

Daniel Dascălu

*Conventional and Unconventional Tonality in Debussy's Second Book of Préludes*

Along the way of his musical studies, the author has picked up a growing interest in Claude Debussy's music and especially in his unique brand of tonality, which sounded to him neither too far away from conventional tonality, nor too deeply anchored in its common practices. Debussy was a revolutionary; not in the way that broke up with anything that was held as law, but rather through a mixture of conventional practice and new elements, which imbues his music with an original charm. The paper focuses on Debussy's tonal language in the *Préludes* for piano. Any attempt to analyse Debussy's music is a perilous adventure, because of his revolutionary nature and his conviction that music must evolve, and not bask in the reflected glory of past masters. He sought the unconventional, the breaking of laws that would hinder progress; in this respect, he sought to hide his music from conventional practices – which he nevertheless didn't completely forget. His music is, by excellence, an elusive music.

Alina Bottez

*Water Waves, Sound Waves, Down the River, Up the Staves: Representations of the Danube in the Music of Its Riparian Countries*

This article is the first part of a study that explores, from a cultural studies perspective, the way in which the Danube has inspired the music of its riparian countries across the ages. This first part analyses significant works composed in the first nine European countries crossed by the river, while the second part focuses on folklore, urban songs, operetta, and film music composed in Romania. Starting from the physical and metaphysical kinship between water- and sound-waves, this article shows how Danube-inspired music has constantly reflected people's lives, customs, traditions, mentalities, and philosophies, preserving information about long-gone local places and immortalising ephemeral generations. Stressing the river's function as border meant both to separate and to unite lands and peoples and to bring into bold relief both their similarities and differences, the study analyses folk and light music, film soundtracks, symphonic and vocal-symphonic works, vaudevilles, operettas, and operas. The conclusion is that music – a language that needs no translation – is a perfect approach to the river in order to capture its cultural significance.

Joseph Cadagin

*Ligeti's Hora lungă and the Sebaldian Digression*

In a 2001-2002 interview, Hungarian composer György Ligeti (1923-2006) expresses a strong aesthetic affinity with the writing of German author Winfried Georg Sebald (1944-2001). This paper examines the striking structural similarities between Sebald's 1995 novel *The Rings of Saturn* and Ligeti's 1994 *Hora lungă*, the first movement of his Viola Sonata. Sebald's description of a Suffolk walking tour, punctuated by numerous tangential asides, resembles the Romanian folk form Ligeti employs, with its recurring acoustic-scale motive and intervening improvisatory episodes. But beyond these more obvious comparisons, I consider the function of modal mixture and microtonal deviation in Ligeti's sonata – features which convey the same sense of loss and decay found in Sebald's prose and accompanying photographs. Finally, I read the nostalgic allusions to Romanian folk music in Ligeti's *Hora lungă* as an indication of the piece's biographical significance for the composer, who grew up in Transylvania. His lifelong separation from his childhood homeland, which he covertly mourns with a Romanian lament motive, parallels Sebald's account of a German-Jewish refugee's fading memories of his pre-migration youth.