

Foreword

You are holding Volume 9 of the scholarly journal *Ars et praxis*. The couple of years of pandemic that halted academic and cultural life around the globe undoubtedly affected academic research in Lithuania as well. That is why this volume of the journal is thinner than what it could have been. It features eight papers by lecturers and doctoral arts students from the Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre (LAMT), as well as by researchers from the Martynas Mažvydas National Library of Lithuania and the Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore. This poorer harvest, so to speak, of academic research means that in this issue, they will not be divided into the theoretical (*Ars*) and practical (*Praxis*) parts. Around half of the articles are based on papers presented at the 45th LAMT annual scientific conference Transnationalism and Art: Neighbourhood, Boundaries, Peripheries (held on September 30, 2021).

It appears that the pandemic-related restrictions had the greatest impact on theatre and film studies. In this 2021 issue, these scholarly fields are represented by Austėja Kuskienė's research "Spoken language as a means of constructing the identity of characters in Maria Kavtaradze's short films". The author analyses the dialogues from films made in 2013–2015 directed by Marija Kavtaradzė, a film director of the younger generation: *Normal People Don't Explode Themselves*, *I'm Twenty Something* and *Iglou*. The films reveal the ability of the director and the screenwriters who helped her co-author the scripts to create portraits and contexts for the film characters using language – the contemporary jargon used by young people in Vilnius, inserts of other languages, spam words and expletives.

The other seven articles deal with musical instruments, recordings, collectives, the intersection of musical styles, composition and interpretation techniques. Jonė Punytė-Svigarienė presents the history of the early piano – from its invention in the beginning of the 18th century to the formation of the instrument as we know it today. In her article "Journey of the piano throughout Western Europe from the 18th up to the beginning of the 19th century: the history of the instrument", she discusses how piano construction developed, particular features of its manufacture in different countries and cooperation between composers and instrument masters aimed at improving the piano mechanism. The author highlights that knowledge of the potential and qualities of historical instruments "can help pianists find the key to stylish interpretation". Only after the piano

was improved did its automatic relative emerge in the US in the late 19th century – the auto-playing piano, the pianola. As Darius Kučinskas writes in his article “Ethnic music recordings for pianola”, unique historical recordings were captured on pianola rolls in the early 20th century; 350 Lithuanian rolls were found, containing almost 400 recorded works. According to the author, these kinds of folk music and professional musical recordings helped various national groups forming in the US, Lithuanians being among them, to realize their musical identities.

Margarita Moisejeva takes a closer look at the musical activities of the Orthodox community in Vilnius in the mid-19th century – in her article “Peculiarities of the formation of the Vilnius Christian Orthodox Choir in the 19th century” she studies choir formation from the perspective of local Lithuanian singers’ circumstances and the sociocultural realities of the singers themselves. The archival documents found by the researcher show that the choirs in those days, made up of teenagers and young people, were educated in various ways (according to religious school singing programmes) and were provided for materially.

Doctoral student Imantas Jonas Šimkus in his article “Conductor analysis: between realization and interpretation” takes a closer look at the role of the conductor in preparing, rehearsing and performing works, at their relationship with the score and the musicians. Having discussed how the genre of a piece, its historical cultural context, performance tradition and other aspects determining the conductor’s contribution to the collective playing of music, the author concludes that there is no one, single, definite answer to the question of whether the conductor is just the one who realizes the composer’s idea, or whether they also offer their own interpretation of that idea.

The next articles deal with contemporary music, the openness of technology and social networks to new ways of representation and interaction with audiences. Doctoral student Vytis Nivinskas analyses the interaction of jazz with academic Western music. His publication “Intersections between contemporary classical music and jazz: double bass in minimalism and post-minimalism music” dedicates most attention to the annual Bang on a Can festival initiated by three American composers in 1987, and especially the double bass player Robert Black who pulled together the Bang on a Can All-Stars ensemble – namely, his playing technique, means of sound extraction and the general role of the double bassist in the ensemble, who, in the words of Nivinskas, “crosses the boundary between classical, jazz, rock, ethnic and experimental music”. Agnė Dūkšaitė and Audra Versekėnaitė research the latest musical creative challenges among accordion players in their article “Compromise performance strategies: analysis of interpretations of Sofia Gubaidulina’s Sonata *Et expecto*”. According to the authors, complex contem-

porary scores sometimes force the performer to choose which of the composer's instructions they should pay attention to, and which ones to ignore, and this can become not just a technical decision but an aspect of the work's interpretation. Sofia Gubaidulina's Sonata *Et expecto* is analysed concentrating on parts that pose a challenge even for the most skilled players (when it is technically impossible to perform all of the instructions given by the composer), analysing different ways to overcome this – performance strategies.

In this issue of *Ars et praxis*, Ingrida Alonderė and Lina Navickaitė-Martinelli begin a publication diptych titled “Choir communication with the audience in social media”, which analyses how art collectives promote themselves via visual artefacts (posters, visual recordings, photographs): create their image, seek to broaden their visibility and popularity, arouse interest among potential new audiences, involve them in their own lives, encourage the public to come to concerts, etc. In the first part of the diptych, “The meaning(s) of visual messages on Facebook” the authors seek “to review the existing musicians' visual communication studies and activities of art collectives (choirs) in social media”. The second part, which will analyse specifically how Lithuanian choir collectives use visual messages in the Facebook social network, should be published in the 2022 issue of *Ars et praxis*.

The Sources part of the journal this year shall recall the first Lithuanian events held in Vilnius and Kaunas in the early 20th century that encouraged the national revival, inspired the establishment of societies and set the groundwork for further development of nationhood. Musicologist Živilė Tamaševičienė presents hand-written memoirs titled “A few words for posterity from the revivalist Lithuanians in Kaunas”. The document, signed as Jonas from Žalpai (attributed to Jonas Garalevičius, a famous Lithuanian organ master and public figure), is kept in the Manuscripts Department at the Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences. It contains an account of the Lithuanian folk song and dance night (*gegužinė*) held on May 13, 1901, which is linked to the beginning of the Daina Society's activities. Even though facts about these events are already known within cultural society, the memoirs are being published to commemorate the 120th anniversary of the event.

Ars et praxis Volume 9 ends with the Appendices – a Chronicle of 2021, which gives an overview of the latest publishing news at the LAMT, conferences, defended dissertations and art doctoral studies projects, list of Master and Bachelor degree theses and awards: there is also information about the authors of articles featured in this year's *Ars et praxis* and a Note to Authors section.

The Editor