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Uvodni prispevek k zgoščenki
Introductory contribution for the audio CD

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SEME SLAP
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Elektronska glasba je v celoti izsledek tehničnega napredka 20. stoletja in kot vsaka nova tehnologija prinaša tudi ta poleg svojih dobrih strani vrsto novih vprašanj in vrsto problemov, ki jih umetniška glasbena dejavnost pred tem ni poznala. Naenkrat so se zdele domala nepotrebne vrednote in dosežki celotne zgodovine vrhunskega razvoja evropske glasbene kulture, za katero lahko rečemo, da je pravzaprav s svojo organizacijsko strukturo, s strokovnostjo in estetiko osvojila svet.. Pri vsem tem pa smo dobili nov in izjemno učinkovit glasbeni instrument in si omogoili drugačne, da ne rečemo kar nevarno poenostavljene delovne pogoje za ustvarjalno delo in - nič drugega. Pač pa smo obvladovani od tehničnih možnosti od vsega začetka napačno obravnavali glasbo iz sveta elektronike.

Kot ima vsak klasični glasbeni instrument svoje tehnične in izrazne posebnosti in pri tem tudi pomanjkljivosti, kar vse pri ustvarjalnem delu določa ravnovesje med uveljavljanjem možnega izraznega razvoja in kar največjega muzikalnega izkoristka ob istočasni prilagoditvi njegovim izvajalskim možnostim, imajo tudi elektronski stroji poleg tehnične bleščavosti svoje čeri, posebno še, če jih soočimo z nalogami glasbene ustvarjalnosti.

Kot predstavlja vsako orodje, in tu stroji za uresničevanje elektronske glasbe niso nikakršna izjema, nekakšen podaljšek dejavnosti živega organizma, torej človeka in njegove miselnosti, tako je tudi vsak glasbeni instrument zgolj sredstvo oz. pripomoček muzikalne izraznosti, katere končni člen je lahko le in samo umetniški muzikalni učinek. Pri najnovejših studijah ameriškega nevrologa in specialista za motorične sposobnosti Franka Wilsona je - v praksi lahko tudi sami pridemo do podobnih ugotovitev - poudarjeno, kako tesno je ročnost (ki igra pri muzikalni poustvarjalnosti nadvse pomembno vlogo) posredno tudi vzpodbuda miselnega razvoja, ki po svoji strani vzpodbuja ustvarjalnost kot izsledek abstrakcije posebne vrste, to je muzikalnega razmišljanja. Zato tudi lahko rečemo, da je glasba nekakšna simulacija miselnih procesov.

Dosedanja dejavnost na področju elektronske glasbe se v glavnem ni dosti brigala za klasično muzikalno smiselnost oblikovanja in razporeditve zvočnega materiala in se očitno ni zavedala dejstva, da je umetniško učinkovitost

mogoče doseči šele takrat, ko predstavljeni zvočni tok praktično zanika, pravzaprav izniči tehnične prijeme, ki so omogočili njegovo uresničenje ter zaživi samostojno v poslušalčevi zavesti. To velja tako za ustvarjalno delo, kot tudi za poustvarjalnost pri instrumentalni glasbi in prav tu se zdi, da tiči največji manjek elektronskih zvočnih izdelkov. Pri njih obstaja ena sama samcata interpretacija in še pri tej manjkajo vse sestavine oživljanja, kot ga poznamo pri klasičnem zvočnem zapisu in njegovih poustvarjalnih zahtevah. Zato je ustvarjanje elektronske glasbe ob vsej tehnični enostavnosti občutno zahtevnejše, če se izogibamo primitivnosti zabavnjaštva in se gibljemo na ravni umetniškega izražanja.

To je področje, na katerem bodo morali ustvarjalci še posebno razmišljati: kako uporabljati računalnik in z njim povezane aparature za produkcijo in obdelavo ter reprodukcijo glasbe kot podaljšek svoje muzikalne misli, kot specifični instrument z neverjetnimi produkcijskimi možnostmi in istočasno z vsemi zagatami, ki jih mora skladatelj premagovati s svojim kompozicijskim znanjem. Problemi skladanja z elektronskimi mediji se torej v ničemer ne razlikujejo od skladanja za klasični instrument, v mnogočem je samo še zahtevnejše, seveda če stremimo po vrhunskih merilih: skladatelj nima na voljo poustvarjalca, ki bi mu po možnosti z učinkovito interpretacijo glasbeno delo res oživel - sam mora z vso odgovornostjo izdelati vse sestavine glasbenega dela skupaj z njegovo dokončno zvočno podobo.

Zdi se, da poleg vsega udobnost sprotne zvočne kontrole tudi najmanjnih delcev bodočega elektronskega glasbenega dela dobesedno ubija avtorjevo gotovo nujno abstraktno "videnje" celote, s čemer predvsem onemogoča samokritičnost, ki je brez dvoma ena osnovnih in nezamenljivih zahtev umetniškega ustvarjanja. Zato ostajajo elektronska dela v veliki večini fragmentarna, manjka jim takoimenovani izrazni "lok", kot temu navadno pravimo na področju klasičnega ustvarjanja. To pomeni, da je tudi na področju elektronske glasbene ustvarjalnosti strokovno znanje kompozicijskih tehnik in razgled po razvoju glasbene estetike nezamenljiva sestavina ustvarjalčeve osebnosti. To pa tudi pomeni, da tudi še tako dobro izdelan računalniški program skupaj z vsemi mogočimi stroji za produkcijo zvokov in naprej izdelanimi zvočnimi vzorčki ne naredi skladatelja, pa čeprav nam nekateri izdelovalci takih programov to skušajo dopovedati.

Razvoj elektronske glasbe je bil pogojen z izumom elektronke v začetku 20. stoletja, njen eksplozivni tehnološki razvoj pa z integriranim vezjem na ploščici polprevodnika in računalniško programsko opremo v njegovih zadnjih desetletjih. Tako je prvotno analogno (to je z magnetofonskim trakom posneti zvok in na traku - z rezanjem in presnemavanjem - obdelani zvočni material) tehniko zvočnega prenosa v celoti zamenjal s pomočjo računalnika digitalizirani, s posebnimi aparaturami proizveden in z računalniškimi programi obdelan zvok.

Današnjim izpopolnjenim in takorekoč vsakemu dostopnimi napravami za produkcijo, obdelavo in reprodukcijo kakršnegakoli zvočnega materiala je predhodila najprej vrsta izvorno konstruiranih elektronskih glasbenih instrumentov, med katere sodi gotovo najbolj uspešni in še dolgo po drugi svetovni vojni tudi na koncertnih predstavah nove glasbe uporabljeni elektronski instrument "Ondes Martenot", ki so ga v svoja glasbena dela

vključevali tudi znani sodobni skladatelji. Prvo inačico tega instrumenta, ki je kasneje doživel celotno vrsto izboljšav, je izdelal leta 1928 francoski radiotelegrafist in profesor glasbe Maurice Martenot in ga imenoval "Ondes Musicales". Aparati za prizvajanje posebnih in tudi za simulacijo klasičnih instrumentalnih zvokov (s klaviaturo ali brez nje) imajo svojega prvega prednika iz leta 1955: izdelan je bil na Univerzi Columbia/Princeton v Ameriki, imenovali pa so ga "Electronic Music Synthesizer".

Medtem pa tudi glasbena stroka ni počivala: že leta 1948 je na pariškem radiu inženir in glasbenik Pierre Schaeffer z nekaterimi somišljeniki začel s proučevanjem tehnične in kompozicijske problematike pri uporabi konkretnih (pri čemer je treba na tem mestu opozoriti na delo Boštjana Perovška s posnetki ptičjega petja), torej z mikrofonom posnetih neglasbenih zvočnih učinkov iz vsakdanjega življenja. Povsem drugače so delali v elektronskem Studiu Koeln, kjer sta se skladatelje Herbert Eimert in Karlheinz Stockhausen v začetku ukvarjala s proučevanjem sintetičnih zvočnih učinkov. Kmalu pa je postalo jasno, da razmejevanje glasbenih prizadevanj glede na izvor zvočnega materiala deluje zaviralno, pa je tako Pierre Schaeffer - tudi pod vplivom sodelujočih skladateljev - leta 1953 svojo institucijo "Groupe de Recherches de Musique concrete" preimenoval v "Groupe de Recherches Musicales".

Razvoj glasbe gotovo zavisi od ustvarjalnega stremljenja, ki izhaja iz človekove miselne sposobnosti in prav to sposobnost je treba zavestno uveljavljati. Muzikalne vrednote zvočnega dogajanja morajo biti tudi vrednote elektronske glasbe, kajti le tako bo mogoče pritrditi mnenju slovenskega znanstvenika Miroslava Adlešiča (v knjigi "Svet zvoka in glasbe" iz leta 1964), da na področju sodobne vrhunske glasbene umetnosti, ki nadaljuje izjemno vredno tradicijo razvoja evropske koncertne kulture, "zbujajo z zvočniki podani zvočni pojavi" elektronske glasbe "fiziološko, psihološko in estetsko povsem istovrstne in enakovredne vtise". Prav tako se bo mogoče pridružiti veri skladatelja Arthurju Honeggerju, ki je verjel "v glasbo mehanike v glasbenem svetu" in v "razvoj glasbe za stroj". Seveda, saj je tudi stroj lahko instrument za izražanje muzikalnega razmišljanja, seveda pod pogojem, da tako razmišljanje obstaja in da stroj ni nič več, kot zgolj uresničevalec izsledkov tega razmišljanja.

Electronic music as a whole is a discovery of the technical progress of the 20th century. The same as every new technology, it provides, in addition to its advantages, a number of new issues and problems that the world of musical art has not known before. Suddenly, the supreme achievements of the entire development appeared almost unnecessary and the values of the European musical culture, that can be considered to have actually overwhelmed the world with its organizational structure, proficiency and aesthetics, seemed to be trivial. This, however, brought about an exceptionally efficient new musical instrument, enabling us different, if not almost dangerously simplified conditions for creative work - this and nothing more. Yet, under the pressure of the technical possibilities at our disposal, we had a wrong approach to electronic music from the very beginning.

Every musical instrument has its technical and expressional particularities that on the other hand involve certain deficiencies. At creative work, this all

determines the balance between the possible development of expression and the maximum utilization of musical effects along with simultaneous adjustment to the performing possibilities. Like every traditional musical instrument, electronic machines, too, combine the technical splendor and the underlying hurdles, in particular if facing the tasks of musical creativity.

Every tool - and the machines producing electronic music make no exception - is an extension of the activity of a living organism, hence of the human being and his mind. Thus every musical instrument, too, is only a means and/or an aid for musical expression that can only end in a merely artistic musical effect. Frank Wilson, American neurologist and specialist in motor skills, is stressing in his recent studies - the same as we can also experience - that the manual skill (such as very important at musical interpretation) is indirectly also a spur of the reflective development that in turn encourages the creativity as the discovery of a special kind of abstraction, i.e. of musical meditation. Therefore, music can also be regarded as a simulation of mental processes.

In general, the practice in the field of electronic music did not much care about the traditional logical approach in musical creation and arrangement of the acoustic material. Evidently, it was not aware of the fact that artistic effectiveness can only be achieved when the respective acoustic flow practically negates, as a matter of fact destroys the technical approaches that have led to its realization and independent perception in the listener's consciousness. This applies to both the creative composing and the interpretation of the instrumental music. And this seems to be the greatest deficiency of electronic acoustic products. They only allow for a single interpretation, yet lacking the elements of reanimation, such as known in the traditional acoustic record and the respective interpretative demands. Accordingly, in spite of all this technical simplicity, composing of electronic music is much more demanding, if we wish to avoid the primitive effects of entertainment music and to move on the level of an artistic expression.

In this sphere the authors will have to be particularly careful when using the computer and the related equipment for production, processing and reproduction of music as an extension of their musical thought, as a specific musical instrument with incredible production abilities, at the same time involving many obstacles that the composer should overcome through his composing skill. Accordingly, the problems of composing with the help of electronic media do not at all differ from those encountered at composing music to be played on traditional musical instruments. In many aspects it is even more demanding, in particular if aiming at the top standards: the composer does not have at his disposal a musician that could put such piece of music into life - he is obliged to alone elaborate all elements of a piece of music, including the definite acoustic form.

Besides, it seems that the convenience of current acoustic control of the smallest elements of a future piece of electronic music tends to suppress the author's urgent need for an abstract view of the whole. It particularly prevents from self-criticism that is doubtlessly one of the basic and irreplaceable requirements of artistic creativity. Therefore a great majority of electronic compositions remain in fragments, lacking an expressive "arch", as usually referred to in the field of traditional creativity. It means that in the field of electronic musical creativity, professional knowledge of composing techniques and an insight into the development of musical aesthetics represent a vital element of the author's personality. In other words, a sophisticated computer program along with all possible sound production machinery in ready-made acoustic decoration cannot build a composer, although certain producers of such programs try to enforce us this idea.

The development of electronic music was conditioned by the invention of

electronics at the beginning of the 20th century, while the outburst of the respective technological development was a consequence of the development of the integrated circuit board and of the software in the last decades of the 20th century. Thus the original analogue technique of acoustic transmission (i. e. sound recorded on the tape and in turn elaborated on the tape through cutting and re-recording) was completely replaced by the sound, digitalized by means of the computer, produced on special equipment and subject to software processing.

The existing advanced and easily accessible equipment for production, processing and reproduction of any acoustic material whatsoever have their predecessors in many electronic musical instruments of original design. One of them is the well-known »Ondes Martenot« electronic musical instrument that used to be the greatest success, launched by the then famous composers and in use on concerts of contemporary music long after World War II. The original version of this instrument, subsequently subject to numerous improvements, was produced in 1928 by Maurice Martenot, a French wireless telegraph operator and music teacher, who named it »Ondes Musicales«. The earliest predecessor of the equipment for production of special instrumental sounds and for simulation of traditional instrumental sounds (on the keyboard or without it) goes back to the year 1955. It was called »Electronic Music Synthesizer« and was produced at the Columbia University /Princeton/ in the United States.

In the meantime the musical profession did not repose either. Already in 1948, Pierre Schaeffer, an engineer and musician, accompanied by a few of his adherents, started to investigate on the Paris radio the technical and composing issues concerning the application of concrete recorded non-musical sound effects from everyday life (at this point it is also worth mentioning the recordings of birds' singing by Boštjan Perovšek). A completely different approach was adopted in the electronic studio in Köln, where the composers Herbert Eimert and Karlheinz Stockhausen started to explore synthetic sound effects. However, it soon turned out that the distinction between musical efforts with reference to the source of the acoustic material produced a hindering effect. Therefore in 1953, Pierre Schaeffer – also under the influence of the participating composers – changed the name of its institution called »Groupe de Recherches de Musique Concrete« into »Groupe de Recherches Musicales«.

The development of music certainly depends on the creative zeal that arises out of the man's mental capacity. This is the capacity that deserves willful asserting. The musical values of an acoustic happening shall also constitute the values of electronic music. Only on these grounds it will be possible to agree with the Slovene scientist Miroslav Adlešič who wrote in his book with the title »The World of Sound and Music« (1964) that in the field of contemporary top-level musical art, continuing the extremely precious tradition of the development of the European culture of concerts, »the acoustic effects« of electronic music »produced with loudspeakers, make identical impressions of equal value from physiological, psychological and aesthetic point of view.« Likewise it is possible to share the faith of the composer Arthur Honegger into »the music of mechanics in the world of music« as well as into the »development of the machine-type music«. The machine, of course, can also function as an instrument of expression of musical meditation, provided that such meditation exists and that the machine is nothing more than a mere appliance for implementation of the results of such meditation.