

Editor's Preface

The 14th issue of *Res Musica* is dedicated to Arvo Pärt. The seven articles appearing in this volume owe their existence to the personal archive and information centre founded in 2010 by the composer's family in Laulasmaa, Estonia. The centre's true potential was revealed when the uniquely designed building opened in October 2018. The Arvo Pärt Centre was conceived as a meeting place for researchers and all music lovers interested in the composer's creative legacy and the ideas that shaped it – a world that extends far beyond the boundaries of music. The tranquillity of the surrounding pine forest provides the ideal environment for encounters with music and offers a space for creativity, exploration and discussion.

At the heart of the Centre lies the composer's rich personal archive, which holds research material for a range of disciplines. The Centre itself provides a space for interdisciplinary encounters between researchers. The first of these meetings was due to take place in Laulasmaa on the occasion of the composer's 85th birthday in October 2020, but had to be postponed by a year because of the COVID pandemic. The conference "Arvo Pärt – Texts and Contexts" took place on 15–16 October 2021. Eleven presentations by scholars from the United States, Austria, Germany, Australia and Estonia were streamed to hundreds of listeners around the world. The seven articles included in this publication are revised versions of papers presented at the conference. Much of the research work would not have been possible without the archival materials of the Arvo Pärt Centre.

On a smaller scale, the Laulasmaa conference followed the direction initiated by the conference "Sounding the Sacred", organized by the Arvo Pärt Project at St Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary in New York on 1–4 May 2017: both events were conceived with the aim of discussing music with scholars of different disciplines for whom Arvo Pärt's work is a meeting place for ideas and perspectives. The Laulasmaa conference focused in particular on the historical and cognitive parallels in Pärt's music, on its

theological foundations and on its relationship with the underlying texts.

Lately, the interest of many musicologists has been centred around Pärt's work from the 1970s and its links with the music scene of the time. In his article, **Peter J. Schmelz** creates an intriguing picture of the borderland between the 'official' and the 'unofficial' in Soviet music, drawing on the work of like-minded contemporaries Valentyn Sylvestrov, Arvo Pärt and Alfred Schnittke. The author has studied unique sources, such as the Soviet literary and musical youth magazine *Krugozor* (1964–1992). **Kevin C. Karnes** uses archival material to trace in detail the development of Pärt's algorithmic and text-based syllabic method of composition in the period 1976–1977. He draws an interesting parallel with the work of the Russian Orthodox painter Eduard Steinberg (1937–2012). **Toomas Siitan** looks at *Wenn Bach Bienen gezüchtet hätte ... (If Bach Had Been a Beekeeper ...)* as a bridge between Pärt's avant-garde works of the 1960s and the *tintinnabuli* style, thus challenging the common narrative of Pärt's creative path. The fact that in 1976 the composer turned once more to the music of Bach is also significant in this context.

Four of the articles explore different ways of articulating the spiritual core of Arvo Pärt's oeuvre, exploring its religious sources and analysing its texts. **Leopold Brauneiss** – probably the most experienced analyst of Pärt's works – describes with unique insight the composer's systematic method of composition and, using the composer's sketches, reveals the musical choices made on the basis of the texts of several large-scale works (*Te Deum, Passio*). From different perspectives, two authors examine the much-discussed phenomenon of silence in Pärt's music. **Peter C. Bouteneff** analyses instrumental works with "silent texts" and relates their spirituality to Russian Orthodox contemplative practice. **Andreas Waczkat** discusses the paradox of the "sound of silence" from the perspective of both the history of religion and perceptual analysis. Finally, **Tauri Tölpt** explores the meaning of the

Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed, a central text of Christian doctrine, in Arvo Pärt's spirituality and in four of his works. His paper is based on conversations with the composer and on the study of his musical diaries.

The editorial team of *Res Musica* would like to express its sincere thanks to the Arvo Pärt Centre for organizing the conference and for

co-publishing this yearbook. Special thanks to Kristina Kõrver, editor and curator at the Centre, whose expert help and attentive eye were invaluable in editing the present collection of papers.

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