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SELECTED PIECES OF VERA MILANKOVIĆ AS A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION TO CREATE DALCROZE'S TASKS AND EXCERCISES

Abstract

The main aim of my presentation is to indicate the close relationships between the music and movement based on selected pieces of music composed by Vera Milanković. Both children's songs and instrumental pieces of music could be a perfect choice for creating typical Dalcroze's tasks and excercises used during Eurhythmics lesson with the Primary Music School's pupils and students of the Academy of Music. Different musical parameters such as rhythm, intervals, scales, forms etc. could be understood through these exercises. Dalcroze's method hence presents the powerful force and inspiring source in completing creative musical tasks.

Key words: Dalcroze, Milankovic, children's songs, Eurhythmic, primary music school.

Introduction

At the beginning of the 21st century Emil Jaques-Dalcroze "(…) discover a new system of music education, rapidly turned into a versatile (miscellaneous) method for studying the rhythmic and dynamic possibilities of the human body"[1]. Eurhythmics is a method of teaching music based on the assumption of comprehensive human development in numerous spheres. Already at the end of the 19th century Dalcroze said: "I dream about such system of teaching music in which the human body will be playing a direct role between the sound and the thought, it will simply become an instrument of expressing our sensations."[2]

Dalcroze believed that movement is the basis of a creative system of teaching music. He lived with and through music: "My whole system of education by rhythm is based on music, because music has a strong physic force which, by its

[1] S. Franco, *Working with the body, the body at work, Euhrythmics in art, Teaching and the medical sciences,* In Institut Jaques-Dalcroze *Emil Jaques-Dalcroze: music in movement. Exhibition book*. Geneva, 2005, p. 5.

[2] M. Brzozowska-Kuczkiewicz, *Emil Jaques-Dalcroze i jego Rytmika* (*Emil Jaques-Dalcroze and his Eurhythmics*), WSiP, Warszawa, 1991, p. 13.

power of evoking action and then regulating it, can harmonise our whole being."[3] Dalcroze used body movement to express a music piece and created a method consisting of three links related to each other, such as: eurhythmics with *plastique animée*, solfége and improvisation. Rhythmics, as the basis of a method "is a form of musical education, based in the first place on listening and teaching of movement […].[4] "Rhythmics teaches the concept of rhythm, structure, and musical expression by movement."[5] It is of crucial importance that "the whole method is based on the principle that theory should follow practice, that children should not be taught rules until they have had experience of the facts which have given rise to them"[6]. Therefore, according to the Dalcroze's metod, the learning directions are: I listen to the music→I feel→I do→I name→I keep→I remember.

In December 2015 I received two CD albums from Vera Milankovic: *Dan* (*Day*) and *Nostalgia*. Since then I found the big inspiration for my personal pedagogical work in her music. From the album *Dan* I selected three children's songs to use in teaching Eurhythmics at the Primary music school in Starogard Gdanski. As being in Serbian language, these songs I used only as a pieces of pure music without the meaning of words. From the album *Nostalgia* I also selected three pieces but for choir, two flutes and piano.

The first song *Kupanje* (*In the Bath*)[7] could be used for understanding musical dynamics and its levels such as forte, crescendo, piano and diminuendo. Dalcroze wrote that "Rhythm, like dynamics, depends entirely on movement, and finds its nearest prototype in our muscular system. All the nuances of time – allegro, andante, accelerando, ritenuto – all the nuances of energy – forte, piano, crescendo, diminuendo can be realized by our bodies, and the acuteness of our musical feeling will depend on the acuteness of our bodily sensations."[8] Dynamics and agogic are the first elements of music, which Eurhythmics teachers obligatory include in their syllabus for beginners during the first few months. Dynamics is

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[3] M. Brzozowska – Kuczkiewicz, *Emil Jaques-Dalcroze i Jego Rytmika* (*Emil Jaques-Dalcroze and his Eurhythmics),* Wydawnictwa Szkolne i Pedagogiczne, Warszawa 1991, p. 31, cyt. Za: Emil Jaques-Dalcroze.

[4] D. Porte, *Podstawy metody Jaques-Dalcroze'a* (*Les bases de la Méthode Jaques-Dalcroze*), Le Rythme, czerwiec 1974, tłum. B. Niewiadomska, [w:] Materiały Informacyjno-Dyskusyjne COPSA, z. 162, Warszawa 1975, p. 117.

[5] *The history of Dalcroze* [online]. [dostęp: 14 grudnia2011]. Dostępny w Internecie: www.dalcrozeusa.org/about-us/history/, [w:] A. Galikowska-Gajewska, *Brzmienie w interpretacjach ruchowych utworu muzycznego, Debussy, Cage, Penderecki, Szalonek, Dobrowolski, Olczak, Kaiser (The sound in movement interpretation of a music piece Debussy, Cage, Penderecki, Szalonek, Dobrowolski, Olczak, Kaiser),* Akademia Muzyczna im. S. Moniuszki w Gdańsku, Gdańsk 2012, p. 45.

[6] E. J. Dalcroze, *Rhythm, Music, Education,* translated from the French by Harold F. Rubenstein, Published by The Dalcroze Society (Inc), 5th Edition 2000, p. 63.

[7] V. Milankovic, CD album *Dan,* song No. 22.

[8] E. J. Dalcroze, *Rhythm, Music, Education,* op.cit, p. 60.

related to human's muscular system, because each dynamic level we can express through tension and relaxation of our muscles. To present dynamics bodily we must use large movements and big space. We've realized that it isn't an easy task to practice tension of muscles with children. Therefore, we need to support it with the use of props. In this song we used colorful ribbons.

The second song *Raspevavanje* (At School)[9] presents an encouraging tool in the process of solfegio teaching. The C major scale is introduced by the melody gradually going upward and downward (Example No. 1). As the tempo being fast for singing and moving at the same time, we used the melody to create a wide variety of tasks and exercises for the students of the second year at the Primary music school. First we compare scale degrees with steps and stairs allowing students to understand scale tonal context faster and easy. At the beginning students sang without naming C major scale degrees, but later we included singing with the solmization syllables. Later students learned to play the melody on the piano, chromatic ringtones and boomwhackers.

The third song we used is *Školska himna* (*School Anthem*).[10] Rhythm and chorus are the most interesting because of the simple rhythmical theme of the chorus is being performed in the fast tempo (Example No. 2). This chorus theme was a great inspiration to create movements. Firstly, students of the second year at the Primary music school feel a pulse and meter, showing it with the accented movement of their bodies.

The fourth song is *Valcer* (*Waltz*) performed by the children's choir Kolibri. This song is an independent song composed by Vera Milankovic and it does not appear on the mentioned CD album *Dan* (Example No. 3). Students loved this gentle music and the oldest one improvised moves by themselves probably provoked by the 6/8 time signature. Movement improvisation is an inevitable driving force during the whole process of Eurhythmic learning, enabling motoric, emotional and creative development. Students started their improvisation performing body movements in the mirror. One person created his own movement proposal while the others repeated it with a delay of one measure. The next related movement was performed at the same time by the whole group without a delay. As we expected, eurhythmic students at the Academy of music created more complex movement interpretation which presents an integral part of eurhythmics, initially called *plastique animée* by Dalcroze himself.[11]

The essence of this art form (plastique animee), however, remains constant, perfectly expressed by Friedrich Schiller: "When the music reaches its noblest

[9] V. Milanković, CD album *Day*, song No. 5.

[10] V. Milanković, CD album *Day*, song No. 6.

[11] *Plastique animée* is currently included in the Polish curricula under the name of "Technique and movement expression" or "Exercises in movement expression", see E. Jaques-Dalcroze, Pisma wybrane (*Selected writings)*, p. 63–84.

power, it becomes a shape in space".[12] The art of creating movement interpretations of music consists in continuous construction of relations between music and human body, between movement and space.

Movement interpretation shows personal experience and how an individual understands and defines music. And thus Monika Skazińska (a renowned Polish artist, teacher of Eurhythmics and choreographer) explained movement interpretation of a musical piece as "A method of piece explanation by using moves ... Its task is to translate the basic musical material which is 'sound language' into 'movement language.'"[13] Movement interpretation of musical piece is the way of reflecting music in space. The synthesis of music and movement is being introduced as well as a deep experience of music embodied in movement of human body."[14]

The complex Balkan meter of 9/8 and simple, but beautiful Serbian folk song named *Pošla Vanka na vodu* (1991)[15] composed for two flutes by Vera Milanković, inspired me to set the song with the students of the first year of bachelor degree. During the entire process of creating choreography, we were trying hard to understand art's aesthetics and to feel the atmosphere of a particular period of time. Then we search for a suitable movement which allows expressing music, not only its form, but also the emotions that song expresses. Two female students have been chosen for this choreography to be prepared for the spring concert. First we talked about emotions that a song provokes. Then we analyzed the song structure. The bodily duet presented a reaction, response and reflection to the specific and intertwined relation of a two flutes.

The last piece of Vera Milankovic's music I chose to make choreography is *Prelude No. 6* from the *Circle of 27 Preludes for piano* (1998).[16] Two groups of students were given task to create choreography and their own movement interpretation. Both groups created choreographies after only two lessons. What is the most interested fact is that students of the first year of bachelor's degree and students of the first year of master's degree decided to use props and green dresses in order to create visualization of Prelude.

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[12] A. Appia, *Live work of art and other works*, Wydawnictwo Artystyczne i Filmowe, Warszawa 1974, p. 95.

[13] M. Skazińska, *Znaczenie interpretacji ruchowej utworów muzycznych w kształceniu nauczycieli rytmiki* (The *meaning of movement interpretation of musical pieces in education eurhythmics teachers*), [w:] Zeszyt Naukowy Akademii Muzycznej w Łodzi, materiały z 12 sesji, nr XVIII, Łódź 1989, p. 215.

[14] A. Galikowska-Gajewska, *Brzmienie w interpretacjach ruchowych utworu muzycznego, Debussy, Cage, Penderecki, Szalonek, Dobrowolski, Olczak, Kaiser (The sound in movement interpretation of a music piece by Debussy, Cage, Penderecki, Szalonek, Dobrowolski, Olczak, Kaiser),* Akademia Muzyczna im. S. Moniuszki w Gdańsku, Gdańsk 2012, p. 49.

[15] V. Milanković, the song *Posla Vinka na vodu,* the Album *Nostalgija.*

[16] V. Milanković, 27 *Preludes for piano* from the Album *Nostalgija.*

Conclusion

Music is having a central point in Dalcroze's method. To create typical Dalcroze's tasks and exercises during Eurhythmic lessons both children's songs and instrumental musical pieces could be used. Vera Milankovic's three children songs from the album *Dan,* then lied, folk song and piano prelude from the album *Nostalgia* have been selected to be visually presented. Different musical aspects existing in the selected pieces became a source of inspiration and movement interpretation for students of the Primary Music School and the Academy of Music. Through singing, playing and dancing students understood music composed on the foreign language and at the same time became familiar with music from the different country.

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Discography

V. Milanković, CD album *Day*.

V. Milanković, CD album *Nostalgija.*

V. Milanković, song *Valcer*.

др Ана Галиковска Гајевска

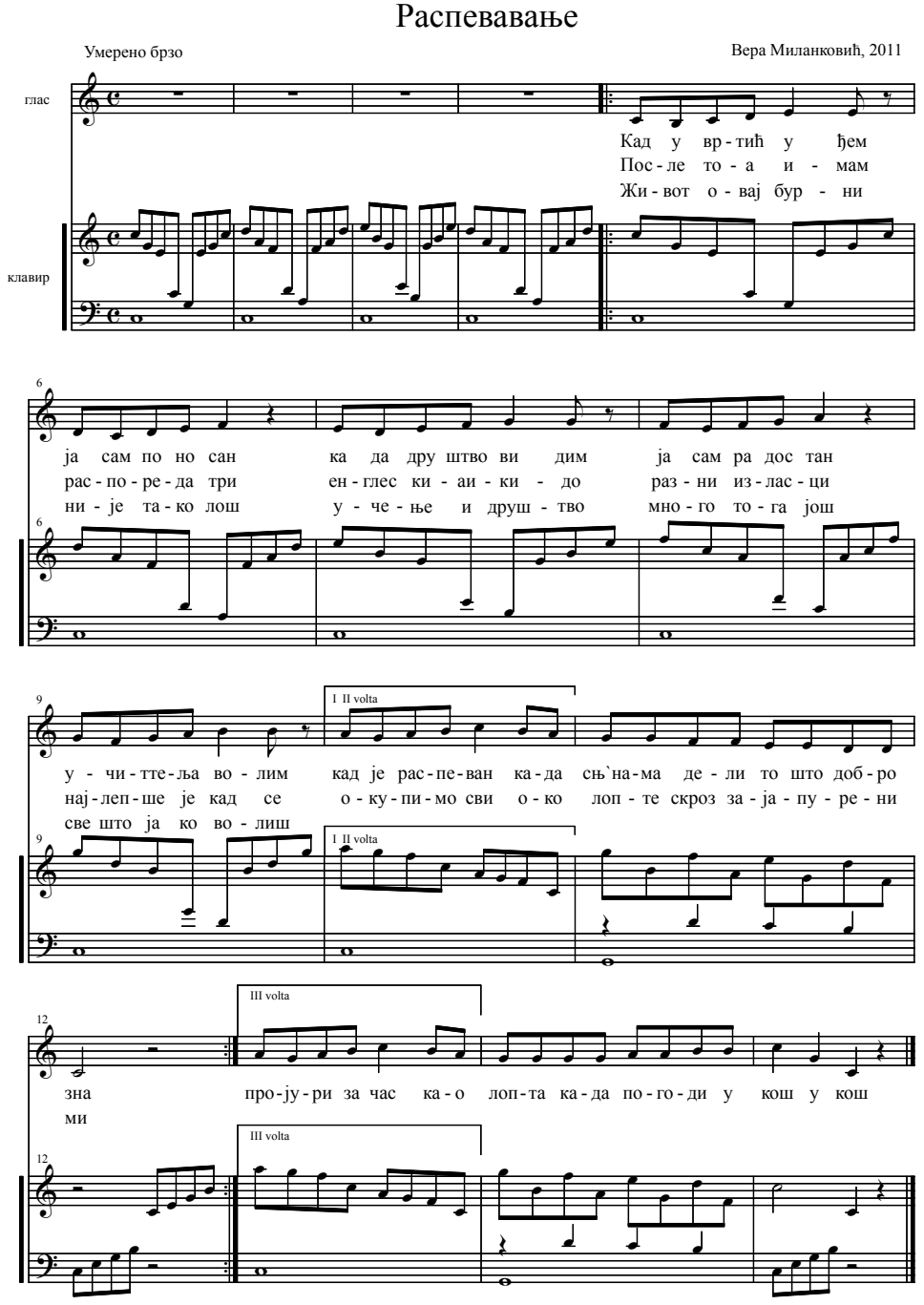
Одабране композиције Вере Миланковић као извор инспирације при изради Далкрозових задатака и вежби

Сажетак

Далкрозов метод – Еуритмија – био је полазиште за припрему ове радионице. У оквиру презентације указаће се на блиску везу између музике и покрета која је произашла из одабраних композиција Вере Миланковић. Музика заузима централно место у Далкрозовом методу. Она је, уједно, и највећа инспирација у личном педагошком и уметничком раду. Стварање препознатљивих Далкрозових задатака и вежби које се користе у току часова Еуритмије могуће је како уз помоћ дечјих песама, тако и помоћу инструменталних композиција. Бројне композиције постале су извор инспирације у раду за ученике основне музичке школе и студенте музичке академије. Музичке појаве, као што су ритмички обрасци, интервали, скале, интонација, музичка форма и сл., могу се обрадити помоћу Далкрозовог метода. Личну инспирацију пронашла сам у опусу композиторке Вере Миланковић. Музика постаје снажна сила и инспирација у креативним задацима и вежбама које можемо да пронађемо у оквиру Далкрозовог метода. Одабране композиције Вере Миланковић доприносе ученицима и студентима да се упознају са музичким стваралаштвом друге културе. Уз помоћ емоционалног и личног доживљаја музике кроз покрет лако се разумеју чак и најсложеније музичке појаве. Правилан избор музике јесте основа за учења и примену задатих циљева.

Кључне речи: Далкроз метод, Вера Миланковић, дечје песме, еуритмија, слушни тренинг, покрет, извођење.

Example No. 1


Распевавање
Умерено брзо
Вера Миланковић, 2011
глас
клавир
Кад у вр - тић у ђем
Пос - ле то - а и - мам
Жи - вот о - вај бур - ни
ја сам по но сан
рас - по - ре - да три
ни - је та - ко лош
ка да дру штво ви дим
ен - глес ки - аи - ки - до
у - че - ње и друш - тво
ја сам ра дос тан
раз - ни из - лас - ци
мно - го то - га још
у - чи - тте - ља во - лим
нај - леп - ше је кад се
све што ја ко во - лиш
кад је рас - пе - ван ка - да
о - ку - пи - мо сви о - ко
сњ`на - ма де - ли то што доб - ро
лоп - те скроз за - ја - пу - ре - ни
I II volta
III volta
зна
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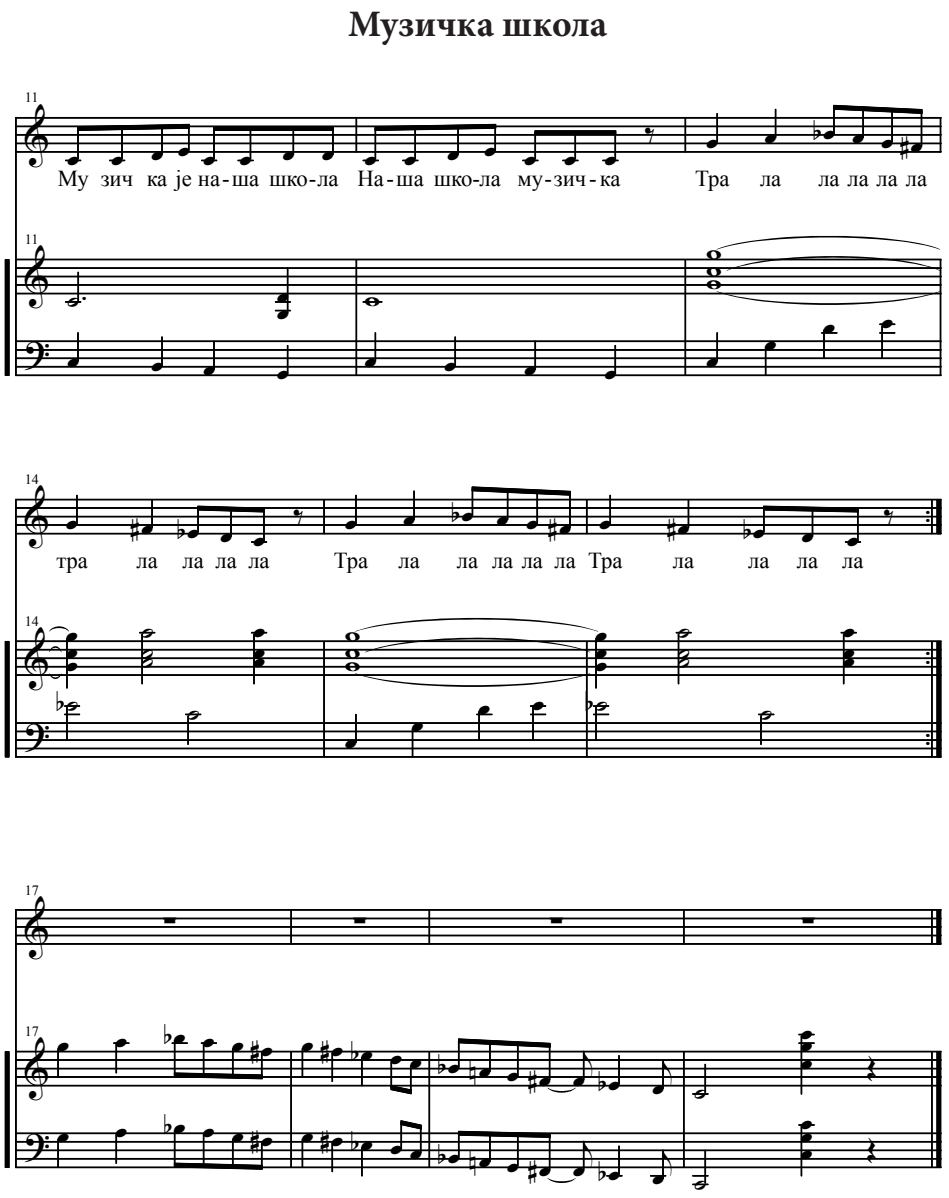
про - ју - ри за час ка - о
лоп - та ка - да по - го - ди у
кош у кош

Example No. 2


Музичка школа
11
Му зич ка је на-ша шко-ла На-ша шко-ла му-зич-ка Тра ла ла ла ла ла
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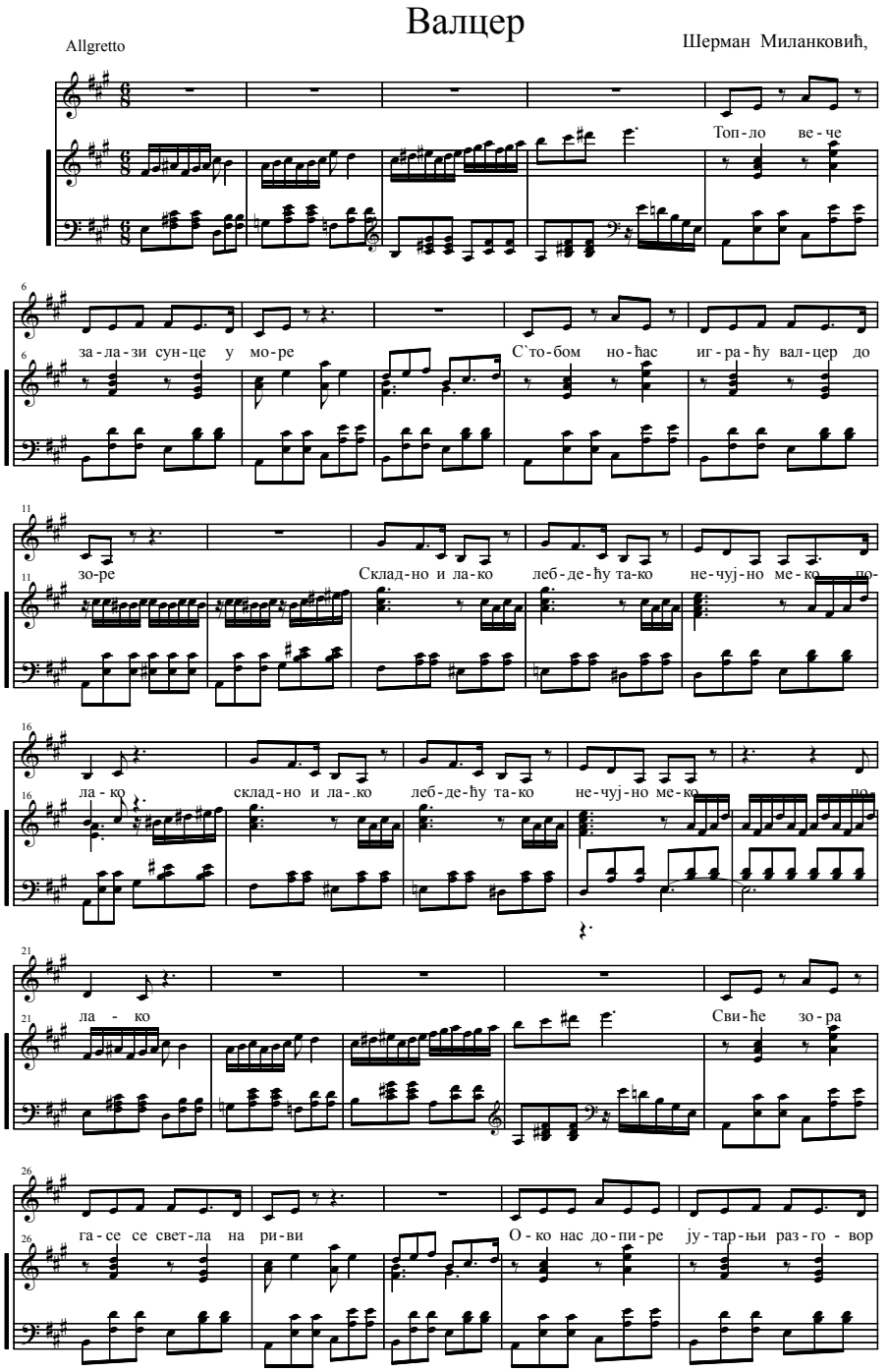
17

Example No. 3


Валцер
Allgretto
Шерман Миланковић,
Топ-ло ве-че
за-ла-зи сун-це у мо-ре
С'то-бом но-ћас иг-ра-ћу вал-цер до
зо-ре
Склад-но и ла-ко леб-де-ћу та-ко не-чуј-но ме-ко по-
ла-ко склад-но и ла-.ко леб-де-ћу та-ко не-чуј-но ме-ко по-
ла - ко
Сви-ће зо-ра
га-се се свет-ла на ри-ви
О-ко нас до-пи-ре ју-тар-њи раз-го - вор