

Article received on May 27, 2004

UDC 78:654.197(049.3)

Milica Gajić

**Snežana Nikolajević: *Ekran srpske muzike (The Screen of Serbian Music)*  
Belgrade: Radio-televizija Srbije, 2003  
(128+CD ROM with music and video examples)**

This monograph, the sixth book by musicologist Snežana Nikolajević, is her adapted doctoral dissertation entitled *Televizija kao kreativni i interpretativni prostor srpske muzike (Television as a Creative and Interpretative Space of Serbian Music)*, defended at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade on May 27, 2001. It is a study, as explained by the author, “analyzing the essence of the musical being on television” (p. 13).

Formally it comprises three chapters and seven subchapters, includes a preface and an epilogue, a list of references used and a summary in English. In a word, it contains the complete essential apparatus that shapes the main course of the book into a serious and integrated study. It is interestingly and quite functionally printed in non-standard format. Numerous notes and photographs are included in the margins of the book, as well as marks indicating the numbers of video examples on the accompanying CD ROM, which in content became not only an adequate supplement to the monograph, but also its integral part.

The language of the monograph is interesting, reasonable and readable. The monograph gradually introduces the reader into every, even the most complex segments of adapting music for television. In addition to being theoretically very well furnished, Snežana Nikolajević’s book incorporates another rare quality. Namely, indications of the results of the author’s years-long practical engagement in the television medium as editor and author of a series of individual programmes and serials on Belgrade Television are available throughout the monograph.

In addition to a review and analysis of the literature concerning this subject, purposefully and consistently collected by the author over the years, the legacy – or rather the archived material at the Belgrade and Novi Sad television stations – undoubtedly exerted a primary influence on the content and its organization in the book.

This theoretical investigation of various works, “transposition” of compositions of Serbian musical heritage, focuses on the study of the television medium in all the variety of its connection or symbiosis with music.

Reading this book we know, from beginning to end, that a comprehensive research was conducted concurrently with a display of versatile and profound knowledge of the analyzed subject matter. In addition, the entire corpus of Serbian music thus presented was placed into a wider context of priorities of world television music production. Aware that we are not able to come close to world

television magnates principally due to production limitations, on reading this book we can conclude that efforts made in that area in our country have not been inconsiderable.

The methodological technique employed in this work arises directly from the connection of music and television in all forms of its manifestation. The media theories of Marshall McLuhan, Horace Newcomb and Umberto Eco are analyzed, as well as Eco's theses on television as the medium of open form and a communications act and Eva Kofin's idea on "television music". Theoretical starting points include writings by Boris Grabner and Brian Rose on the principles of "translating" musical forms and manifestations. Finally, the author points out Mihailo Petrović's theory of phenomenological reproduction and Svetomir Nikolajević's theory of structural transformation as most significant in the analysis of her subject.

The examined correlation between television and music, along with the perceiving of the phenomenon of time and space, suggests that television is a medium that conforms the already existing works to its own laws, and that it is characterized by "the creating of new forms in which thinking in television terms affects the compositional technique".

The second part of the book comprises three chapters whose richness lies in diversity. *Od opere na televiziji do opere za televiziju (From the Opera on Television to the Opera for Television)* is a chapter containing a systematization of three categories one comes across in analyses of the realizations of the operas *Koštana* by Petar Konjović, *Suton (Dusk)* by Stevan Hristić and *Paštrovski vitez (The Knight of Paštrovo)* by Mihovil Logar and of a typical television opera *Dnevnik jednog ludaka (The Diary of a Madman)* by Stanojlo Rajičić.

In the chapter *Televizijski balet, video dans: mesto i uloga muzike (Television Ballet, Video Dance: the Place and Role of Music)* special attention was paid to the ballets *Sobareva metla (The Servant's Broom)* by Miloje Milojević, *Stav'te pamet na komediju (Use Your Wits on Comedy)* by Nikola Hercigonja, *Pod zemljom (Under Ground)* by Stanojlo Rajičić and *Kameleon (Chameleon)* by Zoran Hristić.

*Muzika kao događaj (Music as an Event)* is theoretically based on practical examples of the visualization of *Rukoveti* by Stevan Stojanović Mokranjac, *Pesme prostora (Songs of Space)* by Ljubica Marić and particularly on the works *Rodoslov (Genealogy)*, *Boj (Battle)* and *Tragovi (Footsteps)* by Zoran Hristić. These are supplemented by reflections on video spot and landscape.

The chapter *Prošlost i sadašnjost (The Past and the Future)* incorporates three wholes – *Istorija muzike u televizijskom izdanju (History of Music in a Television Edition)*, *Srpska duhovna muzika u televizijskom zapisu (Serbian Sacred Music in a Television Recording)* and *Savremena muzika: akcija i interakcija (Contemporary Music: Action and Interaction)*.

Accustomed to traditional surveys on the development of Serbian music written using the traditional form, with familiar methodological and aesthetical prerogatives, at first we do not perceive this chapter or the entire book as a specific survey or history. Yet essentially it is just that, although it treats the phenomenon of music not through an analysis of a musical recording, but through an

analysis of its interpretative form in the television medium. Naturally, it is also often supplemented or combined with many segments that television as a medium has to offer.

Translated by Dušan Zabrđac