

## OPINION

**By Prof. Dr ATHANAS KARAFESLIEV**

Head of the Chamber Music and Accompaniment Department, Faculty of Instrumental Music,  
NMA "Prof. P. Vladigerov"

On the dissertation for the award of the academic and scientific degree "DOCTOR",

submitted by **MIRNA MLIKOTA - DIZDAREVIC**

doctoral candidate on independent study.

at the Department of Music, New Bulgarian University

on the topic: **"THE ROLE OF A FLUTE SOLOIST IN THE XVIII, XIX, XX CENTURY: A  
COMPARISON ABOUT QUALITIES AND EXPECTATIONS."**

**BIOGRAPHICAL DATA:** Mirna Mlikota - Dizdarevic was born in 1993 in Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina. She graduated from primary and secondary music education with distinction and was awarded Summa cum laude. She obtained her Bachelor's degree at the Music Academy in Sarajevo under the mentorship of prof. Sakib Lacevic in the year 2016, and her Master's degree from the same Academy under the same mentor in 2018. In 2019 Mirna completed her second Master's degree in Ljubljana at the Music Academy in the class of prof. Matej Župan. She participated in many masterclasses and worked with distinguished flautists, including Laura Levay Axin, Ljubiša Jovanović, Renata Penesić, Karolina Chantl Zupan (with whom she completed her third academic year as part of the Erasmus Mundus programme in Ljubljana), Marina Horak, Pierre-Yves Artaud, Trevor Wai, Orlando Vallee, Philippe Alain-Dupré, Damian Krajačić, Karl-Heinz Schutz, Rafael Leone, Ana Domančić, Boris Previšić, Luisa Sello (with whom she completed her 2017/2018 academic year as part of the Erasmus+ programme, Trieste), Matej Zupan. Mirna Mlikota carries the Golden Badge Award from the University of Sarajevo for outstanding artistic achievement. She has participated in many national and international

competitions. She has performed actively in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Italy.

Mirna performs at festivals such as: Chamber Music Festival-Sarajevo, Mayske svečanosti, Zeničko proljeće, Grad, Flautistra, Bašćaršijske noći, Flautissimo, Flute &Me, etc. In 2019 she founded the Flavia Trio for flute, violin and viola, together with colleagues from the Academy. In 2021 she became a member of the flute ensemble Le agane, under the direction of prof. Luisa Sello, Italian flautist and founder of the ensemble. Mlikota plays the flute, piccolo flute, and traverso flute. In addition to solo piano and flute recitals, she performs in various chamber ensembles. She performs a repertoire ranging from Baroque to contemporary music. She is currently working as an assistant professor of flute at the Academy of Music in Sarajevo, in the Department of Wind and Accordion.

Myrna Mlikota's artistic biography is impressive - high educational qualifications, a considerable number of masterclasses, awards, concerts and performances in various formations with various music, and proficiency in a wide range of instruments. All this shows an excellent preliminary preparation for writing this dissertation. The thesis contains an introduction, three main chapters and a conclusion.

Appended are: a list of publications and concerts on the doctoral thesis and four tables with figures to illustrate the research. An extensive bibliography is used, including 16 references, 69 references to online sources and three interviews - a sufficient number according to the normative requirements for a thesis.

Chapter One is entitled "Historical Development of the Flute" and is a kind of introduction to the thesis.

Chapter Two is entitled "Styles and Changes", and in it, the doctoral student focuses on the flute's history and the development of flute performance in Europe. This chapter is historical and looks at the passage of the instrument through the different eras - Baroque, Classical, Romantic and Modern. This part of the work would be helpful for beginning flautists to learn about the

historical development of the flute. It is assumed that the doctoral student will be teaching such students, and they would find this information particularly useful.

Chapter Three is entitled “Comparing Yesterday and Today. A study of performance versus expectations”. This part of the study would significantly develop the flute school in the candidate’s home country. The work could serve as a textbook for flautists dedicated to early music and its interpretation. The author aims to analyse the relationship between past and present, between old and new music, examining through the prism of her views and perceptions the role of the contemporary flautist in the innovative reading of early music.

I have confidence that the present work can be published in the doctoral candidate's homeland as a methodological manual to serve the development of native pedagogy and performing arts. It also contributes with a description of the problems in the work of instrumentalists in a pandemic situation and their management.

The contributions of the work are outlined as follows:

- The doctoral thesis traces the role of the flautist-soloist from the eighteenth century to the present day, looking for similarities and differences. A parallel (comparison) is made with the development of the flute as an instrument and the connection between disagreements in social changes and how they affect the flute player with all the challenges and responsibilities. The author emphasises adherence through the centuries to the same ultimate goal of preserving high-quality flute music. She demonstrates how music can survive as an artistic value despite changes and differences.

- It highlights the problems in the current process: digitalisation and technological advances are distancing performing musicians from the audience maximally. The technology prevents live music from acting on the audience, and the direct publicity of musical processes is hindered. The PhD thesis proposes ways of combining classical styles of stage performance with new technology-based approaches to create innovative content. Still, the aim is always to preserve the music, its essence and artistic value. On the other hand, technology today makes it much easier to get hold of the score of a flute work, to find information about its history, about the composer in the layers of virtual arrays (which facilitates and guarantees higher quality), whereas this was impossible a few centuries ago.

A concise chronological narrative and analysis of the most prominent flute schools and flautists and the composer's works for flute during the specified period are provided. Analysing the historical overview of the development of the flute as an instrument, with its sub-types - alto flute, piccolo flute and innovations related to the instrument - proves the inextricable link between instrument, performer and composer: the lighter technical demands from performers in the 17th century, related to the characteristics of the instrument - still unrefined, and today, with all the flute's expanded tonal and technical facilities, performers enjoy a repertoire that demands creative process, originality, and supreme sonic and technical possibilities.

- Advantages and disadvantages - in socio-cultural, performance (flute, solo, etc.) and technological aspects imposed by the particular circumstances of the last two years (Covid-19) are highlighted. Possible online, mixed hybrid and various solutions are given. The author seeks to answer the question: is it possible for art to survive in such circumstances, and what should flautists and other musicians do in such situations, how to contribute to the preservation and improvement in light of artistry?

- **The most important contribution of the doctoral thesis is the sociological aspect of the findings in the search for a formulation of the vision and principles of the solo flautist's personality - viewed historically before and today.** The commitments of flautists have always been multifaceted - in the 17th and 21st centuries, the flautist must also be a manager, fluent in foreign languages, and a good interpreter. In the past, he was looking for someone to sponsor his concerts financially, but today the flautist writes projects and applies for funds, looking for sponsors. This complexity of conclusions about the necessary qualities of a contemporary flautist would give a vision and a probable path for the development of young performers. Thus, the author characterises the solo flautist of the twenty-first century by showing expectations and achievements.

- Ample attention is also paid (as a flautist-performer and scholar-researcher) to another problem: the dilemma of interpreting old scores - in an authentic or in a contemporary way? A possible answer to the question lies in the traditions of various performance schools and, sometimes, in the personal choices and culture of the interpreter. It is left to each individual to make their own decision: that supporters of the modern flute should not return to the imperfect baroque traverso instrument and that supporters of early music should use replica instruments of

the time and represent the style as faithfully as possible. The author believes there is ample room for both ways of presenting flute music and for an audience to appreciate them.

The contributions are well brought out, and the whole structure and content of the work should be welcomed, given the usefulness of this kind of research. The author has fulfilled her aims and objectives in their entirety, as the approach is purely practical, and the appendices prove it. At the end of the work, Mirna Mlikota applies programmes of concerts performed by her in many countries, thus demonstrating an excellent concert experience. The wide range of styles and genres in which concerts are performed is evident, which is extremely important for a future academic career of a PhD student.

**In the context of what has been said so far, I express my positive opinion, proposing to the esteemed scientific panel to award the Doctor of Education and Science degree to Mirna Mlikota - Dizdarevic, PhD candidate in independent studies at the Department of Music of New Bulgarian University.**

25. 03. 2022, Sofia

Prof. Dr. Atanas Karafezliev