
NEW WORKS

Article received on 23rd Jun 2014

Article accepted on 29th Jun 2014

UDC: 784/789

Branka Popović*

University of Arts in Belgrade

Faculty of Music

Department for Composition and Orchestration

**SVETLANA SAVIĆ: *SONETI*
“LA DOUCE NUIT”, “LOOKING ON DARKNESS”,
“LA VITA FUGGE”**

Abstract: *Soneti* [*Sonnets*] by Svetlana Savić were composed between 2008 and 2012. The cycle comprises three pieces: “La Douce Nuit” for violoncello, piano, and electronics, as well as “Looking on Darkness” and “La vita fugge” for a female voice, violoncello, piano, and electronics. Here, the work is analysed from the perspective of the author’s modernist orientation towards sound as a specific tool of music as a medium, which defined multiple poetic aspects in creating this work and had repercussions on the treatment of the text, the ensemble – both its acoustic and electronic layers – the forming and relationship between individual layers of texture, as well as the choice of music material. Dealing with sound, searching for a specific acoustic quality is revealed already in the title, *Soneti*, because the term *sonnet*, which refers to a 13th-century Italian poetic form, comes from the Italian word *sonetto*, derived from the Latin word *sonus*, meaning sound. However, although Savić looks for particular acoustic qualities and sound is her main material, the resulting work is full of associations, musical and extramusical alike, and reaches out to other kinds of artistic expression. The composer never loses sight of her extramusical content and thus her composition generates a peculiar sort of interference between the acoustic and the verbal – the music absorbs the verbal, turning words into sounds and sound into words. At certain moments, this is joined by the visual component.

Key words: sound; acoustic quality; sonnet; variation; the intertwining of motives; musical and extramusical associations; a peculiar sort of interference of the musical, the verbal, and the visual

* Author contact information: branka@branka.rs

Soneti [*Sonnets*] by Svetlana Savić were written between 2008 and 2012, as the final project in her doctoral studies of composition at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade. The cycle consists of three pieces: “La Douce Nuit” for violoncello, piano, and electronics, as well as “Looking on Darkness” and “La vite fugge” for a female voice, violoncello, piano, and electronics. *Soneti*, in its integral version, was premiered by Ana Radovanović, mezzo-soprano, Srđan Sretenović, violoncello, and Neda Hofman, piano, at the Matica Srpska Hall in Novi Sad, in May 2013. The ‘libretto’ of this cycle includes five sonnets by Michelangelo Buonarroti, nine sonnets by Petrarch, 17 sonnets by William Shakespeare, 16 sonnets by Charles Baudelaire, as well as one visual-verbal sonnet by Raša Perić. The duration of the entire cycle in performance is around 27 minutes.

The term *sonnet* refers to a 13th-century Italian poetic form. It comes from the Italian word *sonetto*, derived from the Latin word *sonus*, meaning sound.¹ Therefore, the title of the cycle – *Soneti* – refers not only to the textual basis of each individual movement – i.e. the sonnets by the authors listed above – but also to several important features of Svetlana Savić’s poetics, due to its connection with the concept of sound. Namely, although this is a vocal-instrumental composition based on the synergy of its verbal and musical components, whereby the extramusical content influences the shaping of her musical ideas, the way Savić builds her works suggests that her creative process is nevertheless dominated primarily by exploring sound and that her primary concern is searching for a particular acoustic result and achieving a particular acoustic quality. In *Soneti*, this focus on sound had repercussions on the treatment of the text, the ensemble – its acoustic and electronic layers alike – the forming and relationship of different layers of texture, as well as the choice of music material.

The first sonnet, “La Douce Nuit” for violoncello, piano, and electronics, is based on Baudelaire’s *Les Fleurs du mal*. In this piece, the text does not appear in the vocal part (it is not sung); instead, it is presented as an integral part of the electronic layer, containing samples of processed recordings of Eva Le Gallienne and Louis Jourdan reciting Baudelaire’s verses. Instead of using the sonnets integrally, the author chose particular sentences, phrases, and words from a large number of poems and thus created the textual basis of the piece. The text used in the first sonnet is as follows:

¹ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sonnet>

Entends, ma chère, viens par ici,
entends la douce Nuit qui marche.

soleil monotone
Une femme passa

Endormeuses saisons! je vous aime et vous loue

Des hommes dont le corps est mince et vigoureux,
Et des femmes dont l'œil par sa franchise étonne.
Le violon frémit comme un csur qu'on afflige;
Valse mélancolique et langoureux vertige!
Le soleil s'est noyé dans son sang qui se fige.

deux à deux
Moi, mon âme est fêlée
ô toi qui le savais!

balcons
Je suis l'Ange
bruit des carillons
Un éclair...
magiques
Ailleurs
mystiques
Je suis belle, ô mortels!
Moi
Ô toi
Le violon frémit
Fugitive beauté
Dont le regard m'a fait soudainement
Le soleil s'est noyé dans son sang qui se fige...
Doux comme les hautbois

The form of the first sonnet is essentially ternary, ABA₁. The composition begins with introductory chords in the lower register of the piano, which are soon joined by the sound of a 'train' (a loop of vinyl record skipping) and a

male voice uttering the verses. The development section (A) begins at b. 18, which progresses alongside a striking sonic content in the electronic layer, made of a pulsating continuous sound in a low register and birds chirruping. The violoncello and piano parts emerge from the electronics, imitating its content and leaving their imprint in the process: short motives inspired by birds are provided with a chordal dimension in the piano part, while the use of harmonics in the violoncello part produces subtle variations in them, in the manner of an echo. The development progresses in a delicate intertwining of parts, which take cues from one another and create relations of variance, but also retain their own individual identities (Example 1). The result is a minutely wrought musical tissue, brimming with diversified details, whose significance and expressivity are emphasized by the transparent texture of the piece.

Example 1 – *La Douce Nuit*, bb. 47–51

The image shows a musical score for three parts: Violoncello (Vc), Piano (Pno), and Audio File (A. file). The Vc staff is in bass clef and contains several measures of music with dynamic markings like *mp* and *f*. The Pno staff is in treble and bass clefs and contains several measures of music with dynamic markings like *f*, *p*, and *mp*. The A. file staff is a horizontal line with a play button icon and a time signature of 2.30. The score is for measures 47-51.

In b. 61, a new formal section (B), which begins in b. 67, is announced by a subsiding of the tension and returning to the ‘train’ sound and the male voice reciting the verses. This repetitive section is based on a chordal motive in the piano part, which is reminiscent of the chords from the opening of the piece. In this section, working with samples of male and female voices reciting the verses is more pronounced than in the first segment of the composition. The section ends with a solo violoncello cadenza, beginning in b. 84. The closing section, i.e. recapitulation of the first segment (A_1), starts in b. 95. With an ostinato background formed by a percussive motive in the electronic layer, bird-inspired motives develop in the violoncello and piano parts, as well as in the electronics (Example 2). The treatment of voice samples grows much more dynamic – they are cropped, mixed, repeated, and thus generate an active textural element.

Example 2 – “La Douce Nuit”, bb. 95–99

The chords from the beginning of the composition reappear in b. 110 and the section ends with a habanera-like material in the violoncello part (b. 124 – Example 3).

Example 3 – “La Douce Nuit”, bb. 124–127

The very ending of the piece is marked by the entrance of the chordal motive of the piano from the middle section (B), but now in the timbre of electronic bells. This segment functions as the coda.

The second sonnet, “Looking on Darkness”, for a female voice, violoncello, piano, and electronics, also has an overall ternary form, ABA₁. The text is rendered by a female voice, although it partly appears in the electronic layer as well, which also serves as the dominant musical agent in the piece.

The first section (A) is based on a rhythmically pregnant, percussive motive in the electronics, while the material performed by the voice, violoncello, and piano is a reverberation thereof, echo, or extension. The electronics is permeated with recordings of Petrarch’s verses, performed by Moro Silo in Italian, and those of Shakespeare’s, performed by Richard Pasco in English. Also, some French can be heard at the beginning of the composition – samples of medieval love poems by Guillaume de Machaut enter in the electronics layer in b. 9 and

their text and melody are imitated in the vocal part. The turbulent and developmental initial section is replaced by a meditative middle section (B) beginning in b. 48 – electronics composed of a static acoustic mist, which completely submerges the inconspicuous figurations and harmonic shadings in the violoncello and piano parts, underneath the vocal part, which for the first time becomes the vehicle of verbal delivery. A new dynamic section (A_1) begins in b. 120, based on a variation of the motive from the beginning, rendered by the electronics. The electronic layer now also contains samples of a female voice (Milica Đelić) uttering Petrarch's verses in Italian. The voice, however, remains the dominant vehicle of verbal delivery until the end of the piece. Its part, as well as those of the violoncello and piano, is modelled after the material in the electronics. Thus, the musical tissue is generated by intertwining and alternating short and variant motives, through sequential entrances and dialogues between the voice, electronics, and acoustic instruments (Example 4).

Example 4 – “Looking on Darkness”, bb. 138–142

The image shows a musical score for Example 4, measures 138-142. It consists of four staves: Voice, Violoncello (Vc), Piano, and A file. The vocal line has lyrics: "sweet fin - gens this sim - ble loop". A box with the number 4.38 is located below the piano staff.

At the very end of the piece, in b. 202, the motive which was heard in the electronics at the beginning appears once more, in its original form.

The text rendered by the voice in the second and third sections of the composition, chosen from several sonnets by Shakespeare, is as follows:

Time stands still
Silent thought
Time stands still
Tune delighted
Sparkling stars
Tune delighted
Times in hope
Blind do see

Quick objects
Crooked eclipses
Dancing chips
Parallels
Interchange of state
Sweet fingers that nimble leap
Torture me
Saucy jacks
True image!
Thousand errors
To be so tickled
Transfix
Shake!
Shape!
Do none
Triumphant splendour
It shapes them to you feature
Time exchange
Changing course
Costly gay!
Work's expired
Time
Kissing with golden face
Nothing stands!
Do nothing
Nothing

Now all is done
All is done!

The third sonnet, "La vita fugge" for a female voice, violoncello, piano, and electronics, has a four-section form, ABCA₁. The text in this sonnet is sung throughout, although the electronics includes some vocal samples, whose verbal content, nevertheless, remains unintelligible. The sonnet begins with an introduction in the piano part, based on a three-bar motive and its variations (A). In b. 29, it leads to an episode resembling a renaissance secular song in which the violoncello assumes the role of a lute, while the voice sings Petrarch's verses in Italian (Example 5). The verses are as follows:

Solo et pensoso i piú deserti campi
 vo mesurando a passi tardi et lenti,
 et gli occhi porto per fuggire intenti
 ove vestigio human l'arena stampi.

Example 5 – “La vita fugge”, bb. 29–39

The musical score for Example 5, "La vita fugge", measures 29–39, is presented in a multi-staff format. It includes staves for Voice, Vc (Violoncello), Pno (Piano), and Comp (Computer/Electronics). The voice part features lyrics in Italian: "Solo et pensoso i piú deserti campi vo mesurando a passi tardi et lenti, et gli occhi porto per fuggire intenti ove vestigio human l'arena stampi." The score is divided into two sections, A and B. Section A starts at measure 29 and ends at measure 39. Section B starts at measure 40 and ends at measure 39. The score includes dynamic markings like "mf" and "pizz.", and performance instructions like "pizz." and "pizz.". The electronics part includes a "Bella" section at 1.46 and a "Deep male voice" section at 2.22.

The next major section (B) begins in b. 40, with solo electronics, whose main ingredient is a transformed recording of Petrarch’s verses recited, with the addition of percussive effects recorded on the strings and the body of the piano. A similar material appears in b. 107 as well, but now with added chordal motives in the piano part. These two entrances of the electronics frame the episode in which the voice recites Petrarch’s verses, accompanied by the piano and a toy piano whose sound is modified by various effects, mainly delay.

The text of this episode is as follows:

Benedetto sia ’l giorno, et ’l mese, et l’anno,
 et la stagione, e ’l tempo, et l’ora, e ’l punto,
 e ’l bel paese, e ’l loco ov’io fui giunto
 da’duo begli occhi che legato m’anno;

et benedetto il primo dolce affanno
 ch’i’ ebbi ad esser con Amor congiunto,

et l'arco, et le saette ond'i' fui punto,
et le piaghe che 'nfin al cor mi vanno.

Benedette le voci tante ch'io
chiamando il nome de mia donna ò sparte,
e i sospiri, et le lagrime, e 'l desio;

et benedette sian tutte le carte
ov'io fama l'acquisto, e 'l pensier mio,
ch'è sol di lei, sí ch'altra non v'à parte.

The third section of the composition (C) begins in b. 118, arranged for the voice, violoncello, and electronics. It is based on the visual-verbal sonnet "Sveti tamnjan" ["Holy Incense"] by Raša Perić, in Serbian, taken from the collection *Srpski sonet* [*Serbian Sonnets*] edited by Časlav Đorđević. The sonnet was written as follows:

))))))))))))))))))
(((((((((((((((((((
))))))))))))))))))
iz tamnjana dim

(((((((((((((((((((
))))))))))))))))))
(((((((((((((((((((
ka tebi penuša

))))))))))))))))))
(((((((((((((((((((
oče budi s njim

(((((((((((((((((((
))))))))))))))))))
u njemu je duša.

The typography suggests the verbal content which is delivered in the composition by the voice accompanied by the electronics and violoncello, and then, from b. 133 onwards, by the electronics only.

The fourth and last section (A₁) is a varied recapitulation of the opening and begins in b. 140. The voice – accompanied by the violoncello imitating a

lute, the unobtrusive piano based on the three-bar motive from the introduction, and the electronics – delivers verses by Petrarch:

La vita fugge, et non s'arresta una hora,
et la morte vien dietro a gran giornate,
et le cose presenti et le passate
mi danno guerra, et le future anchora;

The sonnet, and thus the entire cycle, ends with an echo of the three-bar motive sounded by the piano at the beginning of “La vita fugge”.

Searching for a specific acoustic quality defined and oriented Savić's compositional procedure, resulting in a work of a rich, delicate, and elaborate sonority, where an abundance of details and subtle acoustic nuances are put together into a compact system and shrouded in a perpetual sonic aura. The path to such a result led through working with short variant motives, used for weaving a musical network embracing all parts of the ensemble – the electronics as well as the acoustic instrumental parts. Building a musical tissue from a reduced number of musical cells, repetitiveness, and minimal variability, and a firm integration of the electronics and the acoustic instrumental parts, which are in an imitative relationship (their respective materials stem from one another) – contribute to the creation of a solid structure and a kind of *binding interdependence* of all elements in this musical system.

Therefore, a striking feature of all three *Sonnets* is their delicate blending of the electronics and the sound of acoustic instruments. In the first and second movements, the music material of the violoncello and piano grows out of the electronic layer and its transformations, careful layering, intertwining, alternation, and interaction with the electronics, in search of an appropriate acoustic result, are used to build an ‘organically’ connected, solid music-dramatic entity. In the last sonnet, unlike the previous two pieces, the electronics is not a pre-recorded audio file. Instead, the composer favoured the concept of live, interactive electronics, and working with echoes of instrumental motives. Most of the material is written for the acoustic instruments and the electronics becomes their reflection. In that way, a thorough coherence of all materials employed in the composition is achieved.

The treatment of the text is also subordinate to the search for a particular acoustic quality. “La Douce Nuit” is a piece with love themes in which the samples – recordings of a spoken interpretation of Baudelaire's verses woven into the electronics – deliver the verbal content, although they are simultaneously treated as acoustic material processed into the musical tissue. The actors utter the verses in a way that is essentially full of music, which the composer recognized and

made 'visible'. The textual basis of the composition consists of a great number of sonnets, that is, parts (sentences, words, phrases) of sonnets, chosen not only on account of their semantic qualities, but also their sonority, which makes them a material suitable for music. In the second and third sonnets – "Looking on Darkness" and "La vita fugge" – the text is treated more conventionally. It is rendered mostly by the vocal part, although diverse solutions were found in the process of *putting it to music* – singing, speaking, forming specific structures due to the interference with vocal samples coming from the electronic layer.

Beside the text, various ambient sounds, such as that of a 'train' or birds chirruping – sometimes close to their original forms, sometimes significantly transformed – are mixed and blended into the musical tissue primarily according to their musical properties.

All of the selected and qualitatively diverse acoustic materials – the text (variously treated – spoken, sung, and electronically processed), ambient sounds (samples that constitute the electronic layer of the composition), and the sound of the acoustic instruments – are turned into music by an 'alchemic' process and integrated into a compact music-dramatic entity.

In his essay "Modernist Painting", Clement Greenberg said that "what had to be exhibited [in art] was not only that which was unique and irreducible in art in general, but also that which was unique and irreducible in each particular art. Each art had to determine, through its own operations and works, the effects exclusive to itself. By doing so it would, to be sure, narrow its area of competence, but at the same time it would make its possession of that area all the more certain".² Greenberg's ideas on the individual qualities of various art disciplines allow us to interpret Savić's intense focus on sonority, on sound as the unique property of music as a medium, which is further refined and intensified in the genre of chamber music. Namely, the author listens and *puts to music*, inserts sounds of diverse origins into her compositions. By carefully choosing her *sound particles*, based on their acoustic qualities and particulars, and by means of their studious combining, Savić creates complex segments of musical tissue.

Although composing this cycle was governed by the modernist principle of focusing on sound and the self-centredness of music, the result is a work full of associations, both musical and extramusical, which also reaches out to other kinds of artistic expression. In the process of inner listening, Savić did not allow her fascination with sound to make her neglect the extramusical content – her attitude towards the extramusical is very active, because she created her 'libretto' by carefully choosing and combining segments from various sonnets.

² Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting", in: *Forum Lectures*, Washington D.C., Voice of America, 1960.

Example 6 – “Looking on Darkness”, bb. 94–97 (6a) and 74–78 (6b)

94

Voice

Spark - ling stars

Vc.

Piano

p

6

A. file

3.06

74

Voice

Si - lent thought

Vc.

Piano

p

pp

6

6

6

A. file

2.27

“Silent Night” (6c)

B \flat F B \flat

1. Si - lent night, ho - ly night, all is calm, all is bright

The poetic form at the foundations of this cycle, the sonnet was originally a type of love poem, but its thematic range was later expanded – to religion, politics, nostalgia, various aspects of life. The intimate chamber world of *Soneti* rests precisely on a stylized contemplation of these subjects – the first sonnet is about love, the second about life (bliss, optimism, liveliness), and the third about tran-

science, finitude. Although the samples, made of recordings of spoken verses in the electronic layer, are used mainly as sound material for building the musical tissue, the selected segments of various sonnets, even if only a word or two, hint at the subject and direct the listener. And given that the text of *Soneti* consists of selected and freely combined segments of a large number of poems, it not only represents the concrete extramusical content of the work, but rather, the entire set of texts wherefrom it originates, as well as their entire range of subjects. This shows that Savić’s *Soneti* are part of a broader *artistic space*.

The entire cycle is permeated by an unassuming network of musical associations. In the first sonnet, with its love theme, apart from birds chirruping and the ‘train’, there is also an echo of popular music, in the electronic layer’s (b. 95 – see Example 2) constant beat, similar to the drum section of a rock band, as well as music material resembling the habanera from Bizet’s *Carmen*, in the violoncello part (b. 124 – see Example 3). The title of the first sonnet is “La Douce Nuit” (after a verse from Baudelaire’s sonnet “Recueillement”), which means “silent night”. This is also the title of a famous Christmas carol, whose melody is quoted in the second sonnet, “Looking on Darkness”. Namely, the selected verses by Shakespeare, “Silent thought” and “Sparkling stars” – which resemble the text of the carol, “Silent night, holy night” – are set to its melody. “Silent thought” corresponds to the motive from the fourth bar of the carol and “Sparkling stars” to the one from the third (Example 6).

Another well-known melody, attached to the words “thousand errors” and “works expired” in “Looking on Darkness”, is a motive from Handel’s chorus “Hallelujah” from the oratorio *Messiah* (Example 7).

In the last sonnet of the cycle, “La vita fugge”, one hears material written in the spirit of renaissance music (sections “Solo et pensoso” and “La vita fugge”, bb. 29 and 155 – see Example 5) and Serbian Orthodox chant (“Sveti tamnjan”, b. 118 – see Example 8).

The appearance of Raša Perić’s visual-verbal sonnet “Sveti tamnjan” introduces a visual component to the cycle. Namely, not only are the verses “Iz tamnjana dim / ka tebi penuša, / oče budi s njim, / u njemu je duša” [“Incense smoke / foams up towards you, / father, stay with it, / there is a soul in it”] set to a melody resembling Orthodox chanting, but also, at the same time, the electronics brings material that could be described as an acoustic haze, thus activating visual associations of smoke as well. This is a moment of an intense synergy between the verbal, musical, and visual components of the work, one stacked onto another.

The blending of verbal and musical layers occurs already in the first sonnet, where the text contains hints of music, provoking acoustic associations:

Example 7 – “Looking on Darkness”, bb. 181–182 (7a)

The musical score for Example 7, measures 181–182, is presented in a multi-staff format. The top staff is for the Voice, with a soprano clef and a forte (f) dynamic marking. The lyrics are "Works ex - pir - ed Works ex - pir - ed". The second staff is for the Violoncello (Vc.), with a bass clef and a forte (f) dynamic marking. The third staff is for the Piano, with a bass clef and a forte (f) dynamic marking. The piano part includes a section marked "6.00" at the bottom. The score is enclosed in a box with a circled "N" at the top left.

*Le violon frémit comme un cœur qu'on afflige;
Valse mélancolique et langoureux vertige!
bruit des carillons
Le violon frémit
Doux comme les hautbois*

The entire cycle is coloured by the nostalgic sounds of glockenspiel, music boxes, and toys.

Though searching for a certain acoustic quality and treating sound as her primary material, Savić never loses sight of the extramusical content. A peculiar sort of interference between the acoustic and the verbal occurs in her work – the music absorbs the verbal, turning words into sound and sound into words. At times, this ‘alchemic’ process is joined by the visual component as well.

Soneti introduces the listener to a mystic, poetic, intimate acoustic world woven together using carefully integrated sound particles. There are no explosive dynamic moments in this piece. In fact, even the sections featuring intense development retain intimacy and peace. The culmination of the whole cycle is the moment when the voice sings “u njemu je duša” (“La vita fugge”, b. 133).

G. F. Handel, “Hallelujah” (7b)

2.21 Chorus “Hallelujah Chorus”

Allegro

The musical score is for the Chorus "Hallelujah" by G. F. Handel. It is in the key of D major and common time (C). The tempo is marked "Allegro". The score includes parts for Tromba I, Tromba II, Timpani, Violino I, Violino II, Viola, Soprano, Alto, Tenore, Basso, and Tutti Bassi. The vocal parts have lyrics: Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah, Hal - le - lu - jah.

This is not a commonplace climax, where the most prominent point of the musical and dramatic development of the piece is supported by the highest density of musical events combined with the strongest dynamics, in a sort of explosion. This is the strongest point, but solved in its own way. Instead of an explosion, an implosion takes place – a moment of a massive compression with the greatest possible tension. The text “Sveti tamnjan” in b. 118 is rendered by the voice, whose part is modelled after Orthodox chant, with participation of the violoncello and electronics. This segment already brings a significant dramatic charge, which from b. 133 intensifies even further by leaving the violoncello out and focusing on the solo voice, pure and very discretely shaded by the electronics

Example 8 – “La vita fugge”, bb. 118–139

The musical score for "La vita fugge" (Example 8) is presented in three systems. The first system (measures 118-121) shows a vocal line with lyrics "Их ти-па-ла дим." and piano accompaniment. The second system (measures 122-125) features a vocal line with lyrics "ка те-би пе-чу-ша о-че бу-ди е-дем." and piano accompaniment. The third system (measures 126-129) features a vocal line with lyrics "у не-му је ду-ша у не-му је ду-ша." and piano accompaniment. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf* and *p*, and performance instructions like "L'istesso tempo, ma poco liberamente". The piano part includes various textures, including arpeggiated figures and sustained chords. The vocal line is marked with "High female voices" and "D. f. voices".

(Example 8). The text sung at that moment is “u njemu je duša” [“there is a soul in it”] and, symbolically, this moment is the ‘soul’ of this composition.

On the one hand, *Soneti* is marked by a quest for sound, a modernist focusing of music on its own devices. On the other hand, evoking and remembering most diverse musics, reaching out to the verbal and the visual, activate strong associations and show that this work is part of a broader *artistic space*. It establishes a fine balance between sound, as the material of composition, and meaning, both musical and extramusical, which sound can produce. The verbal, the ambient, the acoustic, even the visual – is turned into music. Svetlana Savić took her reflections on most diverse subjects, her own thoughts, and transformed them into music: thoughts given a musical form. Therefore, this music – whose treatment of text reminds one of Heiner Goebbels’s *Songs of War I Have Seen* and the atmosphere of Salvatore Sciarrino’s *Vanitas* – is distinctly intimate, introspective and delicate, and at the same time quite effective and expressive. It engrosses the audience and requires of them to be fully engaged whilst listening.

Translated by Goran Kapetanović