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Dinu Lipatti (1)

The most famous Romanian performer worldwide, Lipatti is still in the top of twentieth-century pianists so many decades after his death (in 1950), according to some prestigious journals in the field. This is how his last, re-edited, recital in Besançon is described by the *BBC Music Magazine* in 2011: “Probably the most famous piano recital of the 20th century, beautifully re-mastered; if ever a release were self-recommending, this is it. Even near death, Lipatti’s mastery was as imbued with radiant humanity as it was in its prime.” Another critic, publishing in *Diapason* (2017), refers to the same emblematic CD:

Trop jeune, trop tôt. En 1950, la maladie a déjà condamné Lipatti, qui se bat contre les annulations. Coûte que coûte, il assurera son récital de septembre à Besançon. Nulle morbidité pourtant dans cette course contre la mort, mais seulement le combat de Jacob dans la Sonate KV 310 de Mozart, le sourire et la lumière qui éclaboussent Bach, Schubert et Chopin. La Valse no 14 prévue sera pour les anges, il nous reste les treize autres pour patienter. Le ciel peut bien attendre.

I would like to invest these two quotes with a secondary function, that of preparing the reader’s journey through the linguistic oscillation between the articles in English or French that will follow. In this sense, *Musicology Today* has decided to respect the choices made by the authors who come together in these two issues dedicated to the Lipatti centennial. Two enthusiastic musicians and employees of Radio Romania have worked full time on bringing Lipatti’s personality to light in the latest several years. The efforts made by the Monica Isăcescu–Ștefan Costache team have been not only welcome, but absolutely necessary in the pianist’s native country, through their minute documentation and their contribution to a wider spread of all the aspects

of Lipatti's career. While carefully preparing the celebration of one hundred years since the pianist's birth (1917), Monica Isăcescu and Ștefan Costache have organized various events. They have created a site (www.dinulipatti.org), accessible in Romanian, French and English and have invited the enthusiastic Canadian Mark Ainley – who has been tirelessly revealing novel recordings made by the pianist – to hold a series of lectures in Romania. In 2015, in collaboration with the National Music University in Bucharest, they organised an international conference which reunited 12 researchers from Romania (Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca), Canada, Belgium, Germany and France, to investigate lesser known aspects of Lipatti's biography and activities.

Even though all the conference papers have already been published on the above-mentioned site, *Musicology Today* has followed the organisers' suggestion and has selected some of these papers, which the authors have agreed to transform according to our format and to academic requirements. Some of them have even preferred to change the initial version to a longer, better documented one. We have thus put together two issues out of nine articles, to which we added a review signed by Cristina Șuteu (of the volume edited by Alin Ionescu, *In Memoriam Dinu Lipatti*, published in Bucharest in 2012), included with the first bulk of studies and articles.

In this first group of texts, most of the novelties come from Mark Ainley, who, since the 1980s, has been revealing various private recordings of Lipatti's performances and has been militating for making them part of the international circuit, through editing and publishing them. We have been able to admire his enthusiasm as he has brought to light original sonorous documents (mostly coming from private collections) not only in the context of the above-mentioned conference, but also in the lectures he gave in Bucharest and Cluj-Napoca in 2016.

Maria Bojin's and Ștefan Costache's studies are also based on original research, as they reveal on the one hand the reception of Lipatti's concerts in Belgium, on the other hand his performances at the Romanian Radio Concert Hall. There are enough arguments – extracted from journals published on Belgian territory between 1938 and 1947 – in favour of the popularity of the pianist Lipatti within this space, and the critical opinions selected by Maria Bojin are all favourable and even enthusiastic. Lipatti's concerts "at home", reflected in various chronicles and other documents of the time, are also interesting, as shown by Ștefan Costache in his inventories of the pianist's connections with the Radio (concerts and recordings).

Having been interested in Lipatti's creation for decades, the pianist Viniciu Moroianu (who was awarded a prize of the Dinu Lipatti Foundation in

1992 for rediscovering and performing *Fantaisie, op. 8* by Lipatti in a concert, as well as holder of a PhD in musicology for the thesis *Two Centuries of Compositional Thinking Reflected in Dinu Lipatti's Creation for Solo Piano*) puts forward here a personal synthesis on Lipatti's style as a composer, as we perceive it in his compositions for solo piano.

The same balance between Lipatti the pianist and Lipatti the composer, between his interpretative art and his passionate interest in music writing will guide us in the next issue of *Musicology Today*, in which other works, so far unknown, will lend themselves to discovery. We will not avoid the historical and ideological context either, as it has influenced and affected the famous Romanian musician's short life.

English version by Maria-Sabina Draga-Alexandru