

REVIEWS AND CRITICISM

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THOUGHT BETROTHED BY ART. REVIEW
OF THE BOOK: VALENTINA KHOLOPOVA:
“FENOMEN MUZIKI” [“THE PHENOMENON OF MUSIC”].
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Annotation. *The author of the book is Doctor of Arts, Professor at the Moscow State P. I. Tchaikovsky Conservatory, Valentina Nikolayevna Kholopova. The object of the research is serious, classical music in general examined from the most varied sides: the history of the concept of “music,” the functions of music, the musical image, music as a language and musical intonation. A special direction of this work is the content of music, which has set the issues of comparison of “content” with “semantics” and “hermeneutics,” and has examined special concepts of music content — “specialized and non-specialized musical content” and “three sides of musical content.” Content is also examined in the triad of composer, performer and listener. Involving the psychological aspect led to the problems of conscious and subconscious in the perception of music, as well as psychological analysis of musical form. The axiological aspect has also been brought in due to the elaboration of criteria of artistic value in music. The methodology of research, thereby, became complex and interdisciplinary, having connected theoretical and historical musicology, the foundations of aesthetics, philosophy, semiotics, psychology, linguistics and axiology. The novelty of the work consists in the indicated complexity of methodology, making it possible to disclose previously undemonstrated features of the art of music — the correlation of the sides of content in various epochs, among various composers and performers, in various compositions, the differentiation of musical epochs according to the signs of canon and heuristics, the role of emotions in music, the manifestation of musical intonation in the phenomenon of sonority and pitch, the assertion of music as a language, the establishment of the role of the conscious and subconscious, the typology of listeners to music, and introduction of an original system of artistic value in music. This work merits to be translated into other languages, because of its fundamental nature, modernity and lack of precedent in world musicology.*

Keywords: *listener, musician-performer, canon and heuristics, psychology of form, musical language, musical content, intonation, image, music, artistic value.*

As the author of the book “Fenomen muzyki” [“The Phenomenon of Music”] indicates, this monographic work presents a continuation of the book “Muzyka kak vid iskusstva” [“Music as an Art”] (of which there were 5 editions between 1990 and 2014^[1]). And their common goal is to examine the art of music from the positions of the most general musical and a number of other humanitarian categories. The book consists of two main parts and 14 chapters: Part I — The Basic Categories of Music as an Art. Part II — The Content of Music. Part I features the following chapters: 1. The Concept of “Music,” 2. The Functions of Music, 3. Canon and Heuristics in Music, 4. The Artistic Image in Music, 5. Intonation, Sonority and Sound, 6. Music as a Language, 7. The Conscious and Subconscious in Music. Part II features these

chapters: 8. Musical Content Compared with Musical Hermeneutics and Musical Semantics, 9. Specialized and Non-Specialized Content, 10. The Three Sides of Musical Content, 11. Musical Emotions, 12. The Aesthetics and Psychology of Musical Composition, 13. The Functions of the Performer-Musician, 14. Music in the Perception of the Listener. Instead of an Afterword: The Criteria of Artistic Value in Music.

The new large-scale book by the researcher, who, undoubtedly, can be counted among the leading ten humanitarians of Russia, who holds the position of the most prolific and respected musicologist in our country and, most likely, the whole world, cannot do otherwise than attract attention — whether interested, captious, enraptured, or even jealous — any kind, but, first of all, *attention*.

The reader, who is familiar with Valentina Kholopova's previous works^[1], will at first be confused by the numerous coincidences of the material of the latest book with that which was well-known, at times learned by rote previously. The book's table of contents indicates that separate pages, as well as entire monographic books of previous times have been included into it^[2;3;4;5]. However, even the most enlightened connoisseur should not hasten with conclusions. If one is to read the entire book from the beginning to the end, especially casting one's attention on all that is new and revised in comparison with the previous versions, it will turn out that in this motion the entire array of thoughts developed in the publications of several previous decades is brought out. The tectonic process covers not only Kholopova's personal achievements, but also the greatest amount of embranchments from the "main stem" of her theory, the elaborations of her students and colleagues, derivations, projections and fantasies having at least a sideways relation to it. By a volitional effort, the *past* is turned into the *existent*. The indefatigability and unquenchable character in the development of the theme, the polishing of the theses and formulations is remarkable... In all likelihood, this is particularly how the *work of one's life* must look, and in this appearance the exposition, even with all of its exhaustive thoroughness, does not seem to be fully completed. The conception continues to grow, it is young, active and full of inner potential for further saturation.

Kholopova, as the greatest specialist not only in the sphere of musical content^[4; 5; 6;7], but also in issues of the theory and aesthetics of 20th century music^[8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15], is perfectly aware of what powerful hermeneutic qualities our art is endowed, how multiform the interpretations of the same texts may be, how contradictory, paradoxical and remarkably original the interpretations of widely known, immutable phenomena and objects can be, when assessed by various artistic people — authors, performers and researchers... She is likewise well aware of how in the conjunction of elements previously disjointed frequently a new quality is generated, whereas the persuasiveness of the whole surpasses the meaning of each of the parts in their separateness. Accumulating, following the principle of a snowball, small-scale works, separate brochures and monographic works, she presently combined them into a single complex, and in this merging the *familiar* acquired a new contextual accessory and scope. Kholopova has created and mastered an original post-avant-garde musicological technique of a *mono-stylistic collage*, while at the same time, as

benefits an academic scholar, once again reviving the medieval principle of the Summa and elevating her treatise to the primary sources of the European conception of theoretical knowledge. Upon reading the book, there arises an underlying feeling of envy of the author, who had foreseen in advance, which one of the fragments of the puzzle will acquire in due time its lawful position in the overall picture. On the other hand, we, the viewers and readers, limited for the time being in this viewing, resemble tourists, who stand close to gigantic canvases or frescoes, not capable of grasping them in their full scale, similarly to the prisoners of the cave from Plato's immortal dialogue.

Most likely, such was, indeed, the strategic calculation — to accustom the consciousness of society, little by little, to the innovative ideas and approaches, for the sake of asserting to the world the implementation into theory and, more importantly, practice of a grandiose conception, virtually, of an entire branch of scholarship, hitherto merely glimmering in the dusk of segmental observations. "The Phenomenology of Music" — this is, apparently, what the title will be of the resulting edition of this work, which is no longer a heuristic attempt of scholarly creativity, but a substantial canonic work.

One feels somewhat sorry for the previous title — that is, the title of the book, with which the scholarly name of its author has tightly merged; the book that has pushed aside to the periphery of history the initial "holder of the patent" of the titular word-combination — Arnold Sokhor. "Music as an Art" has excited and aroused the broadest specter of emotions even in people who were most distant from art studies. After all, what else is music, but an art? For what purpose must this undoubted attribution be vindicated? One felt drawn to open the cover of the book, at least in search for the answer to the question solicited by itself... "Music as an Art" — this also presents the very title of the tutorial discipline, upon the encounter with which the musicology students acquire the ability to soar seriously in the free space of their field of studies. This has never been a simple matter, whereas the new book passes onto those highest strata of intellectual atmosphere, wherein only the chosen penetrate. "Music as an Art" has been and remains a sign of genuine poetry of research activity, a manual guidebook to the complex route of scholarly knowledge. "The Phenomenon of Music" is not a title, but a commemorative token, a reward for the longstanding fidelity and perseverance, bestowed by the author to her readers, having traversed with them the path and still ready to ascend to the stars.

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