

UNIVERSITY OF PÉCS
FACULTY OF MUSIC AND VISUAL ARTS
DLA PROGRAMME

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LÁSZLÓ DUBROVAY'S BRASS
QUINTETS

Abstract of DLA thesis



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1. Subject of research

My doctoral thesis is based on three chamber works by the Hungarian composer, Kossuth Prize awarded, László Dubrovay – Quintetto Per Ottoni (1972), Quintetto No. 2 Per Ottoni (1980) and Quintet No. 3 (1998) – and their influence on brass music.

In addition to a brief overview of the author's biography, my thesis also covers the origin of the chosen pieces and the works of the brass chamber composers who inspired them, the Renaissance Brass Quintet (later Budapest Brass Quintet) who won the 1979 international competition in Paris, and the internationally renowned Ewald Brass Ensemble. In addition to detailed musical analyses discussed separately in each chapter, my dissertation also contains a table recording the extended brass techniques and their implementation possibilities that can be heard in Laszlo Dubrovay's brass music works.

My primary goal is to highlight in my thesis, as a trumpet and chamber artist, an area that, through its unique and innovative expression in the world of brass instruments, has a great impact on the development of our family of instruments.

2. The reason for choosing this topic

Since 2002 – from the beginning of my studies at Liszt Ferenc University of Music in Budapest – I have been actively engaged in chamber music. In 2003 with nine of my fellow students at the music academy we founded the Concerto Brass'o Brass Ensemble. Originally it consisted of ten members and later it expanded to twelve members during some of our sound contests, and a year later with four of them we founded the Espressivo Brass Quintet. With these formations, in addition to successful participation in domestic and international music competitions, we have participated in self-organized concerts and recordings. In 2009, I was able to participate as a guest artist in several concerts of the Ewald Brass Quintet, as well as the recordings of the album containing the works of the French composer Antoine Simon. My interest and enthusiasm for the genre has increased over time, and over the past two decades my musical identity has increasingly been defined by this area.

Another milestone for me was the founding of In Medias Brass brass quintet in 2010, which I have been a member of since the beginning. During our joint work, we

met with the quintet pieces of László Dubrovay and soon we added the Quintet No. 3 (1998) to our repertoire. This extremely colourful and varied piece drew my attention to how, through the implementation of the extended technical elements and effects recorded in it, a new level in the sound brass instruments can be reached, and how this tremendous musical innovation influenced us, brass musicians.

The theme of my thesis was thus marked by my enthusiasm for brass chamber music, the recognition of the importance of the above-mentioned special expression methods, as well as the intention to expand the Hungarian brass chamber music's literary background that is unfortunately quite narrow even today.

3. Methods of research

At the beginning of my work, I considered my first task to reduce the subject of my research to a point which was as concrete and clearly definable as possible. Thus, I reached – first, instead of processing the events of the Hungarian brass music between 1990 and 2020 – to the brass music pieces of László Dubrovay, and then I further narrowed the area examined to the author's brass quintet pieces for an even better delimitation.

I then reviewed the available resources. From the Budapest Music Center's music library, I borrowed scores of the composer's brass chamber pieces, such as his works written for brass quintet, trombone quartet, brass septet and tuba quartet, and then analysed them from the editing and sound arrangement point of view and I was looking for links and similarities between the various pieces. This work was extremely exciting for me, given that, due to my personal experience with the technical implementation of the out-of-the-box effects that appeared in the works, as a practising brass musician in daily contact with the instrument, I had a fairly direct insight into this exciting area.

Vizsgáltam a választott témámhoz kapcsolódó kiegészítő irodalmat is: az Arcanum Digitális Könyvtár online adatbázisában megtalálható archív anyagokat (például a zeneszerzővel készült interjúkat, portrékat, illetve darabjairól szóló írásokat), valamint a Dr. ifj. Bazsinka József tubaművész, Dr. Dávida Tamás trombitaművész, Prof. dr. Farkas István Péter harsonaművész, Dr. Solymosi Péter trombitaművész, Dr. habil. Szabó László tubaművész által írt doktori értekezéseket, illetve a Dr. habil. Bazsinka I also examined the supplementary literature related to my chosen subject: archival

materials in the online database of the Arcanum Digital Library (such as interviews with the composer, portraits and writings on his works), and doctoral theses written by Dr. József Bazsinka Jr. (tuba artist), Tamás Dávida (trombone artist), Prof. dr. Péter István Farkas (trombone artist), Péter Solymosi (trumpet artist), and also Dr. habil. József Bazsinka's study on extended blowing techniques, which was also published in the March 2024 issue of the Orchestra Magazine.

I considered it important that — on the one hand, by utilizing 21st-century tools, and on the other hand, aiding better clarity and comprehensibility — my dissertation can be followed throughout, both in terms of scores and audio materials as well as special effects, with the help of QR codes.

In connection with the preparation of the summary of the brass playing methods included in the technical palette of the three brass quintets discussed in my thesis, as well as their technical execution, I used the main methodological studies used in brass music and mainly in the trumpet education methodologies of, among others, J. B. Arban, Charles Colin, Philip Farkas, Louis Maggio and Rolf Quinke. I conducted interviews with members of the ensembles that are mentioned in the chapters of my dissertation, so I learned a lot about how a musician can work with the author of a certain piece and how to tackle the technical difficulties posed by the pieces.

Since 2010 I had taught trumpet at the Tihamér Vujicsics School of Music in Szentendre and since 2019 I've been a teacher of trumpet and brass chamber music at the Leó Weiner Catholic Music School in Budapest, so the aspects of Dubrovay's impact on instrumental education has also been of paramount importance for me.

It was crucial for me to involve László Dubrovay in the writing of my thesis. During our personal meetings and consultations, I received very valuable information from him directly.

As an active chamber artist, I also have a number of personal experiences that have been useful in writing this thesis. Here, I think it is important to mention, first of all, the professional work in which I participate as a member of my band, the trumpet of the In Medias Brass. Since the very beginning we have continuously played contemporary music.

I would like to mention two occasions when we played contemporary pieces because they stand out due to their relevance, their connection to the subject area of

my dissertation and because they also appeared in Dr. József Bazsinka Jr's dissertation:

February 27, 2014 19:00 Old Academy of Music

Tímea Dragony: Quintet

Péter Zombola: Quintet

György Selmeczi: Hymns of Pentecost (solo: Zsuzsanna Bazsinka, soprano)

Csaba Tűzkő: Hungarian Sonata – I. mvt.

Gyula Fekete: Széki Ötös

György Arányi-Aschner: Quintet

Gyula Bánkövi: Six Brass Intersection

Csaba Tűzkő: Balkan Sonata – III. mvt.

March 23, 2014 13:00 Hungarian Radio, Studio 6

Tímea Dragony: Quintet

György Selmeczi: Hymns 2. (solo: Zsuzsanna Bazsinka, soprano)

Gyula Bánkövi: Six Brass Intersection

Csaba Tűzkő: Balkan Sonata - Kopanitsa alla Rondo

Gyula Fekete: Széki Ötös

László Dubrovay: Quintet No. 3. – II. III. mvt.

4. Results and conclusions of my research

During my research, when I became acquainted with the author's other chamber works written for brass instruments, it became increasingly clear to me how these pieces, in addition to expanding our repertoire, have a great influence on the technical development of the instrumental music.

My conversations and discussions with László Dubrovay also helped me to see the contours of the interaction between the composer and the performers and confirmed that these two roles must constantly inspire each other.

As I predicted in my introduction, my main goal was to highlight: "László Dubrovay created his individual composition style for the brass chamber music by studying the depth of vocal techniques of brass musicians through close collaboration

with instrumental artists, and by working with performers who were open and, above all, able – in addition to the traditional playing style of the instrument – to jointly experiment with the enhanced techniques.”

Many evidence of this relationship between composer and performer has been presented to me, in particular through my personal encounters with the author and my conversations with the performers and the artists in the collections mentioned in my thesis.

I believe that my doctoral thesis will compensate for a shortage. Although the name of László Dubrovay appears in the dissertations of many artists (including several brass music artists), writings that include such detailed musical analyses or special focus on the author’s brass quintets have not, as far as I know, been written so far.

The extended technical elements that I have also registered, despite the fact that in the studies and lectures of acclaimed speakers, the audience has heard about them several times (I would like to mention Dr. habil. József Bazsinka’s lecture at the Hungarian Academy of Arts in March 2024) has not been detailed and registered until now in a dissertation of scientific importance. The importance of the interaction between the author and the lecturers is also discussed in numerous theses and dissertations, but relationships that have influenced the development of brass chamber art to this extent have not been found in previous papers.

I cannot ignore the personal aspects of the research results. My attitude toward my instrument, the trumpet, and my ideas about its possibilities have fundamentally changed.

The inexhaustibly wide range of methods of expression, and the combination of tests spent studying and practicing the works of László Dubrovay, have also brought the work of the In Medias Brass to a higher level.

My aim was also to enable my thesis, and in particular the extended technical tableau contained therein, to bring, not only professional performers, but also teachers and pupils involved in education, a new light on their previous image of their instrument.

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