristic of the late 19th century gradation of harmonic sensitivity and complexity. Still, the vibrant, obviously *programmed* harmonic colours, the fresh, often unexpected modulation processes, the occasionally modal archaising fields, the *chiaro-scuro*

effects, the harmonic pedals, the intent to interpret even the complex, *more distant* harmonic links as being part of tonalities, the inventive combinatorics both in devising chord sets *enriched* with alterations and in interconnecting them, the treatment of the dissonance, the colouristic effects of chromatisation – all of these testify to the fact that Bersa was a highly qualified participant in the contemporary deliberations on tonality. Even though it is occasionally possible to detect hints of tonality disintegration, he intuitively remains in the sphere of integration even in the most complex of places. The recognisable, gesture-rich movement of motifs sometimes causes changes in the chord set, but not to the degree that would jeopardise the impression of a stable tonality. The structure is integral, connected, the gravitational points are clear, the hierarchy of functions is audibly recognisable and analytically verifiable.

The RHYTHM is connected with motivic characters. The structural base of the rhythm is usually schematic, frequently defined by the very title of the composition, but certain intervals (such as augmented intervals or jumps over octaves) are joined with syncopes, unexpected accents, the opposition between metre and rhythm, quintoles and quartoles in triple time. The schematic nature, particularly prominent in the compositions of a dancing character, is also concealed by highly playful agogics.

DYNAMICS AND AGOGICS are an important part of his instrumentarium and provide prominent support to a powerful harmonic expressivity. Great dynamic ranges or, on the other hand, nuancing within the same dynamic level and a continuous agogic flutter, both within a single tiny motivic phrase, a sentence or a part of a song, are components of a permanent, restless elasticity of the musical flow. In essence, they obfuscate the quadracity of the form and the unvaried repetitions, making them less noticeable. The markings of tempo are therefore only general guidelines that can bring the author's obvious intent to life and create a balance between a tone of improvisation and a constructed structure only creatively, reconciling by means of one's own interpretative energy a rhythmically more liberal reading of the notation with frequent accelerating *crescendos* and decelerating *decrescendos*.

CONTRAST is in the very essence of Bersa's sensation of life and of himself. ("My personality is a truly strange thing, consisting of an ever-present

painful contrast... a battle of feelings and longings within me! I am in love with life and nature, with everything that is beautiful and noble, but my joy of living is poisoned by a terrifying mystery of the afterlife... an eternal doubt... from time to time I am overcome by a horrible, black sadness.” Journal, 17/3/1905). All of his musical projects are torn between extremes, and even in the predominantly lyrical and melancholic landscape of his works for the piano, the more powerful, even violent momentums and forceful accents are representative of the other side of his (Dalmatian) nature. (“My lyricism is gentle, intimate, Slavic in its softness (unlike the Italian), and my dramatics is deep, intense, impetuous, almost brutal at times; there are two extremes in my music: gentleness and – forcefulness... my sea lives, cries, hollers, admonishes, threatens, shakes... “ Journal, 5/2/ and 9/11/1915). The miniature frameworks of certain piano compositions and occasional suggestions by the author that the whole ought to be maintained at a unified dynamic level should therefore not lead the interpreter into excessive balancing of the flow and reduction of contrast. Even within the *set* expressive level, the fluttering contrasts are necessary in order to fully demonstrate the expressive nature of the compositions. The author’s comprehensive verbal guidelines for interpretation are also quite helpful here – he does not hesitate to use words when agogic and dynamic instructions seem insufficient.

The issue of the NATIONAL, which has often surfaced as decisive, and has even served as a measure of value, is currently no longer in the spotlight. The consistency of Bersa’s musical expression certainly includes a bond with his genetic origins and sources. He often noticed it himself, observing himself through the eyes of others. (“Even if there are not many folk motifs and rhythm in my work [and there are, for only a deaf person could not hear them!], all of my compositions have all the features of Slavic, and specifically of South Slavic music.” Journal, 5/2/1915). The national elements are perhaps not intentional, nor are they particularly emphasised, but are rather natural components of Bersa’s poetics.

He did not see the NEW as an imperative either. In a time when everything that was *new* increasingly became an issue of worldview, and even of political affiliation, his will for the aesthetic fed upon the broader historic experience in which he wished to participate. The engagement with the imaginary part of that

broader reference system did not, however, prevent him from exploring within it, especially in an effort to bring forth new sound combinations, instrumental solutions and harmonic connections. While recognising the *signs of the times*, he obviously did not feel that the techniques, procedures and tools used by art to portray the inner and outer worlds had been exhausted. Even the concessions to the fashions of the time, such as the Neo-classicist composition *Po načinu starih "Airs de ballet"* [*In the Manner of the Old "Airs de ballet"*], demonstrate the fact that, even under a well-tailored fashionable cloak, the author's essence did not change. He intended to give the cycle a subtitle of *free imitation*, referring primarily to passacaglia, then to a capricious burlesque, and finally to a pastoral. The introduction (repeated at the beginning of the third part) reminds us of an organ intrada, and the title and the structure recall the gestures of the French court dances of the 17th and 18th centuries – but still, in this *free imitation* of the manners of the past Bersa remains within his own frameworks and in his own time.

Bersa's PIANISM, or rather the secondary realisation of the idea and the structural foundation *on the piano – for the piano*, will be judged by pianists. But certain basic features can be derived from Bersa's entire piano opus in its edited version, where excessive differences between compositions regarding the character of the notation have been removed. These features primarily include unity with the instrument, its mastery, gradual development of pianistic expression, enrichment of the spectrum of expression, register and articulation, and gradation of virtuosity.

Marija Bergamo

EDITOR'S NOTES

This recording of Bersa's piano compositions gives the selection of the performer. A few of the works found in the publication *Piano Works* within the *Collected Works of Blagoje Bersa* (redactor Petar Bergamo, edited by Marija Bergamo

and Petar Bergamo, Zagreb: Croatian Music Institute, 2010) are not included: *Minuetto* op. 11, *Bagatella, Tema con variazioni* op. 15, *Sonata in C major*, op. 19, *Marcia trionfale* op. 24, *Fantasie – Impromptu* op. 27 and *Fantasia breve*.

CD I.

1. Balada (Ballad), op. 65

Vienna, 22 February – 8 June 1909 – Zagreb, 20 October 1920

The drafts and transcripts testify to the particular attention Bersa put into creating this rather complex composition, characterised by an exceptional narrating tone infused with vitalist energy, as well as by original harmonic and rhythmic solutions.

2. Notturmo, op. 38

Graz, 23 – 29 March 1903

A composition created out of the same frame of mind as *Ora triste*, composed just a few days earlier. The author's inner ear hears the colour of other instruments in the melodic phrases, so at bar 25 he notes: "quasi oboe," and at bar 30: "quasi fagotto." It follows in the footsteps of Field's and Chopin's nocturnes, with an Italian melodic *ductus*.

3. Novelletta

21 – 22 May 1910

Composed along the lines of Schumann's *novellettes*.

4. Ora triste, op 37

Graz, 21 – 23 March 1903

The title itself, like the tempo and dynamics markings, accompanied by descriptions of the intended expression and character (*mesto abbandono e scoramento, molto triste, dolorosamente, con profonda mestizgia*), is the

reflection of the author's depressed frame of mind. The models are obviously Chopin and Grieg.

5. Bizarna serenada (Bizarre Serenade)

Vienna, 9 December 1915

The autograph is actually a draft, a particella, the basis for a part of a planned cycle *Moja domovina (My Homeland)*, which Bersa instrumented and used at the beginning of the symphonic poem *Sablasti (Apparitions)* in 1926.

(The author's note on the content of the work: "The composition itself tells me the following story: night – the mausoleum and its outline stand out in an image of nocturnal landscape – the moon shines on it – the sea is quiet, sleeping – mysterious, uncanny nocturnal peace – the inhabitants of Stari Grad (Dalmatia) are sleeping – the apparitions, wraiths arrive and serenade the dead master of the mausoleum, they dance and sing – the Hail Mary bells scatter them..., " *Journal*, 30/3/1926).

6. Mélancolie

Vienna, 22 – 23 May 1919 – Zagreb, 9 – 11 November 1921

Bersa's notes next to the title: *Tristesse?* and *Remembrance?*. In parentheses below the title: "Thinking of my mother, my family, the sorry conditions I find myself in as an artist."

The initial tempo marking (*Andantino triste*) is accompanied by an instruction: "All to be played piano, without affect, intimately, absolutely no forte!"

7. Na žalu (On the Beach)

Zagreb, 11 December 1921

A composition of the moment, filled with the author's dilemmas and suggestions for the title (on the top margin of the autograph), outlining the semantic field of the imagined sound of this barcarole: *At the Seaside, In the Country, Light Carriers, Fireflies, Legend of the Fireflies, In the Woods, Barcarole, Notturmo*.

8. Po načinu starih "Airs de ballet" (In the Manner of the Old "Airs de Ballet")

Leipzig, 22 January 1905 – Zagreb, 24 October 1926

A suite consisting of earlier compositions.

I – *Fantasia breve* op. 56, Leipzig, 22 January 1905. In Zagreb, 18 September 1926, Bersa added modifications and additions to the first draft, in pencil, and then performed the final editing in the final draft (marked as A), prepared for print.

II – *Scherzo* op. 62, Vienna, 30 December 1906. In this first version the author also considers the titles *Capriccioso?* and *Burlesco?*. In the second version and in the transcript prepared for print (marked B), the tempo was changed from *Allegretto* to *Vivo*.

III – *L'heure des rêveries...* The first version, dated Vienna, 9 May 1917, already contains additions and changes to the notation, tempo markings, metronome markings and titles: *Pastorale*, *L'heure des souvenirs* and *Twilight*. In a revision dated 24 October 1926, now as the third part of the cycle *Po načinu starih "Airs de ballet"* (*In the Manner of the Old "Airs de Ballet"*), the composition is given an introduction – the initial eleven bars from the final version of the first part of the cycle.

CD II.

1. Sonata u f-molu (Sonata in F minor), op. 20

6 April – 29 June 1897

Just a few months after the Sonata in C major op. 19, this one-movement composition is another attempt at mastering the sonata form during the author's studies. Entitled *Appassionata*, both its title and its tonality indicate Beethoven's sonata as its (possibly set) model. The cantabile melody and fresh harmonic colours adumbrate Bersa's later works.

2. Serenada – Barkarola (Serenade – Barcarole)

Vienna, 7 November 1917

Original title: *Serenada? Barcarola? (Serenade? Barcarole?)*

The question marks in the title testify to the author's typical dilemma about finding a name that describes the type and character of the composition as accurately as possible. The term "barcarole" as used here refers primarily to the 6/8 time and the characteristic accompanying figures.

3. Ballabile

18 November 1894

Like the *Waltz* op. 3, this dance movement in ABA form was created while Bersa was still learning his trade in the Music School of the Croatian Music Institute in Zagreb.

4. Valse mélancolique

Vienna, 15 December 1915 – Zagreb, 21 November 1921

The author worked on the first version for a very long time, and he also had doubts about the title: *Danse mélancolique*, *Danse passionnée* – again associating his sensation of melancholy with passion and elation, not despair and surrender.

5. Venecijanska barkarola (Venetian Barcarole), op. 58

Vienna, 19 – 21 September 1905 – Zagreb, 27 November 1921

The autographs show that Bersa used the notation of the first version (1921) to add to and draft the second.

6. Riso e lamento, op. 63

Vienna, 8 March 1908

In the subtitle Bersa adds *Impromptu*, and as initial tempo he lists *Tempo di Walzer*, defining more closely the *tone* and the motion of the composition.

7. Stari mornar priča (An Old Sailor's Tale)

Vienna, 10 December 1915

The autograph is a draft for the piano meant for instrumentation. The author's note at the end of the autograph: "Begin and end this piece with a 16-bar *tirada* on the G-string for all violins and violas by themselves on the G-string – end on an empty G-string (like our peasants singing on a second.)"

8. Rondo – Polonaise, op. 18

11 September 1895 – 2 March 1897

The work was already well rounded in its 1895 first version, so the author most likely considered it completed as such. The second version is more developed,

more complex and larger than the first. Two basic materials from the first version remained unaltered. It appears that the author intended to provide instrumentation for this more comprehensive variant.

9. Valcer (Waltz), op. 3

6 – 17 February 1893

Assignment at the Music School of the Croatian Music Institute in Zagreb.

A series of waltzes. Formally a continuation of similar compositions by Franz Schubert, Josef Lanner and Johann Strauss Sr.

Marija Bergamo

Impresum

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