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«Երաժշտական Հայաստան» ամսագրի խմբագրական խորհրդի
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ՀՀ ՄԱՅՈՒՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԿՐԹԱԳՐԱԴԱՐԱՆ

GHAZAROS SARYAN'S "ANDANTE AND PRESTO" AS A SUM OF HIS CREATIVE PATH

Abstract

Andante and Presto for violin and orchestra represents a distinctive synthesis of Ghazaros Sarian's artistic evolution, marking the completion of his creative journey. The composition integrates, in a highly concentrated and generalized manner, the defining characteristics of the author's individual intonational language, the principles underlying the generation and development of musical material, and the structural logic of formal organization. The integration of these compositional parameters within a single work imparts to it the quality of an internally coherent artistic whole. In this way, the piece can be seen as the best example of Sarian's compositional style, as it shows the most significant aspects of his musical thinking and creative process.

Key Words: creative path, thematic connections, intonational vocabulary, musical style characteristics, constructive logic of form, components of the mask theme.

Ամփոփում

Արվեստագիտության թեկնածու, Երևանի Կոմիտասի անվան պետական կոնսերվատորիայի դոցենտ Նարինե Ալեքսանդրի Սահակյան. - «Ղազարոս Սարյանի «Անդանտե և Պրեստո»-ն իբրև ստեղծագործական ուղու հանրագումար»:

Ղ. Սարյանի ստեղծագործական ուղին ավարտող ստեղծագործությունը ջութակի և նվագախմբի համար գրված «Andante և Presto»-ն դարձավ կոմպոզիտորի ստեղծագործական ճամնապարհի յուրատեսակ հանգուցալուծումը, որտեղ արվեստագետն ասես ամբողջացրեց սեփական ինտոնացիոն բառարանը կոլեկտիվային տրամաբանությամբ, երաժշտական նյութի ստացման, նյութի զարգացման տրամաբանության, ձևի կառուցվածքի կերտման իրեն բնորոշ առանձնահատկությունները, կոնցենտրացրեց ամենը մեկ կտավում՝ դարձնելով այն յուրատեսակ խտանյութ:

Բանալի բառեր: ստեղծագործական ճանապարհ, թեմատիկ աղերսներ, ինտոնացիոն բառարան, երաժշտական ռճի առանձնահատկություններ, ձևակառուցողական տրամաբանություն, դիմակի թեմայի բաղադրատարրեր:

Абстракт

Кандидат искусствоведения, доцент ЕГК им. Комитаса Нарине Александровна Саакян. - «“Andante-Presto” Газароса Сарьяна как кульминация его творческого пути».

“Andante-Presto” написанное для скрипки и оркестра и завершающее творческий путь Л. Сарьяна, представляет собой своеобразный итог творческого пути композитора. В данном сочинении художник словно обобщил собственный интонационный словарь, характерные особенности собственного интонационного мышления, принципы формирования и развития музыкального материала, а также закономерности построения формы. Концентрация указанных элементов в пределах одного произведения придает ему характер целостного художественного обобщения и позволяет рассматривать его как своего рода квинтэссенцию.

Ключевые слова: творческий путь, тематические связи, интонационный словарь, особенности музыкального стиля, конструктивная логика формы, компоненты темы маски.

Prologue

Andante and Presto for violin and chamber orchestra concluded Ghazaros (Lazar) Saryan's creative journey*. The piece is dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the prominent violinist Eduard Tadevosyan.

The premiere took place on September 15, 1999, at the Aram Khachaturian House Museum, with Sybil Tchopp and the Serenade Chamber Orchestra under the baton of Eduard Topchyan. The concert in honor of Lazar Saryan was organized by the Armenian Music Assembly.

Andante and Presto

In 1997, Saryan was already gravely ill when he was working on Andante and Presto. A year earlier, the composer had been diagnosed with cancer. Fully aware of the implications of his condition, Saryan nevertheless created a piece that neglected the thoughts and emotions inevitably associated with the disease. On the contrary, the piece enchants the listener with its radiant inner light, vibrant energy, and a comforting sense of tranquility.

This was not the first time the author has addressed a cyclic form in his work. In a certain sense, the *Aria and Toccata* composed in 1966 can be seen as the genre prototype for this composition, reflecting emerging classical trends and marking an important milestone in the composer's artistic journey. It encapsulated prior accomplishments while also paving the way for the next turning stage of his work, which commenced with the Violin Concerto. However, unlike the *Aria and Toccata*, this particular piece did not fulfill its intended purpose. This was a remarkable integration of various visible and invisible elements-including formative, thematic, and musical-in tonational components from the earlier stages of Saryan's work, especially the latest period. While summing up his previous achievements and indicating a new direction for future development, it unfortunately became the composer's last work.

As mentioned earlier, Saryan dedicated his *Andante and Presto* to E. Tadevosyan. When explaining the tonal nature of the piece, the composer remarked: "It is challenging for me to compose tonal music nowadays. However, Edik has a bright and harmonious personality that corresponds exactly to this kind of music".

This cycle, like its prototype, consists of two contrasting parts. The thematic material of *Andante* is based on the movement of seconds and fourths, a feature already evident in the author's earlier works. The violin solo in *Andante* and the watercolor-like sound of the strings give the composition a transparent and elegant quality, imbuing it with a reflective and luminous character. Long notes, which subtly highlight barlines and metric accents, are gradually interspersed with shorter durations, syncopations, internal melodic passages, and changes in meter. These elements contribute to a dynamic buildup and ultimately lead to the climax of the sound.

This latter is expressed in the melody of the solo vio-

lin, distinguished by its expansive melodiousness, as well as in the following chromatic passages. This resembles a growing, complex culmination in music of the middle part, which sets up the violin cadenza. In this way, the ternary form returns to the musical material of the first part before moving on to the third part. The latter, compared to the first part, is remarkably concise, as anticipated after the intensively unfolding, complex material of the first and second parts of the *Andante*.

In the final bars, a progression of seconds and fourths reappears again, while the solo violin for an extended period appears to dissolve and fade away. The strings, continuing the same theme even in the last bars, complete the first movement of the piece, followed by attacca transitions to the second movement, Presto.

Example Presto

Օրինակ Presto

Пример Presto

Presto" for violin and piano.

Նվիրվում է Ղ.Սարյանի ծննդյան 105-ամյակին



In *Presto*, the composer enriches the orchestral sound by including a flute, two oboes, and two French horns in the score. *Presto* is written in ABACA rondo form. The introduction features melodic movements in seconds and syncopated rhythmic patterns that serve as essential construction elements of the piece. The refrain of *Presto* consists of various combinations of three notes, which build up energy and are gradually released, thus broadening the soundscape. The thematic develop-

ment is characterized by irregularly timed breaks in the orchestra, along with accented chord strikes in *sf*. Subsequently, tremolos and new metric layers are seamlessly integrated into this movement, accompanied by chord clusters of the orchestra.

The first episode again is constructed around movements in seconds, fourths, and fifths, with the orchestra establishing a consistent rhythmic foundation. It is important to highlight that the melody of this episode closely mirrors the intonational patterns found in the counterpoint of the solo violin in the *Passacaglia* composed in 1994. Additionally, many thematic elements, intonational phrases, and even specific musical fragments are direct references to the *Passacaglia*. Even more so, these elements are presented in the same pitch range and within the identical sections of the climactic moments, including similar movements of descending seconds and ascending fourths.

It is important to highlight that the counterpoint accompanying the theme in the *Passacaglia* features intonational variations based on the "theme of mask". The symbolism of the mask, prevalent in several paintings by Martiros Sarian, finds its auditory expression in the compositions of L. Saryan. This can be manifested as an inversion of the theme, as seen in the part of the solo violin, or as its retrograde imitation, as in the flute part. At times, it is a new derivative version, as in the part of the English horn. Furthermore, the theme of the *Passacaglia*, as in the *Violin Concerto*, is presented both in its original and transposed versions—either in C or in *D* flat—thereby introducing a sense of freshness to the sound and breaking the tonal stasis.

The theme of 'mask,' which was first fully realized in the symphony, emerges as a distinctive outcome of interconnected processes involved in the transformation of the intonation field within the Sarian's music. Similar intonation elements can be found in his earlier compositions, such as the *Armenia Symphonic Panel*, the *Violin Concerto*, and various other works. In these earlier pieces, the musical material associated with the mask theme appears subtly and indirectly; it is expressed through motifs, themes, intonational cores, fundamental intonation shifts, and other musical elements. This phenomenon reflects the cohesiveness of the composer's musical thought and reveals a unique compositional strategy that fosters a consistent thematic and intonation landscape throughout his oeuvre.

Clearly, all the counterpoints represent distinct fragments of the same lyrical theme, which, through varying timbral nuances and a clear sound quality, effectively

express the most delicate transitions and emotional nuances in the music.

In the first movement, the French horns strive to extend the theme; however, as the tempo shifts, the rhythm becomes fragmented, the texture thickens, and the volume intensifies. The ascending chromatic steps across the orchestral spectrum, combined with an accelerating tempo, reach their pick in the first climax, where a new expansive, 'powerful' theme emerges, resonating in fortissimo with a major tonality. Yet, upon closer examination, it becomes evident that the theme retains the same intonation that serves as the thematic foundation for the counterpoint, complemented by three layers of orchestration.

The second presentation of the refrain is one tone higher. The second episode is performed while maintaining the orchestral background of the first episode, this time with a quarter note shift. The third full-length presentation of the refrain begins with B, contrasting with D in the first refrain presentation and E in the second. Thus, a movement of seconds and fourths is viewed from a larger space-time perspective. The mentioned thematic similarity is yet another piece of evidence of the composer's unique individual musical thinking.

In the Presto refrain in sf, the composer employs extended chords that momentarily halt the momentum, allowing the sound to transition from sf to ff before gradually diminishing to pianissimo. Amidst this backdrop, the use of fading flageolets provide a concluding touch, as if the composer was deliberately bidding farewell to life while leaving behind a vivid memory as an image fading into the mist. Life is portrayed as the constant motion of the world, or indeed, the universe, existing without a discernible beginning or end. In departing, he offers the world a profound, illuminating light, evoking a sense of blissful wisdom and tranquility that is emblematic of extraordinary souls, along with the elevated, gentle, philosophical calm that characterizes his worldview.

Epilogue

In his last work, Saryan appears to encapsulate his creative journey: he enhanced his own intonational vocabulary with kaleidoscopic logic, the peculiarities of the formation of musical material, the concept of its development, and the creation of a formal structure. All this is concentrated on a single canvas, thus creating a distinctive quintessence of his artistic style. This is a work of significant artistic integrity, and it deserves to be considered one of the greatest examples of Armenian music.

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