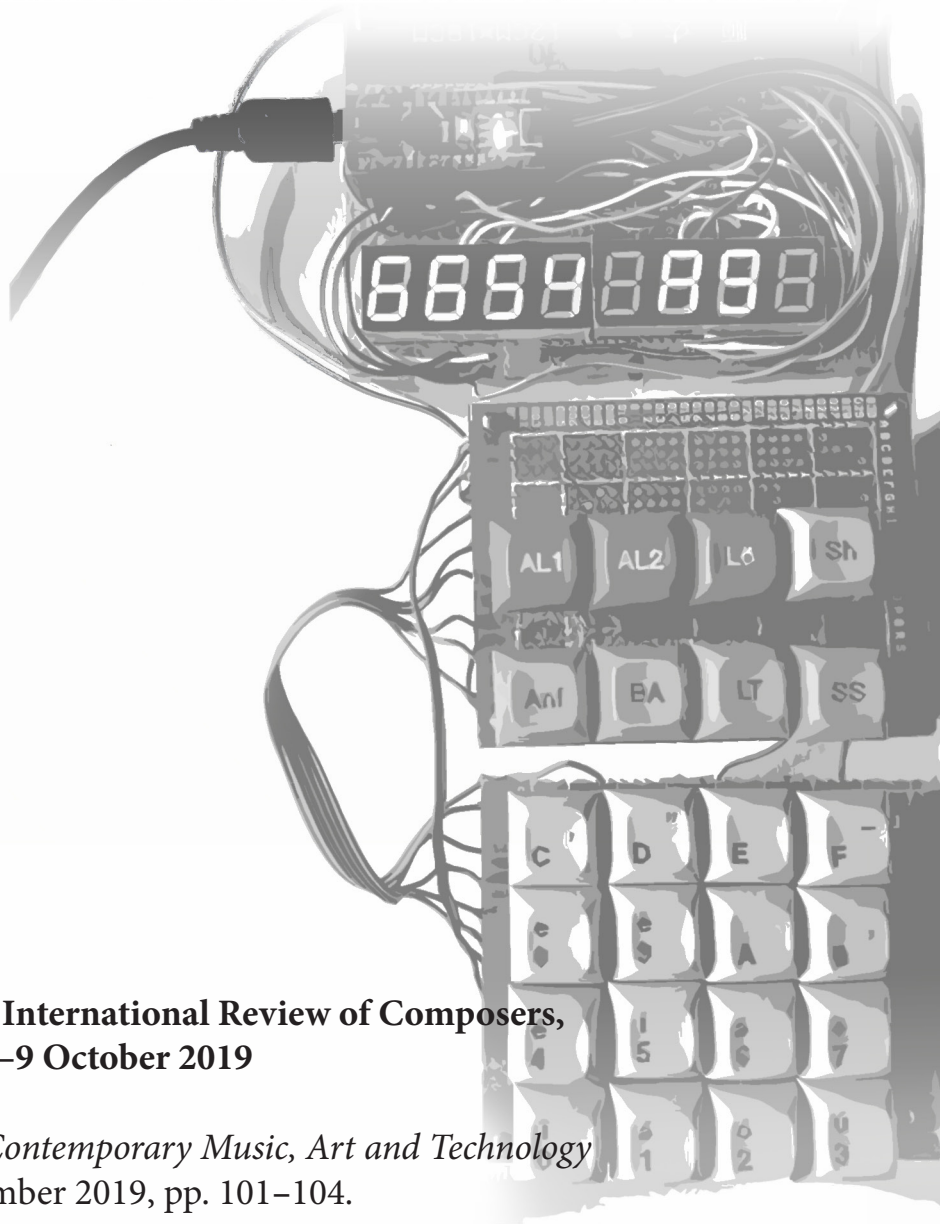


# I N S Δ M

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**Review of the 28th International Review of Composers,  
Belgrade, Serbia, 4–9 October 2019**

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## **Review of the 28th International Review of Composers Belgrade, Serbia October 4–9, 2019.**

The 28<sup>th</sup> International Review of Composers was held at the Students' Cultural Center [Studentski kulturni centar] in Belgrade, from 4<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019. Similar to last year, the 28<sup>th</sup> Review didn't have a specific title that would determine the thematic content of the festival. Therefore, Belgrade audience heard a heterogeneous collection of works, ranging from solo instrumental works and pieces for various types of small chamber ensembles to pieces written for larger ensembles both with and without electronics. The Review's program was divided into nine thematic concerts named after the pieces that were on the repertoire: during six days, musicians performed around sixty compositions (chosen out of more than two hundred submitted works), most of which were written in the last ten years, except for a few pieces that were written in the second half of the last century, by eminent composers such as Philip Glass and Steve Reich. The 28<sup>th</sup> Review also included a lecture by Serbian composer and musicologist Branka Popović.

Amongst the performers at the Review were renowned musicians of the Serbian contemporary music scene: *LP Duo*, *Tea Dimitrijević and Dejan Subotić Piano Duo*, *Construction Site Contemporary Music Ensemble*, *Belgrade String Quartet (Quintette)*, and *Ensemble Studio 6*. In addition, the public heard young soloists and smaller chamber ensembles who specialize in performing contemporary music. This year's Review also included performances of two world-renowned ensembles: *in process*, a German ensemble dedicated to the performance of minimalist music, and *SISU*, a Norwegian percussion ensemble.

Opening ceremony of the 28<sup>th</sup> Review started with the presentation of the Mokranjac Award for the best composition in 2018 to professor and composer Dejan Despić, for his comic opera *Priest Ćira and priest Spira*, op.200 [*Pop Ćira i pop*

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*Spira*], based on the novel of the same name by Stevan Sremac. The Jury said that, “using clear, neoclassical musical language Despić musically revives the humor of Sremac’s novel,” and that “in opera vocal parts, music and dramatic flow are equal partners who complement one another,” which are only some of the elements that make it “stand out, not only by its compositional and technical skill and mastery, but also, by its place and meaning in Serbian music.” The opening ceremony proceeded with the concert dedicated to music written for two pianos. The concert was divided into two parts. The first part was named *Hurricane* after a piece by Jugoslav Bošnjak, and the performers were *Tea Dimitrijević and Dejan Subotić Piano Duo*. They performed Ihar Komar’s composition *An Islet in the Sea of Japan*, Bošnjak’s composition *Hurricane*, Miloš Zatkalik’s *Il Mostro Meccanico* and Vladan Radovanović’s *Furioso*. The second part of the concert, named after Ivan Brkljačić’s composition *A Piece, a Cookie, a Collage*, was marked by the performance of *LP Duo* (Sonja Lončar and Andrija Pavlović). They performed *Ariel* written by Ivan Božičević, followed by Ana Sokolović’s *Trois études pour piano*, Branka Popović’s *14.30*, Brkljačić’s *A Piece, a Cookie, a Collage*, and Kim Helveg’s *American Fantasy*.

On the fourth and fifth night of the Review, two more awards were presented. The Pavle Stefanović Award for music criticism and writing was given to the eminent musicologist and music writer Dušan Mihalek, for his book *Music and the Word* [Музика и реч], that contains a selection of his writings on music, while the Aleksandar Pavlović Award for the promotion and performance of Serbian contemporary music was presented to the members of the chamber ensemble *Trio Movement* [*Trio Pokret*]. Additionally, the jury gave special awards to musicians who dedicated their life’s work to the promotion of Serbian contemporary music: Gordana Djurdjevic, music editor of Radio Belgrade, Nada Kolundžija, professor and well-known performer of contemporary music, and Petar Ivanović, professor, violist of Serbian string quartet Mokranjac [Srpski gudački kvartet Mokranjac] and conductor of string orchestra Sveti Đorđe.

The first concert of the second night, named *The Upgrade for a group of musicians with telephones* after Maja Bosnić’s composition, was dedicated to music for smaller chamber ensembles. The first piece of the repertoire was the composition *Why?*, written by Ana Kazimić, succeeded by Aleksandar Perunović’s *АЯТИАМАНТРА ЯЮИИНОРИ Variationen und Reaktion über Klavierstücke I-IV von Stockhausen*. After these works, the audience heard Bosnić’s composition *The Upgrade for a group of musicians with telephones...in a fictional waiting room from a not so distant future*, which stood out not only by its sound but the whole concept: it’s a music piece, music theatre, that makes a critique of the society we live in. It depicts an imagined moment in the future when the young generations, raised with their attention-sapping mobile phones, and a lack of will to communicate, grow up and take responsibility for society. After this piece, the audience also heard Teodora Stepančić’s *Clarinet No. \_\_*, Božo Banović’s *Mountains* and Ljubomir Nikolić’s *Emulations*.

The second concert of the second evening, dedicated to music written for the

organ, took the audience to the Cathedral of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The name of the concert, *Organ +*, doesn't refer to a specific composition, but to the concept of the concert itself. The program consisted of five great pieces for the organ and some small chamber ensembles, written by composers from all over the world, such as Zvonimir Nagy's *Angelus*, Farangis Nurulla-Khoja's *La Cloche Fêlée II*, Laurence Jobidon's *Expansion: une ode au Big Bang*, Lise Morrison's *Ninety Five* and Vlastimir Trajković's *Epimetheus*.

The third evening of the Review brought to the audience two very interesting, and, in terms of sound, very different concerts. The first concert, named after Dragana Jovanović's composition *Romance, Waltz, and KoltzeTrans*, revolved around small chamber ensembles and soloists. The piece that opened the evening was Luka Čubrilo's *Inégal*, and it was followed by Milan Aleksić's *Wall*, Ivana Ognjanović's *318km*, Dimitri Papageorgiou's *Even the sky screams sometimes too II* and Dragana Jovanović's *Romance, Waltz, KoltzeTrans*. Two vocal compositions which concluded the concert, Svetlana Savić's *Godzilla* and Tatjana Milošević's *When You're Left by the One You Love*, left a great impression on the public thanks to the composers who provided a great musical characterization of the texts chosen for their compositions.

The second concert of the evening was dedicated to minimalist music. The performers were members of the ensemble for minimalist music *in process*, led by their artistic director Ulli Götte. The ensemble was founded in 1985, when Ulli Götte gathered a unique ensemble of jazz, classical, and avant-garde musicians, intending to perform and further develop minimal music. Thanks to their performance, the audience had the opportunity to hear contemporary minimalist music, as well as pieces written by renowned European and American composers. The repertoire included Philip Glass's *Conclusion* (from opera *Satyagraha*) and *Funeral* (from opera *Echnaton*), Ulli Götte's *Two Groups (Part III)* and *...dies ist mein...* (from: *Grenzen*), Vladimir Tošić's *Medial 6*, Steve Martland's *Dance Works (Part I)*, and *Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices and Organ* by Steve Reich.

The fourth night featured music written for diverse chamber ensembles. The first concert, *Sonority of Kafana*, named after Nataša Bogojević's composition, was entirely dedicated to music written for trios, quartets, and quintets. The performers were members of *Ensemble Studio 6*, soloists, and chamber musicians. The repertoire of the concert consisted of the following compositions: Laura Mjeda Čuperjani's *Reverse*, Petra Strahovnik's *Crop circle*, Chatori Shimizu's *Fiddle*, Diana Čemeryt's *Jahre Ohne Mozart* and Sonja Mutić's *All Your Worlds*. The last composition performed was Bogojević's *Sonority of Kafana*, in which the composer created an interesting synthesis of Balkan folk music and American minimalism.

Keeping with music written for small chamber ensembles, named  $(4)+1=2$ , after Goran Marković's composition, the second concert of the evening brought a different sound and atmosphere. The opening composition was Predrag Repanić's *Dr. Wolfi and Mr. Haydn in a new episode: Sonata (quasi una fantasia) – non facile, per*

*pianoforte e orchestraoke ossia Moz-Art á la Haydn et vice versa*, an interesting and socially provocative composition dedicated to “all the fake doctors and other plagiarizers in Serbia and beyond.” Consequently, the composer himself didn’t write a single note. Instead, he used excerpts from Mozart and Haydn’s piano sonatas, from which he made new materials and sounds and presented them as his composition for piano and electronics. This piece was followed by Fani Kosona’s *Flow Imprints*, Paul Pankert’s *Fake-Flutes*, Mirjana Živković’s *A Little Quartet for Friends*, Milana Stojadinović Milić’s *A Little Cloud on Top of Mount Athos* and Marinković’s *(4)+1=2*. The last two pieces performed at this concert were Zoran Erić’s *Dedication to Nature* and Isidora Žebeljan’s *When God Made Dubrovnik*.

The penultimate day of the festival brought on the scene of the Students’ Cultural Centre SISU, a percussion ensemble from Norway. SISU percussion ensemble is one of Scandinavia’s most prominent contemporary music ensembles. Formed in 1993, and led by its artistic director Tomas Nilsson, the ensemble is recognized for its unique musical aesthetics, developed through an exploratory attitude towards every musical challenge. The concert, named *Wither with a bird in the palm* after Ivana Stefanović’s composition, was memorable thanks to its performers and the program, that was comprised of music written for percussion with/without electronics. On the program of the concert were three exceptional pieces written by Norwegian and Serbian composers: Rob Waring’s *Sikoté Sukán* for percussion, Ivana Stefanović’s *Whither with a bird in the palm* for percussion and tape and Arne Nordheim’s *Respons I-IV* for percussion and electronics.

The 28<sup>th</sup> International Review of Composers was concluded with a lecture and concert. Namely, the last night of the Review started with a lecture by Branka Popović titled *A story about China told from a personal perspective*. In this lecture, Popović presented the project *Composers Field Trip to China* in which she participated. During an inspiring 90 minutes, Popović shared video materials, experiences, and the knowledge she gained whilst participating in this project, whose aim was to “establish a cultural interaction with China and develop a professional cooperation which will encourage friendship between different nations.” The concluding concert, *Light – Lapse* based around music written for larger ensembles, featured the *Construction Site Contemporary Music Ensemble* under the baton of Ivan Marković. The program of the concert consisted of Vladimir Tošić’s *MOTUS 2*, Sungji Hong’s *The Tempest*, Marco Longo’s *Light – Lapse*, Draško Adžić’s *The Anamnesis of Miron Goldenberg*, Emre Sihan Kaleli’s *Five Love Songs* and Lazar Đorđević’s *Trinity*. Overall, the 28th International Review of Composers affirmed its well-built position on the cultural map of Belgrade thanks to the diversity and quality of its repertoire and performers, and the great interest of the audience.

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