

**SUMMARY  
OF THE MONOGRAPHIC (ARTISTIC) WORK  
OF CHIEF ASSISTANT DOCTOR ANGEL ZABERSKI**

**AUTHOR CD 'BIG BAND IN ACTION' COMPLETED**

11 author music works and arrangements written for it. Finalised in **2018**.

Recording the album together with the Big Band Brass Association

Conducting and solo performance.

**13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> September – The 'Big Band in Action' CD official promotion**

<https://impressio.dir.bg/noti/big-bend-v-deystvie-e-noviyat-proekt-na-angel-zaberski>

'Big Band in Action' is the latest project of Angel Zaberski Big Band named after the last album recorded by the band in 2018. On the stage of the Sofia Philharmonic Orchestra 'Bulgaria Hall' and House of Culture 'Boris Hristov' - Plovdiv the latest plays by composer and conductor Angel Zaberski are presented for the first time. Zaberski invited some of the most successful Bulgarian and foreign jazz musicians. The program includes romantic ballads, folklore plays, opera arias and jazz standards: 'An eclecticism of genres - swing, ballad, fusion, folklore, bebop, mainstream..' The project is presented not only in Sofia and Plovdiv, but in Dobrich, Varna and Ruse as well.

**WORKS INCLUDED IN 'BIG BAND IN ACTION'**

**1. Anti Jazz**

The composition is a little more 'complicated' because the harmonic expression goes beyond the standard II/V/I. The introduction and coda are the same. A dense orchestral sonority with repetitions of the same material and superimposition, leading to Martin Tashev solo performance /trumpet/. Then follow the soloists Tobias Hoffman /saxophone/, Dimitar Liolev /saxophone/, Alexander Logozarov /guitar/ closing with - Martin Tashev and Stoyan Yankulov /drums/. A play 'beyond' the standard swinging.

**2. Eclipse**

Eclipse is perhaps 'the most contemporary' play in the whole album. Its rhythm is closest to the musical modernity we live in. A standard three-part form - theme, solo, ensemble and reprise. Soloists - Tobias Hoffman /saxophone/, Ivan Ivanov /saxophone/ and Vladislav Michev /trombone/.

**3. I love you**

The famous Cole Porter jazz standard. I tried to go a little beyond the standard orchestration framework by building a composition and shifting the standard puzzle: theme - solo - theme, trying to bring my style to the play as well, as I have listened to it in hundreds of variants. The fast swing piece contains a magnificent solo by Arnau Garrofé /saxophone/ and before it - Boris Tashev /double bass/ and Alexander Logozarov /guitar/. The play ends with a large-scale tutti, and at the very end Stoyan Yankulov /drums/ hints at what will happen in the next plays.

**4. In the key of Love**

A typical jazz ballad with a very beautiful melody interpreted brilliantly by Mihail Yosifov /trumpet/. The form is standard three-part: theme - solo - theme. The composition is very pleasant to listen to, feels like romance, love, why not for an evening love dance too.

**5. Che gelida manina Rudolfo's Aria from 'La boheme'**

The famous aria from Puccini's opera Bohemia was originally recorded in a trio version - Angel Zaberski /piano/, Boris Tashev /bass/ and Stoyan Yankulov /drums/ in the album Like Jazz Volume I. After we recorded it, I realized that it has the potential to

- be developed for a large orchestra, although it was performed by an opera orchestra and why not then by a Big Band as well. While transcribing the original music, well known all over the world, I had a very careful approach to the melody and harmony so that the audience can focus on the music. Solo performers are Mihail Yosifov /trumpet/, Alexander Logozarov /guitar/ and Vladislav Michev /trombone/.
- 6. Nessun Dorma**  
Nessun dorma is the second Puccini opera aria from his opera Turandot included in the album. Once again I realized that Puccini is very difficult to remake, as his music is genius; this play is also recorded in a trio version and the sound of the trio is what inspired me to make it for the Big Band. I very carefully approached the original melody and focused more on the rhythm and reharmonization but trying to keep the spirit of Puccini's melody and mood. The solo performances of Alexander Logozarov /guitar/ and Mihail Yosifov /trumpet/ are brilliant. There is original author's material at the end of the play, more precisely in the coda.
- 7. Slow motion**  
A typical pop ballad, beautifully performed by Dimitar Liolev on alto sax. Placing lyrics on the melody can easily turn it into a song.
- 8. Memories from Strandzha**  
'Memories from Strandzha' is a special composition of mine because it reminds me a lot of my roots which are in Strandzha. The play carries the spirit of Bulgarian folklore. Mihail Yosifov /trumpet/ is the soloist. The play refers slightly to the uneven Bulgarian measures.
- 9. The Big Race**  
'The big race' theme comes from a signal I had written for a program broadcasted on BNT; playing it in a smaller formation, it came to my mind it could turn into a composition for a Big Band and I just did a remake. The fast swing is impressive, soloists are Mihail Yosifov /trumpet/, Dimitar Liolev /saxophone/ and Stoyan Yankulov /drums/. This is good example how a 4-bar idea can turn into a spectacular Big Band play.
- 10. The good old school**  
'The Good Old School' is a play reminding of Sammy Nestico's style and the sound of Count Basie. If I had not already chosen the album name, it would probably have been named after this play. Soloists - Vladislav Michev /trombone/, Mihail Yosifov /trumpet/, Dimitar Liolev /saxophone/.
- 11. Thracian Tunes**  
This play is in the category 'the funniest', perhaps that is why I would like to conclude with it. It is a folk play, I have no idea how it occurred. It has three parts, the first theme in moderate tempo, as the melody is presented by the duet by Mihail Yosifov /trumpet/ and Dimitar Lelev /saxophone/; the second part includes their solos in different tonalities, as folk musicians do when they perform solo. Then a folk ballad follows, it is chanting and lasting, having rich harmony and reminding of the beautiful slow folk melodies, again played by the duet Misho and Mitko. The third part is a reprise of the first theme, the conclusion is a bit in James Bond style. The play is a great ending to the whole album and the work done by all of us. A play to dance, laugh or even cry.

**The Brass Association** is the latest big band in Bulgaria consisting of 17 members.

Since its establishment, the band has performed on the stage of the National Palace of Culture with "DE PHAZZ", "Sofia Jazz Peak", it recorded a concert for BNT in the National Palace of Culture (directed by Monika Yakimova); the band performs regularly on the stage of 'Sofia Live Club' and 'Studio 5'. The first concert of the big band is on the stage of the National Music School – 'New Academy' stage.

The band did a tour in Italy with a guest conductor, playing the music of Bernstein and Duke Ellington. The first studio recording is ready, it was done in 'Sofia Live Club' (for the first time the club is used as a recording studio). Nine plays, specially composed and arranged for the Angel Zaberski formation, who is also the orchestra leader, as well as arrangements of two jazz standards 'Alone Together', 'Little Sunflower' /the album is to be released/. Alen Hadjistefanov from Skopje has been invited to be a sound-engineer.

### **Brief analysis of the compositions of Chief Assistant Dr. Angel Angelov Zaberski presented as the second part of a monograph**

The monographic work, which I gladly present in relation to my forthcoming habilitation as an Associate Professor of Musicology and Music Art (under professional field 8.3. Music and Dance Art) compiles my artistic and creative activity into a **monograph** - implementation (performing, organizing and writing activity) of four significant projects of national and international importance, hereby presented with a brief text with defined scientific problem and contribution:

**Taking part in a concert on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> November 2014** together with Angel Zaberski Trio, Mihail Yosifov and the Brass Quintet at the '**EUROPEAN CULTURAL DAYS**' festival in **Frankfurt am Main**. The event was organized by the European Central Bank (ECB) in cooperation with the Bulgarian National Bank. The EUROPEAN CULTURAL DAYS initiative has been running since 2003 each year focusing on the culture of the various countries of the European Union. The first concert of the Angel Zaberski Trio was on Jazzkeller stage where jazz icons such as Dizzy Gillespie and Louis Armstrong played 60 years ago. On 28<sup>th</sup> November together with Vasil Petrov, Stoyan Yankulov, Mihail Yosifov, Todor Bakardzhiev, Martin Tashev, Vili Stoyanov, Mihail Mihailov and Dimitar Uzunov we held a concert entitled 'A new interpretation of evergreens'. The music we played on the stage of the oldest music academy in Frankfurt Dr. Hoch's Konservatorium (1878) was based on my own arrangements.

**Participation in a concert on 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2016 with the project 'JAZZ MEETS THE CLASSICS'** on 4 grand pianos with three of the best pianists in Bulgaria (Ivan Yanakov, Georgi Cherkin and Zhivko Petrov) at the invitation of the Bulgarian Cultural Institute in London, with the participation of Theodosii Spasov, The Mystery of the Bulgarian Voices, the London Bulgarian Choir and the London Chamber Orchestra. The concert is held in the prestigious Cadogan Hall in London honouring the Day of Bulgarian Literature and Culture with special guest – the Minister of Culture Vezhdi Rashidov. The concert is the first in a series of events during Bulgaria's preparation for the presidency of the Council of the European Union. The concert was held under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and was prepared by the Bulgarian Cultural Institute team in London, managed by Svetla Dionisieva.

**Participation in a concert from the cycle 'Music for America'** in April 2013 with Angel Zaberski trio together with the American trumpeter Rex Richardson, with arrangements by Angel Zaberski to the music of J. Gershwin, D. Ellington, L. Armstrong.

**Performance in a concert with Mihail Yosifov - trumpet, and Classic FM orchestra in the fourth season of the cycle 'The Music of America'.** The concert took place on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2013 in Bulgaria Hall having popular themes from Hollywood productions, with special guest conductor Francisco Noah – well-known in the musical life of the United States and his home country Venezuela, one of the promoters the famous El Sistema - music education for poor children. He graduated in composition and conducting in Boston (USA), then lived and worked as a conductor there at the Rhode Island Philharmonic. He teaches at the prestigious Berkeley College.

**Participation in a concert of Christian McBride with his trio at the invitation of Sofia Music Enterprises. The concert was held in March at Sofia Live Club** with Jazz FM as media partner. Christian McBride visited Bulgaria on March 7 with his trio and drummer Ulysses Owens Jr. McBride is famous for the variety of his solo projects and the support he gladly provides to other artists with their recordings.

#### **Recording and implementation of author CD:**

- OKtet – Angel Zaberski octet
- Angel Zaberski 'Hot and Brazz rhythm'
- 'Definitely Mr. Zaberski'
- 'Hi voltage'- Big Band
- 'Reflections'
- 'Like Jazz'

Here are some of the plays:

#### **1. Gangsters in da House**

A *swing-shuffle* play reminiscent of the dry regime in America. 40 bars 'AABA' play having an extended middle part instead of the standard 8,16 '*bridge*' bars. It starts with an orchestral 'tutti', the theme is in 16 bars, saxophones in unison. The 'refrain' (*bridge*) is played by trumpets, accompanied by saxophones and trombones gradually complicating and superimposing harmony.

#### **2. Fa Funk**

The play is closer to the 'jazz-rock', 'fusion' style, tonality is key here: F major. It reminds a little of 'Maynard Ferguson' or 'Rob McConnell' Big Band - the 80s - 90s of last century. It starts with 4 bars of drums instead of 'intro'. The theme is presented with trombones and saxophones in unison and trumpets, again in AABA form, only the refrain is more diverse to make contrast, the 2nd A parts are in fa - ostinato harmony.

#### **3. 3 and ½ in One**

This is the largest composition in the whole album and consists of 3 independent parts connected by a common '*leit motive*'. The three plays are also different in style. The intro is very simple and does not suggest what will happen next. The 1st part is composed harmoniously (vertically), the so-called '*hidden melody*', a lot of '*swing*', with alternating long and short musical durations. This part is based on the standard AABA form. A melody in alto saxophone follows played by Mitko Liolev with a love sound and namely that is the *common feature* in the whole composition.

#### **4. You and Me**

A typical ballad written for trombone and big band, brilliantly played by Vili Stoyanov and reminding of the style of the big band art master - *Sammy Nestico*! Alternation of tranquillity and tension in musical terms. It starts with gentle 'intro flugelhorn' and 'trombones' (a soft sound), the theme is in quarters and reminds of '**choral**'. After Vily's solo, a more dramatic and emotional sound follow from the band, then the heavy trombone, an outburst of passion and energy.

#### **5. Alone Together**

The famous jazz standard of *Artur Schwartz* performed by jazz musicians all over the world. The arrangement starts with standard 8 bars "fill - in" drums, the 'intro' is short, with theme elements in saxophones with polyphonic elements. Solo alto-saxophone is Vladko Karparov, with ostinato *background* of the orchestra.

#### **6. last Love Song**

This is the second ballad in the album, in a more complex harmonic language, 'clusters' (narrower chords). The whole composition is in a choral, heavy, huge sound, the melody is not lost, although the harmonic expression is the focus here. The mastery of the musicians is easily seen as the tempo is very slow and almost all durability is in quarter and half notes.

#### **7. Little Sunflower**

This is the second play that is not author's but only an arrangement. Its author is *Freddie Hubbard*. It starts with a mysterious piano 'intro', gradually imposing the other instruments, an ostinant melody repeating for a long time and perhaps reminiscent of the 'the wind that sways the sunflower' ... or of film music.

#### **8. For Good**

A composition not very close to *swing* and originally written for a 'combo' band, but remade into a 'Big Band' version. It starts with an independent "intro" from the "sax section", followed by the soft sound of trombones and flugelhorn. The theme is played by Misho Yosifov and Vladko Karparov - flugelhorn and soprano saxophone, masters of their instruments, sounding like one.

#### **9. Analogous Case**

Jazz samba but sounding more commercial which can also make you dance. A typical theme and form: 32 bars. The first A is in unison, divided between the various groups. 'Bridge' in thirds of trumpets and a countermelody of saxophones in unison.

Solo: Vladko Karparov - alto saxophone, full of energy all the time, and Misho Yosifov - trumpet, not letting you take a breath even for a second – this is hot 'jazz samba' after all. And a piano solo, reminding of *Mishel Camilo* style, *Danilo Peres*... why not!

#### **10. Never Say Yes**

The third last ballad in the album is played by Mitko Liolev, who not only plays it but 'sings' it on his alto saxophone. Again the standard 32-bar AABA form is used. The 'pop ballad' again reminds of *Sammy Nestico* style. The theme is divided between the alto saxophone and the 'trombone soli'.

#### **11. Retro News**

A truly 'retro' composition taking us back to the 70s and 80s of the last century (20th century). Movement in triplets. A typical theme reminiscent of the *Rocky* movie, of *Maynard Ferguson* band and the films of that time. A healthy rhythm, 'action'.