

JUGGLE FOR CLARINET AND PIANO BY CRISTIAN MARINA – CHANGING THE SEMANTICS OF CONTEMPORARY MUSICAL CREATION FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF VARIOUS INSTRUMENTAL VERSIONS

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SUMMARY. *Juggle* (2005) for clarinet and piano by Cristian Marina represents the starting point for another of the composer's works, *Intorno* (2006) for clarinet, violin and piano. The work was composed especially for and dedicated to the Aperto Trio, obtaining the 1st Prize at the International Aperto Composition Competition, Bucharest, 2006 (president of the jury: the late maestro Ștefan Niculescu). The present study analyses the main musical differences between the versions of the piece, insisting in the beginning of the analysis on the large circulation of this phenomenon (different instrumental versions of the same piece) in international and Romanian musical works of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Keywords: versions, transcription, instrumental, clarinet, piano, creation, contemporary.

The piece we will take into consideration for our study, *Juggle* for clarinet and piano (2005) by Cristian Marina (n.1965), also has a "twin sister", for alto saxophone and piano, but represents, at the same time, the starting point for *Intorno* for clarinet, violin and piano (2006). The legitimate question naturally arising would be why the Romanian composer (now living in Stockholm, Sweden) opted for 3 instrumental versions of the same musical piece, changing, for the last version, even the initial title?

This phenomenon – of transcription of a musical work in different timbral garments and of using fragments from a previous work in another creation with a different title – is rather frequent in music history, culminating in the "new music" of the 20th and 21st centuries. Therefore, before analysing the reports established between the "mother-piece" *Juggle* and its "offspring" entitled *Intorno*, a short voyage in the history of music is needed in order to present the large circulation of the above mentioned phenomenon.

Thus, even from the beginnings of instrumental creation, the phenomenon of transcriptions was present due to the "possibility offered by 14th and 15th

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centuries composers to instruments to double or replace one or several of the human voices from the polyphonic ensemble of their vocal creation² (initially, an optional possibility) and especially due to the “transcription of vocal creations for instruments with polyphonic possibilities (such as the lute, the organ or the clavichord)”³. The transcription phenomenon manifested on the one hand with an educational purpose (transcriptions “were persistently recommended by educators of the time to their disciples – composers or interpreters – either in order to shape their compositional thinking or to ease their capacity of deciphering a score”²) and on the other with practical purpose (due to “the need for the repertoire of the church choir to be transcribed for organ in order to be permanently followed²”; taking into account the request of organ players outside the church also, “it is necessary to also transcribe some a capella works”²). We additionally mention here the rich repertoire of secular vocal-polyphonic works “transmitted as arrangements where the lute had either an accompanying role or a soloist one”⁴).

In our voyage towards the 20th century, we cannot forget a few famous examples of the use of musical fragments (with certain modifications from the point of view of timbre, but also affecting musical substance, by rhythmic and melodic variations, abbreviations etc.), such as:

- *Crucifixus* from the *Missa in b Minor* (BWV 232) by **J.S. Bach**, fragment taken (abbreviated and transposed) from the cantata *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen* (BWV 12),

- cantata *Davide Penitente* (K.V. 469) by **W.A. Mozart**, where most of the musical fragments are derived from the *Great Missa in c Minor* (K.V. 427), left unfinished,

- *the Ninth Symphony*, part 4, by **L. van Beethoven**, which uses –in variational form also – a theme very much related to the main theme in the *Fantasy for Piano, Choir and Orchestra*, op. 80.

- the two sonatas for viola and piano by **J. Brahms**, representing transcriptions made by Brahms himself, after the “two sonatas for clarinet and piano from Ischl”⁵ (op.120, no.1 and 2).

In what regards the 20th and 21st centuries, we notice an increase in the frequency of these instrumental adaptations of the important composers’ own creations. Therefore, in an international context, we are bound to mention a few notable examples such as:

² Ștefănescu, Ioana, *O istorie a muzicii universale (A History of Universal Music)*, Vol.I, Ed. Fundației Culturale Române, 1995, p. 117.

³ Ibidem, p. 118.

⁴ Ibidem, p. 121.

⁵ Ștefănescu, Ioana, *Op. cit.*, Vol. III, p. 466.

- ✓ **W. Lutoslawski** – who orchestrates his work *Variations on a Theme by Paganini* for two pianos (1941), resulting in a concert version for piano and orchestra (1978).
- ✓ **P. Boulez** – who extends and transforms *Douze notations* for piano (1945) in an orchestral work entitled *Notations* (1978-); a very clear example for our study is *...explosante-fixe...* (also by P. Boulez), reuniting no less than 4 different instrumental versions (the first version, for flute, clarinet and trumpet, 1972; the second version for octet and electronic music, 1973–74; the third version for vibraphone and electronic music, 1985; the fourth version for flute - MIDI, chamber orchestra and electronic music, 1991–93).
- ✓ **K. Penderecki**, who resorts to instrumental re-arrangements for the following works: *Sinfonietta No.1* for string orchestra (1992), originated from String Trio composed one year earlier; *Sinfonietta No.2* for clarinet and strings (1994), based on the Quartet with clarinet from 1993; *Concerto for viola* (1983), also transcribed for clarinet, cello, but also for chamber orchestra; *Concerto for clarinet and chamber orchestra* (1995) represents a transcription of the *Concerto for flute* composed in 1992. A special place is held by the *Polish Requiem* (1980-84), revised and extended in 1993, but also in 2005, after the death of Pope John Paul the 2nd.
- ✓ **J. Cage** also brings his contribution to the development of the 20th century list of transcriptions with *Prelude for 6 Instruments in a Minor* (1946), resulted from the musical arrangement of the second piece of the *Two pieces* for piano, composed earlier, that same year; the ballet *The Seasons* (1947), with a written version for piano and one for orchestra; *Cheap Imitation* for piano (1969), orchestrated in 1972, having also a violin version (1977); *Quartets 1-8* for orchestra (1976) are multiplied in 3 versions, for 24, 41 and 93 interpreters, but with arrangement also for 12 amplified voices and concert band from 1978;
- ✓ **K. Stockhausen** – *The Fourth Hour: Harmonien* is written for a solo instrument, in 3 variants: flute, bass clarinet or trumpet (2006).

In the context of Romanian contemporary musical creation we notice the same development of the transcription phenomenon. From the famous case of *Martie (March)* by **Marțian Negrea**⁶, through the works of composers such as **Dan Dediu** (*Parerga agonica* for mezzo-soprano and saxophones - op. 44a, 1994, but also for mezzo-soprano and clarinet - op.44b,

⁶ “*March* was, in the beginning, part of the cycle *Ten Songs on Lyrics by Lucian Blaga*, composed in 1957, but published only in 1969. While the first nine “songs” are written for voice and piano, the last one is for flute and reciter. The adaptation for clarinet [...] was written in cooperation with the clarinet player Aurelian Octav Popa [...]. This adaptation was later promoted by the *Clarinet Method* in two volumes belonging to teachers Dumitru Ungureanu and Eugen Radovici” (Marcu, Șerban, *Elemente de structurare ale discursului muzical în lucrarea Martie de Marțian Negrea (Elements of the Musical Discourse in Martie (March) for Clarinet Solo by Marțian Negrea)*, in: *Studia UBB Musica*, no.2/2011, p. 144).

1994/95; *Variațiuni-animată pe o temă de Mozart (Animated variations on a theme by Mozart)* - op.51a, 1995 for oboe, clarinet, saxophones, ocarina alto and bass, percussion, but also for clarinet, saxophones, ocarinas, piano and percussion - op. 51b, 1995; *Chansons gotiques* for saxophones and organ - op. 68a, 1997-98, but also for saxophones and orchestra - op. 68b, 1997-2000), **Doina Rotaru** (*Clocks* for chamber ensemble, in 2 versions: for clarinet, piano, percussion or for oboe, clarinet, bassoon, violin, cello, piano and percussion - 1987), **Valentin Timaru** - *Omagiu lui Enescu (Homage to Enescu)*, poem for violin solo and string ensemble - 1980, but also for violin and piano - 1988), **Cornel Țăranu** - *Ofrande I (Offerings I)* for flute and 3 percussions – 1978 and *Ofrande II (Offerings II)* for flute, 3 percussions, piano and string quintet – 1978, *Rezonanțe I (Resonances I)* for guitar and *Rezonanțe II (Resonances II)* for guitar and instruments – both written in 1978, *Prolegomene I (Preface I)* for string quartet and piano – 1981 and *Prolegomene II (Preface II)* for string quintet/orchestra and piano – 1982, *Sempre ostinato I* for saxophone/clarinet solo – 1986 and *Sempre ostinato II* for saxophone/clarinet and 7 instruments – 1986-1988, *Remembering Bartók I* for oboe solo with piano ad libitum, *Remembering Bartók II* for oboe, string quintet, piano and percussion ad libitum and *Remembering Bartók III* for soprano saxophone and 4 saxophones – all the three versions being composed in 1995, *Responsorial I* for 1-2 clarinets, *Responsorial II* for 2 saxophones – both written in 1996 - and *Responsorial III* for clarinet, bassoon, piano, percussion, violin and cello - 1997), **Cristian Marina** (*Juggle* for clarinet/alto saxophone and piano - 2005, as well as its extended version, *Intorno*, for clarinet, violin and piano - 2006) and, with your permission, myself, **Cristian Bence-Muk** (*Radio.zip*, for violin, flute, piano and cello, written in 2008 – abbreviated version of *Radio* for flauto dolce, recorder, harpsichord and cello from 2006; *Oprîți războiul (Stop the War)* - for 16 or 14 string instruments - 2003/2010; *A Few Musical Horror Scenes* – abbreviated version of *Musical Horror Scenes*, both versions being written for 2 pianos in 2011).

After this short voyage in the history of music and especially in the musical creation of the 20th and 21st centuries, the following legitimate question arises: why composers (especially the contemporary ones) chose to write several instrumental (or vocal-instrumental) versions of their own works?

Considering the examples previously enumerated, we could distinguish several causes:

- 1) the lack of time between various orders of compositions (an aspect very familiar to J.S. Bach, but also to the composers belonging to the “century of speed”);
- 2) orchestration of a chamber work in order to be played both by a symphonic and by a chamber orchestra (see above the examples of Lutoslawski, Penderecki, Cage, Boulez, Dediu);

- 3) the other side of the coin would have meant adaptation of a piece for a more restricted instrumental (or vocal-instrumental) formula, due to practical reasons (for example: Valentin Timaru - *Omagiu lui Enescu (Homage to Enescu)*).
- 4) in the case when only musical moments from a previous, larger work are used (J.S. Bach - *Crucifixus*, L. van Beethoven - *An die Freude* from the 4th part of the Ninth Symphony, K. Penderecki – *The Polish Requiem*, etc.), the reason could be the continuous wish of the composer to improve and make plenary use of his previous work;
- 5) last but not least, what determines composers to write several different versions of the same piece could be the wish to hear the work in different timbral garments, as a continuous search for the ideal instrumental (vocal-instrumental) ensemble; the perfect example here would be *Arta Fugii (The Art of Fugue)* by J. S. Bach, where the instruments are not specified, leaving them to the interpreters' choice.

Therefore, seen as stages in the continuous development of a musical work, the different variants of a piece could offer us, by a virtual overlapping in a musical palimpsest, the ideal sonorous image of the work, in bold contours (like in a 3D film watched without the special glasses), but totalizing the entire musical substance, with all its details which change from one version to another, rendering the entire conceptual depth, impossible to capture in a single, rigid timbral stance.

We will furthermore return to *Juggle* by Cristian Marina, in order to illustrate, by a few musical examples, the resemblances and especially the differences between the versions of a piece, as well as the practical ways of obtaining them. We chose this piece – as an object for our study – for two reasons: on the one hand it has been integrated in the research project constituting the general frame of this article and, on the other hand, it is a very eloquent musical example for the chosen theme, being also a great accomplishment of 21st century Romanian contemporary music⁷.

In its version for alto saxophone and piano, *Juggle* was played for the first time on July 6, 2006, at the Cankarjev Dom, Ljubljana, Slovenia, at the 14th World Saxophone Congress, by David J. Parks (saxophone) and Marina Chamasyan (piano)⁸. *Intorno* (clarinet, violin and piano), mostly based on *Juggle*, was played for the first time by the Aperto Trio on May 28, 2006 (in

⁷ *Intorno*, mostly based on its previous version, *Juggle*, received the 1st Prize at the International Aperto Composition Competition, Bucharest, 2006 (president of the jury: Ștefan Niculescu) - <http://web.comhem.se/~u70815704/biography.htm> - the official website of the composer, visited on 12.16.2011.

⁸ <http://web.comhem.se/~u70815704/%28first%29-performances.htm> - the official website of the composer (visited on 12.16.2011).

the Atrium of the Cantacuzino Palace, in Bucharest, Romania, during the International Week of New Music), but it was also played one year later, at the international festival "ISCM - World Music Days", in Hong Kong, China (by the ensemble of the Music Conservatory in Sichuan)⁷.

The version for clarinet and piano of *Juggle* however, was played for the first time on December 5, 2011, in Cluj-Napoca, during the Educational Concert of Contemporary Music⁹, taking place at the "Gh. Dima" Music Academy (room 59, played by the clarinetist Răzvan Poptean and the pianist Mara Pop).

It is probably no coincidence that the final instrumental version, never played before, returned to Cluj-Napoca, the birth place of the composer (born in 1965), where he began his musical studies at the Music High School (as a cello player), pursued at the Music Conservatory in Cluj (1983-1987), studying composition under the guidance of professor Cornel Țăranu. After graduation, Cristian Marina continued his studies at the Musikhogskolan in Göteborg and Stockholm, but also at the Académie d'été, from IRCAM in Paris, France (1995) and at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena, Italy (1996). Among his composition professors we mention Franco Donatoni, Magnus Lindberg, Philippe Manoury, Luca Francesconi, Miklós Maros and Sven David Sandström¹⁰.

His passion for jazz materialized in founding and leading an instrumental ensemble, giving concerts in Sweden, Finland, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. This aspect is also to be found, indirectly, in the pieces *Intorno* and *Juggle*, the composer confessing in his electronic correspondence with us that the melodic and rhythmic aspect is dominated by "influences from jazz and East-European folkloric music". Therefore, Cristian Marina's works taken into account for the present study were written under the influence of a synthesis of his Romanian-Swedish musical experiences.

The originating piece, *Juggle*, has two instrumental versions: alto saxophone and piano and clarinet and piano, respectively. The two versions do not operate essential changes in the musical substance, which remains the same; they only bring timbral changes, as the alto saxophone is replaced by the clarinet. Actually, starting from the perspective of the clarinet version (first played and recorded in Cluj-Napoca), we notice that the version for alto saxophone has the same extension (important to mention, especially in comparison with *Intorno*) and the part of the piano is identical, only the alto saxophone replaces the clarinet, most of the times in an identical way:

⁹ Realized as part of the TE research project *The artistic and social impact of the contemporary music of the 21st century from the perspective of the relationship composer-performer-audience*, project financed by C.N.C.S.I.S. – U.E.F.I.S.C.S.U. with the contract no. 5/5.08.2010 (Project director: Lect.univ.dr. Cristian Bence-Muk).

¹⁰ Acc. Cosma, Viorel, *Muzicienii din România – Lexicon (Romanian Musicians - Lexicon)*, Vol. 5 (K-M), Ed. Muzicală, Bucharest, 2002, p. 306.

Ex.1

measures 1-6 from the two versions:

But other times with subtle “play on” registers, made by transpositions to octave:

Ex. 2

m. 223-227, from both versions¹¹:

¹¹ In all comparative musical examples of the present study the first term of the comparison represents the clarinet and piano version, while the other belongs to other versions, as the case may be.

However, it is by comparing *Juggle* for clarinet and piano with *Intorno* for clarinet, violin and piano that we actually enter the core of the matter. In this case, musical transformations are profound, beginning from the total change of metro-rhythmic conception: if in the first piece extremely varied alternative measures (6/16, 5/16, 7/16, 2/8, 3/8) very rapidly succeed one another, determining changes almost every measure (on the impulse of metrical delimitation of whimsical musical motives), in the second piece we notice the framing of rhythmic formulae (with normal and exceptional divisions) in “traditional” measures (4/4, but also 3/4 or 2/4), the motivic stress becoming rhythmical, completely dissociated from the metrical one. We present the first 2 measures of *Intorno*, coinciding with measures 1-6 from *Juggle* (see example 1 for comparison):

Ex. 3

Secondly, *Intorno* (approx. 10 min. and a half) is significantly more extended than *Juggle* (approx. 7 min.), by the intercalation of an ample medial section, dilating the contrasting section (quasi piano solo with short interventions of the clarinet) also present in *Juggle*. We present the beginning of the musical section only to be found in *Intorno*, section representing the amplification of the development of the initial motives from the two works.

Ex. 4

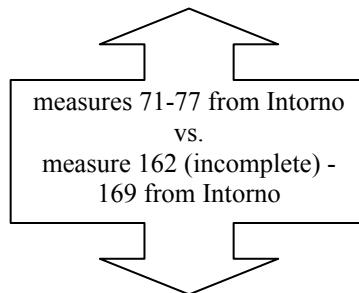
m.79-81 from *Intorno*

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We re-enter the musical flux of the basic piece (*Juggle*) by means of a very efficient and simple method, that is, the reprise of the last two measures, common to the two versions, the ones before the new section (composed especially for *Intorno*): the reprise of measures 71-77 of *Intorno* (corresponding to measures 172-191 of *Juggle*), in measures 162-169, however, in a new metric context:

Ex. 5

Musical score for piano, measures 162-169. The score is written for the left hand (bass clef) and right hand (treble clef). It features complex rhythmic patterns and dynamic markings such as *mf*, *f*, and *sfz*. The notation includes various note values, rests, and articulation marks.



Musical score for piano, measures 162-169. This score is a continuation of the previous one, showing the same complex rhythmic and dynamic structure for the piano part.

Thus, the piece continues naturally, exactly as in the initial version.

Another problem to be solved by the composer before writing the *Intorno* version was the distribution of the sonorous discourse for three instruments instead of two. The piano part remains almost untouched, as a harmonic fundament standing at the basis of both pieces; there are, however, small modifications, resulted from the fact that the violin takes over a motivic element from the piano:

Ex. 6

Nevertheless, the melodic line of the clarinet (from the *Juggle* version) was distributed to the two melodic instruments – the violin and the clarinet – in several ways:

- by “dividing” the melodic line between the two instruments (when the second instrument takes over, the first one takes a break):

Ex. 7

m. 1-2 from *Intorno* (for comparison see musical ex. no. 1, measures 1-6 from *Juggle*):

- by the polyphonic “dividing” of the melodic line between the two instruments (when the second instrument takes over, the first one continues with a held note):

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Ex. 8

m.16-19 from *Juggle*
vs.
m.7-8 from *Intorno*

The image shows a musical score for Ex. 8. It features three staves: Clarinet (CL), Violin (VI), and Piano (PI). The top right section is enclosed in a box and labeled with a callout box below it. The callout box contains the text: "m.16-19 from *Juggle* vs. m.7-8 from *Intorno*". The score shows the melodic line of the clarinet and the violin's accompaniment, with the piano part providing harmonic support.

- the melodic line of the clarinet remains identical and the violin participates isorhythmically with various effects (tremolo, flageolet), thus highlighting a sound of the harmonic complex of the piano:

Ex. 9

m.9-15 from
Juggle vs.
m. 4-6 from
Intorno

The image shows a musical score for Ex. 9. It features three staves: Clarinet (CL), Violin (VI), and Piano (PI). The top section is enclosed in a box and labeled with a callout box below it. The callout box contains the text: "m.9-15 from *Juggle* vs. m. 4-6 from *Intorno*". The score shows the melodic line of the clarinet and the violin's accompaniment, with the piano part providing harmonic support. The violin part includes downward-pointing arrows indicating specific effects.

- by the addition of new polyphonic melodic lines (and with the modification of the first sound from the example for clarinet):

Ex. 10

m.29-31
from *Juggle*
vs.
m.13-14
from *Intorno*

In all the cases presented above the sonorous registers are treated with flexibility, the composer often making use of transpositions to octave.

Therefore, here are a few specific ways of creating a new instrumental version, by timbral re-allotments, which can also trigger substantial transformations of the musical discourse from a melodic, polyphonic, metric, rhythmic and even formal point of view (from the extension of the cellular-motivic processing resulting a new, ample elaborative section). The initial musical motives (see example 1) are submitted – in both works – to continuous variations, permutations, reprises, this compositional perspective fully supporting the titles of the two opuses (if the meaning of *Juggle* is obvious, *Intorno* means, in Italian, “around”).

As we witness not only the creation of a new instrumental version, but also the transformation of the sonorous substance in order to fit three instruments instead of two – aspect also reflected by the length of the work or the vast compositional work – we notice a change in the semantics of the initial piece, which, enriched from the point of view of timbre and form, becomes a new piece, with a different title, possibly marking a higher stage in the accomplishment of the ideal musical piece.

We close with the hope that this analytical perspective (from the point of view of a composer - myself) on a compositional phenomenon, generously represented in contemporary music, will prove useful to those

interested to understand the technical mechanisms or the expressive and aesthetical triggers in creating different instrumental versions of the same piece, revealing therefore the continuous avatars of contemporary musical creation, in permanent evolution.

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Scores:

- Marina, Cristian - *Juggle* for clarinet (in bb) and piano (ms.)
Marina, Cristian - *Juggle* for alto saxophone (in eb) and piano (ms.)
Marina, Cristian - *Intorno* for clarinet, violin and piano (ms.)

Webography:

- <http://web.comhem.se/~u70815704/> (the official website of the composer Cristian Marina).