

Jānis MEDIŅŠ (1890–1966)

Reinis Zariņš, piano
Liepāja Symphony Orchestra (1-3)
Kaspars Ādamsons, conductor (1-3)

	Klavierkoncerts / Piano Concerto (1934)	
1.	I. Allegro moderato	13:42
2.	II. Lento	12:05
3.	III. Allegro	8:00
4.	**Daina No. 6** (circa 1925)	2:55
5.	**Spēle / Play** (1952)	3:27
6.	**Daina No. 17** (1949)	4:13
7.	**Kaprise / Caprice** (1952)	4:42
8.	**Daina No. 14** (1946)	2:41
	Sonatīne / Sonatina (1954)	
9.	I. Allegro moderato	3:54
10.	II. Moderato assai	2:28
11.	III. Allegro moderato	2:51
12.	**Balāde / Ballade** (1922)	12:25
13.	**Ārija no Pirmās orķestra svītas / Aria from Suite No. 1 for Orchestra** (1922) arr. Reinis Zariņš (2025)	5:01

TT: 78:30

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LATVIJAS MŪZIKAS INFORMĀCIJAS CENTRS
Kultūras ministrija
VALSTS KULTŪRKAPITĀLA FONDS
LIEPĀJAS SIMFONISKAIS ORĶESTRIS
GREAT AMBER LIEPĀJA CONCERT HALL

Dear Listener,

This album was made for you. Not to gather dust on library shelves, but to be listened to today. Even without an introduction, this music expresses youthfulness, maturity, and life force. Still, some may wonder why a Jānis Mediņš album is being released right now. Hence these introductory lines.

My first in-depth encounter with Mediņš's music took place in 2010, during the celebration of the 120th anniversary of his birth. I had been invited to perform at the Latvian National Opera as the soloist in his Piano Concerto. What I remember most about learning the piece is how difficult the process was, mainly because the sheet music existed only in a barely legible handwritten version. Memorising Mediņš's Rachmaninoff-like passages from a manuscript took considerably more time than learning, say, Rachmaninoff himself. But, as often happens, the things we suffer for later become dearest to us. That is what happened to me – Mediņš's Piano Concerto now holds a special place in my heart, and I never hesitate to present it to the world as a true classic of Latvian music. Remarkably, despite being the very first Latvian piano concerto and having been composed over 90 years ago, a modern, widely accessible recording of it had never been released. But today, that dream has come true, thanks in large part to the generous involvement of the Liepāja Symphony Orchestra and conductor Kaspars Ādamsons. We had already performed the piece together in a concert marking Latvia's Independence Day in 2022, and it was clear to me that we had to reunite for this recording.

If the Piano Concerto is like the trunk of a mighty oak on this album, the solo pieces are its branches and twigs. Before the recording sessions, I spent time in music libraries, reading through all of Mediņš's piano works, including some I had never heard of before. I was especially intrigued by the compositions he wrote while living in exile in Sweden, perhaps because they differ so greatly from his better-known works. Of course, an album lasting 70–80 minutes requires that choices be made. So I picked as wide a range of pieces as I could: something from his early period, something from his final years, something familiar, and certainly also something new. One of the biggest surprises for me was the Ballade, composed in 1922 and dedicated to the outstanding pianist Lilija Kalniņa-Ozoliņa, whose name is inseparably linked with the Piano Concerto. I still cannot believe that this epic piece had never been recorded. Now, at last, it can be heard by all.

Alongside studying Mediņš's music, I read his autobiography *Tones and Semitones*. Just three days before the scheduled recording session, I realised there was one more piece that had to be included on the album, namely, the famous "Aria" from his Suite No. 1 for Orchestra. Why? Because from his

autobiography, I learned how deeply this piece resonated in the lives of Latvians in exile – not just as a beautiful melody but as a symbol of a lost homeland. That is something that may be hard to grasp for Latvians living in Latvia. But my own years in the United States and London taught me how bittersweet the love for Latvia can be among émigrés – just like Mediņš's "Aria", which he himself rearranged while in exile, transforming it from a grand orchestral piece into an intimate work of chamber music. And so, in a hurry, I printed out blank sheet music, found the scores of both versions of the "Aria" in the library, created a piano arrangement, and recorded it just two days later. It was one of those moments when you know that something *must* be done, even if it appears impossible, and so you just do it.

In other words, I feel a personal responsibility for the life of Latvian music. Not everything composed has lasting significance, but so many outstanding works are known only to a few hundred Latvians of this generation, and so many more are already forgotten. Breathing new life into such music – that is something I gladly dedicate my efforts to. And that is why this album is now in your hands.

Finally, a few words about a very special person. It is no secret that releasing albums of classical music today is essentially a form of charity. In Switzerland, there lives a man named Jürg Vollenweider, who is not a Latvian by birth or heritage, nor a professional musician. And yet, quite remarkably, he has fallen in love with Latvian music and longs to share it with the world. The seed for this album was sown by Jürg's passion for the music of Jānis Mediņš and his determination to bring it to light. I can say with complete certainty that without Jürg's enthusiasm and support, this album would not exist. So I offer him my heartfelt thanks, and I hope his example will inspire many others.

On the occasion of Jānis Mediņš's 135th birthday,
Reinis Zariņš

LIFE

Jānis Mediņš was a prolific composer and a very active conductor. He was self-taught in both fields. He composed the first Latvian opera (although it was not the first to be performed), the first piano concerto (but again, not the first to be performed), the first ballet and the first piano trio. He was famous for saying, "I cannot stand blank sheet music." Mediņš served as the principal conductor of the Riga Radio Orchestra from 1928 to 1944. He was a broad-minded and well-informed man with a European outlook. The descendant of a farmer from Brukna parish, Mediņš became one of the most influential figures in Latvian music between the wars.

Jānis Mediņš: "My parents are from Kurzeme. I, too, consider myself more of a Kurzeme native, and I still spend my holidays there. I think I inherited my musical abilities from my father. My father and I even look similar – he was also short and slight, like me. I also have my father's face shape, hair and eyes."

There were four children in the family: three future composers and one future pianist, who died while still relatively young due to a pharmacist's tragic mistake.

JM: "My father's most ardent wish was for us to become musicians. When I performed my first symphony [which was later lost] in Riga in 1913, my father was in the audience. After the concert, he said, happily moved: 'Now I can die in peace, because I have set also my last son on his way." Both my parents are Latvian. As far as I know, there are no musicians among my father's or mother's closest relatives."

Mediņš was born on 9 October 1890 in Riga. He died on 4 March 1966 in Stockholm.

He studied violin, cello and piano at the Zīgerts Music Institute in Riga. For a while, he also studied oboe. At one point, he earned a living playing in a café. Mediņš gained professional musical experience playing in the orchestras of the Riga Latvian Society and Latvju Opera (Latvian Opera). He began his conducting career at Latvju Opera.

JM: "I did not take harmony, fugue, counterpoint, or free composition courses at school; instead, I learned them mainly through self-study. Naturally, my brother Jāzeps helped me with free composition. I wrote and asked him to look through my attempts and correct them. I liked self-instruction better and found it more suited to my talents. I didn't like studying when I was forced to. I perceived all compulsory work as a burden, but when I was free to act on my own initiative, I worked with interest and enthusiasm."

Mediņš supplemented his musical education in Italy, Switzerland and Germany.

He wrote his first notable compositions at the age of 19. In 1912, he made his public debut with two choral songs. Shortly before the First World War, Mediņš began writing the opera *Fire and Night* and risked his life carrying the work's manuscript (which weighed more than 30 kilograms) through Siberia and the turmoil of war, literally on his own shoulders and those of his wife and Dr. Ziediņš.

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In independent Latvia following the war, Mediņš initially made a name for himself as an opera conductor. However, due to the dominance of a certain individual at the opera, he felt he did not have a very promising future there, so he gladly accepted an invitation to lead the Riga Radio Orchestra.

Mediņš began working at the radio on 1 September 1928 as the orchestra's principal conductor and the head of the radio's music department. In his own words, he got on well with the Radio Orchestra. He made an enormous contribution to expanding its repertoire, popularising contemporary foreign music and promoting the work of Latvian composers. Under his leadership, the orchestra also left the radio studio and began performing public concerts in front of live audiences.

Thanks to Mediņš's keen interest in world affairs, the radio's score library grew to 17,000 publications, which was an unusual achievement for civic-minded, self-sufficient interwar Latvia.

JM: "One cannot compare the Latvian Conservatoire with the educational institutions in the world's major music centres. Our country was young and lacked brilliant talent. For example, pianists only had to play one piano concerto to graduate, or part of one, if they couldn't learn the entire work. In Leipzig, on the other hand, graduates had to know ten concertos. I think it would have been better if we had had higher standards. Forty years have passed since the founding of the Latvian Conservatoire, but how many pianists have we produced who really know their stuff?"

Mediņš had no shortage of responsibilities at the radio, the conservatoire, and the composer's desk, but he still found time and energy for fishing, fast and distant automobile journeys, making and embroidering rugs and pillowcases, and building furniture he had designed himself. He was also well known as an enthusiastic collector and teller of anecdotes. In addition, he often created the graphic design for the publications of his own scores.

Composer and music critic Jēkabs Poruks wrote: "With typhus and the Siberian taiga behind him like a bad dream, he shone in the skies of Riga like a star of the first magnitude. The youngest and most talented member of the conservatoire faculty, meteor-like as a composer and conductor. Instead of

a watch, a thin gold chain dimly glimmered around his left wrist as he swiftly turned the pages of our feeble scores at the piano. His pedagogical criticism consisted merely of a slight smile, a quick glance with a sharp turn of the head, and a few words."

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Mediņš fled Latvia during the war in 1944, and after a few years in Germany, he settled in Stockholm in the late 1940s. He worked as a music copyist at the Stockholm Concert Hall and only appeared as a conductor in 1958, when the *Latvian Music* publishing house hired the Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra. After the public concert, a nighttime recording of *Letters to Peer Gynt* took place, with soloist Paula Brīvkalne, who was admired by Richard Strauss himself.

Mediņš's music was also heard to some extent in Soviet Latvia, albeit in some cases with slight changes to the external form. In 1965, he arrived in Latvia and lived there for an extended period. Latvian National Symphony Orchestra conductor Centis Kriķis became his assistant and many years later told Sandra Ņedzvecka, host of the "Klasika" programme on Latvian Radio 3: "That was an unforgettable summer and autumn for me."

For the composer himself, it was an unforgettably emotional, happy and also tragic time. On the one hand, it was a carefully calculated move by the Soviet authorities to invite a "poor exile" back to his homeland. On the other hand, it was an opportunity to call Latvia by its own name through music. After his monographic concert in October 1965, where he had the opportunity to conduct his distinctive "Aria", Mediņš returned to Sweden and passed away the following March.

THE INDIVIDUAL

Mediņš was a highly intuitive composer. He wrote music rapidly, with urgency, and allowed his talent to dictate the flow.

JM: "I don't think I can point to any cases of ecstasy. But there are quite a few cases in which the creative process moves quickly. Sometimes my thoughts are so fast that my pencil can't keep up; I can't write or make note of things at the same pace as my feelings flow.

"I do most of my composition work when I'm feeling inspired, excepting, of course, purely mechanical transcription. This also explains why I cannot compose to order. I change very little of

what I create in moments of inspiration. One could say that in 99 cases out of 100, I do not make any changes. [..] Of course, I edit my work again before publication, but the corrections are only minor. I never make any fundamental changes."

Mediņš drew inspiration for his compositions mainly from the work and ideas of other composers. He needed neither paintings nor impressions from nature, neither literature nor current events, to create a new work. For him, composing came most easily in autumn and winter. Summer was unproductive, nor was spring very generous. Mediņš liked to work in the evenings and at night, when all was quiet and peaceful. He did not like bright ceiling lights; a lamp with a green shade on the table was best.

Mediņš composed at incredible speed. For example, he could write a solo song in one go.

Critics detected the influence of Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss in his early works, which Mediņš himself did not deny, at least in terms of instrumentation technique. In later years, he admired Bartók, and in an interview Mediņš also mentioned Hans Werner Henze, whose ballet *Ondine* had made a great impression on him.

LATVIANNESS

Many refer to Mediņš as a distinctly Latvian composer, and here we enter a slippery zone, because the opinions of various critics on this theme can vary greatly. However, we shall offer two statements that are perhaps worth considering.

The composer and writer Knuts Lesiņš stated: "Nationalism in music cannot be conjured up by will alone, like the glaze for a vase. It does not arise from ethnographic replicas but must grow invisibly, even unconsciously, from the composer's psyche. Of course, if we analyse Mediņš' music, we cannot easily determine that this vocal passage or that chord is specifically Latvian. The composer's creative spirit is influenced by many different impressions, all of which can be found here and there in some form. However, by filtering all of this through the intuition of his Latvian spirit, Mediņš has developed his own style, his own mode of perception, which, when we listen to his work as a whole, makes us feel that it was written by a Latvian composer."

Irēna Dunkele, a prominent researcher of Mediņš's work, states: "Nature had gifted Mediņš with perfect pitch, a vivid imagination, keen intuition and inexhaustible melodic imagination. As Jēkabs Poruks accurately described him, Mediņš did not know the pangs of creation. Motifs unfolded with little effort from one to the next in a continuous stream, beautiful, playful, sparkling, mournful, fanciful

and at times emotionally charged, occasionally crowding together into powerful dramatic climaxes. In addition, while Mediņš's music sounds so Latvian, it nevertheless has a distinctly personal character. This Latvianness, in my opinion, is expressed in the melodic-thematic structures, sometimes also in the rhythms or the peculiar melodic turns, and perhaps also in the frequent use of church modes, which is so characteristic of our folk songs. Mediņš weaves these Latvian elements into the music in his own unique style and, at the same time, in a European musical language."

COMPOSITIONS

It should be noted that Mediņš's oeuvre can be divided into two distinct periods: before the Second World War and after the war. Reinis Zariņš has selected works from both periods, thus providing listeners with a portrait of Jānis Mediņš in his entirety, so to speak.

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Let us begin with the Dainas, because Mediņš composed them throughout his entire creative career, from 1921 to 1963. He coined the genre himself, and it is very appealing. The name echoes Latvian folk songs, which are frequently called *dainas*, while as a proper noun, Daina is a beautiful female name. The verb *dainot*, for its part, means 'to sing' or, in a broader sense, 'to produce music or sound'.

In his autobiography *Toņi un pustoņi* (Tones and Semitones, 1964), Mediņš commented on his Dainas: "I did not want to call them preludes or anything else that is customary in similar cases in international musical terminology. I searched for a name of my own and decided that *daina* was a really good word. But one must not assume that it has anything to do with dainas in the folkloric sense or that I wanted to use folk song melodies or at least imitate them by writing something 'folk-like'."

In 1935, Poruks reviewed four Dainas by Mediņš, stating: "Nowadays, when nothing new is appearing in piano literature, we should be particularly happy about new Dainas. Although small in form, they are among the best work that Mediņš has given us. Such uncomplicated, melodically rich musical flow is rare these days. In this respect, Mediņš is like an inexhaustible well of ideas, always clear and refreshing."

Several Dainas are dedicated to Mediņš's two brothers; his fellow composer Alfrēds Kalniņš; pianists Lidija Gomane-Dombrovska, Pauls Šuberts, Lūcija Grauds, Hugo Štrauss, Dagmāra Kokere and Guna Kurmis; music publisher Edgars Rods; musician Juris Krīgēns; doctor Björn Holmgren; and the women he loved.

Daina No. 6 on this album is dedicated to Mediņš's first wife, Olga Mediņš (1895–1954), a former singer with the Latvju Opera. Her obituary in 1954 stated: "[..] During the First World War, she helped her then-husband, Prof. Jānis Mediņš, carry the score of the opera *Uguns un nakts* [Fire and Night] across all of Siberia and back to Latvia. She was in Dresden during the aerial bombing but emerged unscathed from the flames. [..] The deceased was laid to rest on Monday, and Herta Lūse also arrived at the funeral from New York, singing Mediņš' song 'Glāsts' [Caress] at the coffin, in accordance with the deceased's wishes." Someone witty once commented that any young lady in Jelgava could play this song, but its almost impossible beauty has made it perhaps the most popular of all the Dainas, regardless of pianistic difficulty or simplicity.

Daina No. 14 is dedicated to Mediņš's second wife, Vanda Mediņš (1911–2008), a Polish woman he met in the mid-1930s at the Radio Library, where she worked. They married in 1938, and Vanda was the keeper of the composer's hearth and home during their prosperous times in Riga as well as their years of modesty in Sweden.

Mediņš dedicated **Daina No. 17** to Swedish gynaecologist Björn Holmgren, who served as the director of the Pro Patria hospital and was selfless and accommodating when Marija, the daughter of the composer and his second wife, was about to be born. Interestingly, Holmgren turned out to be a distant relative of the composer Kurt Atterberg, but judging by the Latvian composer's writings, it is not known whether Holmgren fully appreciated Mediņš's heartfelt gesture of writing a composition in his honour. This Daina, composed in 1949, is already quite characteristic of Mediņš's new style, which Latvian critics of the time tended to describe as "leftist", meaning the composer's desire to situate himself at least somewhat closer to the European spirit and not limit himself to Latvian national romanticism. In any case, this piece exudes a strongly impressionistic sense of freedom, as if Mediņš had opened up a previously unnoticed window onto the creative spirit.

Mediņš dedicated two Dainas to pianist Lilija Kalniņa-Ozoliņa (1903–1934), who was praised as the most talented performing musician in Latvia at the time. He was captivated by the young woman's talent and taste, fell passionately in love, left his family, and the two tried living together for a short time. But Kalniņa-Ozoliņa was also married, to the renowned cellist Alfrēds Ozoliņš, who was a good friend and stage partner of Mediņš. The *Aizkulises* gossip magazine added fuel to the fire by publishing a rather nasty remark about those involved in the affair, and Kalniņa-Ozoliņa chose to end her life by suicide. Several musicians vandalised the magazine's offices, and Mediņš was forced to leave the capital and live with his brother in Jelgava for a while, because the Radio Orchestra musicians were quite angry with their maestro.

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A month before Kalniņa-Ozoliņa's suicide, Mediņš put the finishing touches on his **Piano Concerto,** which he dedicated to her. He composed the work astonishingly quickly – between 21 December 1933 and 5 January 1934. The premiere took place on 4 March 1935, with Paris-born Danish pianist France Ellegaard (1913–1999) as soloist. She was highly acclaimed and recognised throughout Europe, but Mediņš later wrote: "The best performers of my works are the late pianists Lilija Kalniņa-Ozoliņa and Marija Zalmanoviča, a student of Busoni who was exterminated by the Germans. She played my piano concerto flawlessly; the Danish pianist Ellegaard played the premiere with a wrong note here and there."

Rachmaninoff-like in its spirit, the music is fervent and glowing – blustery and thematically magnetic in the first movement, nobly serene in the second movement, and full of robust joy in the finale. Poruks thoughtfully described Mediņš' intuitive approach to music (especially regarding formal structures), stating that "each movement contains powerful, self-contained, unified musical content, and together they present a monumental, uniquely harmonious edifice of sound".

I must admit, I have not discovered what really happened to the score for Mediņš' Piano Concerto. Legend has it that it was destroyed in 1941, when the House of the Blackheads, where a considerable amount of sheet music had been stored, went up in flames as the Russian and German armies clashed in Old Riga. In an interview in 1960, Mediņš said: "For Latvia at the time, it was a good piano concerto. Now I would write it differently. The score burned to ashes during the war in 1941 in the House of the Blackheads. It turns out that the piano part was preserved by [pianist] Velta Vaite-Cechi in Italy. But I don't intend to restore this work."

Be that as it may, in 1965, when Mediņš visited his homeland, which was then occupied by Soviet forces, a concert was held in his honour, which also included his Piano Concerto, performed by Vilma Cīrule accompanied by the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra and conductor Edgars Tons. Five years later, a studio recording was made with conductor Centis Kriķis, who had accompanied Mediņš during his visit to Latvia and had also acted as the composer's eyes, as Mediņš was almost blind but still wanted to compose.

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Returning to the women in Mediņš's life, Kalniņa-Ozoliņa may never have seen the concerto dedicated to her, but she probably did perform Daina No. 7 and No. 8, and it is known for certain that her repertoire included the **Ballade**, which Mediņš dated to 1922 in his autobiography. From press

reports, we can gather that the Skaņražu Kopa society of musicians published Ballade in the winter of 1925, and already then it was dedicated to Kalniņa-Ozoliņa. This would not be surprising, as her career began early, before she had reached the age of twenty, and Mediņš was known to follow the latest developments in Riga's concert life.

In May 1926, the prominent music historian Jēkabs Vītoliņš expressed surprise that no pianist had yet performed the newly published Ballade, and we can continue to wonder why this masterpiece has been heard so little (or not at all) until now. A rare exception was in 1982, when, in a review of Gunta Dukāte-Čerņavska's solo concert, the noteworthy music historian Vija Briede praised the musician's selection of music and commented: "We listened to Jānis Mediņš's Ballade as a new musical discovery, one which had not been heard before in our concert life. The complexity of the composition's free form and its high technical demands have apparently prevented pianists from turning to it."

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From the first period of Mediņš's creative work, the digital version of this album includes the unpretentious, graphically intricate **Sketch**, composed in 1922, while his second period is represented by *Caprice*, *Play* and the Sonatina.

Let us turn to the eccentric and keen observer, composer, organist and writer Andris Vītoliņš, who wrote: "The bizarre **Caprice** requires pianistic equilibristics. The harmonic structure is similar to that of **Play**, although it contains more impressionistic features. While very free in terms of form, it maintains the so-called concentric principle. The middle of *Caprice* features a stirring monologue based on a quiet dissonant chord. Before and after this, a sorrowful melody reminiscent of a folk song in an old church mode is enveloped by broken chords and chromatic accompaniment figures. This, in turn, is surrounded by an expressive, almost atonal melody accompanied by calm quintuplets as well as runs of sixteenth-note triplets. The light, distinctly rhythmic beginning and ending are joined by a mournful melody within the space of a minor third. In the distinctive transitions, Mediņš reveals a rare wealth of invention."

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Andris Vītoliņš was an excellent music critic, but he was also a notable performer, whose life as a pianist was once quietly blessed by Mediņš himself. Vītoliņš had the honour of premiering Mediņš's **Sonatina**, and here let us consider Ingrīda Pāvulāne's comments: "The best performance of the evening was Andris Vītoliņš's premiere of Jānis Mediņš's new piano sonatina. It seems that this may be the best work for piano that Mediņš has written to date, and it can confidently compete

with internationally recognised compositions. The impressionistic mood of the first movement is reminiscent of the great French masters, but the second theme – one of Mediņš's most beautiful inspirations – seems deeply Latvian, as does the airy transition before it, which unwittingly brings to mind a mysterious bubbling of water. The unaccustomed listener may be disturbed by the harsh chords, but we must follow the times lest we become strangers. The second movement is based on a beautiful theme in old church modes. The serenity of this movement after the powerful swell is captivating. The final movement is dominated by rhythm – a syncopated yet singing melody with a cheerful rhythmic accompaniment. The burlesque elements act as anchors but are at the same time full of witty humour. Mediņš has brilliantly executed the fugato in the middle of this movement – the only example of this in our piano literature to date."

Orests Silabriedis
English translation: Amanda Zaeska

Beauty and truth: these are the qualities Latvian pianist **Reinis Zariņš** seeks in the music he chooses, the interpretations he sculpts and the collaborations he enters. Equally at home in classical and contemporary repertoire, his passion lies in the crafting of conceptual programmes that encourage exploration of the deeper layers of human experience.

Ever since his concerto debut at the age of nine, Reinis Zariņš has performed as a concerto soloist, recitalist and chamber musician throughout Europe and North America as well as the Far East. He has participated in prestigious music festivals including the Lucerne Festival, the Bath International Music Festival and the Scotia Festival of Music. His subtle virtuosity has delighted audiences at Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, London's Wigmore hall, New York's Carnegie Hall and the Seoul Arts Center. Reinis Zariņš has collaborated with leading orchestras including the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Kremerata Baltica and the Ostrobothnian Chamber Orchestra, and with conductors Pierre Boulez, Peter Eötvös, Pablo Heras-Casado, and Andris Poga, among others. His chamber music partners include Viktoria Mullova, Gidon Kremer and Matthew Barley as well as his Trio Palladio, while multimedia projects include collaborations with painter Maryleen Schiltkamp and choreographer Kirill Burlov. Reinis Zariņš's performances have been broadcast live by BBC Radio 3, NDR, Polish National Radio and King FM. For his concert schedule and more information, go to **reiniszarins.com**.

Reinis Zariņš champions the work of Latvian composers – to date, most of his albums are dedicated to Latvian music. His interpretations have been awarded with the Latvian Grand Music Award five times, and for his service to Latvian culture, he has received the Order of the Three Stars.

Away from the piano, Reinis Zariņš enjoys long-distance running, being with his children and seeking glimpses of the Beyond in many other ways.

Kaspars Ādamsons holds a doctor of arts degree and has graduated from the Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music with a master's degree in choral conducting, completing additional conducting studies under early music specialist Professor Erik van Nevel at the Lemmensinstituut Leuven in Belgium. In 2011, Ādamsons graduated from the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre with a master's degree in orchestral conducting; in 2012, he completed studies at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm, where he studied orchestral conducting under professors Daniel Harding, Cecilia Rydinger Alin and B. Tommy Andersson, among others.

Ādamsons is a full-time conductor at the Latvian National Opera and Ballet, conducting both operas and ballets, such as *Nabucco*, *Simon Boccanegra*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Merry Widow*, *Viy*. *The Nights of Horror*, *Three Comrades*, *The Fountain of Bakhchisarai*, to name a few.

Among others, Ādamsons has collaborated with the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, the Liepāja Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonietta Riga, Orchestra RIGA, the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, the Gävle Symphony Orchestra, the Umeå Symphony Orchestra, the Dalarna Chamber Orchestra, the Linköping Wind Orchestra and the Gotland Wind Orchestra.

The **Liepāja Symphony Orchestra** (LSO) has been sharing the love of music with listeners in Latvia and beyond for more than 140 years. In 2010, the LSO acquired the status of a national orchestra, thus becoming a significant ambassador of Latvian culture throughout the world, delighting audiences with masterpieces of classical music as well as highlighting Latvian composers and promoting their work. The orchestra participates in premieres and commissions a significant number of new works.

All twelve compositions of the monumental Liepāja Concerti cycle proposed by the LSO have been presented to the public and experts for appraisal. To date, symphonies by Latvian composers such as Rihards Dubra, Imants Kalniņš, Andris Vecumnieks and Jānis Lūsēns have been performed as part of the LSO Latvian Centenary Symphonies series, and in 2019, at the suggestion of the LSO, Dubra composed the opera Saga of the Suiti.

The LSO has received the Latvian Grand Music Award multiple times and a "Golden Microphone" Latvian Music Recording Industry Award eight times, in addition to other significant awards. The opening concert of the LSO's 142nd season, which also marked the inauguration of the orchestra's artistic director and principal conductor Guntis Kuzma, received the prestigious "Kilogram of Culture" Latvian public media award in 2022.

The LSO's mission is to create a meaningful bond between music and people, making music accessible and enjoyable and to celebrate our rich cultural heritage through beautiful music at every concert.

Since autumn 2022, the chief conductor and artistic director of the LSO is Guntis Kuzma.

lso.lv










STEINWAY & SONS



Dārgais klausītāj,

Šis albums ir tapis tieši Tev. Nevis lai tas putekļotos bibliotēkas plauktos, bet lai šo mūziku klausītos šodien. Tai piemīt jauneklīgums, briedums, dzīvīgums – arī bez ievadvārdiem. Tomēr kādiem varētu interesēt, kāpēc Jāņa Mediņa mūzikas albums ir tapis tieši šobrīd. Tāpēc šis ievads.

Mana pirmā nopietnā satikšanās ar Jāņa Mediņa mūziku notika 2010. gadā, kad mūsu Baltajā namā tika atzīmēta Jāņa Mediņa 120-gade un mani uzaicināja solista lomā Klavierkoncertā. Galvenokārt atceros šī darba apguves procesu kā kaut ko grūtu tādēļ, ka notis tobrīd bija pieejamas tikai ar roku rakstītā, gandrīz nelasāmā variantā. Lai no rokraksta iegaumētu Mediņa rahmaņinoviskās pasāžas, bija jāiegulda daudz vairāk laika, nekā mācoties, teiksim, Rahmaņinovu pašu. Taču tas, kas grūti nācis, pēc tam nereti kļūst tuvs un mīļš. Tā arī man — Mediņa Klavierkoncertam pieder silts stūrītis manā sirdī, un esmu gatavs bez šaubīšanās to rādīt visai pasaulei kā latviešu mūzikas klasiku. Taču līdz šim šis pats pirmais latviešu klavierkoncerts, kas tapis pirms vairāk nekā 90 gadiem, vēl nebija ne reizes izdots modernā un visā pasaulē pieejamā ierakstā. Šodien šis sapnis ir piepildījies, lielā mērā pateicoties Liepājas Simfoniskā orķestra un diriģenta Kaspara Ādamsona dāsnajai atsaucībai. Ar Kasparu un LSO jau iepriekš bijām sagatavojuši šo pašu opusu 2022. gada Neatkarības dienas svētku koncertam Liepājā, un man bija skaidrs, ka es ar viņiem visiem vēlos satikties vēlreiz — mikrofonu gaismā.

Ja Klavierkoncerts šajā albumā ir kā varena ozola stumbrs, tad solodarbi ir šī paša ozola zari un zariņi. Pirms ieraksta vairākkārt ciemojos nošu bibliotēkās un izlasīju visus Jāņa Mediņa klavierdarbus, arī tādus, par kuriem iepriekš nebija dzirdēts nekas. Mani uzreiz saintriģēja trimdas laikā tapušie darbi - tieši tāpēc, ka tie ir tik neparasti pazīstamo Mediņa opusu vidū. Taču albuma 70-80 minūšu formāts gribot negribot liek izdarīt izvēles. Tāpēc nolēmu izveidot tādu kā izlasi no Mediņa klavierdarbiem – kaut ko no agrīnajiem, kaut ko no pašiem pēdējiem, kaut ko labi zināmu un noteikti arī kaut ko jaunu. Pārsteigums man pašam ir 1922. gadā tapusī Balāde, kas veltīta izcilajai pianistei Lilijai Kalniņai-Ozoliņai, ar kuru nesaraujami saistīts Klavierkoncerts. Joprojām brīnos, ka šis episkais darbs ne reizes nebija ierakstīts; tagad to būs iespējams klausīties ikvienam.

Paralēli Mediņa mūzikas studēšanai es lasīju arī viņa autobiogrāfiju "Toņi un pustoņi". Trīs dienas pirms noliktā ieraksta datuma es aptvēru, ka ir tomēr vēl viens darbs, kuram noteikti jāatrod vieta albumā — un tā ir slavenā Ārija no Pirmās Orķestra svītas. Kādēļ tā? No autobiogrāfijā lasītā es sapratu, cik liela nozīme Ārijai ir bijusi trimdas latviešu dzīvēs – nevis kā skaistai melodijai, bet kā zaudētās dzimtenes simbolam. Latvijas latvietim to varbūt ir grūti saprast, taču tie gadi, ko pats pavadīju ASV un Londonā, man parādīja, cik saldrūgtena ir trimdinieku mīlestība uz Latviju. Gluži kā Mediņa Ārija, kuru pats

autors trimdas gados no vērienīgā orķestra oriģināla pārvērtis klusinātā kamermūzikas darbā. Tā nu es steigšus izdrukāju baltu nošpapīru, bibliotēkā atradu abas Ārijas versijas, no tām izveidoju klavieru aranžiju, un pēc pāris dienām tā jau bija ierakstīta šajā albumā. Tā ir tā sajūta, ka tā vajag, ka tā ir pareizi, pat ja darāmais tiek darīts pēdējā brīdī.

Citiem vārdiem sakot, es jūtu personīgu atbildību par latviešu mūzikas dzīvību. Ne viss, kas uzrakstīts, ir ar paliekošu nozīmi, taču tik daudz izcilu darbu ir zināmi vien dažiem simtiem šīs paaudzes latviešu, par citiem vairs nezina neviens. Iedvest šādai mūzikai šodienas elpu — tam es labprāt veltu savus spēkus, un tādēļ arī šis albums ir Tavās rokās.

Vēl īsi par kādu īpašu cilvēku. Nav noslēpums, ka mūsdienās klasiskās mūzikas albumu izdošana ir viens liels labdarības projekts. Šveicē dzīvo kāds vīrs Jürgs Follenvaiders, kurš ne pats, ne rados nav latvietis un nav praktizējošs mūziķis. Lai cik tas būtu neparasti, viņš ir iemīlējis latviešu mūziku un ilgojas to līdzdalīt ar citiem. Šī albuma idejas aizmetnis ir tieši Jürga aizrautība ar Jāņa Mediņa mūziku un vēlme to parādīt pasaulei. Pavisam droši varu teikt, ka bez Jürga dedzības un atbalsta šis albums neeksistētu. Tāpēc — es saku sirsnīgu paldies Jürgam un ceru, ka viņa piemērs iedvesmos vēl daudzus citus.

Jāņa Mediņa 135. dzimšanas dienu sagaidot,
Reinis Zariņš

DZĪVE

Jānis Mediņš bija ļoti ražīgs komponists un ļoti darbīgs diriģents. Abās jomās autodidakts. Latviešu pirmās (sacerētās, ne uzvestās) operas, pirmā (sacerētā, ne atskaņotā) klavierkoncerta, pirmā baleta un pirmā klaviertrio autors. Slavens ar teicienu: "Nevaru ciest neaprakstītu nošpapīru." Rīgas Radiofona orķestra galvenais diriģents no 1928. līdz 1944. gadam. Eiropas apvāršņa cilvēks, plašu skatuloku, labi informēts. Viena no ietekmīgākajām personībām starpkaru Latvijas mūzikas dzīvē. Bruknas pagasta zemnieka pēctecis.

Jānis Mediņš: "Mani vecāki ir kurzemnieki. Arī es sevi ieskatu vairāk par kurzemnieku un vēl tagad Kurzemē pavadu savas brīvdienas. Savas muzikālās spējas, domāju, esmu mantojis no tēva. Man ar tēvu pat daudz ārējās līdzības: arī viņš bij tāds sīks, neliela auguma kā es. Man arī tēva sejas forma, mati un acis."

Ģimenē aug četri bērni: trīs nākamie komponisti un viena nākamā pianiste, kas samērā agros gados traģiski mirst aptiekāra pārskatīšanās dēļ.

JM: "Tēva karstākā vēlēšanās bij, lai arī mēs būtu muzikanti. Kad 1913. gadā Rīgā izpildīju savu [vēlāk pazudušo] pirmo simfoniju, mans tēvs arī bij publikā. Pēc koncerta viņš, priecīgi aizkustināts, teica: "Nu es mierīgi varu mirt, jo arī savu pēdējo dēlu uz ceļa esmu izvadījis." Abi mani vecāki ir latvieši. Manos tēva un mātes tuvākos rados – cik zinu – muzikantu nav."

Dzimis 1890. gada 9. oktobrī Rīgā, miris 1966. gada 4. martā Stokholmā.

Rīgas Zīgerta mūzikas institūtā Mediņš mācās vijoles, čella un klavieru spēli. Kādu laiku apgūst arī oboju. Vienubrīd pelna iztiku, spēlēdams kafejnīcā. Profesionāla mūziķa praksi gūst, spēlējot Rīgas Latviešu biedrības un "Latvju operas" orķestros. "Latvju operā" sāk diriģenta karjeru.

JM: "Harmonijas kursus, fūgu, kontrapunktu un brīvo kompozīciju mācības iestādēs neesmu izņēmis, bet esmu to piesavinājies galvenā kārtā pašmācības ceļā. Brīvā kompozīcijā, zināms, man piepalīdzēja brālis Jāzeps. Es rakstīju un palūdzu viņam manus mēģinājums izskatīties cauri un izlabot. Pašmācības gaita man vairāk patikās un vairāk izlikās piemērota manām talanta īpatnībām. Es ne labprāt mācījos, kad mani spieda. Visu obligatorisko sajutu kā slogu, bet kad paša iniciatīva bija vaļā, tad strādāju ar interesi un aizraušanos."

Muzikālo izglītību Mediņš papildināja Itālijā, Šveicē, Vācijā.

Pirmās vērā ņemamās kompozīcijas Jānis Mediņš uzraksta 19 gadu vecumā. 1912. gadā viņš debitē publiski ar divām kordziesmām. Neilgi pirms kara sāk rakstīt operu "Uguns un nakts", kuras 16 pudu

(vairāk nekā 30 kg) smago manuskriptu, riskējot ar dzīvības briesmām, iznes cauri Sibīrijai un juku laikiem burtiski pats uz saviem, sievas un daktera Ziediņa pleciem.

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Neatkarīgajā Latvijā Mediņš sākotnēji eksponējas kā Operas diriģents, taču jūt, ka Operā kādas dominējošas personības dēļ necik auglīga nākotne nav viņam sagaidāma, tāpēc labprāt piekrīt aicinājumam uzņemties Rīgas Radiofona orķestra vadību.

Radiofonā Mediņš sāk darbu 1928. gada 1. septembrī gan kā orķestra galvenais diriģents, gan kā Radiofona Mūzikas nodaļas vadītājs. Pēc paša vārdiem, ar orķestri saprotas labi. Milzīgs Mediņa ieguldījuma repertuāra paplašināšanā, laikmetīgās aizrobežu mūzikas popularizēšanās un latviešu komponistu daiļrades veicināšanā. Mediņa vadībā Radiofona orķestris iziet no radiostudijas un stājas publikas priekšā atklātos koncertos.

Pateicoties komponista milzu interesei par to, kas notiek pasaulē, Radiofona partitūru bibliotēka pieaug līdz 17 tūkstošiem izdevumu, un apmierināti pilsoniskajai un ar sevi pašpietiekamajai pirmskara Latvijai tas ir neraksturīgs rādītājs.

JM: "Nevar salīdzināt Latvijas konservatoriju ar pasaules lielo mūzikas centru mācību iestādēm. Mūsu valsts bija jauna, trūka spožu talantu. Pianistiem, piemēram, diploma iegūšanai bija jāspēlē tikai viens klavieru koncerts vai daļa no tā, ja visu nevarēja iemācīties. Turpretim Leipcigā absolventiem bija jāprot 10 koncerti. Man šķiet, būtu bijis labāk, ja mums būtu bijušas augstākas prasības. Jau 40 gadu pagājuši kopš Latvijas konservatorijas dibināšanas, bet cik mums ir izauguši pianisti, kas kaut ko prot?"

Jānim Mediņam netrūkst pienākumu ne Radiofonā, ne konservatorijā, ne pie nošulapām, tomēr viņš atrod laiku un spēku arī makšķerēšanai, straujai un tālai autobraukšanai, grīdsegu un spilvendrānu darināšanai un izšūšanai, paša zīmētu mēbeļu izgatavošanai. Mediņš bijis slavens arī kā aizrautīgs anekdotu krājējs un stāstītājs. Viņa nošu izdevumiem nereti paša veidots grafiskais dizains.

Komponists un mūzikas apskatnieks Jēkabs Poruks raksta: "Rīgas debesīs viņš dega kā pirmā lieluma zvaigzne, ar pārciesto tīfu, izbristo Sibīrijas taigu kā baigu sapni aiz muguras. Visjaunākais, visspožākais Konservatorijas profesūrā, meteorīgs kā komponists, kā diriģents. Pulksteņa vietā viņam bija tieva zelta važiņa, kas blāvi vizēja ap kreisās delnas locītavu, kamēr viņš pie klavierēm žigli šķirstīja mūsu kusli topošās partitūras. Viegls smaids, ātri pamests skats ar strauju galvas pagriezienu, pāris vārdu bija visa viņa pedagoģiskā kritika."

...

1944. gadā Jānis Mediņš aizbrauc no Latvijas, un pēc dažu gadu perioda Vācijā 40. gadu beigās par viņa mītnes vietu kļūst Stokholma. Mediņš strādā par nošu pārrakstītāju Stokholmas Koncertnamā un kā diriģents uzstājas tikai 1958. gadā, kad apgāds Latvian Music salīgst Stokholmas filharmonijas orķestri. Pēc atklātā koncerta naktī notiek "Vēstules Pēram Gintam" ieraksts, kur solo dzied paša Riharda Štrausa apbrīnotā Paula Brīvkalne.

Mediņa mūzika mazliet skan arī Padomju Latvijā, tiesa, dažos gadījumos nedaudz mainītā ārējā ietērpā. 1965. gadā Jānis Mediņš ierodas Latvijā un nodzīvo te ilgāku laiku. LNSO diriģents Centis Kriķis tiek par Mediņa asistentu un daudzus gadus vēlāk Latvijas Radio 3 "Klasika" programmu vadītājai Sandrai Ņedzveckai saka: "Tā man bija neaizmirstama vasara un rudens."

Pašam komponistam tas ir neaizmirstami emocionāls, laimīgs un traģisks brīdis. No vienas puses, padomju varas smalki aprēķināts gājiens uzaicināt uz dzimteni "nabaga" trimdinieku. No otras puses, iespēja ar mūzikas starpniecību nosaukt Latviju vārdā. Pēc 1965. gada oktobra autorkoncerta, kurā pašam ir iespēja nodiriģēt savu hrestomātisko "Āriju", Jānis Mediņš atgriežas Zviedrijā un nākamā gada martā aiziet viņsaulē.

PERSONĪBA

Jānis Mediņš ir izteikti intuitīvs komponists. Mūziku viņš raksta aizgūtnēm un ļaujas sava talanta diktāta paisumam.

JM: "Ekstāzei līdzīgus gadījumus, domāju, nevarētu atzīmēt. Bet tādu gadījumu, kur jaunradīšanas darbs iet strauji, ir diezgan daudz. Dažreiz domas strādā tik ātri, ka zīmulis nepagūst viņām sekot, nevaru uzrakstīt, atzīmēt tādā tempo, kādā iet jūtu plūdums.

Savu komponēšanas darbu pa lielākai daļai strādāju inspirācijas brīžos, zināms, izņemot tīri mehānisko pārrakstīšanu. Arī ar to izskaidrojas tas, ka es uz pasūtījumu nevaru komponēt. Inspirācijas brīžos radīto vēlāk pārgrozu ļoti maz. Var teikt, ka 99 gadījumos no 100 es pārgrozījumus neizdaru. [..] Zināms, darbus pirms publicēšanas vēlreiz rediģēju, bet koriģējumi ir tikai sīkāka rakstura. Pamatīgāki pārgrozījumi nekad netiek izdarīti."

Impulsus komponēšanai Mediņš saņem galvenokārt no citu komponistu opusiem un idejām. Jauna darba tapšanai viņam nevajag ne dabas iespaidus, ne gleznas, ne literatūru, nedz arī apkārtējos

notikumus. Komponēšana vislabāk vedas rudenī un ziemā. Vasara ir neauglīga, un arī pavasaris ne visai dāsns. Mediņam patīk strādāt vakaros un naktīs, jo tad ir miers un klusums. Spožas griestu ugunis neder, vislabāk, ja uz galda ir lampa ar zaļu kupolu.

Mediņš komponē neticamā ātrumā, un, piemēram, vienas solodziesmas tapšanai viņam var pietikt arī ar mirkli.

Jaunības darbos kritiķi samana Riharda Vāgnera un Riharda Štrausa iespaidu, ko nenoliedz arī pats Mediņš, vismaz attiecībā uz instrumentācijas tehniku. Vēlākos gados viņam tuvs kļūst Bartoks, un kādā intervijā Mediņš piemin arī Hansu Verneru Henci, kura balets "Undīne" atstājis uz viņu lielu iespaidu.

LATVISKAIS

Jāni Mediņu daudzi sauc par izteikti latvisku komponistu, un te mēs nonākam slidenā zonā, jo dažādiem vērtētājiem ieskati par šo var galēji atšķirties, tomēr piedāvāsim divus izteikumus, kas, iespējams, ir apsvēršanas vērti.

Komponists un aprakstnieks Knuts Lesiņš saka: "Nacionālisms mūzikā nav uzburams ar gribēšanu vien, kā glazūra vāzei. Tas nerodas no etnogrāfiskiem atdarinājumiem, bet viņam jāaug neredzami, pat neapzināti, no komponista psihes. Protams, ja mēs analizēsim Mediņa mūziku, mēs nevarēsim viegli konstatēt, ka, lūk, šis balss gājiens, vai šī saskaņa ir latviska. Komponista radošo garu ietekmē daudzi un dažādi iespaidi, kas visi būs šur un tur kādā ieskaņā sameklējami, bet, savā latviskā gara intuīcijā visu to pārkausējot, J. Mediņš izstrādājis savu stilu, savu uztveri, kas katra noklausīta darba iespaidu kopsummā liek mums sajust, ka to uzrakstījis latviešu komponists."

Mediņa daiļrades prominentā pētniece Irēna Dunkele saka: "Daba Mediņu bija apdāvinājusi ar absolūtu dzirdi, lielu fantāziju, smalku intuīciju un neizsmeļamu melodisku izdomu. Mediņš, kā viņu pareizi raksturojis Jēkabs Poruks, nepazina radīšanas mokas. Motīvi bez smagas piepūles izauga viens no otra plūstošā jūsmā, skaisti, rotaļīgi, dzirkstīgi, skumji, groteski un brīžiem emociju piesātināti, vietām sablīvējoties spēcīgos dramatiskos kāpinājumos. Bez tam Mediņa mūzika skan tik latviski un tomēr ar izteikti personīgu veidojumu. Šis latviskums, manuprāt, izpaužas skaņraksta melodiski tematiskajā konstrukcijā, dažkārt arī ritmos, savdabīgos melodiskos pagriezienos un varbūt arī biežajā baznīcas toņkārtas pielietošanā, kas jo raksturīgs mūsu tautas dziesmām. Un šie latviskie elementi ievīti Mediņa mūzikā viņam īpatnējā stilā un reizē eiropeiskā skaņu valodā."

SKAŅDARBI

Jāņem vērā, ka Jāņa Mediņa daiļrade diezgan izteikti dalās divos lielos posmos: līdz Otrajam pasaules karam un pēc tā. Reinis Zariņš izvēlējies daiļrades paraugus no abiem posmiem, tādējādi mēs redzam Jāni Mediņu, tā teikt, pilnā augumā.

...

Sāksim ar dainām, jo tās Mediņš komponējis gandrīz visa radošā mūža garumā – no 1921. līdz 1963. gadam. Žanra apzīmējums ir komponista pašizgudrots un ļoti simpātisks: tas sasaucas ar latviešu tautasdziesmām, ko arī mēdz dēvēt par dainām, tajā pašā laikā tas ir skaists sievietes vārds, un darbības vārds 'dainot' nozīmē 'dziedāt' vai plašākā nozīmē 'skandēt'.

Autobiogrāfijā "Toņi un pustoņi" (1964) Jānis Mediņš par dainām raksta: "Man tās negribējās dēvēt ne par prelūdijām, ne citādi, kā tas līdzīgos gadījumos parasts internacionālajā mūzikas terminoloģijā. Meklēju pašu nosaukumu un atzinu, ka īsti labs dainas vārds. Tikai nevajag domāt, ka tam kāds sakars ar dainām folkloristiskā nozīmē un ka es vēlētos izmantot tautasdziesmu melodijas vai vismaz tās imitēt, rakstīt kaut ko "tautisku"."

1935. gadā Jēkabs Poruks apskata četras Mediņa dainas un saka: "Tagad, kad klavierliteratūrā nekas jauns neparādās, par jaunajām dainām sevišķi jāpriecājas. Kaut formā nelielas, tās pieder labākajam, ko Mediņš mums devis. Tāds nesamezglots, melodiski bagāts mūzikas plūdums vispār ir rets šos laikos. Mediņš šai ziņā ir kā neizsīkstošs avots, vienmēr dzidrs, spirdzinošs."

Jānis Mediņš veltījis dainas abiem brāļiem, amatbrālim Alfrēdam Kalniņam, pianistiem Lidijai Gomanei-Dombrovskai, Paulam Šubertam, Lūcijai Grauds, Hugo Štrausam, Dagmārai Kokerei un Gunai Kurmis, nošu izdevējam Edgaram Rodem, mūziķim Jurim Krīgēnam, ārstam Bjērnam Holmgrenam un mīļotajām sievietēm.

Šajā tvartā iekļautā **Sestā daina** veltīta Jāņa Mediņa pirmajai sievai, kādreizējai "Latvju operas" dziedātājai Olgai Mediņš (1895–1954), par kuru 1954. gadā nekrologā teikts: "[..] Pirmā pasaules kara laikā palīdzējusi savam toreizējam vīram prof. Jānim Mediņam cauri visai Sibīrijai iznest un pārvest Latvijā operas "Uguns un nakts" partitūru. Bijusi Drēzdenē gaisa uzbrukuma laikā, bet neskarta iznākusi no ugunīm. [..] Nelaiķi pēdējā dusā izvadīja pirmdien, un uz izvadīšanu no Ņujorkas bija ieradusies arī Herta Lūse, kas pēc nelaiķes agrāk izteiktās vēlēšanās pie šķirsta nodziedāja Mediņa dziesmu "Glāsts"." Par šo dainu kāds asprātis teicis, ka to jau katra Jelgavas jaunkundze varot nospēlēt, taču dainas gandrīz neiespējamais skaistums padarījis to par, iespējams, populārāko no visām neatkarīgi no pianistiskās grūtības vai viegluma pakāpes.

14. daina ir veltījums komponista otrajai sievai Vandai Mediņš (1911–2008) – polietei, ko komponists 30. gadu vidū satika Radiofona bibliotēkā, kur viņa strādāja. Abi apprecējās 1938. gadā, un Vanda bija komponista sirds un sadzīves pavards gan Rīgā pārticības laikos, gan Zviedrijā pieticības gados.

17. dainu Jānis Mediņš veltīja zviedru ginekologam, slimnīcas *Pro Patria* direktoram Bjērnam Holmgrenam, kurš bija nesavtīgs un pretimnākošs, kad pasaulē teju bij jānāk komponista un Vandas meitiņai Marijai. Interesanti, ka Holmgrens izrādījies attāls komponista Kurta Aterberga radinieks, taču, pēc komponista rakstītā spriežot, nav zināms, vai viņš novērtēja Mediņa sirsnīgo veltījuma žestu. Šī 1949. gadā komponētā daina ir jau diezgan raksturīga Mediņa jaunajam stilam, ko tālaika latvju aprakstnieki mēdza apzīmēt kā 'kreisu', ar to domājot komponista vēlmi tikt maķenīt tuvāk Eiropas elpai un neierobežoties latviskajā nacionālromantismā. Katrā ziņā te ir stipri impresionistiska brīvības telpa, it kā Mediņš būtu atrāvis vaļā kādu līdz tam nemanītu radošā gara vēdlodziņu.

Divas dainas ir veltītas pianistei Lilijai Kalniņai-Ozoliņai (1903–1934), kuru slavēja kā spilgtāko talantu sava laika Latvijas atskaņotājmākslā. Jāni Mediņu apbūra jaunās mūziķes talants un gaume, viņš karsti iemīlējās, pameta ģimeni, neilgu laiku abi mēģināja dzīvot kopā, bet arī Lilija bija precējusies, turklāt ar ievērojamo čellistu Alfrēdu Ozoliņu, kas bija Mediņam labs draugs un skatuves partneris. Savu pagali kaislību ugunskuram piemeta tenku žurnāls "Aizkulises", publicējot diezgan riebīgu remarku par dēkā iesaistītajiem, un Lilija Kalniņa-Ozoliņa izvēlējās beigt dzīvi pašnāvībā. Vairāki mūziķi izdemolēja "Aizkulišu" redakciju, un Jānim Mediņam nācās kādu brīdi padzīvot pie brāļa Jelgavā, jo Radiofona orķestranti bija nemēr nikni uz savu maestro.

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Mēnesi pirms pianistes pašnāvības Jānis Mediņš lika punktu **Klavierkoncertam**, kas veltīts Lilijai Kalniņai-Ozoliņai. Opuss tapa apbrīnojamā ātrumā – no 1933. gada 21. decembra līdz 1934. gada 5. janvārim. Pirmatskaņojums notika 1935. gada 4. martā, un solo spēlēja Parīzē dzimusī dāņu pianiste Frānsa Ellegora (Ellegaard, 1913–1999). Viņa bija augstu slavēta un daudzviet Eiropā atzīta, tomēr Mediņš vēlāk rakstīs: "Labākās manu darbu izpildītājas-atskaņotājas tagad mirušās pianistes Lilija Kalniņa-Ozoliņa un Marija Zalmanoviča, Buzoni skolniece, kuru vācieši nobendēja. Manu klavieru koncertu viņa spēlēja bez kļūdām, dānietes Elegordes pirmatskaņojumā šur tur bija pa nepareizam tonim."

Īsteni rahmaņinoviskā garā dzimusī mūzika ir jūsmīga, kvēlojoša – pirmajā daļā brāzmaina un tematiski magnētiska, vidusdaļā cildeni apskaidrota, finālā robusta spēlesprieka pilna. Mediņa intuitīvo pieeju mūzikai (sevišķi formas aprisēm) smalkjūtīgi aprakstījis Jēkabs Poruks, teikdams: "Katrai daļai spēcīgs, sevī noslēgts, viengabalains muzikāls saturs, un visas kopā tās sniedz monumentālu, īpatnēji harmonisku skaņu celtni."

Jāatzīst, ka šo rindu autoram īsti neizdevās saprast, kas notika ar Mediņa Klavierkoncerta notīm. Leģenda vēsta, ka partitūra sadega 1941. gadā, kad Vecrīgā sadūrās krievu un vācu armijas intereses un ugunīs gāja bojā Melngalvju nams, kur glabājās ievērojams daudzums nošu. Kādā 1960. gada intervijā Mediņš saka: "Savā laikā latviešu apstākļos tas bija labs klavierkoncerts. Tagad rakstītu citādi. Partitūra sadega 1941. gada kara dienās Melngalvju namā. Izrādās, ka klavieru partija saglabājusies pie [pianistes] Veltas Vaites [-Ceki] Itālijā. Bet es nedomāju šo darbu atjaunot."

Lai vai kā, 1965. gadā, kad Jānis Mediņš viesojās savā padomju varas okupētajā dzimtenē, viņam par godu tika rīkots autorkoncerts, un tajā skanēja arī Klavierkoncerts – solo spēlēja Vilma Cīrule, kopā ar viņu Latvijas Nacionālais simfoniskais orķestris un diriģents Edgars Tons. Piecus gadus vēlāk tapa studijas ieraksts ar diriģentu Centi Kriķi, kurš bija Mediņa pavadonis dzimtenes vizītes laikā un arī komponista acis, jo Mediņš jau bija gandrīz neredzīgs, bet vēl aizvien vēlējās komponēt.

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Atgriežoties pie Jāņa Mediņa liktenīgajām sievietēm, sev veltīto koncertu Lilija Kalniņa-Ozoliņa nez vai pat paspēja ieraudzīt, tomēr Septīto un Astoto dainu gan jau atskaņoja, un ir pilnīgi skaidri zināms, ka viņas repertuārā bijusi arī **"Balāde"**, kuras tapšanu Mediņš autobiogrāfijā datējis ar 1922. gadu. No preses var nojaust, ka "Skaņražu kopa" izdeva "Balādi" 1925. gada ziemā, un jau tad tā nāca klajā ar komponista veltījumu Lilijai Kalniņai-Ozoliņai. Tas arī nebūtu nekāds brīnums, jo pianistes karjera sākās agri, vēl pirms divdesmit gadu vecuma sasniegšanas, un Jānis Mediņš, zināms, sekoja Rīgas koncertdzīves jaunumiem.

1926. gada maijā prominentais mūzikas vēsturnieks Jēkabs Vītoliņš brīnās, ka neviens pianists joprojām nav iestudējis jaunizdoto "Balādi", un mēs varam turpināt brīnīties, kāpēc šo šedevru līdz pat mūslaikiem gandrīz nemaz (vai pilnīgi nemaz) nedzird. Rets izņēmums – 1982. gadā lieliskā mūzikas vēsturniece Vija Briede, recenzējot Guntas Dukātes-Čerņavskas solokoncertu, uzteic mūziķes izvēli un saka: "Kā muzikālu jaunumu klausījāmies Jāņa Mediņa "Balādi", ko līdz šim mūsu koncertdzīvē nav nācies dzirdēt. Skaņdarba brīvās formas komplicētība un augstās tehniskās prasības acīmredzot kavējušas pianistus tai pievērsties."

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No Jāņa Mediņa daiļrades pirmā perioda šajā albumā (tā digitālajā versijā) likta vēl 1922. gadā komponētā nepretenciozā, grafiski filigrānā **"Skice"**, savukārt otro posmu pārstāv "Kaprise", "Spēle" un Sonatīne.

Te ņemsim palīgā ekscentrisko un asi vērojošo komponistu, ērģelnieku un aprakstnieku Andri Vītoliņu, kurš raksta: "Pianistisku ekvilibristiku prasa bizarrā **"Kaprise"**. Harmoniskais ietērps līdzīgs **"Spēlei"**, lai gan šeit vairāk impresionisma pazīmju. Formas veidojumā, gan ļoti brīvi, ieturēts t. s. koncentriskais princips. "Kaprises" vidū aizgrābjošs monologs uz klusa disonējoša akorda pamata. Pirms un pēc tam – gan lauztu akordu, gan hromatisku pavadījumu figūru apvīta tautasdziesmai līdzīga skumja melodija vecā baznīcu toņkārtā. To savukārt apņem gandrīz vai atonāla, izteiksmīga melodija ir rāmu kvintoļu, ir skrejošu sešpadsmitdaļu trioļu pavadījumā. Vieglajam, izteikti ritmiskajam sākumam un nobeigumam pieslienas sērīga melodija mazās tercas apjomā. Savdabīgajās pārejās Mediņš atklāj reti bagātu apdares izdomu."

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Vītoliņš teicami apraksta mūziku, bet ir arī vērā ņemams atskaņotājmākslinieks, kura pianista dzīvei klusu svētību savulaik devis arī pats Jānis Mediņš. Andrim Vītoliņam piekritis gods pirmatskaņot Mediņa **Sonatīni** (ko autors dēvē savā modē par Sonatīnu), un te uzmetīsim aci Pāvulānu Ingrīdas tekstam: "Kā vakara labāko sniegumu gribētos atzīmēt Jāņa Mediņa jauno klavieru sonatīni Andra Vītoliņa pirmatskaņojumā. Šķiet, šis ir līdz šim labākais klavieru darbs, ko Mediņš uzrakstījis, un var droši konkurēt ar starptautiski atzītām kompozīcijām. Pirmās daļas impresionistiskā noskaņa it kā atgādinātu lielos franču meistarus, bet otrā tēma, viena no Mediņa skaistākām iedvesmēm, tāpat kā gaisīgā pāreja pirms tās, kas neviļus atgādina noslēpumainu ūdeņu burbuļošanu, šķiet dziļi latviska. Nepieradušais klausītājs varbūt uztrauksies par skarbiem akordiem, bet mums jāseko līdz laika attīstībai, lai nekļūtu tālumnieki. Otrā daļa, izveidota no skaistas tēmas, vecās baznīcu toņkārtās. Aizgrābjošs ir šīs daļas apskaidrotais nojēgums pēc varenā kāpinājuma. Beidzamā daļā dominē ritms – sinkopēta, bet dziedoša meldija ar jautru ritmisku pavadījuma figūru. Burleski ir smaguma punkti, bet reizē arī atjautīga humora pilni. Lieliski Mediņam izdevies fugato šīs daļas vidū – mūsu klavieru literatūrā līdz šim vienīgais."

Orests Silabriedis