

“SONATA OF PSALMS” FOR TWO FLUTES, PIANO  
AND HUMAN VOICE AD LIBITUM BY V. KAMINSKY:  
ARTISTIC CONCEPT AND ITS REALIZATION

„SONATA PSALMILOR” PENTRU DOUĂ FLAUTE, PIAN  
ȘI VOCEA UMANĂ AD LIBITUM DE V. KAMINSKY:  
CONCEPTUL ARTISTIC ȘI REALIZAREA LUI

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*The purpose of the article is to reveal the concept of V. Kaminsky's "Sonata of Psalms" for two flutes, piano and human voice ad libitum, which vividly reflects the underlying image, idea, content, consonant with the voluminous and diverse poetic and spiritual genre palette of the composer's work. Harmoniously combining the ideas and national spiritual heritage including the ancient traditions of church singing, the composer makes a breakthrough from the present to the past. The restoration of an ancient church tradition is based on the implication of the 117th Psalm "Praise the Lord...", the voice becomes the main criterion for the realization of the author's idea. The work enriches our imagination about his achievements in the field of chamber-instrumental music, where increased attention is paid to the emotional, timbre, dynamic and technical aspects of performance.*

**Keywords:** Viktor Kaminsky, chamber-instrumental ensemble, chamber-instrumental performance, Psalms

*Scopul articolului constă în relevarea conceptului „Sonatei psalmilor” pentru două flaute, pian și vocea umană ad libitum de V. Kaminsky, care reflectă în mod viguros imaginea, ideea, conținutul, în consonanță cu paleta voluminoasă și diversă de genuri poetice și spirituale ale creației compozitorului. Îmbinând armonios ideile și moștenirea spirituală națională, inclusiv tradițiile străvechi ale cântului bisericesc, compozitorul face o descoperire din prezent în trecut. Refacerea unei vechi tradiții bisericești este bazată pe implicarea psalmului 117, „Lăudați pe Domnul...”, unde vocea devine criteriul principal de realizare a ideii autorului. Lucrarea contribuie la îmbogățirea imaginației despre realizările lui V. Kaminsky în domeniul muzicii instrumentale de cameră, unde se acordă o atenție sporită aspectelor emoționale, timbrale, dinamice și tehnice ale interpretării.*

**Cuvinte-cheie:** Viktor Kaminsky, ansamblu cameral-instrumental, interpretare cameral-instrumentală, Psalmi

### Introduction

*Sonata of Psalms* for two flutes, piano and human voice ad libitum written by the Ukrainian composer Viktor Kaminsky is, first of all, a perfect example aimed to familiarize professional musicians and amateurs of chamber-instrumental music with modern works of Ukrainian composers in this art form. The artist, by the grace of God, is usually ahead of Time and, subtly reacting to the collisions of today, even in the conditions of turbulent social events in the country and the world, remains faithful to the ideals of high spirituality and morality.

Today composer V. Kaminsky is one of the active contemporary creators of Ukrainian music. His works are often presented in large and smaller halls, in TV programs, at prestigious music festivals: *Kyiv Music Fest* (Kyiv), *Two Days and Two Nights* (Odessa), *Contrasts*, *Virtuosos*, *Christmas Gift* (Lviv).

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The composer's music is also known in Poland: it was performed in Krakow, Katowice, Przemyśl, Sanok, as well as in Częstochowa, in the hall of the Philharmonic named after B. Huberman.

### Recent publications dedicated to the composer's creation

The creative work of V. Kaminsky is actively covered in the columns of magazines and newspapers in Ukraine and abroad. Among the authors of reviews and analytical posts, reviews of concerts and simply grateful greetings are the well-known composers: H. Havrilets, O. Kozarenko, M. Kolessa, Yu. Lanyuk, M. Lastovetskyi, O. Manulyak, M. Skoryk, B. Frolyak, I. Shcherbakov; musicologists: D. Duvirak, N. Dyka, M. Zhyshkovich, V. Zaranskyi, A. Kalenichenko, M. Kapitsa, O. Katrych, A. Karpyak, L. Kiyanovska, G. Konkova, A. Kravchenko, M. Lypetska, performers: V. Andrievska, Y. Ermin, I. Kushpler, A. Mykytka, V. Morozov, O. Rapita, B. Stelmashenko, E. Chupryk, Yu. Shutko; the writers and poets: Bohdan Stelmakh, Ihor and Iryna Kalynets; numerous journalists, fans of modern Ukrainian music. The significance of the composer's work is evidenced by his official titles and state awards. Viktor Kaminsky is Honored Worker of Arts of Ukraine (1995) and Honored Worker of Culture of Poland (2009). His work has been awarded prestigious state awards: named after M. Lysenko (2000), the Regional Award named after S. Lyudkevich (2004), the highest award in Ukraine – the Taras Shevchenko National Award of Ukraine (2005). For spiritual works, the composer was awarded the Medal of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi.

The purpose of the article is to reveal the general and specific features of V. Kaminsky's compositional writing using the example of the *Sonata of Psalms* for two flutes, piano and human voice ad libitum, which vividly reflects the underlying image, idea, content, consonant with the voluminous and diverse poetic and spiritual genre palette of the composer's work.

### The genre palette of V. Kaminsky's work

The genre palette of V. Kaminsky's work is voluminous and diverse. In his large-scale, close to the paraliturgical vocal-symphonic works, such as the cantata-symphony *Ukraine, Way of the Cross* (1992, sl. I. Kalints) and the oratorio *Idu. I Call I am Calling...* (1998) the words of the sermons of Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky sound majestically in the poetic arrangement by Iryna Kalynets. The composer is also the author of ritual and liturgical forms that are performed mainly in the religious services of the Greek-Catholic churches, however, they can also be heard in concert programs. These are the *Liturgy of John Chrysostom* for soloists and mixed choir (2000), the *Akathist to the Holy Mother of God* (2002), which was performed in the Vatican during the broadcasts of the Greek Catholic service, as well as the *Easter Matins* for choir and soloists (2006). The composer's communication with the meters of the Greek Catholic Church – Vladyka Lubomyr Huzar and Vladyka Yosif-Ivan Milyan contributed to the creation of these works. In the genre-stylistic diversity of V. Kaminsky's work, the most significant achievements are demonstrated by multifaceted instrumental music. Numerous chamber-ensemble works were written by V. Kaminsky: *String Quartet* (1976); *Chamber Music* for string orchestra (1978); *Recitative and Rondo* for viola, bassoon and piano (1981); *Voices of Ancient Mountains* for clarinet, bassoon and piano (2009); *The Traveler and His Shadow* for two violins by Friedrich Nietzsche; *Wandering Spirit of the Artist* for solo violin based on the works of P. Sarasate; for chamber orchestra, flute and oboe on the theme of an authentic Jewish melody; *Superharmony in the Rhythms of the Ocean* (2007) for violin and chamber orchestra based on the motifs of the band *Okean Elzy* by Svyatoslav Vakarchuk and others.

The diversity of the genre-thematic sphere of V. Kaminsky's works is consistent with the variable combination of different stylistic features. Musicologist B. Syuta emphasizes the presence in the composer's works of an inclination towards polystylism, noting that "inherent in V. Kaminsky's creative style is the attraction to polyphonic writing, intense features of dramatic development" [1 p. 299]. In his works, elements of neoclassicism and neo-baroque, signs of romanticism and

folklore borrowings are characteristic of this style. “Despite all the stylistic changes and reorientation of artistic interests, – as noted by musicologist Iryna Stroi-Chernova, –one sphere, one genre category always remains leading in the creative achievements of the artist – this is the sphere of instrumental chamber music in the broadest interpretation of this definition: from the philosophical aspect of understanding the creative idea, as delving into the intimate and spiritual sphere of purely professional interest, with the possibility of forming various coloristic and timbre combinations and mixes” [2]. We agree with musicologist L. Kiyanovska that V. Kaminsky, who “so naturally manifested himself in the main directions for him, with such pleasure feels and embodies – dignity as a talented and experienced actor on stage – completely different pictures of the world, completely different artistic roles, fitting into the graphically clear framework of the composer’s thinking” [3 p. 7]. The artist is the author of transcriptions of well-known European and Ukrainian works, as well as new interpretations of his own previously written opuses. V. Kaminsky’s creation is well presented by pianists, violinists, cellists, flutists, oboists, clarinetists, bassoonists, numerous and diverse instrumental ensembles, as well as by the *Lviv Chamber Orchestra Academy* (leader and concertmaster – People’s Artist, Professor Artur Mykytka; conductor and artistic director – People’s Artist, Professor Ihor Pilatiuk). Increasing the fame of this group in Ukraine and beyond, V. Kaminsky, in addition to original works, enriched the orchestra, “a colossal repertoire, which, – as noted by musicologist Alla Tereshchenko, – includes the chamber and orchestral works of composers from almost all the countries of the world, and specially composed works by Lviv and other Ukrainian composers” [4 p. 519] with a large number of transcriptions that were successful in concert programs.

#### ***Sonata of Psalms* by V. Kaminsky: stylistic aspects**

The *Sonata of Psalms* by V. Kaminsky was created in 1993. It is an example of a modern work, which harmoniously combines the ideas of the spiritual and national revival and the author’s search for a new reproduction of the ancient traditions of church singing. The work dedicated to the composer’s wife Lyubov Kiyanovska, was written in parallel with other spiritual works, including *Te Deum* for chamber orchestra (1996); *Concerto* for four soloists, string orchestra, harpsichord and organ (1996); *Adagio* for string orchestra (1997); *Concerto* for piano and orchestra (1995) and others. The work affirms the artistic and aesthetic values of chamber art and becomes an indicator of the intellectual and spiritual level of society.

The *Sonata of Psalms* for two flutes, piano and human voice ad libitum (solo, ensemble, and choir) is a real revelation of V. Kaminsky’s creation. The 117th Psalm of David *Praise the Lord, All the Tribes...* became the figurative and semantic center of *Sonata of Psalms*. For a musical composition with words, the degree of emotionality of the poetic content is important. The premiere took place in the 90s of the 20th century within the concert program of the International Music Festival, where the piece was performed by: Yuriy Shutka (flute), Bohdana Stelmashenko (flute), Olena Strogan (piano). The musical canvas of V. Kaminsky’s *Sonatas of Psalms* is determined by the initial motif-theme, which becomes the melodic impulse for the further development of the work. The composer filled the score with a wealth of dramatic development, where the flute parts enchant with the sophistication of the timbre and dynamic gradations. The center of the dramatic climax of the work is an extended solo in the piano part. In the vortex of dissonant harmonies and bright sound-timbre colors, the strict restraint of feelings and the special enlightenment of the image magnetize the hearing and the artistic and aesthetic imagination of the listener. However, the voice becomes the main measure of the realization of the idea of the work. According to the composer’s plan, the moment when the instrumentalists, reviving the ancient church tradition, sing the 117th *Psalm Praise the Lord...* becomes the golden intersection point in the *Sonata of Psalms*. This innovative technique has an emotional and sensual effect on the subconscious of both performers and listeners. We observe that in the composer’s creation of

the genre of sonata there is “interference of chamber-instrumental and chamber-vocal genres with a tendency of exploitation in the form of features of a mono-performance, in particular, and according to the type of mono-opera [5p.152]. The concert and stage life of the piece receives new interpretations every time, adapted to the performance with different instruments and voices.

### Conclusions

The observations made in the article allow us to come to the following conclusions:

1. *Sonatas of Psalms* written by the contemporary Ukrainian composer V. Kaminsky has taken a worthy place in the repertoire of Ukrainian chamber musicians: it is heard in festivals, art events, museums, churches, temples: it has become a spiritual heritage of Ukraine and the world.
2. The national flavor of the one-part programmatic chamber-instrumental ensemble canvas *Sonata of Psalms* written by V. Kaminsky is distinguished by emotionality and a special plasticity of the melos, where the author seeks to embody a highly spiritual idea, based on the experience of his own ethnic environment and time;
3. The dialogue of the enchanting layers of religious music and contemporary musical thinking is the specific feature of the analyzed opus.
4. The composer’s concept enlarges the limits of chamber-instrumental music, producing a unique combination of chamber performance with the singing of the 117th *Psalm Praise the Lord...*

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