

Abstracts of Recently Passed Australian Doctoral Theses

Manuel de Falla's Compositional Process in El retablo de Maese Pedro and Concerto

Michael Christoforidis PhD, University of Melbourne, 1997

Manuel de Falla's output during the 1920s was a product of his conscious identification with elements of the Parisian avant-garde in order to create universal manifestations of Spanish musical nationalism. These ideals were pursued in *El retablo de Maese Pedro* (1918–23) and the *Concerto* (1923–26), works which were enthusiastically received in certain modernist circles despite their more limited appeal with the broader public. The extended period of gestation for both works allowed Falla to explore an ever increasing range of contemporary, historical and folk musical models, literary and historical sources, and religious, philosophical and aesthetic considerations, in an attempt to realise his aims. To a greater extent than in his earlier works, *El retablo* and the *Concerto* reflect Falla's preoccupation with innovation and resulted from a more pronounced interdependence of poetic, evocative, structural and technical parameters. His attempts to theorise his procedures at this time, however unsystematic, were also symptomatic of an increasingly conscious, analytical, synthetic and at times articulated approach to composition.

Through a detailed study of the material held at the Archivo Manuel de Falla, this dissertation examines the ideas that Falla explored and brought to the composition of *El retablo* and the *Concerto*, and attempts to contextualise them within his aesthetic, cultural and personal framework. The conception and evolution of these works is outlined and this discussion is informed by an examination of the musical and extra-musical sources studied by Falla, biographical documentation of the composer and his works, and reference to compositional sketch material. While *El retablo* and the *Concerto* formed the principal focus of his creative activity between 1919 and 1926, his overall literary and compositional activity throughout this period is taken into consideration as it relates to the two works in question. The evolution of his musical language during this period is also examined in relation to contemporary developments within his artistic milieu, and through an overview of stylistic precursors to this new style in Falla's own output to 1919.

The Educational Theory of Dmitri Kabalevsky in Relation to His Piano Music for Children

David Lawrence Forrest PhD, University of Melbourne, 1997

This study investigates the educational theories and beliefs of the Russian composer and educator Dmitri Borisovich Kabalevsky as they relate to his piano music for children.

A biographical sketch of the composer's public life was developed incorporating the significant events in his life as they relate to the compositions, and in particular, his work with children. The primary sources for this study are the composer's own writings – some of which were specially translated from Russian into English for the purpose of this study.

Kabalevsky offered an alternative philosophy to that of many Western educators and musicians. His educational and musical views are discussed in the context of the overriding political philosophy to which he adhered throughout his life. The clearest expression of his educational views is seen in his book *A Story of Three Whales and Many Other Things* and the recorded talks with children entitled *What Music Says*, both of which were translated from the Russian for this study.

An overview of Kabalevsky's music was developed, with particular reference to his music for children. Kabalevsky's piano music for children is discussed in the larger context of his output for the instrument. Particular emphasis is placed on the use he made of the song, the dance and the march – the three major genres that are the basis of the small character pieces which constitute the majority of his works for children.

Five sets of music, from the twelve-volume collection entitled *Piano Music for Children and Young People*, have been selected for investigation in this study. The sets are *In the Pioneer Camp* Op.3/86 (1927/1968), *From Pioneer Life* Op.14 (1931/1968), *Thirty Children's Pieces* Op.27 (1937-38), *Twenty-Four Easy Pieces* Op.39 (1943) and *Thirty-Five Easy Pieces* Op.89 (1972).

A descriptive analysis of each of the 100 pieces (under set criteria) was carried out, highlighting the major focus of the piece as well as the important pedagogical elements. An important aspect of this study was the identification and classification of the piano pieces in terms of the genre or style of the song, the dance or the march; only some were identified as such by the composer. The classification of pieces provided an important link between Kabalevsky's educational philosophy and his piano music for children.

Braille: New Codes for Early Music Notations, Long Cells and Exploratory Coding Analysis

Barbara Claire Williams PhD, Monash University, 1995

Braille is a wonderful system: it has empowered millions of blind people the world over, and will continue to do so. In order to expand the access which it can provide, more codes are needed for specialist areas: and for these, more tactile patterns are needed also. Early music manuscripts have not previously been available to blind students and professionals, since the standard braille music code can only express the forms and conventions used in modern editions, not those of the originals. Exact codes for the notations of the original manuscripts are clearly necessary as a basis for any serious musicological research.

New codes are presented here for mensural notation, lute and plucked string tablature, and baroque figured bass. They are designed to be like a diplomatic transcript of the original: fully accurate to that point. Obviously they cannot be a replica physically, since tactile scripts work

so differently from visually perceived symbologies. This presentation constitutes Part One. Some of these new codes utilise long cells, a matrix of eight dots instead of six: some study is included of this new departure.

Part Two examines the underlying structures of the present braille codes, literary and musical. Louis Braille's work is the foundation of all: finding the coding strategies which make his work effective to the reading fingers was the task here. In addition to general understanding, this was done with a view to providing a reliable basis for the development of new codes as they are needed.

The Music of Politics—Politics in Music: The Choral Miniature Repertoire of First Generation Macedonian Composers; A Re-assessment of Macedonian Musical Development

Mary Sapunzijeve PhD, Monash University, 1996

The socio-political events experienced by the Macedonian socio-national group during the era between the two World Wars have their origins in the denationalisation campaigns implemented by neighbouring regions during the latter half of the nineteenth century. It was during the era between the two World Wars that the Macedonian school of composition began due to the contributions of the First Generation Macedonian composers, in response to socio-political events, through their cultivation of a choral miniature repertoire. This choral miniature repertoire proves to be a pivotal point in modern Macedonian musical development.

The beginning of the Macedonian school of composition, and the interpretive direction pursued and maintained by five First Generation Macedonian composers through the initial central compositional component of the choral miniature repertoire, is the consequence of political and cultural experiences specific to the Macedonian socio-national group.

Previous assessments concerning Macedonian musical development have dealt with the Town Song and the Revolutionary Song, and have viewed them as pivotal points in Macedonian musical development. No systematic research, as yet, has been undertaken concerning the Macedonian school of composition. Accordingly, current views concerning musical development in Macedonian society need to be re-assessed.

In order to accurately ascertain the pivotal role of the choral miniature of the First Generation composers in Macedonian musical development, we must first examine the collective socio-national consciousness of the society to whom this repertoire is directed and by whom it is inspired. In order to understand this collective consciousness, we must examine the relationship between the socio-historical conditions (political and cultural conditions) and the consequent psychological conditionings of this collective consciousness. We must also examine the relationship between social needs that have arisen due to socio-historical conditions and conditionings, and the cultivation of the choral miniature repertoire. We need to examine the various motivations that have been pursued and interpreted compositionally by the composers. We need to examine the resultant values—both immediate and perpetual—placed upon this repertoire by Macedonian society.

In order to accurately examine the key role of this choral miniature repertoire in Macedonian musical development, we will examine several fundamental concerns of development of development through the following five conceptual categories: motivation, applicability, interpretation, function and value. These concepts are applied to an examination of political and cultural factors defining the social evolution of the Macedonians, and to an examination of

the constituent elements of the choral miniature compositions—text themes, meter and rhythm, ornamentation, and scales.

A socio-historical and subsequent musical analytical examination of the choral miniature repertoire of the First Generation Macedonian composers will show it be a pivotal point in Macedonian musical development. It is hoped that a re-assessment of recent Macedonian musical history will contribute to filling a distinct void in musicological research concerning the musical development of Macedonian society.

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Issue 21 includes an article by John Weretka on the 18th-century Italian opera singer Francesco Borosini, the first true tenor hero in Baroque opera who created the role of Bajazet in Gasparini and Handel's versions of *Tamerlano*; an interview with Genevieve Lacey by Greg Dikmans; reviews of original compositions and arrangements by a number of Australian composers; reports of festivals and summer schools in New Zealand and Australia; and CD reviews.

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