

Katarina Koprek



MUSICA NOVA & VETERA

SEVEN WORDS OF MARY
IN THE MUSICAL VISION
OF BLAŽENKO JURAČIĆ

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CATHOLIC FACULTY OF THEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB

KATARINA KOPREK

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INTRODUCTION

THE FOUNDATION FROM WHICH ALL ART, including music, springs remains rooted in the depths of human spirituality. It can be affirmed that music, in its essence, is profoundly religious and spiritual form from its inception. Throughout history, music has served as a privileged medium for expressing spirituality, recognized for its inherent power to connect the soul with the divine, with God.¹

For the contemporary church composer Blaženko Juračić, the Word of God, that became flesh through Mary, serves as the wellspring of creativity and inspiration.²

BLAŽENKO JURAČIĆ, composer and professor at the Art Academy of the University of Split, was born in Mostar in 1972. He completed his elementary education in Opuzen and high school in Dubrovnik. Graduating from the Art Academy at the University of Split, he continued his studies at the Pontifical Institute for Church Music in Rome, obtaining licentiate

-
- 1 It is therefore not surprising that music is assigned an important place in religious ceremonies and worship. The type of liturgical music that was created in the Church for the needs of worship in the Roman liturgy is called the Gregorian chant. In the Roman Church, the Gregorian chant holds an important place and function, especially in liturgy. Although this is often forgotten in today's liturgical-musical practice, the sixtieth anniversary of the Constitution of the Second Vatican Council on liturgy "Sacrosanctum concilium" (SC) from 1963 provides an opportunity to rethink the value of this type of music in liturgical celebrations.
 - 2 "Inspiration, in Latin 'inspiratio', means 'in-breathing', an excitement or breath of stimulus or enlightenment that leads a person to speak, act, or write under the influence of a certain creative force." Ivica ŽIŽIĆ, *Ljestve Jakovljeve. Suvremena glazba i religiozna imaginacija*, Služba Božja, Split, 2021, p. 42.

and master's degrees in composition. Juračić's extensive body of work encompasses spiritual and secular compositions, with a focus on choral and chamber music. He has produced a rich artistic oeuvre of 195 original compositions for mixed, men's, women's, and children's choirs, such as psalms, masses, motets, solo songs, instrumental and vocal-instrumental orchestral works, acapella songs, as well as (134) arrangements and transcriptions of Dalmatian, church, and other songs for the *klapa*, a mixed men's acapella choir. His compositions were performed at liturgical celebrations, in concerts, and at various choral music festivals, earning him numerous awards and prizes, including gold and silver plaques, at competitions and festivals such as the Omiš Dalmatian Klapa Festival, Evenings of Dalmatian Letters Kaštela; Klape for Our Lady of Sinj, and the Festival of Spiritual compositions Cro Patria. Notably, Juračić is one of the most awarded composers at the Cro Patria choral music festival and has received the Croatian Parliament of Culture award for the most successful composition for brass band. In 2015, his first collection of compositions titled *O Crux, ave, spes unica* was published by the publishing house Verbum, followed by its release as part of the *Meštrović's Passion* collection. In 2022, with the support of the Croatian Ministry of Culture and UMAS Split, he published his second collection of Latin acapella compositions, *Jubilate Deo, omnis terra*. Juračić has also collaborated with and led several Split ensembles, contributing song covers and arrangements, as well as original compositions. Currently, he leads the Split Doctors Singers choir and the Split Doctors Choir.

Delving into the contemplation of the Mystery of the Incarnation of Christ through Mary, Blaženko Juračić intricately weaves the symbolism of Mary's pivotal role in the history of salvation into his musical compositions. His entire artistic oeuvre resonates with the gravity of sacred musical themes, joyously performed by a diverse array of vocal and instrumental ensembles.

1. THE COMPOSITION

SEVEN WORDS OF MARY

DRAWING INSPIRATION FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, Juračić wrote music for *Seven Words of Mary* as recorded in the Gospel. Here he uses music to outline Mary’s image in the light of the Gospel, connect her with Christ, and integrate her role into the overarching divine mystery.

The Blessed Virgin Mary occupies a profound role in the life of Jesus: as a mother, a believer, and even a disciple. She is included in the narrowest sense in God’s plan of salvation.³ Over the centuries, Mary’s figure has been vested in the most diverse iconographies of piety, emotions, folklore, popular imagination, desires, and personal projections.

In crafting the composition *Seven Words of Mary*, Juračić exhibited exceptional competence and creativity in his utilization of sound sources. This cyclical masterpiece comprises seven movements, each inspired by the words attributed to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Seven distinct instruments – guitar, flute, clarinet, oboe, piano, saxophone, and human voice – partake in the composition, each assigned specific sonorous roles imbued with determined meanings. Juračić meticulously aligns the technical, aesthetic, and poetic dimensions of music, ensuring that each Word of Mary resonates with distinct sonorous planes. By selecting specific instruments for each of the movements based on their inherent sonorities, Juračić establishes a profound connection between sound and the character that each of

³ Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen gentium* no. 56.

the instruments best evokes,⁴ enabling them to serve as auditory conduits for the full emotional manifestation of the holy presence in Mary's words and the events associated with her. The composer's thoughtful selection of instruments, motivated by these inspiring symbols, reflects a deeply personal confession of faith translated into music, infused with a longing for the Mystery. The vision of the mysterious, for a composer who knows what to express through music and how, has been translated into artistic inspiration and creativity.⁵ Juračić has thus created the composition *Seven Words of Mary* within the framework of his religious thought and sentiments, meticulously translating theological concepts into a musical masterpiece that vividly portrays Mary's faith and her active participation in the divine work of salvation.

1.1 Symbolism In The Composition *Seven Words Of Mary*

Mary, as the central figure in the composition *Seven Words of Mary*, is symbolized by the flute. Revered as the precursor to modern wind instruments,⁶ the flute, often endowed with mystical properties, holds significant place in the folklore and fairy tales of many peoples. The very fact that the composer chose the sound of the flute for his *Seven Words of Mary* and assigned it to Mary herself underscores the prominence of this instrument within the composition. He perceives a spiritual essence in the breath that flows through the body of the instrument, personifying Mary who, through

4 Each instrument possesses its own unique harmonies and sound timbre specific to its nature. Namely, musical instruments differ greatly in the frequencies present in their spectrum, i.e. in timbre. What cannot be physically and mathematically explained in music is the subjective experience that every person has when listening to an instrument or composition.

5 According to Prof. Ivica Žižić, "His music closely connects Logos with Melos, song with worship, voice with mystery, instrument with the feeling of faith." Ivica ŽIŽIĆ, *Blaženko Juračić, O Crux, ave, spes unica: Misterij Muke i zapovijed ljubavi. Skladbe za Veliki tjedan*, Verbum, Split, 2015, p. 5.

6 This is supported by the origin of its name. The word "flute" originates from the Latin adjective *flatus*, which means blowing or wind (instrument). In both Eastern and Western myths, the flute is attributed with divine origin and supernatural powers. It is one of the oldest and most widespread musical instruments in the world, known since prehistoric times and encountered in different forms among almost all peoples of the world. The oldest flutes were made of bone or horn, reed, wood, clay, and other natural materials.

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SEDAM MARIJINIH RIJEČI
U GLAZBENOJ VIZIJI MO. BLAŽENKA JURAČIĆA

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UVOD

PRATEMELJ IZ KOJEGA IZVIRE SVAKA UMJETNOST, a onda i glazba, ostaje čovjekova duhovna dubina. Radi toga smijem ustvrditi, da je glazba u svom početku duboko religiozno, duhovno ukorijenjena. Glazba je, naime, u svim vremenima bila povlašteni način izražavanja duhovnosti. Uvijek se u glazbi prepoznavala neka religiozna snaga, moć povezivanja duše s božanstvom, s Bogom.¹

Izvor inspiracije i nadahnuća suvremenog crkvenog skladatelja Blaženka Juračića je Božja Riječ koja je Tijelom postala po Mariji.²

Skladatelj i profesor na Umjetničkoj Akademiji Sveučilišta u Splitu, Blaženko JURAČIĆ rođen je u Mostaru 1972. godine. U Opuzenu je završio osnovnu školu, a u Dubrovniku srednju školu. Diplomirao je na Umjetničkoj Akademiji Sveučilišta u Splitu te na Papinskom institutu za crkvenu glazbu u Rimu gdje stječe licencijat i magisterij iz kompozicije. Juračić je skladao brojna djela duhovnog i svjetovnog karaktera. U središtu

-
- 1 Nije stoga čudno da je glazbi dato mnogo mjesta u vjerskim ceremonijama i kultu. Vrstu liturgijske glazbe koja je nastala u Crkvi za potrebe bogoslužja u rimskoj liturgiji nazivamo *gregorijanskim koralom*. U Rimskoj Crkvi gregorijanskom koralu pripada važno mjesto i važna funkcija, osobito u liturgiji. Iako se to u današnjoj liturgijsko-glazbenoj praksi često zaboravlja, šezdeseta obljetnica Konstitucije Drugoga vatikanskoga koncila o liturgiji „Sacrosanctum concilium“ (SC), 1963. godine, pruža prigodu za ponovno razmišljanje o vrijednosti te glazbene vrste u liturgijskim slavljinama.
 - 2 „Nadahnuće, na latinskom ‘inspiratio’, znači ‘u-disanje’, uzbuđenje ili udah poticaja ili prosvjetljenja koje dovodi osobu da govori, čini ili piše pod utjecajem određene kreativne snage.“ Usp. Ivica ŽIŽIĆ *Ljestve Jakovljeve* str. 42

njegova stvaralaštva je zbarska i komorna glazba. Ostvario je bogati umjetnički opus od (195) autorskih skladbi koje su ga afirmirale kao zrelog umjetnika. Njegov rad obuhvaća skladbe za mješoviti, muški, ženski i dječji zbor: psalme, mise, motete, solo pjesme, instrumentalna, vokalno-instrumentalna orkestralna djela, klapske pjesme i još (134) obrade i transkripcije dalmatinskih, crkvenih i ostalih pjesama za klapu, muški i mješoviti zbor. Skladbe su mu izvođene na liturgijskim slavljinama i koncertantno na raznim festivalima zbarske glazbe. Za svoj skladateljski rad dobio je brojna priznanja i nagrade na natjecanjima i festivalima (zlatne i srebrne plakete). Nagrade i priznanja kao što su: Festival dalmatinskih klapa Omiš; Večeri dalmatinske pisme Kaštela; Klape Gospi Sinjskoj; Festival duhovnih skladbi *Cro patria*. Jedan je od najnagrađivanijih skladatelja na festivalu zbarske glazbe *Cro patria*. Dobitnik je nagrade Hrvatskog sabora kulture za najuspjeliju skladbu za puhački orkestar. Godine 2015. u nakladnoj kući „Verbum“ izdao je svoju prvu autorsku zbirku skladbi pod nazivom *O Crux, ave, spes unica* kao i nosač zvuka *Meštrovićeva pasija*. Uz potporu Ministarstva kulture RH i UMAS-a Split 2022. godine izdaje se njegova druga zbirka latinskih skladbi a cappella *Jubilate Deo, omnis terra*. Surađivao je i vodio više splitskih ansambala za koje obrađuje, priređuje i piše skladbe. Trenutno vodi zbor Splitski liječnici pjevači i Zbor Splitskih liječnica.

Uranjanjući u kontemplaciju Otajstva Kristova utjelovljenja po Mariji u glazbeni opus mo. Juračića ugrađen je simbolizam Marijine uloge u povijesti spasenja, dok se u njegovoj cjelokupnoj umjetničkoj djelatnosti zrcali ozbiljnost pristupa sakralnoj glazbenoj tematici rado izvođenoj od strane različitih vokalnih i instrumentalnih skupina.

BLAŽENKO JURAČIĆ



SEVEN WORDS OF MARY

28

mp *mf* *mf* *mp* *mf*

Zf.

32

mf *mf* *f*

mf

cresc.

35

mp *mf*

f cantabile

rall. . .

39

mp

mf *f cantabile*

Piu lento ♩ = 72

rall. . .

43

mf

mf *f cantabile*

Piu lento

47

mf

pppp *pppp*

rall. . . poco a poco dim. e rall.

II. Riječ

Flute $\text{♩} = 66$

Soprano

12 $\text{♩} = 55$

24 $\text{♩} = 48$

36

44 $\text{♩} = 55$

56

62

mf *fr* *mp* *vibr.cres.* *mf* *glenti fr.* *p* *f* *pp* *mf* *mp*

f *vibr.* *mp* *p* *pp* *mf*

pp *mp* *mf* *mp* *ppp* *mp*

p *pp* *mf* *pp* *mp*

mf *mp* *ppp* *pppp* *p* *mp* *mf*

mf *f* *f* *f* *mf*

f *mf* *mf* *mp* *p* *pppp*

Ec-ce an-ci-la Do-mi-ni: fi-at mi-

-hi se-cun-dum ver-bum tu-um.

Do-mi-ni: fi-at mi-hi

se-cun-dum ver-bum tu-um.

III. Rječ

Largo $\text{♩} = 44$

Flute *p* *mf* *f* *tr*

Oboe

3 *Larghetto* $\text{♩} = 63$

mf *poco a poco crescendo*

mf

6

mf *mf* *mf*

8

p *mf* *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

11 $\text{♩} = 72$

mf *mf*

14

mf *mf*

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