

Foreword

This publication is a collection of scientific articles compiled on the basis of the papers delivered at the 15th international conference “Principles of Music Composing: Phenomenon of Melody”. The conference was held in Vilnius on 14–16 October 2015 to mark the 140th birth anniversary of M. K. Čiurlionis. It was organized by the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre and the Lithuanian Composers’ Union.

Twenty musicologists and composers from Poland, Sweden, Greece, Great Britain, Thailand, Russia, Austria, Latvia and Lithuania participated in the conference and presented their scientific ideas. The articles in this collection are divided into three subthemes.

Subtheme I. Theoretical, Historical and Technological Aspects of Melody. Here a more thorough analysis is devoted to the nature of melody, its sources and the possibilities of its technological expression. Rimantas Janeliauskas, having purified theoretical constances of a melodic line, determines its communication archetypes, which were noticed a long time ago. The author bases his ideas on the analysis of Lithuanian ethnomonody as well as the melodies by Čiurlionis and the 20th-century composers. Cécile Bardoux Lovén goes deep into the meanings and functions of disjunctive intervals composing a melody. The researcher’s interests embrace musicologists’ ideas on the mentioned aspects – first of all those of H. Schenker, his teachers’ as well as of later followers. Liudmila Kazantseva differentiates two closely interrelated conceptions – that of a melody and intonation, emphasizing discretism of one of them and the solidity of the other. Markos Lekkas accepts a precondition – a homophonic melody, consolidating its position in the enlightenment centuries, is hidden by a deep past with its sources reaching Guido’s theoretical-didactic paradigm. On the basis of the formalized Eugene Narmour’s elements of melody conception, Sigita Mickis makes an attempt to give prominence to the space of melody phenomenon. Martin Vishnick suggests enriching the melody performing possibilities by specific classical guitar techniques.

Subtheme II. Aesthetic, Stylistic and Semantic Aspects of Melody. The spectre of reports distinguishes itself by a great variety. Analyzing melodic structures by Törn Takemitsu, Ramūnas Motiekaitis looks for an answer to the principal question – should the specific Japanese culture aesthetic values, resting in the composer’s melodic, be attached to the universal or the national? Dimitris Papageorgiou presents melody expansions by the makam scale, called ‘seyr’, a theoretical-stylistic conception. Charris Efthimiou looks at the design of the melody line and in particular the usage of the violin parts (first and second violins) in Rolla’s symphonies D4 and e1 (1803–1811) from a music-analytical perspective. Baiba Jaunslaviete analyses the influence of melodic monograms on the stylistics of composers’ works, a detailed analysis of the functioning of the monogram E-F-[E]-D-E by the Latvian composer Maija Einfelde is presented. Rimantas Astrauskas particularly emphasizes the linear aspects of the trimming of Lithuanian ethnomelodies composed by Čiurlionis, bringing out the dependence of a melody quality on the genre. Inga Jankauskienė discusses some of the works by the Lithuanian composer Bronius Kutavičius. Pathorn Srikananda unfolds the peculiarities of the tonal and semantic organization of melodic lines in his opera ‘Pero Vaz de Sequeira’. Kalliopi Stiga characterizes the specific features of M. Theodorakis’ epic-lyrical melody.

Subtheme III. Melody in Contemporary Composing Practice. This group of reports reviews the manifestations of the melody phenomenon in its marginal positions. Surveying a wide circle of experimental melody examples, Lawrence Dunn discusses the question: what is it that melody differs from the most simple line or ‘almost’ a line? Rytis Mažulis presents the types of a microtonic melody polished in his various compositions. Chad Langford comments on the processes of compositional formation assisting to bring out a hidden melody and thematism in his written precompositional works. The principles of a melodic-canon punctuation are of interest to Zita Bružaitė. Associating the latter with the work’s dramatic, dynamic whole and the new composing means, she illustrates some musical examples by Lithuanian contemporary composers. Analysing G. Crumb’s melodic language, Manos Panayiotakis paid the greatest attention to the sound height and timbre parameters, associating the latter with the material of exotic music and philosophy. Andrius Maslekovas analyses the peculiarities of ‘quasi-melodic’ elements in sonoric music.

We hope that Volume XV “Principles of Music Composing” will be popular with the readers and will attract attention of all those who are interested in the phenomenon of melody. All comment and criticism are welcome. On behalf of the editors, I thank all who contributed to the preparation and publication of this volume.

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