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JAZZ COMPOSITIONS FOR DOMRA BY V. VLASOV

Work objective. The given article defines the means of jazz stylistics in the modern domra performance in the context of the original compositions for domra by V. Vlasov “Jazz-Concertino”, “Basso-Ostinato”, “Pale Royale”.

The investigation methodology involves applying the comparative, aesthetic-cultural and historical methods as well as musicological and performance attitude to research, forming a general methodological basis. The given methodological approach provides an opportunity to develop a concept of performing the jazz compositions for domra. **The scientific novelty of the work lies in** extension of the modern domra repertoire representation by means of introducing the latest compositions of jazz stylistics. The specifics of mastering the jazzy manner of playing is particularly determined in syncopating peculiarity, the ternary principle of rhythm proportions, the domra “detache” technique prevalence, glissando implementation, pull-up technique etc. **Insights.** Modern domrism is determined to have mastered the jazzy manner of playing which is indispensable to the contemporary repertoire armoury. Domra player’s mastering the jazzy manner in its specific metro-dynamic and tone-quality characteristics plays the key role in interpreting the compositions of jazz stylistics. Performing the compositions of jazz stylistics provides the domra player with an opportunity not only to master the jazzy manner skill but also to elicit the bright and new but still natural features of a recently academised concert instrument of domra.

Keywords: jazz, domra, jazz styles, jazz stylistics, V. Vlasov, ternary principle, detache, glissando.

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Джазові твори В. Власова для домри

Мета роботи. У статті визначаються джазові стилістики у сучасному домровому виконавстві на прикладі оригінальних творів для домри В. Власова «Джаз-концертно», «Бассо-остинато». **Методологія дослідження** полягає в застосуванні компаративного, естетико-культурологічного, історичного методів, а також музикознавчого та виконавського аналітичних підходів, які утворюють єдину методологічну основу. Зазначений методологічний підхід дозволяє розкрити виконавську модель джазових творів для домри. **Наукова новизна** роботи полягає в розширенні уявлень про сучасний домровий репертуар за рахунок введення актуальних джазових стилістичних засобів. Визначається специфіка оволодіння домристом джазовою манерою гри, зокрема, особливостями синкопування, «тернарного» принципу ритмічних пропорцій, переважання домрового прийому «деташе», використання glissando та гри з підтягуванням, втілення «духу» джазової імпровізаційності та свободи. **Висновки.** Категорії колективності, гри, цілісності, а також дитинства, дитячості, виступають у дитячому фольклорі (поряд з синкретизмом, утилітарністю, символізмом, образністю, декоративністю і традиційністю) теми основними концептами, які визначають його зміст, розвиток, міфологічні й виховальні засади, музично-мовні засоби.

Ключові слова: джаз, домра, джазові стилі, джазова стилістика, В. Власов, тернарний принцип, деташе, glissando, гра «з підтягуванням».

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Джазовые произведения В. Власова для домры.

Цель работы. В статье определяются джазовая стилистика в современном домровом исполнительстве на примере оригинальных произведений для домры В. Власова «Джаз-Концертно», «Бассо-остинато». **Методология исследования** заключается в применении сравнительного, эстетико-культурологического, исторического методов, а также музыковедческих и исполнительского аналитических подходов, которые образуют единую методологическую основу. Указанный методологический подход позволяет раскрыть исполнительское модель джазовых произведений для домры. **Научная новизна работы** заключается в расширении представлений о современном домрового репертуар за счет введения актуальных джазовых стилистических средств. Определяется специфика овладения домриста джазовой манерой игры, в частности, особенностями синкопирование, «турнирных» принципа ритмических пропорций, преобладание домрового приема «деташе», использование glissando и игры с подтягиванием, воплощение «духа» джазовой импровизационности и свободы. **Выводы.** Категории коллективности, игры, целостности, а также детства, детскости, выступают в детском фольклоре (наряду с синкретизм, утилитарностью, символизмом, образностью, декоративностью и традиционностью) теми основными концептами, которые определяют его содержание, развитие, мифологические и воспитательные принципы, музыкально языковые средства.

Ключевые слова: джаз, домра, джазовые стили, джазовая стилистика, В. Власов, тернарный принцип, деташе, glissando, игра «с подтягиванием».

Urgency of research. Along with the academic and folk music, jazz plays an important role in the modern musical art development. Nowadays jazz is an important factor of the music culture. Its influence can be observed in different forms of academic compositional art, performance art, and mass genres. Its ideas have been projected in the musical pedagogics and musical aesthetics. The reason for this is that jazz art is humanistic with a human being in the focus of attention. Besides, jazz combines music traditions of different folks. It successfully meets the eternal demand of a musician to express oneself. Its dynamics and expressiveness most accurately reflect the contemporary rhythm and pace of life. During the centenary history, not only jazz got to the close encounter with the academic music, but also the latter one moved in the direction of jazz down to the multiple hybrid forms. D. Ukhov draws a whole variety of analogies between the academic-tradition music and jazz in a major time perspective [4, c. 117]. Gradually manifesting itself as an elitist art, jazz acquired a set of important features, which includes: “individuality of norms, principles and behaviour patterns for the elitist community members who become unique hereby”; employment of “the subjective, individually artistic interpretation of everyday”; and even creating “the deliberately complicated cultural semantics which demands the listener to be of a certain standard” [2, c. 6]. Jazz has become a part of the world musical process. In this context, the folk instrument performers evince great interest in jazz, its means of style and stylistics, and instrumental techniques.

Statement of basic materials. An outstanding event for a four-string domra happened in 2013 in the field of original composing. A well-known composer Viktor Vlasov made a concert for domra and a chamber orchestra, which he called “Jazz-Concertino”. Up to this moment, jazz stylistics was only represented by small pieces of music in the domra repertoire that were either the jazz adaptations from the ones written for other instruments, or the music containing separate elements of jazz stylistics in itself (specific harmonies and rhythms). However, just in its name the new long-form piece of music by V. Vlasov declares an absolute commitment to jazz school in particular, to its style and manner.

V.P, Vlasov is not a newbie in jazz music. This is proved by his numerous compositions, first of all for jazz orchestras and ensembles, and some pieces of music from the movies. For the record, V. Vlasov wrote jazz scores to the two-part movie called “Salesman of air” done at Odessa movie studio in 1967; it was played by an orchestra commonly called a “big band” (trumpets, saxophones trombones and rhythm section). After

that, the composer made a whole cycle of music pieces for accordion, which became quite popular, and for other instruments too (balalaika, pandura, domra). V. Vlasov has also written a book called “The jazz school for accordion and harmonica” [1], where you can find some sensitive information regarding jazz styles and their reflection in the contemporary accordion repertoire, some performing instructions etc.

Here we turn our attention to a couple of music pieces written for domra, both in jazz style. They are “Basso-ostinato” and “Pale Royale”.

«*Basso-ostinato*» is an author’s version of the well-known music piece for accordion. Though the basic accordion theme variant is totally preserved, the domra version can be totally assumed an original piece thanks to the introduction of several new episodes and subdivision of the texture into two parts (solo domra and piano), as well as to the author’s adaptation version.

The music piece is written in bebop style. This jazz style, which gained traction in the middle of the XX century, started a period of the so-called contemporary jazz. It is defined by a complex, figurative and skipping melody line with an extraordinary rhythm segmentation and accentuation as well as by the solo improvisations marked with a vibrant and quite nervous articulation and quite formal picking. The harmonies are based on alternated chords and polytonal structures. One of the most important, significant and unique elements here is rhythm. Its most outstanding feature is the continuous alternation of stability and unsolvable instability, a complex syncopation system that involves the continuous accent shifting from upbeat to downbeat.

After the eight-measure introduction that contains a double bass ostinato figure played by the piano, domra carries the theme melody. After that, improvisation starts as it must, carried out in turns by domra and piano. It is absolutely obvious that the author tries to give a message through performers in order to pass the traditional jazz band flair and manner. They imitate drums by stomping their feet, hitting on the piano lid with their hands and knocking on the instrument body with a pick, at the same time implementing the academic tendency of sonorism looking for the “new sound”. The piano imitates contrabass by leading the replica melody in the lowest register. The impulsive and relief four-sound chording on semi-stopped strings is associated with playing the banjo. In the swirly and a little neglectful passages of domra you can guess the trumpet improvisation, so typical for bebop. The piece of music ends up with carrying out the main theme.

Another piece of music we are studying here is called “*Pale Royale*”, stylistically absolutely different from the previous one. This music piece is named after a tiny garden square in the very centre of Odessa that borders with the well-known building of The Opera Theatre. This garden square is filled with breeze from the sea, soft green light and playful sunbeams that come through rich foliage of the trees. This place is one of the most favourite for the Odessa citizens. One can get a very distinct French fleur here that the city inherited from its founding fathers Duc de Richelieu, José de Ribas and François-Paul Sainte de Wollant.

The music piece is composed in a simple three-part form where the first and the third parts are similar to a deliberate prelude of improvisational character with exquisite and capricious melodic and harmony. The middle part is a small “gulp” of the energetic swing that “cuts” the music piece in half. You can feel grace and subjective expression, psychological involvement, yet light optimism. You can elicit certain features of impressionism and even saloon academism here regardless of the jazz style characteristics. Since the author of this article has been given a possibility to be the first one to perform this unusual and undoubtedly perspective music piece, the stated below suggestions upon performing it could be quite valuable and useful.

As the author explained, while he was working on *Concertino* he wanted to create a long form piece for domra based on the music material of one of the jazz styles, meaning swing, an expressively vivid style that has been holding the top spot in jazz for many decades. “*Jazz-Concertino*” is actually a small concert (as it is given in the title) composed by all classic sonata allegro standards with the main and auxiliary lines, introduction, cadence and recapitulation. However there are a lot of original and innovative things laying behind the traditional form. Primarily the new features are given in the music material, in its theme and texture (harmony, rhythm, many syncopes), as well as in the jazz mode of music thought and the choice of unusual combination of the chamber orchestra and domra. In fact, the composer faced absolutely new and complicated tasks. His idea was to create a composition that would comply with the main goal from the very beginning to the very end: to develop the idea and artistic conception of the music piece by means of jazz together with bringing up the bright nature of domra sound. He wanted to hear the domra that would be standing out from the others, the domra in a new unconventional “jazzy” character.

However, this music piece is quite brief and compact, it is very convincing of its original artistic conception, brightness, deepness and image perfection from the very beginning. The peculiarities of the form add to the impression, i.e. the episode of Andante and the following deliberate cadence before the recapitulation suggest a certain middle part that is supposed to be the second (slow) one, quite typical for the three-part pieces.

The primary area is quite large and is written in a three-part form. It is a typical lively jazz theme filled with seventh chords and syncopes. Its forceful and even a bit aggressive character gives an impulse to the whole concert. The secondary area is contrasting to the primary one as it should be. It is singing, long lasting and lyrical though light in character, written in the major key, and is held in Moderato tempo. The jazz texture is particularly bright here. The area is written with the typical jazz block chords, while the top part is put in charge of domra, the rest of the chord vertical is given to the orchestra.



The development based on the primary and the secondary areas is notable for tone instability, metro-rhythmic variety. The music is more expressive, sharper in character and is driven by joy and nasty spirit. The solo domra and the orchestra seem to compete with each other, syncoping in turns and revealing typical concert features.

Recapitulation makes an appearance after a small but quite substantial cadence. The primary area undergoes no visible changes in comparison to the exposition. The secondary area obtains a new (main) tonality and an Allegro tempo. In the meantime, the theme is given to the orchestra and domra is following it with the brilliant improvisations. The Concertino ends up with a boisterous (presto) coda that gives the soloist a possibility to break out with a fine improvisational jazz technique once again.

The main problem during working on Concertino is to deliver the swing spirit to the audience and master the jazzy manner. It is clear that it is not that easy without background. Jazz musicians obtain such manner by years of rehearsals and trainings as well as by the immanent feel of swing. Still domra performers should familiarize themselves with some

basic arrangements and statements, otherwise the play is going to be very controversial to the author's idea and style.

For starters, swing is considered to be the basic style among the numerous jazz styles like Dixieland, bebop, cool etc. Having appeared in 20-30-th of the previous century it did not disappear but effectively integrated with them and was present in almost every forthcoming style.

So what are the stylistic peculiarities of this play? One of the main conditions of mastering the swing style is supposed to be understanding of the so-called "ternary" or triadic principle of rhythm proportions, which is the way the things are done in jazz. The ternary principle of rhythm proportions, unlike the binary principle that is typical for the academic music, is the best way to express what is happening with the swing rhythm. For example, in the four-four time the upbeat does not mean two eighths in the quarter but three. One should obey the following rule studying the jazz compositions: in most cases, the equal eighths should be played in very high tempo. In moderate and slow tempos instead of the equal eighths one should play the triplet proportions of a quarter or one eighth.

This is how it should be done, for example, in measures 21-23 in exposition:



should be done like this:



One should pay special attention to the syncopes. Measures 51-53:



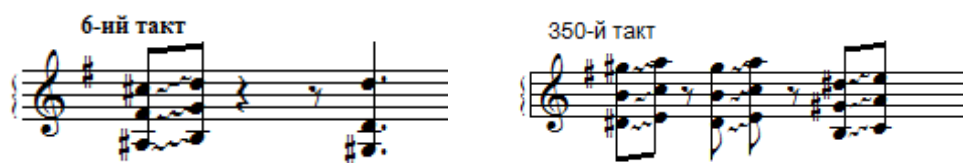
After applying the ternary principle are played like this:



In fact, the article cannot describe all the peculiarities of the swing manner. Besides the ternary principle there is another system called “beat” (on-beat, four-beat, after-beat) elliptical value articulation, walking accents etc. Performers are highly recommended to read the professional literature, for example, the book by O. Sokol “The theory of music articulation” [3]. Besides, the rich hearing experience is required. In order to master it one should listen to the recordings and concert live performances of the best jazz orchestras, ensembles and soloists.

It is necessary to make several remarks regarding the domra specifics. Since the jazz violinists, being more experienced in jazz music, use the *detache* technique to avoid legato, we recommend the domra players to avoid tremolo here and concentrate on single attacks / \ (masking out the sound or leaving it open). The following secondary area and Andante episode are suggested as an exception where even the sixteenths are played with tremolo.

These are the chord pairs in eighths with the first one moving up half-tone as if it penetrates into the next one, which can be done with a glissando technique:



Since glissando is a typical jazz technique, this only intensifies the jazzy nature of music.

There is an episode has a “swing” remark in the end of cadence. The fourth notes should be played with strings being pulled up thus making a little change in the timbre and pitch:



To sum up, the successful performance of “Jazz Concertino” depends not so much by the technique of the domra player, his speed, skill or even nuancing than by mastering the jazz manner and its freedom spirit in the player’s and in the orchestra’s performance.

Insights. Thus, we confirm the fact that jazz stylistics is integral to the modern repertoire of academic performers since the musician always needs to express himself in a bright way through specific reflection of tempo-rhythmical and dynamic intentions of the

century. Nowadays it wins grounds in domra performances. Solo “jazz domra” bands with a chamber orchestra or piano here. The key role in jazz text interpretation resides in mastering the jazz manner: understanding and implementation of the ternary principle, the rhythm proportions principle, the pluck timbre, applying *detache* and largely avoiding tremolo and *legato* technique, well-executed glissando and string pull-ups, implementing the jazz feel of improvisation and freedom by means of rhythm and timbre. In general, performance of the analysed compositions gives a possibility to master the skill of jazz style and deliver the music idea with the jazz means, as well as to discover new features of a freshly-academised instrument of domra.

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Date of submission: 19.04.2017