

## REVIEW

by **Prof. Dr. Milena Shushulova-Pavlova**, New Bulgarian University, on the  
*dissertation of Zane Abazi*

**PhD candidate at New Bulgarian University, Doctoral Program "Music", Sofia, with scientific supervisors Prof. Dr. Luisa Sello and Prof. Dr. Yavor Konov, DSc, on Contemporary Pieces for the Flute by Young Kosovan Composers. A PARALLEL WITH THE EUROPEAN FLUTE REPERTOIRE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

**FLUTE REPERTORY BY EMERGING KOSOVO COMPOSERS. A PARALLEL WITH THE EUROPEAN FLUTE REPERTORY OF THE 21ST CENTURY for the award of the educational and scientific degree of Doctor in the professional field 8.3 Music and Dance Art**

**Zane Abazi** commenced her flute training at the age of seven, subsequently completing her primary and secondary music education in Peja and Prishtina under the tutelage of Professor Suejla Bruti-Zhuri. Thereafter, she pursued her undergraduate studies at the Hasan Prishtina University of Prishtina, where she was mentored by Venera Mehmetagai and Professor Eremira Çitaku. She has participated in masterclasses led by renowned instrumentalists including Laura Levai Akshin, Ljubisa Jovanovic, Andreas Gosling, Susanne Peters, Michelle Becker, Bulent Eugiel, Evelyn Degen, Gregory Charette and Luisa Sello. She is a soloist with the Naonis Donatello Orchestra in Grado (Italy), the Sofia Symphony Orchestra (Bulgaria) and the Kosovo Philharmonic Orchestra. Since 2021, she has been principal flute in the Kosovo Opera. She is also a member of the Kosovo Youth Orchestra, the European Summer Academy Orchestra (ESMA), and the Italian-based flute ensemble "Le Agane". As a soloist, chamber musician, and orchestral performer, Zane believes that every performance offers a unique opportunity to connect with the audience and share the love of music. Her participation in numerous festivals, including the DAM Fest, Flute Sounds, Sofia Music Week, the Orpheus International Music Academy, Chamberfest in Pristina, Skopje and Tirana, the Computer Music Festival in Sofia, Campus Udine, the Darte Festival, the Balkan Composers Competition in Pristina and the Castello Udine Festival, attests to her commitment to her craft. Her profound interest in contemporary music is evident in her exploration of innovative methods for sound production with the flute, a subject that formed the foundation of her PhD thesis.

## Contents of the dissertation

Zane Abazi's dissertation is a thesis focused on performance. It was discussed and proposed for public defence at a meeting of the Music Department Council held on 17.9.2024. The thesis is comprised of 98 pages in total, which include the following: abstract, acknowledgements, introduction, three chapters, and conclusion. List of contributions. The bibliography comprises 60 sources, including 14 books, 7 electronic sources, 33 scores (which are discussed in detail in the dissertation and performed on the concert podium as part of the PhD research), and 6 audio recordings. Zane Abazi has one scholarly publication. 1.1. The artistic musical community in the 2000s in Kosovo and their connection with the artistic musical community in the world. 1.2. The social circumstances of the music community in Kosovo in the early 2000s. The influence of world composers on the artistic and musical development of Kosovo composers since the early 2000s. The most influential Kosovo composers of the 20th century who influenced young and emerging Kosovo composers. The utilisation of extended techniques by Kosovar composers in their flute repertoire, in comparison to the flute repertoire of international composers. 2.2 An examination of the compositional and stylistic characteristics of 21st-century Kosovar composers, and the performance of their works by local flautists. 2.3 An analysis of Kosovar composers from 2000 to 2010 and the incorporation of extended techniques in their oeuvre. 3. Kosovo composers from 2010 to the present. 3.2 Awareness of extended techniques among Kosovo composers and the flute scene in Kosovo. 3.3 Educational musical journey of Kosovar composers and their awareness of electronic music participation in musical works of world composers.

The dissertation comprises an appendix containing a detailed list of the PhD student's concert performances over the past three years. The list is impressive, with a total of 53 concerts (chamber, solo, and with orchestra), excluding performances and onstage appearances as a member of an orchestra (as principal flute). The breakdown of these performances is as follows: 14 in 2022, 25 in 2023, and 14 in 2024.

### **The dissertation's aims and objectives are formulated with precision.**

Zane Abazi's research is of an applied nature, and her dissertation is of an artistic character, comprising the composition of a scholarly text, but chiefly encompassing performance and recording.

The primary objective of the dissertation is to identify and evaluate contemporary works for the flute composed in Kosovo during the 21st century, and to compare them with works by composers dedicated to this instrument from various global regions. The PhD candidate successfully identified a substantial number of composers and a sufficient number of exceptional flute compositions in Kosovo. These are subjected to rigorous evaluation and comparative analysis in this research study. The analysis reveals that the composers who receive the most attention are Drinor Zymeri, Dafina Zeqiri Nushi, Rafet Rudi and Mendi Mengjiqi (they are among the composers of the second half of the twentieth century), followed by the younger ones - Bardh Dubovci, Ylli Daklani, Anda Kreziu, Liburn Jupolli, Ersan Januzi and Leutrim Sahiti. It is anticipated that these composers' works will play a significant role in shaping the future of the flute repertoire in Kosovo. A comparative analysis of their works with those of composers from diverse global backgrounds has been conducted through rigorous research and study of various styles, as well as the exploration of novel and expanded techniques in flute playing. The doctoral thesis underscores the fact that in the twenty-first century, a significant proportion of works composed for the flute are created using innovative extended techniques. The research undertaken by Zane Abazi is of a high calibre, and she has successfully defined, executed and substantiated her PhD thesis. The methodology employed is analytical, historically grounded, comparative, formal (in relation to musical form), and performance-interpretive (in relation to performance issues in sound production and flute technique), particularly with regard to contemporary Kosovan works.

### **The significance of the research problem and its timeliness**

Since the year 2000, Kosovo composers have made a concerted effort to discover potential new applications of flute voicing methods and effects and apply them in their compositions (Zane, 2023). As a component of the thesis, Zane also incorporates the use of electronic or tape/music. The doctoral student demonstrates that in the early twenty-first century, composers from Kosovo exhibited an increased interest, particularly evident in the works *Dialogues Perdue* by Rafet Rudi, followed by *Image* by his daughter Donika Rudi and finally *As You See Me* by composer Bardh Dubovci. With an understanding of the philosophical nature of the works, composers from Kosovo have a distinct compositional style. The musical history and heritage of these composers suggests

a specialised knowledge of electronic composition, and during the historical period under analysis, they made significant progress, displaying similarities with composers from around the world.

### **The doctoral candidate's level of knowledge**

Zane Abazi's conclusion is that the repertoire for flute by Kosovar composers in the 21st century has managed to reach a high professional level, comparable to that of composers from all over the world. The results show the use of modern electronic music, contemporary styles, specific harmonies and metrics. A continuous exchange between tradition and innovation highlights the strength and creativity of Kosovar composers and places them in the wider context of contemporary music. They are adept at integrating electronic components into their works. Their efforts enrich the local musical and cultural environment and strengthen their position in the international music community. This dissertation highlights the importance of these compositions in building a distinctive cultural identity and improving the understanding of contemporary music in Kosovo.

### **Citation accuracy**

**Zane Abazi's** citations are correct.

### **Assessment of the relevance of the abstract to the main points and contributions of the thesis:**

The abstract is consistent with the thesis, although it does not follow its content exactly.

The abstract is in line with the main points and contributions of the thesis, even if it is not exactly in line with the content of the thesis. It aims to focus on the most important conclusions and parts of the dissertation.

### **Scientific publications on the dissertation topic:**

Abazi, Z. (2023): A comparison of the flute repertoire of the 21st century: the Bardh Dubovci and Ian Clarke. Young scholarly forum on music and dance: conference with international participation, (17), 280-294

### **CONCERTS, PEDAGOGY AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES**

(The selection programme of each performance has it as an appendix in the PhD student's abstracts and dissertation).

## 2022

1. **Concert, 12.03.2022 / 19:00**, Museum of Macedonian Struggle, Skopje, North Macedonia. Solo concert
2. **Concert, 04.08.2022 / 20:00**, Mariahilfekirche, Vienna, Orpheus International Music Academy
3. **Concert, 09.08.2022 / 20:00**, Mariahilfekirche, Vienna, International Music Academy "Orpheus", Solo Concert
4. **Concert, 07.08.2022 / 20:00**, Mariahilfekirche, Vienna, Orpheus International Music Academy, Present
5. **Concert, 06.08.2022 / 20:00**, Mariahilfekirche, Vienna, Orpheus International Music Academy, Great Power of Music
6. **Concert, 05.08.2022 / 20:30**, Orpheus International Music Academy, Jazz meets Classical, Chamber Concert,
7. **Concert, 04.08.2022 / 11:30**, Museum of Vienna, Vienna, Orpheus International Music Academy, In Memory of Joseph Haydn, Chamber Concert
8. **Concert, 28.11.2022 / 11:00**, Montagna che Spettacolo, Rifugio Gilberti, Italy, Ensemble Le Agane, Chamber Flute Repertoire
9. **Concert, 28.08.2022 / 16:00**, Cittadella della Cultura, Udine, Italy, Campus Musica Udine, Chamber Repertoire.
10. **Concert, 07.06.2022 / 19:00**, Music Fest Week Sofia, National Palace of Culture, Sofia, Bulgaria, Luisa Sello Flute Recital, Special Participation.
11. **Recording, 18.11.2022**, Bard Dubovci "W" Flute Trio, Performers: Bard Dubovtsi "W" Trio for Flutes, Performers: Yetta Gerjari, Husnier Latifai, Zane Abazi (flutes), [YouTube](#) [ЛИНК](#)
12. **Concert, 09.12.2022 / 17:30**, New Bulgarian University, Music Department, Gallery Hall, International Forum-Festival "Computer Music and Space". (Introduction. 1. First,

second and third generation composers in Kosovo and the musical heritage of Kosovo. 2. Composers from Kosovo at the beginning of the 21st century: their education and influence from outside. 2.1 The new generation of Kosovo composers in comparison with world composers. 2.2 The introduction of tape and electronics among Kosovar composers. 2.3 New and emerging Kosovar composers and their introduction to tape and electronics. Conclusion. List of Contributions. Bibliography. Appendix: Concerts, Pedagogy and Scientific Activities. Autobiography of Zane Abazi).

13. **Concert, 25.09.2022 / 11:00**, Chamber Concert, Music Performance Conference, Jeronimus von Colloredo Palace, Udine, Italy, Duets and Trios for Flute from Mozart Operas

14. **Concert, 22.09.2022 / 15:00**, Library of the Benedetto Marcello Conservatory in Venice, Italy, Chamber Concert, Quartet for Flutes / Luisa Cello and Le Agane

## **2023**

1. **Concert, 22.09.2022 / 15:00**, Library of the Benedetto Marcello Conservatory in Venice, Italy, Chamber Concert,

2. **Concert, 24.02.2023 / 11:00**, Academy of Sciences, Alex Buda Hall, Tirana, Albania, Presentation of the book "Anthology of Kosovo Composers" 3. **Lecture, 14.03.2023 / 14:00**, "Advanced flute techniques in contemporary computer music"

4. **Detailed review of the work "Passages" by J.K. Risset at New Bulgarian University**, Masterclass, 28.03.2023 / 11:00, Masterclass in chamber music with students from the Prenk Jakova School of Music, Prishtina, Kosovo

5. **Concert, 14.03.2023 / 17:00**, New Bulgarian University, Gallery Hall, Chamber and solo repertoire by.

6. **Concert, 15.03.2023 / 18:30**, Concert Hall "Nadezhda", Sofia, Sofia Sinfonietta, Conductor Pasquale Mancece, Premiere of Concerto for two flutes and orchestra "Two Stars" by Giorgio Tortora

7. **Recording, 18.04.2023**, Bard Dubovci "As You See Me"
8. **Concert, 07.05.2023 / 19:00**, Zechschimer Gallery, Vienna, Chamber Concert,
9. **Concert, 10.05.2023 / 18:30**, Casermetta di Santra Croce Mura Urbane, Lucca, Italy, Luisa Cello and EstroVerso Consort
10. **Lecture, 30.06.2023 / 17:00**, "Advanced Flute Techniques" of the Moyse International Flute Competition
11. Gallery Hall, New Bulgarian University
12. **Concert, 26.06.2023 / 20:00**, Faculty of Arts Gallery, Prishtina, Kosovo, Kosovo Contemporary Art Festival, Solo and Chamber music repertoire
13. **Concert, 23.07.2023 / 18:30**, Villa Clerici, Luisa Cello and Le Agane
14. **Concert, 25.07.2023 / 21:00**, Grado Basilica Di Sant'Eufemia, Italy, Accademia Naonis-Donatello Orchestra
15. **Concert, 09.08.2023 / 19:00**, Salon Bösendorfer, Vienna, Austria, Concerto for Chamber Music, Luisa Sello (flute and concept)
16. **Concert, 19.08.2023 / 20:00**, Village of Kukaj, Ethno Festival, Kosovo, First Flute in the Kosovo Opera Orchestra
17. **Concert, 09.09.2023 / 19:30**, New Amphitheatre of the University Library, Prishtina, Kosovo, Dam Festival - Flutestravaganza
18. **Concert, 20.11.2023 / 21:30**, Hotel Abano Ritz, Sala degli Spechi, Italy, New Era Ensemble
19. **Concert, 22.11.2023 / 17:00**, Torre di Santa Maria, Via Zanon 24, Udine, Italy, New Era Ensemble

20. **Concert, 27.11.2023 / 20:00**, Atelier of the Palace of Youth and Sports, Prishtina, Kosovo, Wind Orchestra of the Kosovo Philharmonic
21. **Concert, 21.11.2023 / 17:30**, Palazzo Albrizzi-Capello, New Era Ensemble, Chamber Concert
22. **Concert, 19.11.2023 / 16:30**, Sala Laguna Lido, Venice, Festival Internazionale di Musica Antica Veneziana e Veneta, Chamber repertoire.
23. **Concert, 14.06.2023 / 20:00**, MusicaUp, Faculty of Arts Gallery, Chamber work by Mendi Mengjqi "Fantasia" for flute and guitar
24. **Concert, 04.10.2023 / 20:00**, University Library New Amphitheatre, Prishtina, Kosovo, Songs and other works by Luciano Berio
25. **Concert, 17.11.2023 / 19:00**, Faculty of Arts Gallery, Prishtina, Kosovo, PostDAM festival, concert for flute and guitar duo by Zane Abazi and Urim Maliqi

## **2024**

1. **Concert, 23-25.02.2024 / 19:00**, AMC hall, Obilic, Kosovo, Opera of Kosovo / First Flute
2. **Concert, 06.04.2024 / 20:00**, Asim Vokshi Palace of Culture, Jakova, Kosovo
3. Solo flute accompanied by the Kosovo Philharmonic Orchestra 4. **Concert, 25.05.2024 / 20:00**, Studio of the Palace of Youth and Sports, Prishtina, Kosovo, Kosovo Philharmonic Orchestra / First Flute 5. **Concert, 31.05.2024 / 18:00**, Gallery of the Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Music, Chamber Concert
6. **Concert, 11.06.2024 / 20:30**, Great Hall of the Palace of Youth and Sports, Prishtina, Kosovo, "Strings of Life", Kosovo Philharmonic Orchestra / First Flute



7. **Concert, 19.07.2024 / 21:00**, Piano D'arta, Church of the Archprepietale, Festival Darte, Italy, Chamber Concerto, Gioachino Rossini, "da Il Barbiere di Siviglia" "La calunnia e un venticello" for bass, flute and strings

8. **Concert, 19.07.2024 / 18:30**, Alzeri, Church of San Niccolo, Festival Darte, Italy, Trio Estroverso, Chamber Concerto for Flute

9. **Concert, 20.07.2024 / 11:00**, Castoia, Casa Morcutti, Darte Festival, Italy, Trio Donatello

10. **Lecture, 10.07.2024 / 12:00**, "New and Extended Techniques in the Flute Repertoire", Doctoral students.

11. Maratone Kuintetesh, Wind Quintet, Frymon Festival **Concert, 11.07.2024 / 20:30**, Caleto of Tirana, Tirana, Albania 12.

13. Chamber concert, repertoire by Ligeti, Góber, Iber, etc.

14. **Concert, 27.07.2024 / 21:00**, "Carshia e Jupave", Djakovo, Kosovo, Gocat Frymore, Ditet e Shqiptarit Festival, Chamber Concert with repertoire from Ligeti, Bozza, Iber, etc.

### **Contributions of the thesis**

A significant contribution of doctoral candidate Zane Abazi is evident in her concert and performance activity, which is noteworthy. I have personally attended the majority of her concerts in Sofia, and it is evident that she is a highly skilled flautist. She possesses an enviable modern technique, stage presence, and a talent for performing that is highly enviable. Furthermore, her dedication to the Moysé International Flute Competition at New Bulgarian University in 2023 and 2024 is noteworthy, as she contributed significantly to the organisation of these events.

1. The dissertation she has submitted is of national and international significance, as it provides a comprehensive collection, evaluation and cataloguing of contemporary flute compositions by Kosovo-based composers. The dissertation provides a comprehensive overview of contemporary flute compositions from the twenty-first century, showcasing the diverse range of composers and

their evolution in terms of innovative use of effects and extended flute playing techniques, including electronic or tape music.

2. In addition to its informative content, the study serves as a valuable resource for young flautists and aspiring composers, both within Kosovo and Europe, by offering insights into contemporary trends, interpretations, performance techniques and styles. The dissertation and concert recordings offer students a direct encounter with the contemporary flute repertoire, facilitating the preservation of the traditional components of the Kosovar school of composition while exposing students to novel and expanded techniques demanded by the analysed flute compositions. Consequently, the dissertation makes a dual contribution: it serves to preserve Kosovo's musical heritage and to provide a resource for the education and inspiration of the next generation of musicians, including flutists. By acquiring a more profound understanding of Kosovo's vibrant musical traditions and cultural practices, this study equips future musicians with the necessary skills to contribute to and participate in the ongoing evolution of their country's musical landscape.

3. Historically, Kosovo's composers have been exposed to a variety of international musical styles over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries. As a result of their diverse educations outside of Kosovo, these composers have incorporated these influences into their works and have passed them on to their students. In the contemporary era, young composers in Kosovo have the opportunity to present themselves on the global stage and contribute new stylistic insights to their music. This dissertation demonstrates that Kosovo composers have adopted a contemporary musical style, while many of them continue to utilise traditional Albanian folk music motifs in their works, combining them with new and expanded flute playing techniques.

4. This dissertation undertakes a comparative analysis of the modes, stylistic approaches, compositional techniques, and musical language of newly emerging Kosovar compositions, placing them in a global context and drawing parallels with those of twenty-first century world composers. The flute repertoire under scrutiny stands in marked contrast to international compositions of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, underscoring the significance of emerging Kosovar composers and showcasing their remarkable development, despite the absence of a classical musical heritage. The innovative and imaginative use of new and expanded techniques in

compositions for flute, evident in the work of these composers, is indicative of their significant contributions to contemporary music.

5. The present study focuses on the flute repertoire of Kosovo, thus providing a valuable contribution to the field of musicology. It demonstrates the creative potential of Kosovar composers and their place in 21st-century contemporary music, thus making it an invaluable resource for educators and performers alike. The works, performance techniques and interpretive approaches presented in this study have the capacity to spark interest and increase awareness of Kosovo's musical heritage.

6. The dissertation encourages the next generation of musicians and composers to experiment with these new performance methods and to explore the use of electronic and tape music in compositions. In addition, it demonstrates the rich potential of the flute repertoire in Kosovo. The dissertation offers useful advice for young performers, motivating them to continue their research and to support the future growth of contemporary music culture in Kosovo.

**In conclusion**, it is evident that the activity of the PhD student meets the scientific-metric indicators for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor", according to the PhDBA. The dissertation work of **Zane Abazi**, a PhD student at New Bulgarian University, DP Music, Sofia, with scientific supervisors Prof. Dr. Luisa Sello and Prof. Dr. Yavor Konov, DSc, entitled: **FLUTE REPERTORY BY EMERGING KOSOVO COMPOSERS. A PARALLEL WITH THE EUROPEAN FLUTE REPERTORY OF THE 21 CENTURY**, together with the contributions of scientific and applied qualities, as well as the publications and concerts on the subject, I consider sufficient to give my confident positive assessment and to propose to the esteemed scientific jury to **award the educational and scientific degree of Doctor** in the professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art to **Zane Abazi**, in accordance with the stipulations outlined in the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

01.12.2024, Sofia

Prof. Dr. Milena Shushulova-Pavlova