
“STANA ĐURIĆ-KLAJN” AWARD

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WELCOME SPEECH

Dear colleagues and friends,

In my capacity as President of the Serbian Musicological Society, it is my honour to open this ceremony, the inaugural presentation of “Stana Đurić Klajn” Awards for outstanding contributions to musicology, and to extend my warmest greetings to all of you.

First, it is a great pleasure to greet here the first two winners of this newly established prize, Dr Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman and Dr Melita Milin, and congratulate them on behalf of the Steering Committee and all members of the Society. I also want to thank the members of the Award Committee and its chairwoman, Prof. Dragana Stojanović-Novičić, for their professional efforts, energy, and good will, which enabled the “Stana Đurić Klajn” Award, imme-

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diately upon its establishment, to live up to the credibility and quality implied by its name.

Unfortunately, the epidemiological crisis that has disrupted, since March 2020, all aspects of regular life and, to a large extent, put our musical life on hold, did not allow us to fulfil our original intent and present the awards on 5 May, the date Stana Đurić-Klajn was born in 1905, when we celebrate the Day of the Serbian Musicological Society. Given the circumstances, it seems to me that we should be happy that we managed to come together this evening at all, especially here, at the Ilija M. Kolarac Endowment, a hugely significant institution for the musical and cultural life of Belgrade and Serbia, as well as in the rich biography of Stana Đurić-Klajn. First as a member of the Organizing Committee and then as a performer and lecturer, pianist and musicologist, Đurić-Klajn maintained a close relationship with the Concert Hall of the Kolarac Endowment right from its opening in 1932, especially in terms of shaping its Musical Hours (*Музички часови*), a breeding ground for modernist trends in inter-war Belgrade.

The Musicological Society is especially grateful to the Endowment and its director, Ms. Jasna Dimitrijević, for allowing us to use this space, which is, for all the reasons enumerated above, emblematic of the figure whose name our award proudly shares. In what follows, our main topics will be musicology, musicologists, Stana Đurić-Klajn, and her enormous contribution to our profession and discipline. On this occasion, I will share just one snippet that connects Stana Đurić-Klajn with the history of the Kolarac Endowment.

It concerns a Musical Hour held on 7 May 1935, featuring the Belgrade Philharmonic led by Vojislav Vučković and the 26-year-old pianist Stana Đurić Klajn as the soloist in Manuel de Falla's *Nights in the Gardens of Spain* (*Noches en los jardines de España*), with Petar Bingulac as moderator and lecturer on the evening's programme, which also included, in addition to Falla's piece, Josef Suk's *Meditation*, Debussy's *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* (*Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*), and Vítězslav Novák's tone poem *Of the Eternal Longing* (*O věčné touze*).¹ An attractive and stylistically consistent

¹ Cf. Драгољуб Катунас [Dragoljub Katunas], "Пијанистичка делатност Стане Ђурић-Клајн" [The Pianist Work of Stana Đurić-Klajn], in: Мирјана Веселиновић-Хофман [Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman] and Мелита Милин [Melita Milin] (eds.), *Стана Ђурић-Клајн и српска музикологија. Поводом стогодишњице рођења Стане Ђурић-Клајн* [Stana Đurić-Klajn and Serbian Musicology: Marking the Centenary of the Birth of Stana Đurić-Klajn], Belgrade: Serbian Musicological Society, 2010, 145.

programme, you will admit, especially given the repertoires of our orchestras today! These symptomatic and symbolic pieces of information come from an article by the musicologist Dragoljub Katunac included in *Стана Ђурић-Клајн и српска музикологија* (Stana Đurić-Klajn and Serbian Musicology), a collection of essays published by the Serbian Musicological Society in 2010 to mark the centenary of her birth. It was co-edited by Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman and Melita Milin, our two esteemed colleagues whom we gathered to celebrate here tonight. That is symbolism and continuity!

But we are not here only to evoke the past and maintain continuity with it, although the past may currently seem preferable to our present, but also for the sake of that present and the future, both of musicology and the Kolarac Endowment itself, which has operated over the past several years under increasing pressure due to unresolved legal and financial issues, only to suffer a further blow from this global pandemic, with its very survival at stake.

Thus I feel obliged to use the privilege of speaking first tonight to issue an appeal on behalf of the Serbian Musicological Society's Steering Committee to all the institutions responsible for implementing cultural policy in the Republic of Serbia – first and foremost the Ministry of Culture and Information, whose financial support helped us establish this award – to address the problems of the Ilija M. Kolarac Endowment, “a cultural subject entitled to special protection”, according to the Law on Culture. To that special status I would only add “national”, which is, in my view, entirely pertinent to the standing of this institution.

Let us urge the government to quickly make all the necessary amendments to the Law on Endowments and adopt appropriate provisions regarding permanent funding of their work, which are already built into the Law on Culture and the Cultural Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for 2017–2027, allowing endowments to receive up to 45% of their total funding from the government. Such an elementary safety valve would provide a further impetus to the principle of donating, which informs the work of endowments in general. Even if, perhaps, this appeal sounds simplistic, we are confident that, if met by political good will, this burning issue in our culture would be quickly resolved, with the potential to be applied to other similarly neglected cases, which block the free flow and diversification of cultural and artistic ideas in our society.

Thank you for your attention!