

Gubaidulina's Abstract «Filmic» Music in The Lyre of Orpheus

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This study explores Gubaidulina's *The Lyre of Orpheus* (2006) for violin, string orchestra and percussion, which emphasizes sound to represent the mythical figure Orpheus, giving a different presentation of the mythical story. In the composition, Gubaidulina's communication with her listeners relies not on what is seen, but on what is heard, and what is understood based on the Orpheus mythology. She retells past events but presents them in the present through sound. Important musical characteristics are related to storytelling methodologies, reflecting Gubaidulina's employment of film scoring approaches. There are double meanings conveyed through her musical ideas, as with film music, which contains layers of information. A time frame structure is designed. A mixture of emotions and conflicts are conveyed throughout, expressing deep sadness and pain of both Orpheus and Gubaidulina's own feelings and memories of her lost daughter. Not only does Gubaidulina create interesting, thoughtful, challenging musical presentations and designs, but also gives meaning in her composition, providing a different hearing experience and imagination of a contemporary interpretation of the «story» of Orpheus.

Keywords: Sofia Gubaidulina; 21st century music; film music; *The Lyre of Orpheus*

La música abstracta i «cinematogràfica» de Gubaidulina en *La lira d'Orfeu*

Este estudi explora *La lira d'Orfeu* (2006) de Sofia Gubaidulina, per a violí, orquestra de cordes i percussió, obra que emfatitza el so com a mitjà per a representar a la figura mítica d'Orfeu, oferint una presentació diferent del relat mític. En la composició, la comunicació de Gubaidulina amb els seus oients es basa no en el visible, sinó en l'audible i en el que es comprén a partir de la mitologia d'Orfeu. La compositora reinterpreta esdeveniments passats, però els presenta en el present a través del so.

Importants característiques musicals es relacionen amb metodologies narratives, reflectint l'ús per part de Gubaidulina d'enfocaments propis de la música cinematogràfica. Les seues idees musicals transmeten dobles significats, igual que la música de cinema, que conté múltiples capes d'informació. Es dissenya una estructura temporal definida. Al llarg de l'obra es comuniquen una mescla d'emocions i conflictes, expressant una profunda tristesa i dolor tant d'Orfeu com dels propis sentiments i records de Gubaidulina per la pèrdua de la seua filla.

Gubaidulina no sols crea presentacions i dissenys musicals interessants, reflexius i desafiadors, sinó que també dota a la seua composició de significat, proporcionant una experiència auditiva distinta i una nova imaginació d'una interpretació contemporània de la «història» d'Orfeu.

Paraules clau: Sofia Gubaidulina; música del segle XXI; composició cinematogràfica; *The Lyre of Orpheus*.

La música abstracta y «cinematográfica» de Gubaidulina en *La lira de Orfeo*

Este estudio explora *La lira de Orfeo* (2006) de Sofia Gubaidulina, para violín, orquesta de cuerdas y percusión, obra que enfatiza el sonido como medio para representar a la figura mítica de Orfeo, ofreciendo una presentación diferente del relato mítico. En la composición, la comunicación de Gubaidulina con sus oyentes se basa no en lo visible, sino en lo audible y en lo que se comprende a partir de la mitología de Orfeo. La compositora reinterpreta acontecimientos pasados, pero los presenta en el presente a través del sonido.

Importantes características musicales se relacionan con metodologías narrativas, reflejando el uso por parte de Gubaidulina de enfoques propios de la música cinematográfica. Sus ideas musicales transmiten dobles significados, al igual que la música de cine, que contiene múltiples capas de información. Se diseña una estructura temporal definida. A lo largo de la obra se comunican una mezcla de emociones y conflictos, expresando una profunda tristeza y dolor tanto de Orfeo como de los propios sentimientos y recuerdos de Gubaidulina por la pérdida de su hija.

Gubaidulina no solo crea presentaciones y diseños musicales interesantes, reflexivos y desafiantes, sino que también dota a su composición de significado, proporcionando una experiencia auditiva distinta y una nueva imaginación de una interpretación contemporánea de la «historia» de Orfeo.

Palabras clave: Sofia Gubaidulina; música del siglo XXI; composición cinematográfica; *La lira de Orfeo*.

The story of the mythical figure Orpheus is one that most familiar with and well-known to the Western world. It is an ancient Greek legendary and has been casted across time through numerous dramatic works, operas and songs in the past eras. Nevertheless, it is less commonly presented in the form of purely instrumental music. Perhaps most frequently heard would be Liszt's symphonic poem *Orpheus*. The study explores Gubaidulina's *The Lyre of Orpheus* (2006) for violin, string orchestra and percussion, in which emphasizes on sound to represent the mythical figure Orpheus, giving a different presentation of the mystical story. Although Gubaidulina claims that the composition is constructed through Pythagorean system and numerical proportion, the study draws on a different approach from theoretical and mathematical aspects. It aims to explore how Gubaidulina presents a sorrowful and lonely persona of the past in *The Lyre of Orpheus* through her abstract ways of narrating and presenting the expressions in the music. The study also demonstrates Gubaidulina's own thoughts in her

musical interpretation of Orpheus mythology, examining its relation to film scoring and exploring how Gubaidulina employs film score ideas in the composition in telling her «story».

The Lyre of Orpheus represents Gubaidulina's own time of sound imagination, utilizing and exploring new and creative musical idioms and ideas to capture the medieval myth, creating a new and unique quality in music presentation. The work is also written to convey the tragic loss and in memory of Gubaidulina's daughter, Nadeyka, who passed away in 2004. In an interview, Gubaidulina said: «my daughter is always with me, always supporting me» (Marcus, 2021). It is through the composition she invites listener into her inner feeling of her loss. The composition also reveals the love, love alone that both Orpheus and Gubaidulina have for their loved ones, respectively.

Although time passes Orpheus' grief of losing his wife never lessens. Even though the solo violin in *The Lyre of Orpheus* represents the lyre of Orpheus, Gubaidulina also emphasizes the solo violin to metaphor the character Orpheus, particularly in the second section of the composition. Similarly, it is the solo violin that expresses an abstract form of Gubaidulina's interpretation of Orpheus' stage of mind and his lament that told in the mythological story. Interestingly, her musical treatment and design in the composition can also be associated with operatic work and film scoring, in terms of theatrical approach in structural design and musical style. To some extent, both opera and film share some similarity in design, music writings and its functions, and others. Jaumes Radigales writes that «much of Herrmann's music for the big screen closely follows an operatic conception...» and also claims that «in the early film scores, opera was a common resource as a source of inspiration...» (Radigales, 2014: 49). In some events of *The Lyre of Orpheus*, sound can make in the interpretation of abstract «images» and feelings Gubaidulina intended to show and describe. To some extent, it is as if the music is divorced from the image which was created to accompany in the film.

Although Gubaidulina does not write any operas, she has been active in the field of film music since her early composing career. She composes more than twenty-five film scores for film scenes, cartoons and animated films, in particularly during her early career. These include *Vertikal* (Odessa Filmstudios, 1967), *Den angela* (Angel's Day, Odessa Filmstudios 1968), *Belyy vzryv* (White Explosion, Odessa Filmstudios, 1969), a series of «Mougli» (Jungle Book) (1967-

73), «Balagan» (1981), «The Scarecrow» (Chuchelo, 1984), «The Cat That Walked by Itself» (1988), «Slepye» (2011), «Queen of Scots» (2013) and many more others. Many of her music for films could be considered as striking in the history of Soviet film music from 1960s to 1980s. For Gubaidulina, writing film music can be a door that opens for creativity and music experiment.

Paul Griffiths writes that

Gubaidulina's achievement in film scores include the film music for Rolan Bykov's "Scarecrow" and a number of collaborations with Ida Garanina on animated films. But this sort of work was not a chore: it provided her with another kind of education, since the need to match music to gesture gave her a strong sense of how instruments can speak and how music can mimic physical action or, by extension, movements of the mind and spirit (Griffiths, 1999).

Gubaidulina's film scores received both positive and negative receptions. For instance, a review on «Mougli» wrote that «the music fits very well and while atonal music has more appreciated and haunting rhythmically and melodically» (Review to «The Adventure of Mowgli», 2013). Other finds «the expressive polytonal score [of "Mougli"] has a marked contrapuntal character dominated by fast rhythms wrapped in a suggestive mysterious atmosphere and refined exotic references that recall the magic of sounds and movements and the voices of the forest and its inhabitants» (Eustachi, 2016). A review of «Balagan» commented that «in 'Balagan' everything worked out, everything came together: the most delicately worked out color and light score, unforgettable (from the first viewing — forever remembered) music by Sofia Gubaidulina...» (Vasilkova). However, some claims that Gubaidulina's music score for «*The Cat Who Walked by Itself* [...] didn't always fit, sometimes sounding too ominous and wouldn't have said no to it being used sparingly» (*The Cat Who Walked by Herself* (1988), 2021). The film score is less acceptable is of her experimentation of contemporary sounds; the music is atonal and saturated with dissonances sound colors, using pointillistic and *Sprechstimme* techniques. Gubaidulina's film score demonstrates that there is room for more experimentation, and she finds new approaches in writing for film music. As some asserts that «most of the works [including film scores] of Sofia Asgatovna are clearly experimental in nature and therefore require reflection and understanding. Which means it's not for everyone» (Tanaseva, 2005).

In an interview, Rolan Bykov, the film director of *The Scarecrow* praised Gubaidulina that

She didn't simply compose the music for this film, she participated in it, in its creation. A situation, by the way, that's not at all typical. Nowadays many a composer writes music for a film without so much a glance at it... Listening to Sonia's [Gubaidulina's] music, I realized it was magnificent —when water trickled in the film, water trickled in her music... It was no simplistic musical depiction of fire or water. But an artistic musical image. I was astounded, even shocked... The music went through an entire process of implantation in the body of the film. But once it was implanted, it became clear that the music was the very blood flowing through the veins of the film (cited in Kurtz, 2007: 171).

In the history of film music, many composers of concert music composed movie music as well, and their concert compositional techniques can be heard in film score, and vice-versa; suffice to mention Copland and Shostakovich. Working as a concert music composer, Gubaidulina continues writing film music. One finds in many of her compositional techniques and sound colors are used both her film scores and concert music.

The initial motif dotted by the tremolo of the flute, to which the strings are added, which accompanies Lena's inner drama, is followed by sonorous figures dominated by angular dissonances wrapped in the usual density of the expressive register, which recalls great symphonic works such as *Stimmen... Verstummen* symphony in twelve movements (1986), *Sieben letzte Worte* for cello, bayan and string orchestra (1982) and *Pro et Contra* for orchestra (1989) and respond in a highly effective and engaging way to the profound psychological and of social criticism of the film (Eustachi, 2016).

In 2018, there were 928 invitees, including five Russians film crews: cameraman (Mikhail Krichman), film director (Dina Velikovskaya) and composer (Sofia Gubaidulina), from the world was invited to join 2018 The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences awards («Film Academy's 2018 Class Its Largest...» 2018). This has demonstrated the exceptional achievement of Gubaidulina in the field of theatrical motion pictures.

While in film one interacts with images, spoken word, text and sound, in *The Lyre of Orpheus* by using film scoring ideas Gubaidulina communicates through mere music. Film music has several functions.

Film music does often fulfill the basic roles of conveying emotion and suggesting connections or themes in the film, film music also works in more complex roles to affect the meaning in film. Through music's development in conjunction with the other channels of information helps to create the of specific leitmotifs, themes, and cues, the calculated use of film music in narrative and control the way that the audience interprets a film (Green, 2010: 82).

Like music, «film music can expose the inner feeling of the characters and create meaning in film» (Green, 2010: 81). Similarly, Neil Brand, a broadcaster and composer, who has been a silent film accompanist for over thirty years (Neil Brand), wrote that music is not to be seen as a subordinate role in film, rather it «tells us about characters, about major turning-points in the story, about the deep subtext beneath a scene» (Brand, 2021). In an interview Rolan Bykov also asserts that «music is used to create “unspoken” thoughts of a character or unseen implications of a situation» (cited in Timm, 2003: 5). Sebastian Stoppe, a media scholar, writes that «poorly written film music has also the ability to destroy a film. In this way, the role of the film composer is of major importance» (Stoppe, 2014: 14). Indeed, in a film scene, film music often fulfills more than just one role, and it helps to determine the meaning of what is happening on the film screen, and such ideas are also experimented in Gubaidulina's *The Lyre of Orpheus*.

Although dialogues in opera and most films are centrally involved in the communication of the narrative, in *The Lyre of Orpheus* there are no musical «dialogues» occurred as found in the opera and film. Neither nor there is action displayed. The piece is reintroduced in a new perspective, and Gubaidulina's music can give directions to understand what is happening in her abstract «story» and the feeling of Orpheus, which makes the composition unique. In an interview dated in 2012, Gubaidulina asserts that «theatrical techniques, the introduction of color into a piece of music, all kinds of initiatives —I call this period an archaic future. It is a very interesting period: a decline that nurses a new wave» (Desiatyryk, 2012).

The story of Orpheus and Eurydice is often being loosely presented in ancient Greek and Roman literature, pottery, or in other art forms. The Greek version of the mythical pattern of the Orpheus and Eurydice story are listed as Terence Dawson stated in *The Orpheus Complex* (Dawson, 2000: 246):

- a) The «death» (literal or metaphorical) of Eurydice and her descent into an «underworld»
- b) The grief of Orpheus
- c) The descent of Orpheus into the «underworld»
- d) An endeavor by Orpheus to return to life with Eurydice.

In *The Lyre of Orpheus* Gubaidulina makes use of music and sound colors as her primary storytelling support. Whilst she allows her listeners to have freedom of interpretation, in overall view of the composition she chose to stress on the grief of Orpheus and give an abstract description of Orpheus' journey. The musical events presented reveal Gubaidulina's rendition of and reflections on Orpheus' thoughts of his love for Eurydice. Not only does Gubaidulina's masterfully portray Orpheus' mental stages and dramatic situations, but she also creates intensity in the music and employs sound colors to express or represent her ideas that is not stated in words. Indeed, what Gubaidulina planned in *The Lyre of Orpheus* is based not on visually showing as seen in a dramatic work but allowing the listener to hear correspondence between the different abstract events that emerge in the composition. This has assisted in forming «visual images» in the listeners' mind and offers a space for freedom of interpretation, which is a way of Gubaidulina's communication in her music. A sense of time is created through the «story's» development. There are variety of ways in which Gubaidulina uses music to shape and convey her instrumental «storytelling» that are closer to Orpheus' mythology, and to generate a unique atmosphere in contemporary composition. She works as a storyteller to her own music design, creating new possibilities in musical approaches through her own interpretation.

In the mythology, Orpheus, a demigod, is a poet, musician and singer who has compelling voice (Segal, 1989: 1). It is believed that he was able to make music that no one could resist. He expresses himself through his lyre and singing, and this can be heard in Gubaidulina's music description in *The Lyre of Orpheus*. «Orpheus is constantly strumming his lyre. He plays happy music when he is in love and somber music when Eurydice dies» (Meinert, Keiner and Bak, 2019: 4). It is often claimed that «Orpheus had no rival there or anywhere except the gods alone. There was no limit to his power when he played and sang» (Hamilton, 1942: 139). His music has been characterized as «being both emotive and

intellectual —able to arouse on the one hand and instruct on the other...» (Santos, 1996: 8). «In Roman times his [Orpheus] song would grow more specifically linked to the experience of human love and loss» (Santos, 1996: 8).

According to some legends, «Apollo, who was the god of the sun, arts and prophecy, gave Orpheus his first lyre» (Augustyn, «Orpheus»). It is also claimed that the two great lyre-players of classical myth are the god Apollo and Orpheus («Lyre»). Orpheus sang «so sweetly the fiercest warriors lay down their swords» (Santos, 1996: 6), and his songs «attracts around the voice all living beings, both animals and inanimate, whether they be on the earth, in the sky, or in the sea. It is a voice un-known to the closely packed circle of listeners, but one around which trees, stones, birds, and fish all gather, full of joy» (Detienne, 2003, 134). In *The Lyre of Orpheus*, Gubaidulina depends on what is being conveyed at the time in the past within the context of the mythology story, demonstrating her personal level of experience in interpreting the compelling voice and emotion of Orpheus.

It is often received that Orpheus is associated with writing, music, and lyrical poetry and much of which are connected to the myth of himself and his wife (Detienne, 1989: 133-134). «Little is told about his life before his ill-fated marriage, for which he is even better known than for his music» (Hamilton, 1942: 139). Indeed, Orpheus is emphasized with his faithful love for Eurydice and is presented as a man who lost his wife and is left behind. Through his music Orpheus laments over his wife, who was bitten by a snake and died, and was led to the underworld on her wedding with Orpheus. What presented in *The Lyre of Orpheus* expresses Orpheus' sorrow through his song and powerful lyre. In the composition, Gubaidulina makes use of certain musical elements or alterations to better convey her mes-sages. Similarly, through the use of her own musical language, Gubaidulina is able to place her feeling in the story.

There are several versions of Orpheus's recusing his wife. In the mythology Orpheus faces the tragic «second death» of Eurydice occurred at the moment when Orpheus looks back at Eurydice on their way out of the underworld. The fault of Orpheus by violating the commend of Gods, Eurydice is doomed to the underworld forever. Nevertheless, there is another version claiming that Orpheus has successfully rescued Eurydice. It stated: «as early as the middle of the fifth century B.C., told of Orpheus' success in bringing

Eurydice back from the dead» (Segal, 1989: 8). In Gubaidulina's *The Lyre of Orpheus*, whether the music physically addresses Eurydice in the composition is not known. Nevertheless, one can assure that Eurydice exists in Orpheus' mind by his expressing of sadness. Perhaps an apparent sense of Eurydice's existence is implied at the end of «story» where the gradual thinner in texture expressing her doomed to the underworld forever and the final emotional moment of Orpheus.

Throughout the composition a variety of techniques are used to produce sounds and images that suit the musical context. How Gubaidulina creates her own version and ways of presenting sound of Orpheus' lyre? How does she portray moods of instability? In addition, other than mythology story, the music also draws on past musical idioms, rebuilding the past in a modern sound context, presenting the multiple music perspectives of Gubaidulina. The composition illustrates different approaches and challenges in her musical ideas.

Throughout the music, feelings of hope and despair are emphasized through various musical gestures. Nevertheless, certain relative musical traits are used to portray the situation in the «story». For instance, her use of rests and silence is meaningful. There are sound colors used for her purposes to mirror and symbolize certain events, creating special effects that Gubaidulina intends to capture. The study will also explore how she creates cohesiveness in the music? Moreover, percussion receives attention in her compositional writing. The role of percussion instruments, in particular drum, and their inter-relationship to Orpheus in the composition should not be neglected. Despite the fact that composition shows a greater freedom in sound colors and musical handling, some musical approaches can be associated with oppositional form, demonstrating the relationship between the opposite tendencies.

Binary concept is never absent in Gubaidulina's music to bring and evoke possibilities of meaning of her presentations. The fact that the employment of binary oppositional concept is also found in film. Levi Strauss claims that «binary opposites» which entails that the majority of narratives in media forms such as books and films contain opposing main characters. These binary opposites help to thicken the plot and further the narrative; and introduce and contrast» («What is Levi Strauss' Theory of Binary Opposites?» 2013). The concept in film commonly can draw on «black vs. white, security vs. fear, feminine vs. masculine, relaxed vs. tensed, string vs. weak, humanity vs.

technology, hero vs. villain» (Wilson, 2021). Gubaidulina's binary oppositional concept can draw on a dramatic conflict in her «story» in *The Lyre of Orpheus*. Other than one finds various oppositional ideas took place to shape the moods and atmosphere surrounded and the state of mind of Orpheus, but the composition is also center on the theme that approaches from the idea of love and death, hope and despair.

The Lyre of Orpheus

The Lyre of Orpheus is a one movement work which may be divided into three main sections: an opening introduction to the «story» that creates the mood and atmosphere, a second section that emphasizes a solo violin playing the main and secondary themes, and a third section that ends the composition. It must be added that the opening introductory may also be seen as an «overture», in which like an opera overture, the music introduces the following story. The use of overture can be found in film as well. «In the past, movies have had overtures indeed, with music playing to a black screen—just think of *2001: A Space Odyssey*, where [Stanley] Kubrick made use of such a device» (Stoppe, 2014: 13).

In *The Lyre of Orpheus*, the introduction and third section have less association with the themes from the second section, which is different from the traditional compositional design where main theme tends to connect the entire movement of composition. There are several distinct musical characteristics and turning points to indicate between the sections. Despite the seemingly «sectional» design there are some ideas that bound together to create a sense of progression in the three sections. This approach reveals how Gubaidulina effectively structures her abstract «story» in *The Lyre of Orpheus*, giving directions to the “story” and finally leads to the despair of Orpheus in the third section. It is one of her compositional strategies to achieve a goal of communicating a message.

The structural design of the composition, in which contains an introduction, two «acts»/«sections» to create a «story» line, may also be alternatively seen as film and operatic work designs. In her book *Muzyka i film* Lissa Z. writes that «music possesses natural continuity and formal cohesion, whereas visual component of film consists of constantly shifting images and

what keeps them together (in narrative cinema) is a story line» (cited in Walus, 2012: 70). Gubaidulina's *The Lyre of Orpheus* gives moment-by-moment, one after another music flow of information. It provides cohesive in the composition, depicting various abstract «scenes», «plot» or events, in particular sections two and three, which also bring the listener closer to the mythology story.

In Gubaidulina's abstract «story», the second section illustrates the major development in musical ideas and material she desires to express and captures. For instance, glimmer of hope occurs in this second section, especially the constant use of harmonic sounds. This may relate to one usually finds the use of word-painting in music, for example, higher notes are alluding to height, high place or hope describing in the text, and lower notes to contrary meanings. One comes to encounter Gubaidulina makes extensive use of harmonics in many of her compositions such as *Offertorium*, *Dialogue: I and You* and others to represent heavenly world. However, in *The Lyre of Orpheus*, the harmonic high pitches in the composition may suggest hope and also be interpreted as the realm of heaven giving a positive and optimistic sense. Gubaidulina enhances the idea by using percussion instruments such as crotali (also known as antique cymbal), which often claimed to have bright pleasing sound quality, campanelli, which has bright and penetrating sound color, and campane (chimes) to accompany the ascending harmonic sounds. Perhaps this might reflect the mythological story, in which intending to regain his wife back Orpheus travels to the underworld, charming Pluto and Proserpine with the harmony of his music. In the journey to the underworld, what Orpheus carries is the optimistic feeling of hope. Nevertheless, in the mythology Orpheus' feeling evanesces quickly when his act of a backward glance. Gubaidulina creatively captures this aspect through her use of gradually thinner the texture to convey the message, illustrating the complex changes in feeling of Orpheus towards the conclusion of the composition.

Gubaidulina sets *The Lyre of Orpheus* in a way that music can be the representation of sound as meanings and emotions to shape the «story». This aspect of discussions on music can be read in various articles. For instance, in «Music as Representation» Philip Bohlman discusses the notion of music as representation through signs (Bohlman, 2005: 213). The «signs» in here are music notation and sound colors. Bohlman addresses that this idea of music being representative in a given narrative —both by the extra-musical aspects and

through the sound itself (Bohlman, 2005: 215-216). Indeed, Gubaidulina experiments with music ideas that give meanings in her compositions, including film scores. For instance, in her film scores ascending motions and high pitches indicating mountain climbing in «Vertikal», and high pitches to depict the extensive burning of fire and the flying bats in «The Cat who Walked by Himself». In the films Gubaidulina uses musical gestures to accompany images and to enhance the meaning of her messages.

In *The Lyre of Orpheus* musical gestures also play a role in bringing meaning that would fit into Gubaidulina's «story». The use of ascents and descents motions interact in Gubaidulina's «story» delivers double-meaning messages. This aspect of idea is employed in writing for film score. Neil Brand asserts that «I believe that, just as with movies today, the audience needs to hear more in the music than they are seeing onscreen. If music merely describes the image we're watching then it's wallpaper, no matter how successful it may be as music. But when music fills out the context beyond the images, when it has an attitude and an authorial presence —then the images spring to life» (Brand, 2021). Brand further explains that «when allied with storytelling, music is primarily one thing —information» (Brand, 2021). Music often serves to connect several themes of film into a whole that creates meaning, relating to the other elements that are concerned in the story. «In its most basic functions, film music works with the image to help the audience feel the emotions of the characters and to understand the larger themes at work in the film» (Green, 2010: 84).

The double-meaning approach in *The Lyre of Orpheus* can be found in the music when the fast-running notes of harmonic sounds in groups are continuously presented in one after another, giving a sense of moving upward motion which sets an abstract pictorial interpretation of Orpheus' strumming his lyre. Similarly, the upward moving gesture may project hope, in which signifying the situation of losing Eurydice may yet to be changed. However, Gubaidulina also constructs in her composition that hope is short lived towards the conclusion of the composition and the use of descending gesture, which drawing on what is happening in Orpheus mythology, and this has created one of the ways binary oppositional idea is presenting her «story».

Gubaidulina's abundant use of descending motions in certain events may be interpreted as Orpheus' descend into the Underworld rescuing her

beloved wife. On the other hand, giving the fact that Orpheus' grief never lessens till his death, an alternate interpretation of the use of descending musical gesture may be described and interpreted as the emotion of grief and despair. An obvious example is the slow, lyrical main theme played by solo violin in *The Lyre of Orpheus*, which is presented in descending motion. Moreover, to create more dramatic effect in the «story», chromatic pitches in descending motions is stressed and occurred in various different events to create ambiguity in mood in the music. This allows Gubaidulina to develop different «plots» in her «story».

Throughout the entire composition repeating musical gesture, sound colors and rhythmic pattern in groups are saturated enhancing both lyrical solo violin and other instrumental parts, setting not only the feelings of Orpheus and overall mood of the piece, but also highlighting specific meaning Gubaidulina intended to capture. For instance, not only does she stress the use of repeating tremolo sound color to portray uncertainty of the atmosphere, but also to create uneasiness of mood and tension, particularly at the conclusion. The tremolo sound color is also employed in film music. In the early film music repeating tremolo sound color is often used to achieve certain effect. One aspect is that many early film composers use string tremolo «as a means for creating suspense in the horror film genre» (Timm, 2009: 100).

Uncertainty in mood is also heard in the cadenza passage of *The Lyre of Orpheus* where it ends with an unresolved trill playing, giving an idea indicating something unexpected is to follow up. What has presented recalling the idea that can be naturally applied to the operatic and filmic experience with hearing and interpreting, except that here in the composition there is no visual experience.

Although what Gubaidulina may have intended is not stated in words, her ideas and intentions may project through her choice of sound colors, pitches and techniques that are used in *The Lyre of Orpheus*. For instance, dissonance sounds that set the mood coincide with Orpheus' grief and hopelessness, drawing on the fact that Orpheus is not that fortunate in his final task to bringing Eurydice back to Earth. Other than the extensive use of chromatic pitches throughout the composition, the stress of augmented 4th and diminished 5th symbolize pain and sorrow of Orpheus, and perhaps even the feeling of uneasiness and tension. Like in film music, in which film composers often use dissonance sounds and terrifying noise to indicate something is about to happen on the screen. Moreover, there are music and sound characteristics such as

«dissonance and unnaturalness, chaos, or disorder; the dynamics of loudness, speed, and pitch; uncertainty, expectations (silence during tense moments), whispered voices, context disconnect; and the startle reflex» used in film music intending to evoke psychology response and tension (cited in Fu, 2016: 38).

In *The Lyre of Orpheus* the solo violin main melodic line has become a common, continuous recurring theme in the second section. At times, it occurred with modification in each of its appearance. The employment of recurrence solo violin main theme signals the character Orpheus. Similarly, film music is also able to translate a film's character into sounds. Although the use of recurring theme throughout the composition is commonly found in traditional art music, the idea of the technique is also introduced as leitmotif in film. «Leitmotifs create meaning, then, is by constructing identifications that are easily recognized within the film» (Green, 2010: 87). The concept of the leitmotif appeared at the end of the 19th century operatic works. It appears to be a concept derived from Wagner's use of themes in his operas. «Leitmotifs [in film] can be identified as a simple melody, usually only a few measures in length» (Green, 2010: 87). It also claims that «a leitmotif can be altered when it recurs during a film. The alteration can be a change of instrumentation, tempo, or harmony. Through these transformations, the changing mood or state of a character can be depicted» (Hickman, 2005: 43). Justin London, in his article «Leitmotifs and Musical Reference in the Classical Film Score», writes that «in filmic contexts the introduction of musical leitmotifs is highly conventionalized. Usually, this introduction involves the simultaneous presentation of the character and his or her leitmotif, especially when we are given a striking presentation of both early on in the film» (London, 2000: 87).

The constant reappearances of the solo violin in the second section of the composition also reflects Orpheus' voice, allowing the audience to hear his thoughts as he talks or sings to himself concerning his current situation. What is interesting here is that the slow, lyrical descending motion solo violin melody is breaking up by rests to imitate a «singing/talking» manner, in which to create a way of interruption in «speech» flow. This is as if it is sang by Orpheus portraying his inner feeling of loneliness and sorrow in a quiet surrounding facing the absence of Eurydice. Gubaidulina sets the second section giving an explanation to the audience explaining Orpheus's peculiar life situation.

In addition, Gubaidulina enables the accompaniment instrumental parts and other secondary solo instrumental parts to play a significant role in the composition to reinforce her purposes and ideas. The slow, lyrical singing solo violin melody is sometimes responded by either a solo cello, or a solo contrabass. In many moments where there are changes of emotional states occurred at once between solo violin and other instruments. One also encounters a positive emotional state illustrated in the secondary theme, in which begins in ascending motion in long-note value that providing hope, is presented contradicting to the main violin theme in emotion. The conflicting emotions also create an unsettling mood of Orpheus. Listeners connect to the events and «story» through sensations portrayed by the music. Musical contrast, or a binary oppositional idea is usually established between their responses, putting them into a complementary pair.

Despite the fact that there is no solo violin melodic theme presented in the opening introductory section of *The Lyre of Orpheus*, the imitation of lyre's playing is heard as if Orpheus is present. Lyre is usually seen as a plucked instrument; the player holds with the left hand, while plucking with the right. It is claimed that the instrument sometimes playing in praises God (Hillberg, 2015: 42). Lyre is one of the oldest musical instruments. It is claimed that the lyre «appears for the first time in Megiddo, Israel in c. 3100 BCE» (West, 1992: 49). Although the instrument continued to be used, it was gradually replaced by harp in the early centuries (Hillberg, 2015: 46). Without using a lyre, Gubaidulina's personal interpretation of the sound of Orpheus' lyre is unique and interesting in *The Lyre of Orpheus*. It can be associated with a modernist musical idiom, pointillistic technique that is employed by Anton Webern. For instance, the opening musical idea begins with pointillistic sound texture in different octave ranges and big interval leaps in violin 1. Gubaidulina acknowledges the influence of Webern and embraces pointillistic technique which can be heard in many of her compositions and film scores.

In addition, there are various ways of imitating lyre playing sound that enhance Gubaidulina's idea presented in the composition, for instance the use of staccato, staccatissimo and pizzicato playing, and they are often heard as repeating pitches in instrumental parts. An example can be heard beginning at rehearsal 5. There are also moments where glissandi passages are used in presenting Orpheus sweeps across the strings of lyre. Not surprisingly, Gubai-

dulina not only intends to imitate the sound of an old instrument lyre in the present time in association with her character but also setting the «plot» of her «story».

The percussion instruments can be seen appearing in many of the Greek vase paintings in 5th century BCE and other early centuries. In Gubaidulina's Film score for *The Cat That Walked by Itself* percussion sounds are stressed when the scenes addressing the primitive time. In describing her «story» in association with Greek mythology in *The Lyre of Orpheus*, Gubaidulina designs the composition to begin with triangle and sonagli. She has been interested in exploring percussion instruments since her early compositional years. «I give a lot of importance to percussion instruments. They contain the essence of existence («Composer Sofia Gubaidulina's Life and Career», 2022).

Percussion instruments are stressed in the second section of *The Lyre of Orpheus*, showing their different significant roles in sound, in which to intensify emotion and enhance certain events. Other than the pleasing crotali and other percussion sound quality that accompany the ascending harmonic sounds, in the other moment Gubaidulina stresses the rolls of tamburo drum sounds in various rhythmic patterns rather than sustained notes, bringing the music towards the end of the second section (rehearsal number 87). The loud *fortissimo* rolls also catch the attention of the listener and prepare the up-coming final moment of the «story» in the third section. Such structural design is found in both concert hall music and film music. Many composers composed concert hall music and still compose for film, and vice versa. It is not surprising that their compositional ideas and strategies may have been influenced and inspired by concert music and film music writing. Being a creative composer, Gubaidulina knows its psychological expectation of her listener.

Another dramatic event that stresses on repeating drumming, which enhanced by double bass sounds, are heard beginning at rehearsal number 89 (Example 1). This event may indicate the heart pounding of Orpheus. It is a moment where consistent pulsing rhythmic beat written in quarter-note value played by a solo timpani and low pitch double bass, creating dramatic sound effect expressing heart beating and uneasiness.

89 **meno mosso** ♩ = 52
Timp. solo
Perc. ad lib. *p*
VI. solo
VI. I. 1. *pp espr.*
VI. I. 2. *pp espr.*
Cb. 1. *pizz., vibr. p*
Cb. 2. *pizz., vibr. p*
90
con sord. vibr. *pp espr.*
solo con sord. vibr. *pp espr.*

Example 1

Being a film score, composer Gubaidulina knows the music ways to influence audiences' attitude in their hearing. Furthermore, the heart beating timpani and double bass sounds are scored in soft dynamic and in less rapid speed, foreshowing something is happening in the following event. What is intended in Gubaidulina's music presentation also evokes curiosity and physiological response. Such idea is also found in music and sound of film, especially in thrillers and horror movies, in which composers employ the effects of music to grab the audiences' attention by creating tension.

Throughout *The Lyre of Orpheus*, there are several intensified and dramatic moments occurred. They are used in the music to enrich the «story» that tell from Gubaidulina's viewpoint. For instance, a unique sound quality, which is also a hallmark of Gubaidulina's musical language, is presented in forceful, jarring, fortississimo (*fff*) sliding upward-rocketing gestures to high harmonic pitches in string parts in the third section. This event creates intense emotions of Orpheus and foreshadows what is going to happen toward the end of the composition, intending to draw the attention of listener. Similarly, different approaches to the idea can be found in thrillers and horror film music, in which «the dynamics of loudness, speed, and pitch musical scores also create tension. When the volume fluctuates, the uncomfortable noise makes the audience nervous about what will or has happened on the screen» (Fu, 2016: 39).

Another striking moment occurred towards the very end of the third section where percussion instruments such as triangle, bar chimes, campanelli are emphasized, along with tremolo playing with no obvious rhythmic patterns in solo violin 1, giving the music in thin texture. This is how Gubaidulina closes her «story» in *The Lyre of Orpheus*; the music is shaped indicating the arrival of an end of Orpheus' rescuing Eurydice, and his loss is forever. The absence of the themes here also delivers a message that Orpheus no longer sings to beg for the return of his Eurydice. The static texture is established, leading to end the last moment of the piece in peace with dynamic gradually decrescendo to soft and fading away into silence, which may be equivalent to «emptiness», a condition state of disrepair. Not surprisingly, Gubaidulina is aware that a sense of tension, hopelessness, and fear created must be released and resolved at the end.

In many of Gubaidulina's output, concert music compositional techniques can be found in her film scores and likewise. Although silence occurs regularly in music, at times it is used to catch the attention of the audience. In film scoring, different kinds of silence have come into existence; the use of silence is essential and at times has meaning. Silence can also create a sudden, unexpected outcome and impact in a film scene. It is claimed that «without silence, the film composer loses his or her most effective weapon» (Timm, 2009: 11). William Alwyn, who composed over seventy film scores, described the importance of silence: «Sound can only make its effect by contrast with silen-ce...» (cited in Johnson, 2005: 4). Silence created by pauses and short breaks are employed in *The Lyre of Orpheus* for Gubaidulina's compositional purposes and «filmic» hearing experience. Pauses are often used to indicate the beginning of a new event and to break the melodic flow in the music. Rests are also used to create gaps within groups of pitches, forming various rhythmic patterns and significant texture. By using rests Gubaidulina is able to generate a sense of rhythm to describe the happening and to give characteristics to an event of her «story». For instance, separating up speedy groups of rising harmonic sounds gestures with rests in the second section gives the event an energetic moment and a unique characteristic, providing metaphorical message and meaning of hope that is crucial to the «story». In every detail designed in

the composition one hears how the music «story» constructed by Gubaidulina.

Gubaidulina also utilizes film scoring ideas to narrate or tell the events in *The Lyre of Orpheus*. She uses a long pause not only to end the introduction section, but also as a preparation for the entering of the middle/second section in which the first appearance of solo violin that symbolizes Orpheus. The silence pause makes a coming up event perceive to be important like in film scoring. It is claimed that «silence makes scene feel important and if the viewer deems a scene important then they are more likely to pay keen attention to it» (Harriott, 2012). The long use of pause here reminiscent as a formal opening of the first act in opera.

Despite some characteristics in the composition can be derived from film score idea, Gubaidulina writes *The Lyre of Orpheus* for concert hall, not for a film, nor for an opera. In bringing one back to the concert hall music presentation, Gubaidulina recalls music traditions of the past, that is, an expressive cadenza passage is employed later in *The Lyre of Orpheus*, restating idea from the secondary theme with some modification. The insertion of a cadenza passage after a *fortississimo* climactic moment occurred at rehearsal 88 (Example 2) demonstrates several functions. Not only does it foreshadow a significant change in the following up events in the «story» and an end of the second section, but it also corresponded to the design of a past traditional concerto in which a virtuoso passage is inserted near the end of a concerto movement or aria (Cadenza).

88

353

Perc.

II

Perc. ad lib.

III

VI. solo

VI. I

VI. II

Vle

1., 2.

Ve.

3., 4.

Cb.

muta in Trgl.

muta in XII.

muta in Cmp.

Cadenza

357

♩ = 72

♩ = 96

VI. solo

p espr.

mf

p

Example 2

Other than recalling sound of an old instrument, lyre, there are musical idioms used to serve the message that delivers the past traditions. For instance, Gubadiulina draws inspiration from a medieval compositional technique to create contemporary sound. She experiments hocket-like effects throughout in *The Lyre of Orpheus*. An example can be heard beginning at measure 233, where

the hocket effect is presented between two string groups: the violins and viola playing tremolo in chromatic ascending motion, whereas the celli and contrabass playing normal pitches in chromatic descending motion, creating contrary motions and giving a new presentation of hocket playing and sound color. Hocket is a compositional technique «found in medieval musical composition in which two or three voice parts are given notes or short phrases in rapid alternation, producing an erratic, hiccuping effect» (Hocket). Other than the film score ideas, Gubaidulina incorporates hocket technique in the composition, intending to fuse both past and present music traditions and forming her own music presentation of the «story» of Orpheus.

CONCLUSION

The Lyre of Orpheus is a work that re-tells the story of Orpheus just using the music and without a screen or theatrical stage. In it, Gubaidulina has generated a new narrative musical approach in her Orpheus' mythology and gives the composition its own distinctive storyline. Some important musical characteristics used are related to storytelling methodologies. Like in film music in which contains layers of information, in Gubaidulina's music there are often double-meanings convey through her musical ideas, giving persuasive effect in the composition. The music of *The Lyre of Orpheus* is not act as filling the background to the role and image as in film music but is bringing forward to one as a main role to tell a story.

In *The Lyre of Orpheus* Gubaidulina has her own different ways of operating and constructing musical approach in the «story». She delivers a message that there are limitless possibilities to tell a story and evoke specific feelings. Several ideas are employed to represent the existence of Orpheus. Her «story» shows a time frame structure which sets a timeline from the beginning to the end in the music, which not only enables the «story» to stay coherent, but also allows listeners to have better understanding and interpret the events and time unfold in the «story».

Gubaidulina's thoughts and ideas are also expressed in a variety of ways, presenting an interesting combination of old and new musical traditions, retelling an abstract image of the mythology story. Musical contours and gestures are used to depict certain ideas. Mixture of emotions and conflicts in emotions

are conveyed throughout. The violin sings out, expressing deep sadness and pain of Orpheus and Gubaidulina's own feelings and memory of her daughter.

The spirit of the «story» also operates on an invisible, personal level of experience—Gubaidulina's loss of her daughter. Throughout the composition ascending and descending motions are stresses, telling the meaning and giving symbol of hope, despair, lament and fear. Contradicting feeling is also heard. Gubaidulina provides her own styles of an overall moods and feelings to the piece, creating her responses to the mythology of Orpheus. *The Lyre of Orpheus* delivers messages that are full of expressiveness, and meandering.

In the composition the musical flow and coherence is not created merely through the solo violin themes occurred in the second section, instead it is united by the overall mood set up in the music. Gubaidulina's communication with her listeners relies not on what is seen, but on what is heard, and what is understood based on the Orpheus' mythology. Not only does Gubaidulina create interesting, thoughtful, challenging musical presentation and design, but also has given meaning in her composition, giving a different hearing experience and imagination of contemporary interpreting the «story» of Orpheus.

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