

BOOK REVIEW

**LINEN SIEVES – THOUGHTS ON THE MARGIN OF ANGI ISTVÁN'S
MUSICOLOGICAL WRITINGS
(ANGI ISTVÁN: *SITE DE IN*, EDITURA MEDIA MUSICA,
CLUJ-NAPOCA, 2014)**

Founder of the Romanian school of music aesthetics, Angi Ștefan exposes in this book a bounded, but significant segment of his central musicological concerns of the late years. Its unconventional title *Linen sieves*, refers to a paradigmatic verse of the Transylvanian poet, Lucian Blaga, called *At the Court of Yearning*. Both provocative and meditative, the title-metaphor invites the reader not only to explore the content of this book, but also to familiarize itself with the significant and original aesthetic view of the author, elaborated in a two-volume treatise, *Lectures on Music Aesthetics* (Oradea University Press, 2004.)

Beyond the beauty of Blaga's poem, evoked in this book as a motto, we recognize between its lines a profound confession of the 80 years old aesthete, about life, existence and art. In this

sense, the author exposes a passionate approach to his most beloved field of research, manifested during his all life, also giving voice to the sadness of passing and transcendental hope, both embodied in the ephemeral nature of music. But music also teaches us, that everything transitory, paradoxically needs to be immortalized (in a score, in a personal or in our collective memory), and every transcendental act discharges itself from the shackle of time. The metaphor *Linen sieves* reflects just the submissive attitude of the author ("Strained through our waking hours – linen sieves"),



confident of the intrinsic limitations of the human regarding the essence of life and art. But art is joy and hope, and music still exists. As Goethe wrote: "The sound of the music dies away, but the harmony remains."

This book is about passion, a passion of its author for his beloved city, Cluj-Napoca, for its culture and art, city where he lived almost his entire life, where he acquired the basic knowledge about music and aesthetics, about the importance of tradition and contemporaneity. Beyond the general musicological significance of this volume, his gratitude towards the musical life of his city remains a constant and basic horizon of these writings. The term horizon has here a particular meaning, reflecting a basic hermeneutical approach. As Gadamer suggested: the understanding is reached within a fusion of horizons.

The writings selected for this volume cover basically two different fields of research, but they also have something in common: their connection to the compositional and musicological life of the Transylvanian "capital".

The first major section entitled *Romanian paradigms* embraces mainly the activity and work of composers from Cluj-Napoca, along with some reflections on certain other Romanian composers of the last century. As a devoted promoter of his fellow musicians, Angi continues in this volume the series of analyses on their compositions, set up in his extensive book entitled *Snapshots. From the workshop of the composers of Cluj* (Editura Arpeggione, Cluj-Napoca, 2006). In this sense, he emphasizes the importance of the young generation, including some reflections on their output.

It is remarkable however, the broad panorama of his approach, both in its subjects, as well in a methodological sense, according to his basic view about analysis: every work of art demands a particular method, arose from its inner nature. Thus, his *Romanian paradigms* also reflect the richness of their aesthetic roots, from the fusion of styles, to the evocation of ethos, rhetoric, suffering, modernism and postmodernism, epistemes etc.

The other major section of this book consists of several papers presented at the symposiums of the Romanian Mozart Society in Cluj during the last two decades. These writings bring an important contribution to the aesthetic perspectives on Mozart's work and musical thinking, mostly regarding the rhetoric aspect of his oeuvre.

We conclude our thoughts, by quoting another passage from the already mentioned verse, to express the hope that this book will represent for the future readers the object of a profound study, carried on with pleasure and professional satisfaction: "Auroras still gleam, and we are waiting."

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