

Summary

„Contemporary percussion techniques and broadening the competences of the performer towards interdisciplinarity on the example of selected percussion literature of the 21st century”

In every artistic discipline 20th and 21st centuries have been a period of significant change, emergence of new artistic trends and movements as social, political and technological change have had a strong impact on both authors and their works. In music, starting from the beginning of 20th century, composers have noticed and explored new performance techniques and an innovative approach towards musical instruments. There has also been a visible tendency towards interdisciplinarity and synthesis of arts which fascinates artists searching for more profound experience, going beyond the frames of their artistic disciplines. Composers seeking something more than just sounds and tones of traditional acoustic instruments were inspired by a possibility to join them with other various forms of expression. 20th and 21st centuries also constitute a period of rapid development and expansion of percussion instruments, what has become a convenient field for artistic experiments. The obvious performative pageantry as well as countless various tone combining possibilities have become a foundation to synergy with other disciplines. Additionally from the second half of 20th century growing possibilities of electronic devices use created space for innovatory, interdisciplinary projects with the use of this group of instruments. This dissertation is aimed at showing , to how significant extent the use of new performance methods affects the development of playing techniques as well as how it influences the broadening of modern percussionist's competences. The latest, interdisciplinary percussion literature compositions based on the use of extended playing techniques have been presented and analyzed to support the above thesis. The chosen works are interdisciplinary compositions in which the musician possessing excellent technical skills and knowledge must also be ready to adapt competence exceeding conventional, standard performance skills.

The dissertation is divided into three parts. The first chapter constitutes an introduction to the topic showing the evolution of solo and chamber percussion literature at the turn of 21st century. The chosen works are also analyzed in the context of their interdisciplinarity and the necessity of additional technical skills development as well as knowledge exceeding the level needed earlier. In the last part of this chapter I introduce, present, and analyze new visual conceptions - video, lighting and scenography- and their functions in a composition's execution. Also the role

of cooperation with artists from other music fields is considered. Modernistic pieces enriched with additional, above mentioned, components allow to multiply the number of stimuli affecting listeners and to present a piece in a broader context. The impact of it on a composition and its aesthetic values is also considered.

The following two chapters contain the analysis of the chosen pieces mainly in the context of new playing techniques use. The second chapter focuses on instrumental theatre compositions. The first piece - *Bad Touch*, written by percussionist and composer Casey Cangelosi is based on gestures of a musician operating only a single snare drum stick. The musical background is a tape with composition written and recorded by Cangelosi. The second piece - *Blacksnowfalls* by Wojciech Blecharz is an impressively moving composition for one symphonic timpano solo. The player depicts lyrics of the work on an instrument's membrane. An important element of the piece is a camera placed directly over a timpano due to which a film showed on a screen allows audience to watch all the gestures of a performer.

In both pieces technical requirements exceed noticeably traditional performing technique characteristic for timpani and snare drum. These works require from the performer mastering of new performing skills that become main formative element of the compositions. To both of the pieces composers also added extra elements such as tape in *Bad Touch* or camera and picture in *Blacksnowfalls*.

The third chapter shows a new aspect of 21st century percussive art - a significant role of quickly developing technology, electronics and computerization as well as new media. Initially used tape gradually replaced with samplers, live electronics, the use of new technologies created technical, sound and expression opportunities for composers. The combination of traditional technique with the use of additional device tends to augment difficulties for a performer but also encourages to search for new, experimental solutions on the field of performance techniques.

This chapter contains the analysis of a composition in the context of mastering new playing techniques and acquiring new competences regarding the connection of traditional ways of playing music with the handling of electroacoustic devices. The presented pieces were composed for acoustic percussion instruments with the addition of electronics. The pieces are: *Lunatyk* by Felix Kubin, a German electronic music author, *Electric Thoughts* by Ivan Trevino and *Modular # 1* by Miłosz Pękala. In Kubin's and Trevino's pieces acoustic instruments are accompanied by the tape prepared by composers. In *Modular #1* additional "layers" filled with electronic sounds are released by players themselves with the use of such devices as semi-modular synthesiser, sampler or delay. The last composition analyzed in the dissertation – *Kwadraty*, is a piece for triangles and live electronics, composed by Rafał Zapała. The piece is based on processing an acoustic instrument - triangle sound with the use of Max/MSP programme in real

time. A very uncommon in the existing literature technique required in this composition constitutes a good example of the extension of instrument perception by referring to its Brazilian roots. To perform the score properly, the artist also has to master the ability to operate both the necessary electronic devices and a computer programme.

The theses of the dissertation are based on the interdisciplinary pieces composed in 21st century. Works subjected to discussion were written for percussion instruments with a necessity to use new performance techniques, what significantly influences the formation of a new conception of sound. Not without the significance is the choice of the compositions. The author of this dissertation participated in the creation process of majority of the chosen pieces cooperating or advising their authors. The dissertation focuses on the pieces composed by Polish authors to underline their significant impact on the development of the 21st century percussion literature and therefore half of the analyzed pieces were written by Polish composers.

The evolution of percussion techniques and literature is a process that has not reached its culmination yet. Due to percussionists' and composers' determination new compositions engaging various means of expression emerge. Performance techniques have been modified constantly, musicians keep acquiring new abilities. 20th century equipped artists with tools enabling them to perform even the most technically complex artistic concepts. Using them, musicians cross earlier boundaries and identify new paths. This process is clearly visible in percussive arts that are undergoing constant modification and therefore it can be assumed that the word *development* has been a key word in the context of transformation in this field.

In conclusion, to support a view on the significant role of extended performance techniques as well as new percussionists' competencies for 21st century music, it should be underlined that mastering these techniques and competencies has been a significant advantage of a musician and considering a necessity to perform contemporary music it becomes indispensable.

This dissertation is based on the recording containing the discussed compositions. I truly hope that the material presented in this dissertation will deepen and broaden the knowledge on the latest contemporary percussion literature as well as its performance problems.