

GEORGE SCARPARIS- JAZZ AS A HISTORICAL PHENOMENON AND ITS INFLUENCE UPON CLASSICAL MUSIC

Theme of G. Scarparis diploma work is Jazz as a Historical Phenomenon and its Influence upon Classical Music. The choice of the subject reflects the student's partial interest which was- besides the classical genres- for a long time devoted also to jazz. It is connected with his studies of the guitar at the Conservatory of Jaroslav Ježek in Prague, a school, specialized in education of future jazzmen. The second proof for the usefulness of this option could be watched at the final concert of our alumnus, where his witty arrangement for rockapella was heard. Every student has usually his unrepeatable personal qualities; during his studies G. Scarparis presented himself as a creative and independent person with peculiar opinions about a number of the things. As a supervisor of his diploma work I was once more awared of this fact. Finally I found there lot of original thoughts and some interesting conclusions.

Scarparis tried to comprehend the theme from several angles. At first he had to examine the roots of jazz expression from the point of history. He followed the birth of music which was conditioned by the deportation of slaves from many African localities to America. Next he speaks about is the religious movement Great Awakening which produced a lot od new or re-worked spiritual songs and hymns, founded on the rhythmic style of preaching. In the sub-chapters Scarparis analyses types of songs (working, spiritual songs and cry). Also the fourth chapter discovers the oldest path of music towards jazz as it contains the locality of New Orleans as a "birth place" of jazz. There are compared the media such as rhythm and polyrhythm, irregular and regular meters, appearance of falsetto break, the necessity of metronomic sense and many other. In depiction of characteristic features of jazz music Scarparis apparently uses his own experiences of performer and listener and formulates credible opinions. In the next inquire he describes the main manifestation of jazz in the form of ragtime(especially the Missouri style and differences of the four main categories, including the ragging of classics) and blues (country, city blues and next subcategories such as Delta and jazz blues). Then continues the phenomenon of boogie-woogie and its incorporation into the swing music (including the philological explanation of the word from variable sources). Documentation of the repertory, concerts and performers graduates in the reference to Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton and Buddy Bolden. When studying University in Prague for G. Scarparis was actual to mention the appearance of jazz in Czech Republic. He became acquainted with the Czech scene, composers, groups, referred to E. Schulhoff, E. F. Burian, B. Martinů and mainly J. Ježek. This chapter shows student's sense for proportions of main and secondary facts, logical understanding and precise stylisation. His knowledge was enriched also with the interview with L. Dorůžka, previous director of Prague International Jazz Festival.

I consider the second part of the work a focus of the diploma thesis. It embraces the analysis of the musical elements which participate on jazz composing technique and performance such as melody, harmony, rhythm and sound. A special attention is paid to the basis of jazz hamony in the category of chords, modes, blue, scales and mainly improvisation.

The proof of the student's knowledge of this theme is given by his analysis of jazz compositions (Debussy, Gershwin). Scarparis's attitude to the subject is creative and serious and I hope that it helped the student's understanding of the problem as he pronounced it in his Epilogue. I also agree with his appeal for foundation the basis of jazz education in Prague.

Negative notices: There are mistakes in spelling of Czech words. Also the characters of some terms should be unified. (i instead of I, Afro- Americans in many versions, european, latin instead of European, Latin) Abstract- or Résumé use to be at the end of a book not at the beginning.

Summary is not mentioned in the contents.

Why you divvide Abstract and Summary into two articles when the topic is nearly the same?

Some contradictions can be find in the dates of birth of Buddy Bolden (Scarparis 1868, Poledňák-Matzner Encyklopedi jazzu 1877) and Scott Joplin (Scarparis 1968, Poledňák 1860). It is good to know that the renewed interest in Joplin Scott's music began in 70ies of the last century after the film The Sting (Podraz) was screened with the main melody of his Entertainer Rag.

Classification very well

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