

OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Milena Shushulova-Pavlova, lecturer at New Bulgarian University,

Department of Music - professional field 8.3 Music and Dance,

scientific specialty Musicology and Music (05.08.02)

for the dissertation of Anna Petrova-Forster

PhD student at NBU, Department of Music,

scientific supervisor: Prof. Dr. Sc. Elisaveta Valchinova-Chendova

on:

UNKNOWN EUROPEAN PIANO MUSIC of THE SECOND HALF OF THE XVIII AND THE BEGINNING OF THE XIX CENTURY

for the award of the educational and scientific degree "DOCTOR"

in the professional field 8.3 Music and Dance

Biographical data of the candidate

Anna Petrova-Forster graduated from the Secondary School of Music (1972-1976), then from the National Music Academy "Prof. Pancho Vladigerov" (1976-1980) with a Master's degree. Later she studied at the Ecole supérieure de musique in Geneva, Switzerland, in the classe de virtuosité (1981-1983), at the Musikhochschule in Lucerne (1983-1987), graduating with a Konzertdiplom, and took chamber music lessons with Nathan Milstein in London (1988-1991). She attended a number of masterclasses between 1979-1987 with Stanislav Neigaus, Ivan Moravec and Jürgen Uhde. Between 1981 and 2020 Anna Foerster gave recitals in Europe and toured America. She played in Japan and in Italy with chamber ensembles. For many years she directed the concert cycle 'Geheitipp am Mittag' in Zurich. Anna Petrova-Forster recorded for Belgian, French, Bulgarian and Austrian radio as well as Radio Monte Carlo, and made television recordings in Japan and Switzerland. She has released six CDs. From 1981 to the present she has been a teacher at various institutions such as the Ecole supérieure de musique, Geneva, the Konservatorium Zurich, the Gymnasium Küssnacht, the Musikhochschule and the Konservatorium/Musikschule Bill. She also teaches privately. She speaks Bulgarian, Russian, English, German, French and Italian.

Contents of the dissertation

The dissertation was discussed and proposed for defence at a meeting of the Department of Music - NBU, held on 19.11.2020. The thesis consists of an introduction, five chapters¹ with relevant subchapters and a conclusion in 230 pages, comprising 228 pages of main text with musical examples and three pages of appendices (description of activities related to concerts and recordings of the author during his doctoral studies).² The literature cited includes 121 titles in Bulgarian, Russian, English, French and German, including Siteography.

The **first chapter** deals with unfamiliar European piano music from the second half of the 18th and early 19th centuries. It traces the processes in the piano art of the various countries. The **second chapter** examines the composers who worked in Germany: the first authors (Johann Gottfried M \ddot{u} thel, Leopold Mozart, Friedrich Wilhelm Rust) who wrote for the new pianoforte instrument (the early version of the modern piano which began to proliferate in the second half of the 18th century – an instrument with leather-covered hammers, thin strings like a harpsichord and without a metal frame); the first travelling virtuoso pianists to play an extremely important role in the development of the European piano tradition. Important is the contribution to the piano art by the now-forgotten Ludwig Berger, August Alexander Klengel, Daniel Steibelt and Johann Böhner.

In the third chapter, Anna Petrova-Forster focuses on composers who worked in Austria, which then included the present-day Czech Republic and Hungary. These are the Czech composers Johann Wanhal, Leopold Kozeluch and Jan Vor \acute{z} išek, the Austrians Joseph Woelfl and Nikolaus von Krufft and the Hungarian Johann Fuss.

In the fourth chapter, the object of study is music in France. Among the first composers to create piano music were Hyacinthe Jadin, Alexander Bo \ddot{e} ly and Wilhelm Friedrich Kalkbrenner. Many women composers were also working in France at this time, including Madame Brion, H \acute{e} l \acute{e} ne de Montgeroult, Am \acute{e} li-Julie Candeille and Marie Bigot.

Chapter Five is devoted to English music from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Representatives of the piano school here are not English, but foreign musicians who came to seek success and recognition in England. Muzio Clementi was of Italian descent,

¹ Chapter 1. ON THE UNKNOWN EUROPEAN PIANO MUSIC OF THE SECOND HALF OF THE 18TH AND THE BEGINNING OF THE 19TH CENTURY. SCHOOLS AND INFLUENCES. Chapter 2. COMPOSERS WHO WORKED IN GERMANY (2.1. Johann Gottfried M \ddot{u} thel and Leopold Mozart. 2.2. Friedrich Wilhelm Rust. 2.3. The first itinerant virtuosi and Daniel Steibelt. 2.4 Ludwig Berger. 2.5. August Alexander Klengel. 2.6. Johann Böhner.) Chapter 3. COMPOSERS WHO WORKED IN AUSTRIA (3.1. Jan Crstitel Vanhal. 3.2. Leopold Kozeluch. 3.3. Jan Vorzyšek. 3.4. Josef Wöfl. 3.5. Johann Fuss, Nikolaus von Krufft.) Chapter 4. COMPOSERS WHO WORKED IN FRANCE (4.1. Johann Schobert. 4.2. Johann Eckard, Johann Edelmann, Ignaz Ladurner. 4. 3. The Revolution in France and its impact on musical life. Composers. 4.4. Hyacinthe Jadin. 4.5. Alexandre Bo \ddot{e} ly. 4.6. H \acute{e} l \acute{e} ne de Montgeroux. 4.7. Friedrich Kalkbrenner.) Chapter 5. COMPOSERS WHO WORKED IN ENGLAND (5.1. Johann Samuel Schroeter. 5.2. Johann Baptist Cramer, George Pinto.)

² **RECORDINGS ON CD:** 1) Daniel Steibelt. Piano Works. Anna Petrova-Forster, piano. Gega New, 2012. 2) Daniel Steibelt: Oeuvres pour piano (Works for piano). Anna Petrova-Forster, piano. Forgotten Records, 2015. 3) Diagnosis Wunderkind. Works for piano by young composers. Anna Petrova-Forster, piano. CD Baby, 2016. 4) August Alexander Klengel. Piano and chamber music. Klengel Trio: Anna Petrova-Forster, piano, Keiko Yamaguchi, violin, Stefania Veritá, cello, Toccata Classics, 2018. 5) The Birth of the Etude. Anna Petrova-Forster, piano. Toccata Classics, 2020.

RADIO BROADCASTS: Monte Carlo Le printemps des arts – mars 2018. „Entre 18 et 19 heures” Daniel Steibelt – Anna Petrova-Forster.

RECORDINGS ON YOUTUBE: Anna Petrova Channel – <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTJFIU165gG83Q4nVjpKJ0g>
<http://www.annapetrova.com/en/>

Johann Baptist Cramer and Johann Schröter were Germans. George Pinto was born in England (his grandfather was Italian).

Precisely formulated goals and objectives of the dissertation

The reason for this dissertation research is the lack of sufficient and reliable information about the so-called "minor masters" (composers of the late 18th and early 19th centuries) and their works, the doctoral student's long-standing concert activity and her great passion for discovering unknown and original piano scores, collected with great patience over a long period of time (over 20 years).

The aim of the research is to present to piano pedagogues, performers and theorists unknown now-forgotten piano works and their authors, and their high professional level. This is because despite the information availability and the advanced process of digitization of sheet music today, in the websites of libraries and in the Petrucci Music Library, the works of many composers of the era studied (essential for piano music) are still waiting for their discoverers and first performers.

According to Anna Forster, although today's repertoire of pianists covers almost five centuries, the same works by the same composers are usually performed in concert halls and at festivals. The popular "Rarities of Piano Music" festival created by the pianist Peter Froundjian in Husum (Germany), where unknown, forgotten piano music is performed, is the only one so far. Getting acquainted with the works of forgotten composers not only broadens our horizons and introduces us to new musical worlds, it also gives us a completely different, deeper understanding and appreciation of the works of famous composers of that period.

The subject of the study is the period of the second half of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century, which has not yet been thoroughly studied but is extremely interesting due to the emergence and intensive, rapid improvement of the new pianoforte instrument and the large number of works composed for it in a short period of time.

The task of the dissertation is to verify, process and clarify the scattered information about these forgotten composers and their music, which can be found in various sources and archives.

Significance of the research problem in academic terms

This work is an attempt to collect, verify and process the scattered information about composers from different countries who have sunk into oblivion, to highlight their achievements and to present their music, which is evidence of high artistic skills. With a few exceptions, the names of the representatives of this period are missing in textbooks on music history, and they are not studied in educational institutions. They are usually neglected by performers and rarely presented on concert stages.

"In the process, new names and works kept appearing as I visited libraries or interacted with like-minded artists and specialists. The choice was difficult, because the composers worthy of being mentioned and performed are many."

Left in the shadow of their famous contemporaries, the forgotten composers and their works should be the subject of attention not only of a narrow circle of musicians or musicologists, but also of a wide range of music lovers. This dissertation marks the beginning of the study of this period in Bulgarian musicology. The artistic questions related to the work of these forgotten artists are many and have yet to be explored.

Degree of knowledge of the state of the problem and consistency of the literature used

The doctoral student is an expert in discovering new and unknown piano scores, their first performer, as well as a sought-after teacher: *As a teacher who has taught at the Ecole supérieure de musique in Geneva, the Konservatorium in Zurich and the Musikhochschule and Konservatorium/Musikschule in Bienne, and who also gives private consultations to pianists, I can emphatically confirm that most students are eager to play works they have already heard and know – usually the most performed and well-known works by famous composers. My own concert experience in Europe, in addition to that as artistic director of the 'Geheimtipp am Mittag' concert series in Zurich for many years, shows that fellow musicians and audiences often prefer to perform and listen to composers whose works are already emotionally and mentally assimilated, while any new, unfamiliar artistic world requires a serious attitude, more energy and time to understand. At the same time, audiences receive unfamiliar works with interest, especially if they are commented on by the performer.*

Correctness in quoting a representative number of authors

Anna Forster is correct in her quotations. She uses a rich bibliography on which she has built and proved her thesis.

Contributions of the thesis

1. For the first time in Bulgarian musicology, unknown works from the second half of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries are examined, highlighting the contribution of forgotten, now unknown composers to the development of piano art. The analysis of their music is relevant to a deeper understanding of the music of famous composers of this era.
2. The emergence of the early romantic style in the early years of the 19th century is demonstrated.
3. The development of performance practice during this period is analyzed.
4. Previously unknown facts are presented related to the biographies of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Ludwig van Beethoven and Daniel Steibelt.
5. Corrections, based on many years of research, are made to inaccuracies or errors in the biographies of the authors under consideration.
6. The unknown piano pieces included in the text enrich contemporary pedagogical practice and contribute to the study of various pianistic techniques characteristic of the period of the second half of the 18th and early 19th centuries.
7. There are concert performances and CD recordings of the unknown musical works in question, given by the author.

Assessment of the relevance of the abstract to the main points and contributions of the thesis.

The abstract corresponds to the dissertation and correctly conveys the nature of the doctoral thesis.

Personal qualities of the author (if known to the reviewer)

I have no personal impressions of Anna Petrova-Forster. But her doctoral dissertation is evidence of serious instrumental and theoretical training, as well as a pedagogical interest in new and unfamiliar worlds in piano literature.

Publications on the dissertation topic

The PhD student has enough publications on the topic, featured in various media.

Opinions, recommendations and comments

I have no specific recommendations, but I would like to suggest that the results of this interesting and long-standing work be published in a separate book, possibly in several languages – English, German and French (in addition to Bulgarian).

In conclusion of this **OPINION**, I will end with the following assessment: the activity of the PhD student meets the scientific-metric indicators for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor", according to the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria. The dissertation work of Anna Petrova-Forster, PhD student at NBU, Department of Music, with scientific supervisor Prof. Dr. Sc. Elisaveta Valchinova-Chendova on the topic: **THE UNKNOWN EUROPEAN PIANO MUSIC OF THE SECOND HALF OF THE 18TH AND EARLY 19TH CENTURIES**, together with its contributions of scientific and applied qualities, as well as its publications and concerts, I consider sufficient to give my positive assessment and to propose to the esteemed scientific jury the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the professional field 8.3 Music and Dance Art,

The dissertation work of Anna Petrova-Forster, PhD student at NBU, Department of Music, with scientific supervisor prof. Prof. Elisaveta Valcinova-Chandova, Ph, on the topic. 3 Music and Dance Art, to Anna Petrova-Forster, according to the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria.

31.01.2021

Prof. Dr. Milena Shushulova-Pavlova