

IN MEMORIAM

SABIN V. DRAGOI (1894-1968)

Sabin V. Dragoi, a prominent personality in Rumanian musical life and member of the International Folk Music Council Executive Board, passed away on the last day of the year 1968. His whole life and creative work were dominated by Rumanian folk music, which he collected, published, and interpreted brilliantly and on which he based his own musical creations.

He was born in 1894, of a peasant family from the village Seliste, district of Arad, where the peasant culture of his childhood produced the wellspring of his musical sensibility. After graduating from the teachers' seminary in Arad, he continued his studies at the music conservatory in Cluj and later in Prague, where Vitezslav Novak was his professor of composition. Upon his return to his country he was appointed to a number of important positions: professor of composition, harmony, and counterpoint in the conservatories of Timișoara and Bucharest (1924-50), director of the opera house in Timișoara (1940-44), vice-president of the Society of Rumanian Composers (1940-45) and of the Union of Composers of the Socialist Republic of Rumania (1952-56), director of the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore (1950-65).

With respect to the structural and stylistic renewal of the Rumanian musical language in folkloristic terms, Sabin V. Dragoi belongs among the most distinguished composers of his time, such as Mihai Brediceanu, Marțian Negrea, Zeno Vancea, Mihail Andricu, Paul Constantineacu, and Mihai Jora. He wrote five operas including the musical drama "Nă-

pasta” (La Fausse accusation) after Caragiale’s play, the opéra-comique “Păcală” (Calino, the popular hero), several dance suites, divertissements, tone poems and a rhapsody for symphony orchestra, an oratorio, a cantata, a concerto for piano and orchestra, music for films, piano pieces, a violin sonata, a string quartet, a dixtuor, and much valuable choral music.

While active as a composer, he was engaged already as a young man in the collection and investigation of Rumanian folklore. Over three thousand melodies gathered between 1922 and 1958, especially in Banat and Hunedoara, furnished the basis of his compositions as well as numerous publications of melodies, articles, and monographs: “303 Colinde” [303 carols] (1931); “122 Cîntece din județul Caraș/Banat” [122 songs of the Caraș district, Banat] (1937); “Monografia muzicală a comunei Belinț” [Musical monography of the village Belinț] (1942); “82 Melodii de dans pentru vioară” [82 dance melodies for violin] (1947); “20 Colinde din comuna Zam, jud. Hunedoara” [20 carols from the village Zam, district Hunedoara] (1957); “505 Colinde” [505 carols] (in press); “Musical Research in Rumania and Béla Bartók’s Contribution to It,” *Studiae memoriae Béla Bartók sacra* (Budapest, 1959, pp. 13-30); “Cum am învățat să folosesc limbajul românesc” [How I learned to use the Rumanian musical language], *Revista de etnografie și folclor* (Bucharest, 1959); “The production of New Songs in the Rumanian People’s Republic,” *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*, XII (London, 1960); “Simetrie și asimetrie în cîntecul popular românesc” [Symmetry and asymmetry in Rumanian folk song], *Revista Muzica* (Bucharest, 1960).

These works reveal a profound understanding and knowledge of Rumanian musical creativity and place their author in the distinguished company of D. G. Kiriac, G. Breazul, and C. Brăiloiu. Moreover, under his long directorship the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore produced important research studies in areas and on subjects that not only provided the basis

for the *Corpus of Rumanian Folklore*, the exhaustive bibliography of Rumanian ethnography and folklore (the first volume appeared in 1969), but led to the First International Congress of Musical Folklore (Sinaia, 1959).

Sabin V. Dragoi's creative work and dedication to his country's cultural progress earned him the following prizes, titles, and distinctions: the G. Enescu Prize for Composition, first prize (1922-23), second prize (1928); the Prize of the Rumanian Academy (1932); the Năsturel Academy Prize (1933); the Robert Kremer Prize for Composition (1935); the Musical Prize of the Ministry of Education (1943); the State Prize (1950-52); the title of Merited Artist of the Rumanian People's Republic (1951); Merited Master of Arts of the Socialist Republic of Rumania (1953); Order of Labor first class (1954); Cultural Merit second class (1966); and Corresponding Member of the Socialist Republic of Rumania Academy.

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