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# Librogenre in the Oeuvre of the Latvian Composer Pēteris Vasks

*Librožanras latvių kompozitoriaus Pēterio Vasko kūryboje*

## Abstract

The aim of the present article is to look at and describe the new tendencies concerning the genre situation in the Latvian instrumental music of the second half of the 20th century and early 21st century. Different aspects in relation to the overall genre situation in Latvian instrumental music, as well as diverse new and nontraditional models of musical genre will be considered and characterised within the oeuvre of Vasks, one of the brightest and most distinguished Latvian composers worldwide.

**Keywords:** genre, librogenre, Latvian instrumental music, Pēteris Vasks, Gražina Daunoravičienė.

## Anotacija

Straipsnio tikslas – išnagrinėti ir apibūdinti naujas tendencijas, susijusias su žanro situacija XX a. antros pusės ir XXI a. pradžios Latvijos instrumentinėje muzikoje. Skirtingi Latvijos žanrinės instrumentinės muzikos bei naujų ir netradicinių žanrinių modelių aspektai aptariami Pēterio Vasko, vieno žymiausių ir labiausiai pasaulyje pripažintų Latvijos kompozitorių, kūrybos kontekste.

**Reikšminiai žodžiai:** žanras, librožanras, Latvijos instrumentinė muzika, Pēteris Vasks, Gražina Daunoravičienė.

## 1. Introduction

Every period of music is marked by certain artistic quests, changes and instability. This phenomenon becomes particularly evident in the 20th century, making us revalue long-established traditions through centuries, among them in the field of musical genre as well. On the whole, the situation in the music of the previous century is characterized by two principal trends. The first of them reflects the tendency to continue developing and improving traditional musical genres formed and stabilized in previous centuries. The latter trend, in its turn, highlights the tendency to abandon typical models of musical genre, searching for new and unconventional variants of the genre.

As a result of these processes, a group of musical compositions – manifold and impressive in terms of quantity – is being established. In the titles of these compositions we cannot find such common, habitual and well-known labels as *symphony*, *sonata*, *prelude*, *poem* and other. Instead of these usual labels of musical genres, novel, non-traditional and previously seldom used titles can be found increasingly. Among them one can mention both, the titles that are met a number of times, e.g. *Music*, *Meditation*, *Book*, *Landscape*, *Drawing*, *Dedication*, *In memoriam* etc. and markedly poetic and pictorial, sometimes even highly abstract titles that are absolutely unique and unrepeatable, e.g. *And night lighted up the night* for clarinet, viola and piano by Jānis Petraškevičs (1997) or *Lines towards the peculiar world* for solo accordion by Mārtiņš Viļums (1995) etc.

Thus, the overall genre panorama of the previous century comes in sight as uncommonly diverse and multi-shaped and it, in its turn, activates and provokes the necessity to focus on the exploration and analysis of these processes. This is due to the fact that genre is a phenomenon that helps listeners to catch and perceive the composer's main idea and message represented in the language of sounds. Such kinds of genres are, e.g. as mentioned before *sonata*, *symphony* or *nocturne* and a number of others traditional labels. It is important to note that such capacious notions, capable of uncovering just on the level of the title very significant information about the genre in the perception of the listeners, have been established only as a result of the long enough existence and historical development of the particular musical genre. "Genre is ... one of the most powerful codes linking the composer and his audience, as mentioned by the English musicologist, professor and music critic Jim Samson" (Samson, 1989, p. 223). In fact, Samson refers to the ideas of the English literature scholar and professor Heather Dubrow concerning genre as a phenomenon in literature.<sup>1</sup> Thus, Samson specifically highlights the idea that "genre behaves rather like a contract between author and reader, composer and listener" (Samson, 1989, p. 213). It is hard to disagree with Samson that an obvious parallel with genre in music can be traced. Nevertheless, it is important to note that such understanding of genre could be related to traditional musical genres.

However, the situation is different when there is no sign of recognisable and traditional genre, with the characteristic

set of features, in the title of a musical composition. It is possible to mention a lot of characteristic and frequently met titles of musical works which does not comprise any sign of traditional genre both, in foreign and Latvian instrumental music, e.g. *music, dedication, sketch, landscape, meditation, composition, book, draw* and others. It must be noted that the tendency to use such kind of titles in the instrumental music by Latvian composers is specifically characteristic during the final part of the previous century and onwards.

## 2. Theoretical background

### 2. 1. Title aspect

As it was mentioned before, one of the tendencies, characteristic of the overall genre situation of Latvian instrumental music of the second half of the previous century reflects the composer's desire not to include in the titles of musical compositions any references to traditional genres. There is a whole group of nontraditional titles which are used many times in the oeuvre of different composers. According to the concept of musical genre, worked out by musicologist Gražina Daunoravičienė, such compositions the titles of which do not comprise any sign of recognisable and traditional genres are designated by the term *librogenre* which means "a musical genre without traditions" or "a free genre" (Дауноравичене, 1990 b, p. 24). Just nontraditional labels of musical compositions and their frequent recurrence have become one of the first and most essential impulses, giving reason for discourse about such a phenomenon as the development of new kind of musical genre in 20th century music.

The significant role of the title has been mentioned not only by Daunoravičienė, but also by other musicologists. One of them, the Russian musicologist Aleksandr Sokolov (Александр Соколов), considers appearance of such titles in close connection with the so-called *denial aesthetics* (Соколов, 2004, p. 9) characteristic of the period of avant-garde of the 20th century. It reflects a complete disassociation from any kinds of traditional elements of musical language. According to Sokolov, at the level of the titles of musical compositions it is demonstrated by changing traditional labels of musical genre (symphony, concerto, sonata, suite etc.) to abstractly neutral one, e. g., *composition, structure, music* etc. Thus, this intentional refusal to use traditional labels has created some kind of new results and qualities giving a reason to discuss developing and strengthening new traditions in the culture of 20th century music. As it is mentioned by Sokolov, then "the appearance of musical compositions entitled *music for..., composition No...* in 20th century music reveals some specific tendency and lets us draw the conclusion that this emphasized and demonstrative abandonment of traditional genres, the absence of recognisable features of genres has

gradually become a new and stable feature of musical genre" (Соколов, 2007, p. 10).

In research work devoted to the issue of musical genre by another Russian musicologist Marina Lobanova, the critical situation concerning the genre system in 20th century music is mentioned. More precisely, the author speaks about the collapse of the system of the classical genres and developing of a new one. Lobanova is convinced that one of the results of this process is rejecting all genre designations which represent the classical system and replacing them by neutral ones like *music, composition, opus* etc. Another tendency according to Lobanova, is connected with the replacement of traditional designations by extremely individual labels, such as *Fleeting Moments, Aphorisms, Atmospheres* etc. The author explains that "such titles reflect a concrete compositional idea or technique and reveal a purely structural design, and not a non-musical, literary-theatrical or figurative programme" (Lobanova, 2000, p. 175).

The title aspect is especially emphasized, among others, also by the English musicologist Jim Samson. He is convinced that, on the one hand, the title affects and even in some way conditions our response to the formal and stylistic content, but, on the other hand, the title alone does not create a genre. The most significant thing is that without a title it would be difficult to make any classification of musical compositions because the qualities of musical materials of musical works with the same title can vary considerably. Finally, Samson concluded that "it is the interaction of title and content which creates generic meaning" (Samson, 1992, p. 70).

Thus, the title aspect, which plays a significant role in the perception of every single music piece, is one of the most significant parameters towards classification of nontraditional compositions in terms of musical genre.

### 2. 2. Classification of librogenre

On the basis of the title parameter, it is possible to create a classification of librogenre in Latvian instrumental music (see Fig 1). According to the given classification, there are four main groups of librogenre, proposed by Daunoravičienė in the conception of librogenre:<sup>2</sup>

1. Compositions, the conception of which is based on one particular pitch, reflected in the titles (*In Es* for two pianos by Lapo Sumera, 1978);
2. Compositions, in the titles of which a certain method of development is emphasized (*Sequences* by Luciano Berio, altogether 13 sequences for different instruments, within 1958–1996);
3. Compositions with unique, nonrecurring and poetized titles (*Night Conversations* for clarinet and piano by Pēteris Plakidis, 1992, *Ice dusts* for flute, clarinet in B/bass clarinet, percussion, violin, viola, and cello by Santa Bušs, 2007);

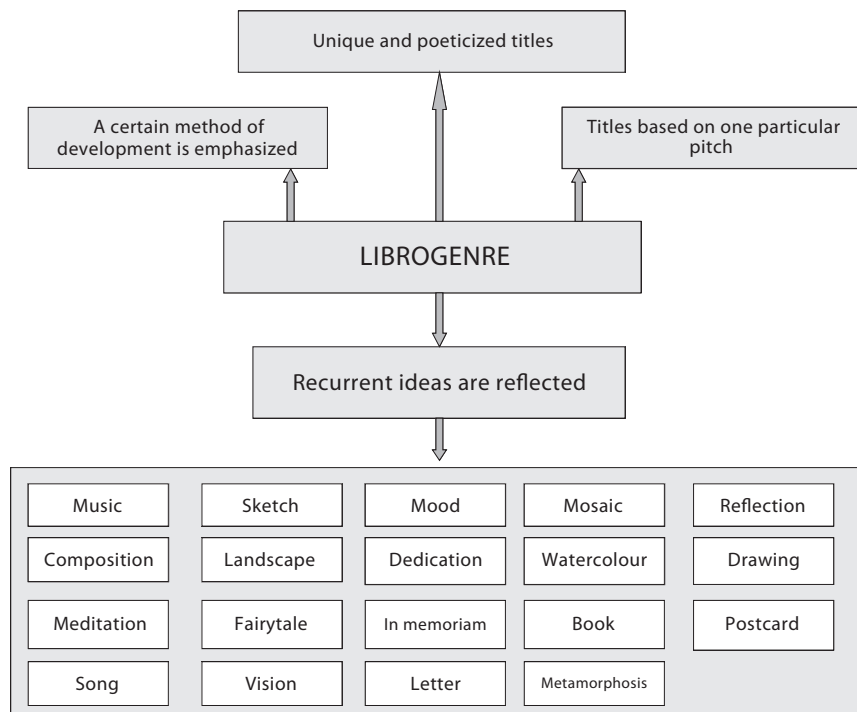


Figure 1. Classification of librogenre

4. Compositions, in the titles of which some recurrent ideas are reflected. Due to the typification aspect, it is possible to subdivide these compositions into yet smaller groups, e.g., *music, meditation, dedication, book* etc. It is important to note that these smaller groups are made exclusively on the basis of Latvian instrumental music. In the given classification, all the titles of compositions, which are used at least twice, moreover have been included in the works of different composers.

According to Daunoravičienė, in Latvian instrumental music the first tendency is specifically characteristic, more precisely, these are compositions with diverse and variable neo-programme titles, including two groups of the given classification, namely musical works with unique and poeticized titles, as well as compositions in the titles of which some recurrent ideas are reflected. The other principles of creating the titles of compositions in the given classification are not typical of instrumental music of Latvian composers.

Within the framework of the librogenre with recurrent ideas in the titles specifically the label *music* is the most popular and frequent in Latvian instrumental music (see Fig 2). As it can be seen, there are 93 compositions altogether. The first composition of this kind in Latvian instrumental music appeared in 1965 (*Music* for string orchestra by Jānis Kalniņš). At the beginning the composers were careful concerning composing such indefinite compositions in terms of musical genre; the following decades are marked by explicit progressive tendency, reaching the climax at the turn of the century.<sup>3</sup>

The second most popular title in instrumental music is *song* (also *canto, cantabile, lauda*). This is an interesting tendency observed in Latvian instrumental music to use titles of genetically vocal genres in the instrumental music. Such kinds of titles became very popular in the creative work of Latvian composers, specifically in the 1980s and onwards. Historically appearance of such titles in instrumental music reflects some connection with romantic piano miniature entitled *song without words*, introduced by the German composer Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. However, in Latvian instrumental music there are only two compositions with the same title, besides, one of them is written for brass wind instruments quintet (Jānis Dūda, 1995), but the other one obviously carries on the tradition of romantic piano miniature and is composed for the piano by Ansis Sauka (2006).

Almost equal to the just mentioned instrumental compositions entitled *song* in terms of quantity aspect, are musical works entitled *composition* (also *piece*), taking third place in Fig 2. Thus, it becomes the third popular title in Latvian instrumental music, reaching a particular development in the third part of the previous century. The first compositions with such titles in Latvian instrumental music appeared already in the contribution of the classical Latvian composer, Jāzeps Vītols. After looking through and analyzing the musical works by Vītols it is possible to identify a specific tendency, which was also inherited by other Latvian composers. Namely, it is the tendency to put several (two, three, four etc.) instrumental miniatures under

Figure 2. Librogenres with recurrent ideas in the titles of Latvian instrumental music<sup>4</sup>

	No date	19th century	1900–1919	1920–1939	1940–1959	1960–1969	1970–1979	1980–1989	1990–1999	Since 2000	TOTAL
Music	3					5	16	19	25	25	93
Song/chant/cantabile/canto	4	3	2	8	7	1	5	13	8	23	74
Composition		5	1		4	4	10	16	22	9	71
Meditation/Prayer	2	1		3	2		1	5	7	9	30
Sketch		2		5	3	1	4	6	5		26
Landscape				8	1		2	4	3	7	25
Fairy tale	3		1		1		1	5	3	2	16
Vision	2						2	1	3	8	16
Mood	3			1	1	3	2	2	1	2	15
Dedication							1	3	2	6	12
In memoriam					1		1	1	1	2	6
Letter				2	1				1	2	6
Mosaic								2	4		6
Water-colour						1		3		1	5
Book							2	1		1	4
Metamorphosis								1	1	1	3
Reflection								1	1	1	3
Drawing							1	1			2
Postcard									1	1	2

a common title – *compositions*, also with opus number, e. g. *Three compositions*, op. 17, for piano or *Four compositions*, op. 20, for piano (1895). In fact, in this case the title *compositions* in some way take the place of such traditional labels as *suite* or *cycle*. This tendency has been successfully inherited by other Latvian composers of different generations and became a stable phenomenon in Latvian music culture, e. g. *Three Farewell Pieces* for piano by Gundaris Pone (1984), *Three Works* for piano by Solveiga Selga-Timpere (1992) etc.

The given chart (see Fig. 2) represents also the situation with other models of new genres incorporating into sphere of librogenre in Latvian instrumental music from statistically chronological point of view. It must be noted that in this case it is exclusively about compositions with recurrent ideas in the titles. As it can be seen in the chart, particular development and flourishing of different kind of new genres has been observed specifically in the last third of the last century.

The second trend within the framework of librogenre which is characteristic of the genre situation in the Latvian instrumental music is linked with the composer's desire to give their compositions particularly poetic and pictorial, sometimes even highly abstract titles. Titles of such kind are completely unique and unrepeatable, thus it is not possible to make any systematization or classification. On the whole, this tendency is much more typical of the composers of the middle generation (*Scents of Summer* for flute, violin, viola, and cello by Selga Mence, 2011, *The Departed Child* for organ by Imants Mežaraups, 2002, *Tears of Light* for kolkle by Rihards Dubra, 2005, *Discussion* for three flutes by Andris Vecumnieks, 1994 etc.); and the new generation,

born in the 1970s, e.g. *Lines towards the peculiar world* for accordion solo by Mārtiņš Viļums, 1995, *Mist... the Furthest Point* for oboe/English horn, bass-clarinet, piccolo trumpet, double-bass by Jānis Petraškevičs, 1998, *Laughing Sparks* for piano (2001), *From the Mists of Silence* for flute and piano (2011) by Gundega Šmite, *Voice of Plains* for saxophone and organ by Andris Dzenītis and others.

### 2. 3. Aspect of the performing staff

The aspect of the performing staff has become one of the typical and specific parameters of such compositions. In fact, the aspect of the performing staff as one of the most significant parameters of musical genre has already been emphasized in the second half of the 18th century. It was a period when musical culture experienced fundamental changes, namely, the domination of vocal music was replaced by instrumental one. As a result of these processes the necessity to seek for new characteristic parameters of musical genre arose. The aspect of performing staff as one of the leading parameters of musical genre (next to formal, aesthetic aspects etc.) was defined by several musicologists, particularly by German music researchers of 20th century musicology Hermann Danuser, Friedrich Blume and Wulf Arlt. Fundamentally, the aspect of the performing staff has already been reflected in the research and classifications of musical genre by music theorists of previous centuries, among them, in the tractates by 16th–17th century music theorist Michael Praetorius, 18th century composer and theorist Johann Mattheson, as well as 19th century music researcher Ferdinand Hand.<sup>5</sup>

The Russian musicologist Galina Grigorjeva (Галина Григорьева), analyzing processes of the genre system in contemporary music, for instance, considers this aspect to be significant and crucial in the development of the particular kind of librogenre, namely, music. She stresses the dominant role of the librogenre music in 20th century music, relating it mainly to varied sonority and inexhaustible resources of chamber performers (*Теория современной композиции*, 2007, p. 23–39). Grigorjeva is convinced that the appearance of nontraditional staff of instruments at the beginning of the previous century has become the first and most essential impulse for creating *music* genre (*Теория современной композиции*, 2007, p. 34–35).<sup>6</sup> Moreover, the author gives examples of compositions where titles do not include the word *music*, e. g. *The Unanswered Question* for flute quartet, trumpet, and strings by Charles Ives (1906) or *Octandre* for seven wind instruments and double bass by Edgard Varèse (1923). In fact, according to the genre conception proposed by Daunoravičienė, such musical works incorporate into the group of librogenres with unique and poetic labels. Thus, the viewpoint proposed by the Russian musicologist concerning the development of *music* genre seems to be considered as interesting and quite provocative mostly due to the fact that there is no immediate connection between librogenre *music* and compositions mentioned by Grigorjeva. Nevertheless, the tendency to use previously non-traditional combinations of instruments has become a characteristic feature of different kinds of librogenre.

#### 2. 4. Compositional aspect

The compositional aspect, including factors of cycle and formal building, is also very significant and can be seen as one of the specific parameters of characteristics of a musical genre. Moreover, the compositional aspect can be considered from two different points of view. Firstly, it is linked with the external organization of every single composition, more precisely, whether it represents a single-movement or cyclic composition. Secondly, it is internal structural organization of every single movement or of all musical composition.

The relevant role of formal/compositional aspect has been mentioned by several music theorists and musicologists of different centuries. For example, the well-known German composer and music theorist of the first half of the 18th century Johann Mattheson is one of those authors who made a significant contribution to the development of the genre theory and worked out two classifications of musical genre from different points of view. He distinguishes between several criteria, among them, the social factor, the aspect of content, as well as the aspect of performing place and formal structure. In his famous tractate *Der vollkommene Capellmeister* (1739) he proposes the classification of musical genres based on, firstly, the aspect of

performing staff (consequently dividing them into vocal and instrumental genres), and, secondly, the compositional aspect. Namely, the musical genres have been grouped into single-movement and cyclic compositions.<sup>7</sup>

The second half of the 18th century is characterised by significant changes in the field of genre theory. It is worthwhile to mention it because a lot of new genres of instrumental music have been introduced. For this reason, there was a need to set out new criteria of musical genres. According to several German authors, such as the music theorist of 18th century Johann Nikolaus Forkel, as well as two 20th century musicologists Wulf Arlt and Hermann Danuser, such criteria as the musical form, the performing staff and the aesthetic aspect became the leading ones.

Also the English musicologist of 20th century Jim Samson speaks about a formal parameter concerning the characteristics of a musical genre. As stated by Samson, “formal archetypes and stylistic schemata may well be constitutive of a genre, but they are not in any sense equivalent” (Samson, 2001, p. 657). Several parameters significant as genre characteristics have been mentioned and pointed out by Samson when he worked on the analyses of Chopin’s Ballades in terms of musical genre and one of them is formal design.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, it is possible to conclude that the compositional/formal aspect has already been seen as one of the characteristic and significant parameters of musical genre, at least since the first half of the 18th century.

### 3. Insight into the genre situation in the works of Pēteris Vasks

As a composer Pēteris Vasks came onto the scene of Latvian musical culture in the early 1970s. The first publicly known compositions appeared in 1973. The works of the early period of his career can be characterised as manifold, productive and varied in terms of genre. On the whole, a lot of different genres of instrumental and vocal music, in equal position in terms of quantity, were created in the 1970s. Both, traditional and new genres can be found in the contribution of the particular period. Traditional ones are represented by musical genres created in different periods of history. For example, one can find several genres coming from Baroque epoch like partita (*Partita per violoncello e piano*, 1974), toccata (*Toccata* for two pianos, 1977), as well as a couple of genres, representing vocal music – madrigal (*With Time Flowers Wilt* for mixed choir, 1976) and cantata (*Cantata for Women* for soprano, mixed choir and symphony orchestra, 1978). One of typical genres of the classical period can also be found in the list of works, namely, it is string quartet (*String Quartet No. 1*, 1977).

The early period of Vasks’s creative work also displayed quite clearly his desire to seek some new and fresh ideas concerning genre interpretation. There are a lot of compositions

with nontraditional labels, incorporating both into group of librogenres with recurrent ideas in the titles, including four musical works with title *music* (see Fig 3), as well as compositions entitled *pieces, cantabile, book, and in memoriam* (see Fig 5) and one musical opus with a completely unique title, *Three Gazes/Trinity* for open instrumental group (1979).

It was a period when the composer was seeking for his unique musical language in instrumental music. The music of this period is characterised by powerful emotionality – through despair, tragedy, aggressiveness there is always a path to the eternal and spirituality, to light and beauty. He speaks about global and timeless problems like death and life, hate and forgiveness, harmony and disharmony. These are themes represented more or less in all of the composer's works. Moreover, it is not only about this period. All of this confirms the main stylistic trend characteristic of Vask's music through all his creative life – neo-romanticism.

There is one more essential moment concerning his early works, namely, in one of the first *music* opuses – *Music for Flown Away Birds* – the theme of birds has been represented for the first time becoming one of the most significant and characteristic symbols of freedom and conscience in his creative work. Voices of birds in symbolic meaning have been represented in many forthcoming compositions, e. g. *Landscape with birds* for flute (1980), Symphony No. 1 *Voices* (1991), *Spring piano music* (1995) and others. As it was mentioned by the composer himself through the voices of the birds, “the warm and sensitive attitude to the surrounding world, environment, homeland and people can be revealed.”<sup>9</sup>

In Vask's compositions of the 1980s some changes and corrections can be noticed. Firstly, his main interest is focused on creating different genres of instrumental music. Secondly, the composer's interest was attracted by more than only one classical genre; more precisely, he wrote String Quartet No. 2 entitled *Summer Songs* (1984), two sonatas – *Sonata per contrabbasso solo* (1986) and *Spring sonata* for string sextet (1987), as well as several concertos (*Cantus ad Pacem. Concerto per organo*, 1984, Concerto for English Horn and Orchestra, 1989). On the whole, Vask's works reflect clearly a common tendency characteristic of the overall Latvian instrumental music, more precisely, it is a tendency to give, alongside with the main title of non-programme genre like symphony, sonata or string quartet, some additional label, often poetic and pictorial.

There are also more musical works representing different kinds of librogenre created in the 1980s. During this decade Vask wrote six compositions with the word *music* in their titles (see Fig 3), as well as two opuses entitled *landscape* and two works, incorporating into the group of librogenre with the title *song* (*Lauda per orchestra and Episodi a Canto perpetuo*, see Fig 5). A couple of musical works created in this period can be considered as librogenres with unique

and unrepeatable titles, and they are *Message* for strings, two pianos and percussions (1982) and *Touches* for solo oboe (1982).

In the compositions of the 1980s Vask continued to speak about essential and significant subjects for him like juxtaposition of good and evil, life and death (*Music in Memory of a Friend, Musica dolorosa*), disharmony and threatening destruction of the world (*Musica seria per organo*), as well as possibility of harmony, hope and light (*Evening Music* for French Horn and organ). Sometimes the composer used clear diatonic without any chromatism, which in his music symbolises spiritual balance, inner harmony of the soul (*White scenery* for piano). Diatonic and chromatism, consonance and dissonance, choral and aleatory became very significant devices for making contrasts and conflicts in his music.

His individual and original musical language, which is capable of fusing the ascetically unostentatious expression of spiritual minimalism and expressiveness, as well as the directness of emotions so characteristic of Vask's music, was crystallized in the 1990s. It is demonstrated and confirmed also by two *music* compositions composed in the 1990s, namely, *Spring music* for piano and *Musica adventus* for strings (see Fig 3). The composer is asking us tirelessly to let the hope and light flow into our hearts. He believes that “music is the most powerful of all the muses, since it reaches the divine most easily. Yes, music is an abstraction, but sounds are able to express the spirit. That cannot be expressed in words. All around me the flesh is spoken about, but I want to shout: Where is the spirit, the soul? Souls are as overgrown as the jungle. That is why in my sounds I try to uphold a beam of light” (Kudiņš, Jānis Pēterise).

On the whole, the creative work of Vask in the 1990s cannot be characterised as very active and fruitful in terms of quantity. Concerning genre situation, the composer keeps writing both, compositions incorporating into sphere of librogenre and musical works representing traditional genres. He has composed the two aforementioned compositions entitled *music*, one musical piece with the title *landscape* (see Fig 5) and several classical genres like concertos (*Concerto per violoncello ed orchestra*, 1994, *Distant Light*, concerto for violin and string orchestra, 1997), sonatas (*The Sonata for Loneliness* for solo guitar, 1990, Sonata for Flute, 1992), string quartet (String Quartet No. 3, 1995) and, finally, it is the time when his first symphony appeared. Only in 1991 was Latvian instrumental music enriched with Symphony No. 1 for string orchestra entitled *Voices* composed by Vask. Concerning symphony Vask says the following: “Symphony is alive and of great vitality genre, which has to do its main task also in the future – it has to speak about essential, significant and eternal things.”<sup>10</sup> Seven years later the composer finished his second symphony for large symphony orchestra (1998). Finally, it could be mentioned

that in this decade specifically classical instrumental genres became predominant.

The first decade of the 21st century and onwards displays the composer's unceasing interest in diverse genres of instrumental music. He still speaks about global, humanly and essential themes in his music, at the same time keeping his idealistic and romantic nature which is clearly demonstrated by one of two *music* opuses created in this period, namely, *Musica appassionata* for string orchestra. This composition from the first sounds speaks directly and vigorously, expressing transparent and immeasurable love and care about all the beauty created in the world. When asked about this composition, the composer said the following:

...I am alive. I'm still alive and I'm still hurt, still love the world and life passionately ... It is praise to the created world.<sup>11</sup>

Vasks still keeps creating different genres of instrumental music. One can find in the list of his works both, classical genres – concertos (Concerto for Flute and Orchestra, 2008, *Presence*, concerto for cello and string orchestra, 2012), string quartets (String Quartet No. 4, 2000 and String Quartet No. 5, 2004), symphony (Symphony No. 3, 2005) etc. and different librogenres, for instance, *Green*

*Scenery*, *Canto di forza* (see Fig 5), *Music for a Summer Evening* (see Fig 3), as well as compositions with unique labels, e. g. *Viatore* for string orchestra or organ (2001), *Bass trip* for solo double-bass (2003), *Credo* for orchestra (2009) and *Epifania* for string orchestra (2010).

Finally, it is possible to conclude that the music of Pēteris Vasks has been developing in two principally different directions. On the one hand, he develops and cultivates classical musical genres of non-programme music. Furthermore his symphonies, string quartets, sonatas and concertos both reflect and confirm the traditions of the above genres developed in the course of centuries and, at the same time, display some kind of individuality and nontraditional interpretation. On the other hand, Vasks is seeking for some original, fresh and alternative ideas incorporating into the sphere of the librogenre.

### 3. 1. Instrumental compositions entitled *Music*

Latvian composer Pēteris Vasks has created fourteen compositions with the word *music* in the title, covering the years 1974–2009 (see Fig 3).

When asked about the first and most essential impulse for the use of the unusual label *music*, the composer answered:

Figure 3. Compositions entitled *Music* by Pēteris Vasks

Year	Title	Performers	Number of movements
1974	<i>Music for...</i>	Two pianos	Cycle: I <i>Moderato</i> II Free variation III Motion
1975	<i>Chamber Music</i>	Flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, percussions	– *
1977	<i>Music for Flown Away Birds</i>	Flute, oboe, clarinet, French horn, bassoon	Single movement composition
1978	<i>Little Night Music</i>	Piano	Single movement composition
1981	<i>Autumn Piano Music</i>	Piano	Single movement composition
1982	<i>Music in Memory of the Friend</i>	Flute, oboe, clarinet, French horn, bassoon	Single movement composition
1983	<i>Musica dolorosa</i>	String orchestra	Single movement composition
1985	<i>Little Summer Music</i>	Violin, piano	Cycle: I Extensively, sonorously II Slowly, leisurely III Vigorously IV Sadly V Gaily VI Extensively, sonorously
1988	<i>Evening Music</i>	French horn, organ	Single movement composition
1988	<i>Musica seria per organo solo</i>	Organ	Single movement composition
1995	<i>Spring Music</i>	Piano	Single-movement composition
1995/ 1996	<i>Musica adventus</i>	String orchestra	Cycle: I <i>Moderato</i> II <i>Allegro energico</i> III <i>Adagio</i> IV <i>Moderato</i>
2002	<i>Musica appassionata</i>	String orchestra	Single movement composition
2009	<i>Music for a Summer Evening</i>	Piano	Single movement composition

\* Unfortunately the score of *Chamber Music* has disappeared. That's why there is not included detailed information concerning this composition.

The idea was that I obviously didn't want to take a frequently used label such as 'suite'. I wished for some other title. I wanted each musical composition to have a name of its own because, though it is in the mind, each composition is like a child of my own.<sup>12</sup>

Summing up the knowledge gained and observations made in the analysis and research of such musical compositions by Vasks, it is possible to draw some significant and relevant conclusions, as well as to mark out particular tendencies that characterize the creative work of this composer.

### Title aspect

First of all, concerning the titles of these musical works, there is an outstanding tendency to use the word *music* in combination with one or more than one elucidating word. Thus, it is possible to direct listeners to a particular emotional mood. In some way such titles work as an emotional code, impulse or direction without providing the concreteness of programme music. It was interesting to hear the opinion on this of the composer himself:

Now I can see that in '74 there is *Music...*, then in '75 – *Chamber Music...* and finally in '77 there is *Music for Flown Away Birds*. It is a composition which has a name. It seemed to me to be substantial and significant. It would be advisable for the name of a particular composition to be different from other names of musical works in the first place. And there is one more factor – elucidating, because a listener is pretty confused when faced with instrumental music. The title, if it is successful, helps to dispose listeners to something even before they listen – *Music in Memoriam of a Friend*, *Little Summer Music...* The title gives some reference to the listener so as not to leave him alone in the middle of a field, so that he knows which direction to look in.<sup>13</sup>

Interesting and attractive seems to be two Italian titles also incorporating into the group of compositions with the title *music*. The composer himself confirmed that there is an intentional connection between these compositions one of which is *Musica dolorosa* composed in 1983 and the other is *Musica appassionata* written almost 20 years later, in 2002. As it was mentioned by the composer, these compositions "could be considered and called like a diptych. They share both, the Italian title and some kind of conception. *Musica dolorosa* – it is a deep and serious encounter with the tragedy, with death. *Musica appassionata*, in its turn, is opposite – a total contrast. It is a song of praise for life – with passion, giving oneself away completely."<sup>14</sup> The conjunctive factor could be observed in terms of not only title and conception but also regarding the performing staff, namely, they are both written for string orchestra.

There is one more interesting title which could be worthwhile mentioning, namely, *Little Night Music*. The author of the article is convinced that everyone who has

read this title has a concrete association with the well-known composition by Mozart. Vasks, when asked about this particular case, answered:

*Little Night Music* – there is a voluntary/deliberate connection with Mozart's *Little Night Music*. In the case of Mozart, it was a beautiful musical work composed for a home festivity or garden-party, but in my case the reflections of the night of the second half of the 20th century have been embraced under the same title, telling about what is happening to mankind, what is happening to our world which is so beautiful and at the same time so full of hostility. It is a dreadful contrast with such endlessly beautiful Mozart's music. Deeply, seriously, hard, without any compromises – What is happening to us? What is happening to mankind? Where are we going?<sup>15</sup>

### Aspect of the performing staff

In regard to the performing staff, the group of compositions entitled *music* by Vasks could be characterized as manifold and variable – starting with compositions for solo instrument and finishing with music opuses written for string orchestra. Consequently, it is possible to say that this parameter is quite unstable, although the general tendency is shared by Latvian instrumental music of the late 20th century as a whole, namely in its orientation towards *chamberness*. Such a tendency can be traced not only in chamber but also in orchestral compositions, with a preference for a string orchestra over a full symphony orchestra.<sup>16</sup> As it is seen in Figure 3, the composer with certainty prefers different kinds of chamber staff. Vasks has composed only three pieces for orchestra, moreover, exclusively for string orchestra. This issue reflects and confirms the composer's special personal attitude towards the colourful and manifold palette of timbre of string instruments. It must be noted that he can play one of those instruments himself, and it is the contrabass.<sup>17</sup>

As to the performing staff, there is one more interesting tendency to be underlined, namely, it is not typical of Latvian composers to create such compositions with the title *music* for solo instruments. In this respect, the contribution of Vasks in some way stands out against the others – he has written five compositions for solo instrument, mostly exclusively for piano (see Fig. 3). When asked about the choice of performers, the composer states the following: "Many times, standing at the crossroads, a question arises: Who to write to? It depends on those musicians, who want to perform this music" (Zemzare, 2000, p. 192–193). The composer is still convinced (eight years later) that music is not created abstractly but thinking about particular performers or orchestra, namely, potential interpreters. For example, one of *music* compositions – *Musica adventus* for string orchestra – has been created in such a way. The composer himself says the following: "In the case of the composition *Musica*



*adventus* for string orchestra, I firstly wrote string quartet and it seemed for me quite successful. Then I was invited to one Winter Music Festival in Finland (in the town not far from Kokkola city where the Ostrobothian Orchestra and my friend conductor Juha Kangas is). I simply created the version for string orchestra thinking about this festival, this orchestra, and conductor Juha Kangas.<sup>18</sup>

### Compositional aspect

Finally, from the point of view of compositional structure and form building, two groups can be distinguished – single-movement and cyclic. The cyclic structure is represented by three musical compositions only, but even though it is the smallest component in the librogenre with the title *music*, one essential and interesting tendency is revealed – specifically the cyclic compositions demonstrate a vivid connection with and similarity and closeness to more or less concrete traditional classical genres. For instance, *Music for two pianos* displays a connection with the sonata genre genotype because it is written in three movements, characteristic of classical sonata cycle both in terms of tempo and formal aspects. The first movement is *Moderato con durezza*, written in sonata form, while the second one is *Free Variations* in *Largo* tempo, which functions as a lyrical centre of the sonata cycle and the third movement is *Motion* in *Presto* tempo as a final movement of the sonata cycle composed in the free rondo form.

*Little Summer Music* for violin and piano reflects a connection with the programme of romantic suite genotype. This composition consists of six movements, creating free romantic suite type with reprise (A B C D E A Coda). The six movements of the cycle are arranged, based on the principle of contrast. On the whole, this composition creates symbolic associations with a colourful summer day. Each of the movements sounds like a reflection of a particular event with concrete emotional orientation, which is also displayed in the titles of each movement (see Fig 3). They are brief and fairly simple in terms of form building and musical language factors. The first movement, which can be seen as an introduction, is quite neutral – improvising, free, very light and cheerful like the birth or beginning of something new. The same musical material concludes the cycle, giving reason to think about the manifestation of the never-ending cyclic principle in the nature – something has finished and something begins again...

The third cyclic composition – *Musica adventus* for string orchestra – represents a connection with classical string quartet genotype. As regards this particular composition it must be noted that originally it was the Third String Quartet (1995), which has been revised later. *Musica adventus* is made up of four movements: I – *Moderato*, II – *Allegro energico*, III – *Adagio*, IV – *Moderato*. Moreover, it represents specifically the romantic traditions concerning

the interpretation of the cycle because of the tempo factor: the second movement – *Allegro energico* can be considered scherzo, but the third movement *Adagio* functions like a lyrical centre of the cycle. Thus, on the one hand, there is a distinct connection with and closeness to the type of string quartet genre, but on the other hand, the new tradition is emphasized through the title.

A tendency to write *music* opuses as single-movement compositions becomes predominant. As it can be seen in the given list of *music* compositions (see Fig. 3), ten of the fourteen opuses are written in such a way. The characteristic features of these single-movement works are gradualness, dynamic and determined development, progression towards climax and the presence of continuity in every composition. Moreover, it should be stated that every single musical piece demonstrates an individual solution in terms of form building. The form of musical composition develops as a result of a process. The composer himself says the following: “In general when composing at least for me it is the process of creating music starting from chaos which gradually acquires some particular contours. I have never got a form beforehand to fill it with musical material. For me it is an entirety. It is as if the musical material was creating the form itself.”<sup>19</sup>

There is one more interesting and characteristic aspect that has to be mentioned concerning the form building factor. It is the principle of recapitulation which is very typical of the oeuvre of Vasks and is present almost in every single work entitled *music*, besides both in cyclic and single-movement compositions. When asked about this phenomenon in his musical works, the composer himself explains:

When creating music it takes a lot of time to seek for musical material and thematism for it to be saturated concerning content not to be too light and superficial. So that it provokes one or another association. And it occurs after a longer selection. Every composer wants his music to be something more lasting than merely a single day performance. I'm reflecting on it a lot. So the resulting material has become significant and vital enough to return to it later.<sup>20</sup>

Theoretically it is possible to mark out at least two main functions of recapitulation in the music. The first one is linked with the constructive factor of musical composition, namely, it is a way how to make any musical work like a complete, finished and in some way symmetrical composition. The second one and more significant is linked with the semantic factor. In this case, the main function of recapitulation is to confirm the musical material, which reflects the main idea, mood or musical character of the work.

An interesting example for representing the principle of recapitulation, in both cases – structural and semantic, is the aforementioned composition *Musica adventus* for string orchestra. As it was mentioned before, it is a cyclic composition made up of four movements in which the principle of

Figure 4. Form scheme of *Musica adventus* for string orchestra

I <i>Moderato</i>	II <i>Allegro energico</i>			III <i>Adagio</i>	IV <i>Moderato</i>		
a a b c d b c d "d"	e f g	h h <sub>1</sub> h <sub>2</sub> h <sup>v</sup> "h"	e g e	i	j k j <sub>1</sub> k <sub>1</sub>	l	j <sub>2</sub> d
A	B	C	B <sub>1</sub>	D	E	F	E <sub>1</sub> /A <sub>1</sub>

recapitulation is reflected at several levels. First, it is linked with the second movement of the cycle (*Allegro energico*) in which the recapitulation principle is also displayed in two different levels – within the whole movement (B C B<sub>1</sub>) and within the reprise of the movement (B<sub>1</sub>, see Fig 4).

Similarly the idea of recapitulation is reflected in the final movement of the cycle. In this case it is possible to observe the principle of recapitulation both at the level of particular movement (E F E<sub>1</sub>) and at the level of the whole cycle (see Fig 4). There is some musical material in the final part of the last movement taken from the first one (material d in the scheme), making this cyclic composition symmetrically rounded. Thus, one can observe that in this composition the principle of recapitulation is implemented at three different levels – within the reprise of the second movement (B<sub>1</sub>), within the whole movements – second and fourth, and finally at the level of the whole cycle.

Concerning the phenomenon of the recapitulation represented in this musical work the composer says the following:

It is also possible to say that there are some eternal values on which we ground and live while we exist. For example, in the last movement of *Musica adventus* there are several spheres of imagery. One of them is the humanly personal and the second is the eternal, existing outside us, it is infinity. We are here, we live, suffer and love. And something is eternal, which exists before us and after us.<sup>21</sup>

### 3. 2. Other models of librogenre

In his works Pēteris Vasks, alongside with classical genres, as well as the aforementioned compositions entitled *music*, has created a number of instrumental pieces with non-traditional labels, including in the group of librogenres. One can find in the list of works by Vasks several compositions entitled *landscape* and *cantabile/canto*. Librogenres, such as *book*, *in memoriam* and *compositions* are also represented in the works of Vasks (see Fig 5).

At the very beginning of his creative activities in 1973, he wrote the first musical opus with a nontraditional title, namely, *Three compositions* for clarinet and piano. Basically, it is a cycle consisting of three different small movements.

The first one *Allegro moderato* can be considered the central movement of the cycle; in its turn the second movement *Rubato* functions like the lyrical centre of the cycle. Finally, the last movement *Vivo* represents a kind of arch with the first one. Thus, it is possible to conclude that the title *composition* in this case takes the place of such a traditional label as a *cycle*. As it was mentioned before, this tendency has been successfully derived from Latvian classical composer Jāzeps Vītols, who used to put several instrumental miniatures under the common label *compositions*. Nevertheless, in this case it is possible to observe some parallels with sonata cycle, namely concerning dramaturgy of the composition (I – activity, II – meditation, reflection, III – activity). Despite the fact that the title *composition* has become very popular in the works of other Latvian composers, Vasks does not use it in his forthcoming creative work.

In the second half of the 1970s Latvian instrumental music has been supplemented with Vask's composition for two pianos entitled *In memoriam*. It is one of six instrumental opuses with such a title in Latvian music created by different composers.

*In memoriam* is one of the most tragic and dramatic opuses by Vasks. It is a single-movement composition written in free through-composed form; it consists of several developmental sections reaching a powerful climax. The musical piece begins so typically of Vasks, namely, quasi being born – silently (*pppp*, *misterioso*) and in a self-collected manner, but the forthcoming development is painful and dramatic. Music reflects unambiguously Vask's deep pain of the destiny of the humankind and of a threatening disaster, even not giving an alternative or hope.

In 1978 Vasks wrote an instrumental composition for cello solo with another nontraditional title called *Book*. It is one of the first *books* in Latvian instrumental music alongside with the *Book for Harpsichord* by Pauls Dambis written the same year. Although the title *book* is considered as a non-typical label for a music piece, the tradition of using such labels can be traced to Baroque music. For instance, the composers of that era used to label collections of several suites for organ or harpsichord, or other instruments by *book*, e.g. André Raison *Premier livre d'orgue*

Figure 5. Other compositions by Pēteris Vasks, incorporating into the sphere of librogenre

Year	Title	Performers	Number of movements
1973	<i>Three pieces</i>	Clarinet, piano	Cycle: I <i>Allegro moderato</i> II <i>Rubato</i> III <i>Vivo</i>
1977	<i>In memoriam</i>	Two pianos	Single movement composition
1978	<i>Book for Cello</i>	Cello solo	Cycle: I <i>fortissimo</i> II <i>pianissimo</i>
1979	<i>Cantabile per archi</i>	Strings	Single movement composition
1980	<i>Landscape with Birds</i>	Flute solo	Single movement composition
1980	<i>White Scenery</i>	Piano solo	Single movement composition
1985	<i>Episodi e Canto Perpetuo</i>	Violin, cello, piano	Cycle: Episodi I – <i>Crescendo</i> Episodi II – <i>Misterioso</i> Episodi III – <i>Unisono</i> Episodi IV – <i>Burlesca I</i> Episodi V – <i>Monologhi</i> Episodi VI – <i>Burlesca II</i> Episodi VII – <i>Canto perpetuo</i> Episodi VIII – <i>Apogeo e Coda</i>
1986	<i>Lauda per orchestra</i>	Symphony orchestra	Single movement composition
1992	<i>Landscapes of the Burnt-out Earth, fantasy</i>	Piano solo	Single movement composition
2005	<i>Canto di Forza</i>	12 cellos	Single movement composition
2008	<i>Green Landscape</i>	Piano solo	Single movement composition

(1688), François Couperin *Second livre de pieces de clavecin* (1722) etc.

The tradition of French Baroque composers in some way has been inherited by several 20th century composers, for example, Olivier Messiaen (*Livre D'Orgue*, 1951–1952, *Livre du Saint Sacrement*, 1984), Witold Lutoslawski (*Livre pour orchestra*, 1968). It must be noted that in the case of works of 20th century composers, it is a multi-movement composition, not a collection of several cyclic pieces.

*Book for cello* by Vasks is also a cyclic composition consisting only of two parts – the first *fortissimo* and the second *pianissimo*. The main developments and activities take place in the first part. It is characterised by continuous dramatic rise reaching a forceful climax at the end of the part. As regards the formal aspect, it is structured as through-composed form with elements of rondo. The second part after dramatic culmination appears as though silent and quiet afterword. It is a song (also in a form where one can observe the principle of strophic organization), which symbolises the eternal and hope in the music of Vasks. Besides, in this opus the endlessly and deeply heartfelt sound of cello has been supplemented by human voice – melancholy longing for harmony and love.

*Cantabile per archi* is the first instrumental composition by Vasks to be incorporated into the group of librogenres with the title *song* written in the end of the 1970s. Moreover, it is the composer's first opus for orchestra, more precisely,

for string orchestra, which becomes so loved and significant in his forthcoming creative work. The composer says:

I realised quiet early that the sound of string instruments is my ideal of sound. Besides, I am in particular fascinated by the feeling of cantilena and endless singing. ... It is a powerful force. Strings – there my message sounds the best, there I can sing it best (Petraškevičs, 2013, p. 49).

*Cantabile per archi* is one of the most positive and lightest opuses by Vasks, confirming the existence of light, hope and harmony. It is a single-movement composition characterised by specific continuity of development and reaching the powerful culmination in a good and positive sense. It is also characterised by the wholeness and fluency of melody, giving the sense of endless singing, as well as the usage of diatonic and melodic motives close to Latvian folk songs, which also strengthens and attests the bright and positive spirit of the opus. Thus, it can be said that the message of harmony and hope is already coded in the title *cantabile*.

In the mid of the 1980s Vasks has composed two more instrumental works with titles containing the word *song* in different ways. For example, in 1985 appeared Vask's composition for classical performing staff, namely – violin, cello and piano, with a nontraditional title – *Episodi e Canto perpetuo*. It is a cyclic composition which consists of eight movements (I *Crescendo*, II *Misterioso*, III *Unisoni*, IV *Burlesca I*, V *Monologhi*, VI *Burlesca II*, VII *Perpetuo Canto*,

VIII *Apogeo e Coda*). Only one of them is called *Canto* (it. – singing, song), moreover, it is included in the common title of the composition. Thus, the composer emphasizes the significant role of the *song* within the whole dramaturgy of the musical piece. Like the other compositions, *song* in this case also symbolises the eternity, spirituality and longing for love.

*Lauda*<sup>22</sup> *per orchestra* is another *song* composition created in 1986. *Lauda* is a single-movement composition in free through-composed form with elements of sonata form. It is an unhurried message based on two different spheres of imagery. On the whole, this opus is orientated on the traditional romantic symphonic poem genre. As it is stated by Latvian musicologist Jānis Kudiņš, *Lauda* reflects the atmosphere of the longing and expectations so typical of the romantic music. Researcher when analyzing not only Vask's *Lauda*, but also the composition for symphonic orchestra *Dziedājums (Canto)* by Pēteris Plakidis, came to the conclusion that the notion *singing* in this case has at least two diverse perceptions.

On the one hand, singing as an endless process of development, in which originally represented melodic intonations transform themselves gradually and initiate the rise of new musical thoughts. On the other hand, singing as a result of seeking ... as a nirvana symbolising the ideal sphere for which to strive and which possibly could never be reached in its full value, but the path to it would never end (Kudiņš, 2008, p. 28).

At the beginning of this century, in 2005, Vasks created another composition entitled *canto* for instrumental staff, more precisely, it is *Canto di forza* composed specifically for the Twelve Cellists of the Berlin Philharmonic.<sup>23</sup> The composer himself comments on the work:

The diatonic composition is in one movement, beginning with a concentrated, quiescent section. The heart of the work is constructed in two waves of development. The first slowly ebbs away following the achievement of the climax and the second leads to a hymnal culmination: doxology. ... In contrast to many of my compositions which dissolve into stillness, *Canto di forza* culminates with a full conviction in fortissimo. I am convinced that music helps to keep the world balanced (Jakubone, 2009).

On the whole, instrumental compositions with titles *canto*, *cantabile*, *lauda* by Vasks are characterised by philosophical absorption, inner contemplation, and not with external brightness and brilliance. The endless melodic line, diatonic bases, intonations close to Latvian folksongs and dances, but not usage of literal citations of folk melodies, linearity in texture, as well as the variable development of themes are the most characteristic features of these compositions.

There are four instrumental compositions in the list of the musical works by Vasks with one more nontraditional title *landscape*. Moreover, all of them are written for solo instruments (see Fig 5). The first one is a small instrumental miniature for flute solo called *Landscape with Birds*. It is a single-movement composition displaying the shape of the concentric form with two waves of the development, reaching a powerful climax by the growing theme gradually in range and dynamic. After culmination the beginning pastoral theme returns with elements of singing. Moreover, it is supplemented with human voice which symbolises eternity and harmony. Overall, *Landscape with Birds* is characterised by orientation to pastoral philosophical character, reflecting the sphere of nature and birds, which is so significant in the works of Vasks.

*White scenery/landscape* for piano solo was written the same year and is also a single-movement composition. It is exclusively contemplative in its character, which is achieved by typical features of minimalism – usage of few changeable melodic and harmonic models, variable repetitions of small structures, displaying and enjoying a specific kind of articulation, as well as colour of particular melodic and harmonic structure in a prolonged way. The composer depicts by sounds the frozen and white landscape of the winter reaching it by no dramatic culmination and vivid contrasts in the development of the composition. In interpreting the particular composition the Latvian pianist Vestard Šimkus says:

Everything is so minimal there, only pure, white silence ... That's why this composition is so great (Jaunzeme, 2009, p. 66).

Different interpretation of the genre, as well as the development of dramaturgy can be observed in the Vask's fantasy for piano solo *Landscapes of the Burnt-out Earth*. First of all, concerning the genre situation, one can speak about the interaction of two genres of different traditions, namely, *fantasy* (old tradition) and *landscape* (new tradition). Moreover, it has been defined by the composer already in the title of the piece. On the other hand, as the composer himself says:

It is a pretty tragic work. It was the summer of 1992, it was dry and there was forest fires in Kurzeme ... More important was a sad feeling about people in Latvia just having achieved independence, but... People were not ready for that. They say words like – why do I need this freedom, I need sausage much more. It was rather about landscapes of the burnt-out souls... (Petraškevičs, 2013, p. 46).

*Landscapes of the Burnt-out Earth* is made up of three parts, following each other without break. Thus, one can speak about the principle of a 'chain contrast' form which,

in its turn, coincides in some way with the fantasy genre, defined in the title of the work. Vasks concerning this composition explains:

... the first part is more visual, the second one is the growing of one motive reaching the tragic culmination, but in the last part there is a choral which frequently has a symbolic meaning in my music – like hope. The choral sounds three times and at the end of the work there is also voice of bird, as it is indicative of returning of life – it must return (Petraškevičs, 2013, p. 46).

*Green Landscape* for piano solo is the most recent opus of this group. Like other *landscapes* it is a single-movement composition in which one can observe the main wave of development with several inner increases, reaching the climax full of joy and energy. The culmination is followed by afterword so typical of Vask's music – it is a singing – silent and interwoven with light melancholy. It is the awareness of the fact that the miracle of the joy and festivity cannot be everlasting. *Green Landscape* is based on two themes. The composer says:

The music reflects joy and contentment. The first theme brings a kind of pure energy; the second is more devoted to tone painting. At the end, a five-note quotation from a well-known Latvian folk song [*Pūt, vējiņi* – I. B.] is heard (Schlüren, 2011).

Finally, the conclusion can be made that librogenre *landscape* in the works of Pēteris Vasks is deeply rooted in nature reflecting this theme in different way. Concerning the formal aspect, on the higher level all works entitled *landscapes* are single-movement compositions, but on the lower compositional level each of them represents an individual interpretation of form. Nevertheless, one can see a rather typical principle of development of such compositions, namely, it is variable repetitions of small melodic and harmonic structures, creating long-lasting demonstration and feeling of particular emotion and colour.

Finally, it would be reasonable to conclude the observation of the contribution of Pēteris Vasks with one more quotation, which reflects a very significant issue, namely, that it is not possible to explain and describe every detail, every single aspect concerning the process of creating musical work:

Every piece of music comes to this world like a little child. And it comprises elements of the composer's sense of world and temper. I can only always remind that the creation of music involves also something mysterious and this irrational aspect is always present, providing contact with the Supreme Power as other people say.<sup>24</sup>

## Conclusions

The main conclusions, arising from the characteristic of overall genre panorama of Latvian instrumental music, as well as the works of Latvian composer Pēteris Vasks, are the following:

1. A lot of new kind of musical genres are created specifically in the last third of the previous century, giving reason to work out the conception of librogenre, proposed by Lithuanian musicologist Gražina Daunoravičienė.

2. Based on theoretical background, the main characteristic parameters of musical genre have been crystallized and they are the following: the title aspect, the factor of the performing staff and the formal/compositional parameter, as well as the content factor, which has to be considered in close interaction with the formal aspect.

3. The compositions by Vasks have developed in two principally different directions. On the one hand, he develops and keeps alive such traditional musical genres as symphonies, string quartets, sonatas and concertos. On the other hand, he is seeking for some original and alternative ideas incorporating into the sphere of the librogenre during all the period of the creative work.

4. The main tendency concerning the title aspect reflects the composer's desire in some way to clarify the emotional directions of their compositions, which coincides also with the works of other Latvian composers. Moreover, it is characteristic of both, traditional genres like symphony, concerto, sonata etc. and different kinds of librogenre. This kind of title gives some emotional impulse to listeners. Not only Vasks is doing so, but other composers as well. For example, his contemporary Pēteris Plakidis confirms the viewpoint given by Vasks. He considers that such titles "suggest that listeners should think of and look in a particular direction. Symphony, sonata – they embedded in history so deeply and are very much abstract and common."<sup>25</sup>

The titles of this kind show a general tendency characteristic of music of the previous century, namely, tendency to move towards more philosophical orientation, sometimes towards abstract spirituality and reflect the composer's desire to go deep into some kind of irrational world. The titles in some way demonstrate the composer's specific desire to disassociate and get free from traditions. After all, the title of a particular musical composition is to be viewed as the composer's first step, first speech towards listeners. Thus, it is essential and significant. Finally, it is possible to draw the conclusion that composers using such titles are trying to move away listeners from traditional genres, and, moreover, do it intentionally.

5. As regards the performing staff, the overall genre situation is characterised by orientation towards *chamberness* which is characteristic of all kinds of librogenre as well as traditional genres. One of the impulses developing such tendency is the decisive role of particular performers in the

process of creating this or that composition. This fact also is noted not only by Vasks but other composers as well.

For instance, compositions entitled *music* by Vasks are mostly written for different kinds of chamber staff. The same could be said also concerning other kinds of librogenre like *landscape* or *book*.

6. As to the compositional/formal aspect one can make a conclusion that the unifying factor can be found not in similarities of compositional structure but on the conceptual level. This common situation highlights the fact that, for example, the word *music* in a title is linked in particular with small single-movement instrumental compositions in which a lyrically dramatic mode of expression prevails. This tendency describes not only the creative work of Pēteris Vasks but also that of other Latvian composers (Pēteris Plakidis, Juris Karlsons etc.).

There is one more interesting issue to be underlined: musical opuses with titles like *landscape*, *song*, *piece* and specifically *music* are typical of the creative work of composers whose musical language is traditional in a very general meaning. Thus, it is possible to come to the conclusion that these compositions are mostly linked with such stylistic trends as neoclassicism and neo-romanticism as it could be observed in the works of Vasks. Primarily, music has been displayed as a lyrical, romantic, and very much emotional art in the wide and fundamental sense.

In conclusion it should be stated that since the late 20th century Latvian composers have used different nontraditional labels like *music*, *landscape*, *composition*, *book* and others in the titles of their compositions with increasing frequency. Thus, this tendency is proving to be a stable and long-lasting phenomenon.

## References

- 1 For a discussion genre as a contract, see *Genre* by Heather Dubrow (London: Methuen, 1982), chapter "The Functions of Genre".
- 2 For more information see doctoral theses by Gražina Daunoravičienė (defended in 1990, *Проблема жанра и жанрового взаимодействия в современной музыке (на материале творчества литовских композиторов 1975 – 1985 годов)*), as well as the article "Некоторые аспекты жанровой ситуации современной музыки" in: *Laudamus*. Москва: Композитор, 1992.
- 3 The overall genre panorama, including both, traditional and new genres, of Latvian instrumental music, mostly focusing on characteristic of three aspects – title, performing staff and statistically chronological, has been discussed in detail in the 43rd International Baltic Musicological Conference, 12–14 September, Vilnius. The title of the paper *Genre in the Latvian instrumental music of the last third of the 20th century* by Ilona Būdeniece.
- 4 The table is based on two sources of information: database of the Latvian Music Information Centre (LMIC) and catalogue *Latvian Symphonic Music*, published in 2009. However, it

is important to note that this material does not pretend to reflect complete information, since unfortunately there is no full information about the works of all Latvian composers in the database of LMIC.

- 5 For more information see: Danuser, 1995; Blume, 1989; Mattheson, 1739; Praetorius, 2001.
- 6 It must be noted that Grigorjeva did not use the term *librogenre* in this particular article.
- 7 For more information see: Mattheson, 1995.
- 8 For more information see: Samson, 1992.
- 9 From an interview with Pēteris Vasks conducted in 2008.
- 10 Vilškersta, Inta Individualizēta dramaturģiska forma un tās izpausmes V. Ļutoslavskā un P. Vaska simfonijās [Individual dramaturgical form and its manifestation in the symphonies by Witold Lutoslawski and Pēteris Vasks]. Unpublished Bachelor work. Rīga: Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music. 2001, p. 35.
- 11 From an interview with Pēteris Vasks conducted in 2008.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Ibid.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 It must be noted that within opuses entitled *music* there is no any composition for full symphonic orchestra as it is seen in Figure 3.
- 17 There are a lot of other compositions by Pēteris Vasks written for string orchestra, e. g., *Voices*, symphony Nr.1 for string orchestra (1991), *Distant Light*, concerto for violin and string orchestra (1997), *Vox amoris*, fantasy for violin and string orchestra (2009), *Epifania* for string orchestra (2010), *Presence*, concerto for cello and string orchestra (2012) etc.
- 18 From an interview with Pēteris Vasks conducted in 2008.
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 *Lauda* originally was known as the sacred song in Italy in the late medieval era and Renaissance.
- 23 In 2006 composer made a transcription for organ dedicated to Tālvāldis Deksnis.
- 24 From an interview with Pēteris Vasks conducted in 2008.
- 25 From an interview with Pēteris Plakidis conducted in 2010.

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## Santrauka

Daugybė naujų muzikos žanrų susikūrė praėjusio amžiaus paskutiniu trečdaliu ir sudarė sąlygas kalbėti apie librožanro koncepciją – librožanro terminą pasiūlė lietuvių muzikologė Gražina Daunoravičienė. Žvelgiant teoriškai, buvo išgryninti šie esminiai žanro parametrai: pavadinimo aspektas, atlikimo ir formalusis / kompozicijos matmuo, taip pat turinio veiksnys, kuris yra glaudžiai susijęs su formaliuoju parametru.

Vasko kompozicijos plėtojosi dviem skirtingomis kryptimis. Viena vertus, jis vysto tokius tradicinius muzikos žanrus kaip simfonija, styginių kvartetas, sonata ir koncertas. Kita vertus, kompozitorius siekia įkomponuoti originalias, alternatyvias idėjas į librožanrą visais savo kūrybos etapais. Kalbant apie pavadinimo aspektą, išryškėja Vasko troškimas išgryninti kompozicijų emociinę kryptį – šis bruožas akivaizdus ir kitų Latvijos kompozitorių darbuose. Be to, šis veiksnys būdingas tiek tradiciniams žanrams, tokiems kaip simfonija, koncertas, sonata ir t. t., tiek ir įvairioms librožanro atmainoms. Šiuo atveju pavadinimas perteikia klausytojams tam tikrą emocinį impulsą, ir to siekia ne tik Vaskas, bet ir jo kolegos – pavyzdžiui, amžininkas Pēteris Plakidis taip pat palaiko Vasko suformuluotą kūrybinio požiūrio tašką. Jo nuomone, tokie konkretūs pavadinimai „suponuoja, kad klausytojai turėtų mąstyti ir žvelgti konkrečia kryptimi. Simfonija, sonata – taip stipriai įsirižę į istoriją, tai gana abstraktu, bet ir įprasta“.

Tokio tipo pavadinimai rodo praėjusiame amžiuje vyravusią visuotinę muzikos tendenciją orientuotis į filosofikumą, kartais – į abstraktų dvasingumą ir atspindi kompozitorių troškimą pasitraukti į savotišką iracionalų pasaulį. Kūrinių pavadinimai tam tikra prasme byloja apie kompozitoriaus siekį išsivaduoti iš tradicijos ir vengti asociacijų – juk vis dėlto kūrinių pavadinimas gali būti traktuojamas kaip pirmasis kūrėjo žingsnis, nuo kurio imama artėti klausytojų link. Taigi būtų neteisinga paneigti didžiulę šio veiksnio svarbą. Ir galiausiai peršasi išvada, kad tokius pavadinimus vartojantys kompozitoriai bando atitraukti klausytojus nuo tradicinių žanrų ir daro tai visiškai sąmoningai.

Kalbant apie kūrinių atlikimo ypatybes, žanro situacija gali būti charakterizuojama kaip orientuota į kameriškumą – šis veiksnys būdingas visiems librožanro ir tradiciniams žanrų tipams. Vienas iš impulsų, skatinančių tokios tendencijos vystymąsi, yra svarbus kai kurių atlikėjų indėlis į kūrinių rašymo procesą. Šį faktą pastebi ne tik Vaskas, bet ir kiti kompozitoriai. Tarkime, kompozicijos, Vasko

pavadintos *muzika*, skirtos įvairios sudėties kameriniams ansambliams. Tas pat sakytina apie kitus librožanro tipus, pavyzdžiui, *peizažą* ar *knygą*.

Nagrinėjant kompozicinį / formalųjį lygmenį aiškėja, kad apibendrinamieji veiksniai pasireiškia ne per kompozicinių struktūrų panašumą, o veikiau koncepcijos lygmenyje. Tokia situacija pabrėžia faktą, kad pavadinime esantis žodis *muzika* susijęs su vienos dalies instrumentine kompozicija, kurioje vyrauja lyriškai dramatinis išraiškos būdas. Ši tendencija apibūdina ne tik Pėterio Vasko, bet ir kitų Latvijos kompozitorių (Pėterio Plakidžio, Juriso Karlsono ir kt.) kūrybą. Egzistuoja ir dar vienas įdomus aspektas: muzikos kūriniai,

pavadinimuose turintys žodžius *peizažas*, *daina*, *kūrinys* ir ypač *muzika*, parašyti kūrėjų, kurių darbų muzikinė kalba yra tradicinė plačiaja prasme. Taigi galima būtų teigti, kad tokios kompozicijos yra susijusios su stilistinėmis neoklasicizmo ir neoromantizmo gairėmis – tai ir matome Vasko kūrinuose. Muzika pateikiama kaip lyriškas, romantiškas ir labai emociingas aukščiausios rūšies menas.

Apibendrinant galima būtų teigti, kad vėlyvojo XX a. Latvijos kompozitoriai vis dažniau pasitelkdavo savo kūrinių pavadinimams tokias netradicines „etiketes“ kaip *muzika*, *peizažas*, *kompozicija*, *knyga*. Taigi ši tendencija – stabilus, išliekamąjį vertę turintis reiškinys.