

Adaptation of Jazz Music for the Interpretation of the Old Polish Language.

Prosody, Articulation and Phrasing in the Confrontation of Syncretism of Selected Songs by Jan Kochanowski with Jazz Compositions by Kuba Stankiewicz

This doctoral thesis consists of two main parts: a theoretical part and a work of art. The theoretical part begins with a presentation of the song as one of the oldest genres of lyrical poetry, closely related to music.

The main part of my thesis bases on the analysis of selected works (songs) by Jan Kochanowski set in the context of compositions by Kuba Stankiewicz. Both creators, despite the many centuries between them, have formed a kind of ‘partnership of authors’ creating a new, contemporary and eclectic work, a ‘synthesis of arts’, which has become the subject of my research.

A highly significant issue raised in the further part of this thesis is also confronting the archaic Old Polish language used by Jan Kochanowski with odd (triple) and even (double) pulsation, as well as with jazz phrasing. In the context of rhythm as the most important factor determining jazz music, the issue of ‘prosody’ of the Old Polish language, i.e. the relation of its sound properties and rules of articulation to the compositions proposed by Kuba Stankiewicz has been presented.

My argumentation has been directed by a profound affirmation for the work of the Polish National Bard, and in particular for the language, no longer in use today, which he used when creating his works. I have also tried to emphasize the still valid overtone of the supreme values and general outlook of the world in the songs of Jan of Czarnolas. My intention at this stage of the work was to defend the thesis that in order to create a two-coded message (verbal and musical), the only possibility of ‘adaptation’ of both song-consisting elements is an exclusively one-way process: music adapted to the word.

Not without significance is the fact that jazz, being an extremely vital and constantly developing ‘musical language’, is eminently suitable for this type of experimentation, and its short history of only over a hundred years proves its extraordinary flexibility in terms of combining various styles, languages and forms. In this particular case, regardless of the density of the musical means used in the creation of the songs, the overriding value will remain the word as an element which the music will only intensify and complement. Another very important aspect of my thesis, to which I would like to draw particular attention, was the creative process preceded by the preparations for the project itself. I describe this stage starting from my personal impressions linked to listening to the sound of the Old Polish

language using archival recordings by actors specialising in its interpretation. I also stress the need to consult linguists about the correct articulation (pronunciation) of phrases that are not used today. At the end of this part of the thesis, I present the process of adaptation connected with the familiarisation with Kuba Stankiewicz's musical proposals which, in the final stage of the whole preparation process, were subject to my (often substantial) alterations with regard to rhythmisation and phrasing.

In the analytical part of the thesis, in the following subsections, there is personal documentation including the musical notation of the final versions of all twelve *Songs* included in the album presenting the work. Next to each of them there are also photocopies of extracts of a particular piece in the original version notation. In addition, I have included my suggestions as to changes concerning particular fragments, which in confrontation with the original shows the process of evolution of the verbal and musical matter.

In the summary of my thesis I emphasize the exceptional and innovative character of the whole project, taking into consideration the fact that no one has ever before made an attempt to combine Old Polish poetry with jazz music.