

FEATURES OF MASTERING THE MODERN MUSICAL CONTINUUM BY THE YOUTH AUDIENCE IN RUSSIA

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Abstract: The article considers the issues of introducing modern teenagers to the specifics of the musical continuum, which contributes to overcoming the negative impact of spontaneous musical environment on the esthetic taste and helps to improve the level of music culture. It is shown that this sphere is closely connected with mental and information security of teenagers. The short historical analysis of understanding the essence of the musical continuum is given in the article, the model of the last quarter of the 20th – the beginning of the 21st century is described, the results of a number of polls of Russian teenagers and university students are presented, which reflects the features of the perception of the musical continuum and the gaps arising in this process. The solutions of the problems of teenagers' music education are marked out, the theoretical and practical aspects of developing in teenagers the bases of understanding the musical language and values, which are broadcasted by modern composers of the academic music, are presented.

Keywords: Space, time, musical continuum, perception, musical language, music cultures of the beginning of the 21st century, teenagers, spontaneous musical environment.

INTRODUCTION

The new language of music, which formed through the 20th century and continues to develop, showing to the listeners and performers new forms of the musical statement, represents considerable complexity for the field of education.

The narrow, at first sight, problem – the development of music culture, in reality appears to be a part of the huge and multifaceted sphere of personal formation and mental human health. So, according to many researchers, spontaneously developing musical environment, a considerable part of which is made up by commercial forms of music, negatively influences the psychological state of listeners. It is connected with the fact that the spontaneous environment has such characteristics as polymodality and dynamism that provide high permeability and forcefulness of such environment for youth audience, and the unpredictability and prevalence of commercial forms of music make it potentially dangerous to the public (Kabkova, 2003).

Developing the thought of the musical environment which surrounds us anywhere and everywhere, it is possible to present how music interacts with space and time, forming a peculiar **musical continuum** – in other words, an existential condition of the music culture of mankind including folk, classical and mass music, and also the music of today born at every moment of the existence of the musical continuum, the modern music expressing all sociocultural and historical processes,

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all achievements of modern technologies, all scales of feelings and experiences of a modern person living not only in the emotionally intense world of passions but also under the oppression of the ever-growing information flow.

The very concept “**continuum**” (from Latin *continuum* – uninterrupted, continuous) is found first of all in the works of physics theorists who refer to research of certain continuous environments and models. This concept is present also in mathematics (theory of sets, topology), philosophy and linguistics.

The concept of a “space-time continuum” and the determination of its scientific content are absent so far in the field of music.

Addressing the historical analysis of this concept, it is necessary to emphasize, first of all, the works of antique authors (Aristotle, 1974), which define space and time as the fundamental background, on which actions and development of various natural objects unfold.

The categories of time and space found fundamental interpretation in the works of I. Kant who tended to think that space and time are congenital (initially given) forms of sensual contemplation (Kant, 1994).

Since the second half of the 19th century, the problem of the space-time continuum of culture has attracted a number of thinkers, such as N.Ya. Danilevsky (Danilevsky, 1995), W. Dilthey (Dilthey, 2004), E. Husserl (Gusserl, 1994), O. Spengler (Spengler, 1998) and others.

These views had a significant impact on all subsequent development of ideas of space and time and dominated up to the 20th century. The theory of relativity formed at the very beginning of the 20th century showed the connection of space and time with moving matter. It revealed that space and time do not exist without matter, and their features are defined by gravitation.

The issues of space-time continuum of culture in the 20th century continue to be investigated by such scientists as H.-G. Gadamer (Gadamer, 1991), M. Heidegger (Heidegger, 1993), K. Jaspers (Jaspers, 2000).

It is fair to emphasize such a phenomenon as subjective and psychological perception of time-space. For instance, deeply subjective and emotionally rich perception of space is reflected in M. Heidegger’s works (Heidegger, 1993, p. 55).

The space-time connections embodied in the circulation of nature and in the change of seasons were shown already at the beginning of the 20th century in the passion of composers for the transfer of time movement through ritual and ceremonial folklore that counterbalanced the rationalism of music technologies of that time. “The Rite of Spring” by I. F. Stravinsky (1913), the music of which reflected the turn to the ritual sources of oeuvre shown at an absolutely new stage of technological achievements, can illustrate this.

Studying the features of the musical continuum of the end of the 20th – the beginning of the 21st century shows that during this period the most significant values of this historical era become relevant in music. Meanwhile, it is obvious that even the greatest advantages of musical compositions will remain unclaimed if the listeners are not involved in their independent understanding and perception as personally significant. Hence, there is a problem of the functioning of modern music culture and its perception – first of all, by the youth audience.

Thus, ignoring the modern musical continuum leads to the reduction by the audience of the works created by the composers of this era. At the same time, modern music culture falls into two parts which sometimes are almost not interacting – the academic music with difficult art language demanding good preparation for perception, and the commercialized music, often of poor quality, but having the widest audience owing to the ease of perception.

In general, it is possible to conclude that the modern musical continuum includes the most diverse directions and sources: folk music, classical music, and mass music fully shown in the 20th century as one of the strongest and most effective factors of influence on the formation of the so-called “mass culture” (Macdonald, 1957). Besides, at each time point there come up the works of modern music – music of today, which are gradually embedded either into the stream of classical music or into the stream of mass one.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The model of modern musical continuum was developed (the period covers the last quarter of the 20th – the beginning of the 21st century) in the research. In Figure 1, the components of the studied phenomenon are visually shown.

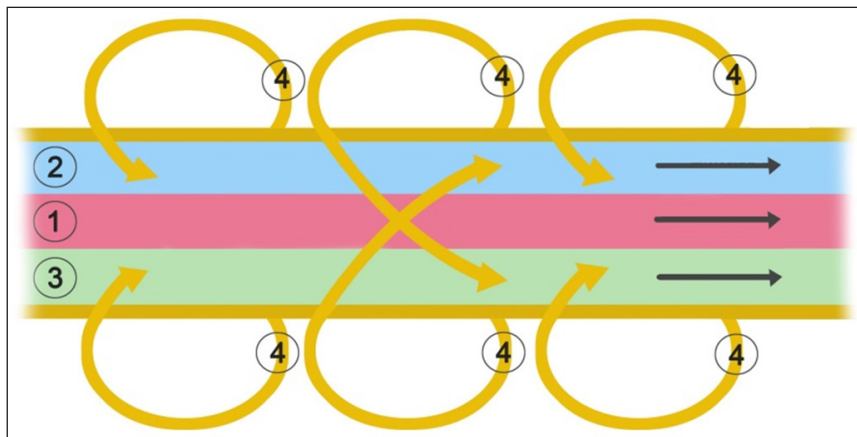


Figure 1: Model of musical continuum of the last quarter of the 20th – the beginning of the 21st century

1. **Folk music** : Is a major part of the musical continuum in spite of the fact that the ethnocultural environment, which feeds it, gradually disappears. Quite often, the whole layers of folk music become, at best, “museum samples” as it happened to Gipsy and Yiddish music. Nevertheless, the potential of folk music is great, and it continues to remain a source of professional composers’ oeuvre.
2. **Classical music** : Academic music is often understood as classical music, but these concepts are not identical. In European music, the classical traditions were established in the second half of the 18th century (the Vienna classical school), but eventually the classics began to mean works of high art level which stood the test of time, became an example of perfection for the subsequent generations in their homeland and in other countries.

In certain cases, the works of composers are defined by the concept “classic” during their lifetimes. D.D. Shostakovich, A.G. Schnittke, E.V. Denisov, and S.A. Gubaidulina became such creators.

The concept “classic” also implies the division of music into “serious” and “light” – that is, music which does not demand special knowledge and special concentration for perception, having at the same time all qualities of classical music. As a rule, it is the highest samples of some entertaining genres which appeared in the 19th century – the Vienna, French and Hungarian operetta, the works of I. Strauss (son) works and others.

3. **Mass music** : Is a direction of musical art which brightly showed itself in the 20th century, directed to general public, clear to an unprepared listener and favoring the formation of a new outlook.

It is conventional that in the extensive massif of mass music there are masterpieces which are brightly reflecting both the experiences of specific persons and the latest features of the time. For example, these are the Soviet songs which were created in the period of the Great Patriotic War. Also, the creative works of national bards of the second half of the 20th century are ambiguous and so far underinvestigated. Here, it is also possible to mention the creative works of a number of popular Soviet rock groups of the 1980s, in whose creativity the heroic spirit and protest are combined with the tragicalness of the mental outlook and dramatic lyrical experiences (Baranov, & Alyoshin, 2011).

4. **Modern music** : In line with this research, the definition of modern music relies, first of all, on the time parameter, as well as on the content of the created works which reflect all the variety and variability of the modern world according to which the **serious music of different genres and styles created by the composers in the last quarter the 20th – the beginning of the 21st century can be considered as modern.**

In the offered model, it is reflected that the music arising at every moment of the considered continuum and determined as “modern music” is gradually embedded into the course of one of basic components of this phenomenon – classical or mass music. This process is continuous and it is its quality that allows treating modern music as one of the components of the musical continuum of the last quarter of the 20th – the beginning of the 21st century (Rufayev, & Odegova, 2011).

The studying of the condition of youth’s musical tastes which is carried out within the research, as well as on the basis of the analysis of the results presented in the scientific articles (Tsukerman, 2010 and others), proves that at the present time the interest in the sphere of classical music considerably decreases and it proves the lack of involvement and understanding of the features of the modern musical continuum by the youth audience. The scientists also emphasize the one-sidedness of musical preferences of the youth, the so-called “coefficient of sameliness”, a high share of consumption of the musical samples aimed at undemanding taste due to the ease of perception (Tveritina, 2002).

Let us refer to the results of the polls of teenagers from Moscow schools and gymnasiums (380 people were interviewed) in 2015-2017. The evaluation of musical preferences of youth was the purpose of the polls.

It was defined as a result that 97% of the respondents from 13 to 15 years listen to music every day (about 4 hours per day). In the rating of musical preferences:

1. On the first place there was dance music (56%),
2. On the second – foreign pop music (48%),
3. The third place was taken by Russian pop music (41%), Russian rap and hip-hop music (39%) and Russian rock music (38%).

For the audience from 12 to 14 years old, the favorite direction in music is Russian rap and hip-hop (22%). At the listeners of 14-15 years old other preferences are noted: favorite style of music is Russian pop music (14%). It is possible to conclude that the musical preferences at the beginning of the 21st century are the criterion of social identification. We also agree with the scientists who state that in modern society music even more often acts as the certain medium favoring the transformation of social experience into personal meaning (Naumov, 2009; Rusinova, 2002).

The communication through music among young people allows finding identification with a certain group or subculture towards which this or that representative of youth is drawn to, to obtain an opportunity of merging with this group/subculture and to solve problems of internal identity in the course of the personality formation (Markova, & Fyodorov, 1997, pp. 67-72).

Modern popular music can serve, thus, as the center of gravity of people by the principle of common interests, but at the same time it also turns into an obstacle for association by the representatives of various social groups. At the beginning of the 21st century, the age differentiation of musical tastes considerably amplifies, which is caused not only by the social context and fashion, but also by a lifestyle change (Iskhakova, & Boltachev, 2006).

It should be also noted that the structure of musical preferences of modern youth, the orientation to low-standard musical samples reflects a sufficiently deep crisis in the field of the cultural policy of the state. It is interesting that the qualitative research of musical taste confirms that even the preferences stated in the answers to the poll given to classical music actually turn out to be only nominal as in the most cases the acquaintance of youth to classics is limited with the pop interpretation of widely popular classical samples (the Symphony No. 40 by W. A. Mozart, “The Four Seasons” by A. Vivaldi, etc.).

RESULTS

The analysis of the information provided above invites the conclusions about the domination of mass music culture often offering the commercialized musical samples of rather poor quality.

How is it possible to overcome the amplifying crisis in mastering the modern musical continuum by the youth audience?

The contemplations in this direction are connected with the questions of the development of educational programs in the sphere of youth policy, education and culture. Besides, there is also an obvious need for the improvement of the music education system and the involvement of youth in a deeper comprehension of music, acquaintance with modern trends of not only mass pop music, but also with academic music of the composers working at the beginning of the 21st century on creation of the works speaking with the audience about the global problems of moral and philosophical character.

Modern academic music sounds at the performances of certain musicians, at the concerts of the ensemble “Studio for New Music”, Moscow Ensemble of Modern Music, the St. Petersburg’s eNsemble and NoName from Nizhny Novgorod. The results of the listeners’ poll (the poll of 150 teenagers and students, who were listeners to the concert of MEMM in Moscow, was held in December, 2016 after the concert) showed that modern composers’ music is capable to attract not only well prepared audience with certain background, but also the audience from various segments of the population, who want to increase their knowledge in the field of modern music. Let us also point out the emergence of Internet forums, creating of the groups in social networks devoted to the discussion of modern academic music. At these forums, the advertisements of concerts, lectures, and meetings are given, the feedbacks are provided and the interpretations of the works are given.

DISCUSSION

At the moment, any research of music culture and music education has to consider the context of the latest developments of media and computer technologies being in some type related to various spheres of musical activity, both composer's and listener's. The global media culture gives to music new qualities and meanings. So, it is obvious that the musical and intonational way of thinking at the beginning of the 21st century considerably changes according to the emergence of new cultural dominants, as follows:

1. The strengthening of multinational relations in music,
2. The dialogue of musical systems of past and present,
3. The assimilation of various cultures, sects, styles and genres. It is especially noticeable in the on-going process of the synthesis of academic music and folklore, jazz, rock, etc.;
4. The rational and pragmatic dominant of art thinking.

Based on the above-noted, it is also possible to emphasize such tendency as "multilingualism of music culture" of the beginning of the 21st century, and the immanent to it problem of opposition and interaction of mass and elite music cultures which becomes determinant in the formation of the outlook, norms and rules of oeuvre, estimation criteria of musical art at the beginning of the 21st century.

The considerable niche in the musical continuum at the turn of the 21st century is occupied by the sphere of entertaining pop music based on a corporeity, archaization of the way of thinking, strengthening of the rhythmic and spectacular origins in the connection with modern technical facilities and technologies of art management in show business.

All this is not characteristic of the sphere of academic music, which, as it was already noted above, appears on the periphery of music culture.

The overcoming of these phenomena can be carried out in the course of an increase in the level of perception by the youth audience of the specifics of the modern musical continuum. It can happen actively and effectively in the institutions of education and culture (just as mainstream, so additional education). Many Russian students understand the importance of music education. The following data should be provided.

In 2015-16, the polls of the students of pedagogical higher education institutions of Moscow and Arzamas were conducted. The students participating in the poll (248 people in total) realize distinctly the need of music education. So, when asked "Would you like to provide music education to your children?" – 86.7% of the respondents answered "yes".

70.25% of the students consider that music education develops art taste, 27.6% – cultivates kindness, 17.7% – helps to cultural entertainment, 5.5% – “introduces to the beautiful”.

Among the answers, it is also possible to note such ones: music “makes a person more moral”, “classic music withstands aggression”.

Such answers were given by future teachers – tutors, the elementary school teachers. It is possible that if to carry out such poll in technical colleges, other breakdown will be received. Nevertheless, it is possible to assume that the value of music education is realized by modern youth to the full extent. Music education gives an incentive to self-development, mental perfection, education of musical needs and values.

Introduction to music in the course of the qualified psychology and pedagogical support helps to overcome pressure of mass music culture, develop aesthetic consciousness and taste.

Undoubtedly, the development of interest in modern music culture, its directions, and the laws of its formation also has to be carried out within music education. To reduce the content of music history only to the framework of the classics of the 19th century – at the very best of the beginning of the 20th century – means to impoverish and distort the essence of the domestic music culture which, as a consistent and natural subsystem of the spiritual culture, is capable to reflect entirely and objectively the features of the institutional development of society.

CONCLUSION

The features of the musical continuum of the end of the 20th – the beginning of the 21st century are connected with the fact that there is a change of types of musical thinking from classical one to rational and pragmatic (Mikhaylov, & Mikhaylova, 2009).

There is also formed an opposition: “the consumer of mass culture” – “the elite listener” (music fan). The large role in the formation of a listener’s culture is played by technical ways of musical information transfer and storage (Rusinova, 2002); the ratio between individual and collective forms of a listener’s activity changes. The modern forms of music broadcasting make it possible to listen to music at home and at the same time band people together at a global scale. Therefore, there is a change of acoustic conditions of music perception that influences the perception and understanding of musical composition, and the sound environment quite often forms in a listener’s consciousness as spontaneous, in which it is difficult for the unprepared listener to find way around. It causes the necessity of overcoming the barriers arising in the course of unfamiliar music perception. The strengthening of the acceptance quality and readiness for cultures’ dialogue in the modern age has the essential role in the formation of the audience (Stukalova, 2007).

The development of these qualities also becomes an important objective of professional and all-humanities music education, the system of which endures a noticeable crisis at the present day, having faced with the whole complex of problems of administrative, financial, structural and organizational nature: so, the material and technical base of the institutions became obviously outdated, as well as the level of their equipment with modern media facilities, conventional attitude towards modern music culture continues to dominate, distance learning by means of media facilities is almost absent, etc.

It determines a need for the modernization of the sphere of professional and general music education, the expansion of the range of the studied systems of music culture, which also requires the development of new learning materials and aids, and thoughtful involvement of information resources of media culture.

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