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Sinfonietta for String Orchestra by Weronika Ratusińska in the Context of the Issue of (Sub)Genre

Abstract

The purpose of the article is to focus on certain terminological and historical aspects related to the genre of sinfonieta in the Polish music of the 20th and 21st century. In the introduction, the author presents the definition and general characteristics, listing the sources and the most representative works in the Polish music. Additionally, she presents numerical statistics and classification of the sinfonieta in Polish music and on this basis she analyses one of the most interesting works representing the type of sinfonieta-transcription – Sinfonietta for string orchestra by Weronika Ratusińska from 2009. The author analyses the use and manner of modification of musical motifs, the way in which the sound layer is shaped and the relation between Ratusińska's work and tradition of the genre.

Keywords

sinfonietta, chamber music, Polish music

Sinfonietta in twentieth-century Polish music is *terra incognita*, a rather marginal research area. This is due to the fact that works representing this genre are associated primarily with small and not necessarily elaborate symphonies of a didactic character. The general state of research on the sinfonietta is quite modest—valuable sources of knowledge, apart from encyclopaedic ones (entries in: *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*,¹ *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*² and the compendium *Handbuch der musikalischen Gattungen*) are monographs of composers, in which sinfoniettas are described in relation to the individual style of the composer.³ Sinfoniettas were sometimes key works for the development of the style of the composers, such as Tadeusz Baird's *Sinfonietta* for symphony orchestra from 1949.⁴ The knowledge of the subject is also supplemented by English-language publications,⁵ articles published in *Ruch Muzyczny*⁶ and musicological works of a didactic character.⁷ The author was also prompted to write this text by the fact that less researched (but valuable and important)

¹ N. Temperley, 'Sinfonietta', in S. Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 17 (London: Macmillan Publishers Limited, 1980), 337.

² L. Finscher, *Kammersymphonie und Sinfonietta*, in L. Finscher, ed., *Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 9 (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag, 1998), 125–127.

³ In this form, sinfonietta appears in many monographs of Polish and foreign composers, see: M. Gąsiorowska, *Bacewicz* (Kraków: PWM, 1999); J. Cegięła, *Dziecko szczęścia. Aleksander Tansman i jego czasy* (Warszawa: PIW, 1986).

⁴ This work of a 'romantic' character (and at the same time a symphonic debut) was received enthusiastically both by the critics and the audience, starting the great career of the young composer. See: B. Literska, *Dziewiętnastowieczne transkrypcje utworów Fryderyka Chopina. Aspekty historyczne, teoretyczne i estetyczne* (Kraków: Musica Iagellonica, 2004), 150.

⁵ J. Schaarwächter, *Two Centuries of British Symphonism. From the beginnings to 1945*, 1–2 (Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 2015), 13.

⁶ H. Schiller, 'Kazimierz Serocki — „Sinfonietta na dwie orkiestry smyczkowe”', *Ruch Muzyczny*, 3 (1958), 28–29.

⁷ J. Chomiński, K. Wilkowska-Chomińska, *Formy muzyczne, 2: Wielkie formy instrumentalne* (Kraków: PWM, 1987), 778–790.

musical genres, such as the magnificat,⁸ the passion play⁹ and the oratorio¹⁰ have already been discussed in the literature. A similar approach to the sinfonietta may broaden the spectrum of contemporary music theory.

At the turn of the twentieth century, European symphony music reached a climax with regard to the composition of the orchestra, the number of movements, and the monumental form of the works.¹¹ Slowly, composers began to focus on the qualities of individual instruments—especially the role of percussion in the construction of the work's tension gained great importance, as it began to create a separate sound layer.¹² Composers began to work more and more consciously in opposition to the huge late-Romantic orchestral works, writing works for chamber composition or for other, previously unused instrumental groups, focusing on timbre. The idea of the symphony was slowly redefined and transformed.

Before the author presents definitions of the sinfonietta, she would like to note that these works were created much earlier than one might think. The attention should be paid to compositions that bear the name 'sinfonietta', but are not independent works. In this sense, sinfonietta appeared already in the seventeenth or eighteenth century as introductions to small operas or cantatas. They were smaller symphonies, or three-part overtures of the Italian type. An example of such use is the sinfonietta preceding the opera *L'Arcifanfano, Re De' Matti* by Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf.¹³

The definition of the sinfonietta as an independent work is usually juxtaposed in the literature with other smaller genres such as the

⁸ T. Kienik, *Magnificat. Od biblijnego tekstu do polskiej kompozycji muzycznej XX i początków XXI wieku* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Muzycznej we Wrocławiu, 2019).

⁹ G. Massenkeil, *Oratorium und Passion*, series »Handbuch der musikalischen Gattungen«, S. Mauser, ed., 10/1 (Bremen: Laaber-Verlag, 1998).

¹⁰ H. Smither, *A history of the Oratorio*, 1: *The Oratorio in the Baroque Era: Italy, Vienna, Paris* (North Carolina: UNC Press, 1977).

¹¹ Among the representatives of the monumental symphony were Anton Bruckner and Gustav Mahler.

¹² Chomiński, Wilkowska-Chomińska, *Formy muzyczne*, 325.

¹³ *Arcifanfano, król głupców*. The opera composed by Dittersdorf in 1774 in Johannisberg.

concertino, sonatina,¹⁴ or chamber symphony.¹⁵ In the second volume of *Formy Muzyczne*, Józef M. Chomiński writes about the sinfonietta as ‘a creation of the twentieth century.’¹⁶ Indeed, it reached the greatest popularity at the beginning of the twentieth century, more specifically, after World War I, but it appeared yet at the end of the nineteenth century (*Sinfonietta*, Op. 188 for wind orchestra by Joachim Raff from 1873, *Symphoniette sur des thèmes russes* for symphony orchestra from 1880 by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov¹⁷ or *Sinfonietta in D minor* for eight wind instruments by Rudolf Nováček from 1888 should be mentioned here). Chomiński’s claim should therefore be clarified with regard to Polish music. The earliest example of the sinfonietta in Polish literature that the author was able to find is *Sinfonietta in D major*, Op. 16 for symphony orchestra by Czesław Józef Marek, written in 1914–1916.¹⁸ In European music, the peak of the popularity of this genre took place from the 1920s to the 1950s, primarily due to the neoclassical trend, in which composers returned to old genres (including the classical symphony). In Poland, this occurred in the 1990s (see graphs 1 and 2).

¹⁴ Such a juxtaposition is proposed by Chomiński. See Chomiński, Wilkowska-Chomińska, *Formy muzyczne*, 778.

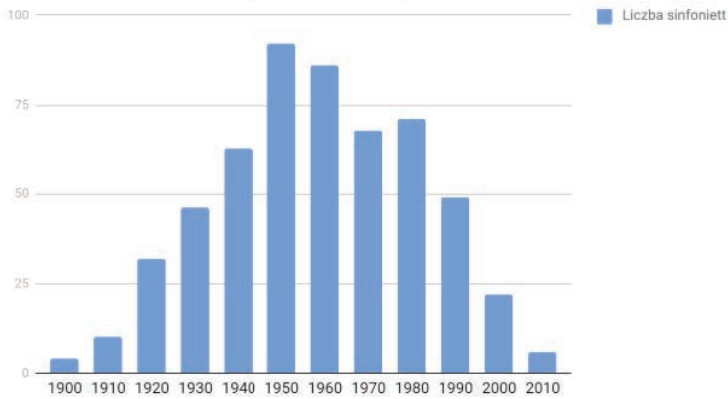
¹⁵ The issue of the miniaturisation of the genre of symphony is discussed by the German musicologist Ludwig Finscher, who described such genres as instrumental genres, e.g. chamber symphony (*Kammersymphonie*), *Sinfonia da camera*, or *Kammerkonzert*, which belong to the group of small works of a similar or identical features. In fact, such types of the works are subject to similar miniaturization; however, they should not be treated interexchangeably with sinfonietta. In the case of chamber symphony, the group of soloists often occur (e.g. *Chamber Symphony* by Franz Schreker for twenty-three solo instruments from 1916, or *Chamber Symphony* for thirteen solo instruments, Op. 25, by Max Butting from 1923). The name ‘chamber’ makes an association with a small ensemble, while in sinfonietta the great symphony orchestra is frequently used. See Finscher, *Kammersymphonie und Sinfonietta*, 126.

¹⁶ Chomiński, Wilkowska-Chomińska, *Formy muzyczne*, 778.

¹⁷ *Sinfonietta na tematy rosyjskie*.

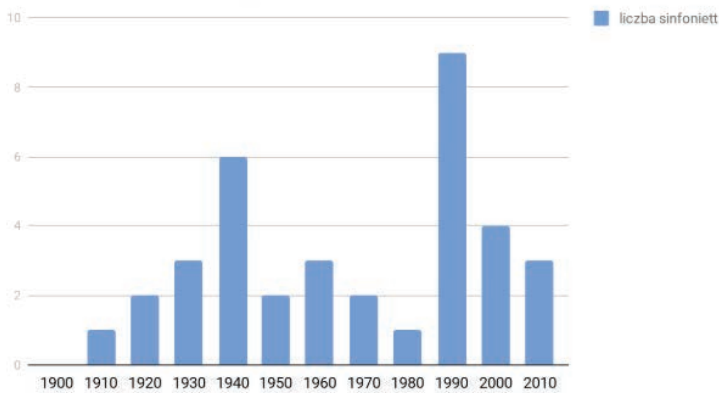
¹⁸ J. Zieliński, ‘Czesław Marek’, in M. Podhajski, ed., *Kompozytorzy polscy 1918–2000*, 2: *Biogramy* (Gdańsk–Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademii Muzycznej im. S. Moniuszki–Wydawnictwo Akademii Muzycznej im. F. Chopina, 2005), 589–592.

Liczba sinfoniett w muzyce europejskiej XX i XXI wieku



Graph 1: Sinfoniettas in European music. The highest number, 92 sinfoniettas were created in the 1950s. Sinfonietta was also extremely popular in the 1960s (86), although the number is decreasing in the following decades.

Liczba sinfoniett w muzyce polskiej XX i XXI wieku



Graph 2: Sinfoniettas in Polish music. These works were most popular in the 1990s.

The Polish definition of the sinfonietta was provided by the author of the entry in *Encyklopedia muzyki* edited by Andrzej Chodkowski:

‘a symphony of smaller size, often for chamber orchestra.’¹⁹ This is certainly true, but it would be appropriate to expand on this notion. A *sinfonietta* may or may not be intended for a chamber orchestra, since examples exist in the literature for symphonic ensemble (Mieczysław Weinberg, 1948), choir (Jan Wincenty Hawel, 1969), string orchestra (Grażyna Bacewicz, 1935), wind orchestra (Jan Krenz, 1995) or an orchestra accompanied by a solo instrument (Piotr Perkowski, 1975). Also, the duration of *sinfoniettas* does not have to be shortened; foreign compositions should be mentioned here: Francis Poulenc’s *Sinfonietta* (about 30 minutes), Erich Wolfgang Korngold’s *Sinfonietta*, Op. 5 (about 45 minutes) or Max Reger’s *Sinfonietta*, Op. 50 (about 50 minutes).²⁰

The above remark takes into account the definition proposed by Nicholas Temperley, who in his text on the *sinfonietta* describes this genre as ‘An orchestral piece on a smaller scale, or of more modest aims, than a symphony.’²¹ The aim of a *sinfonietta* (often comic, ironic) may differ from that of a symphony, because in many works of this type the composers introduce folk melodies or popular music arrangements.²² Aleksander Tansman, among others, included such stylizations in both his *sinfoniettas*, but they are particularly evident in *Sinfonietta* No. 2 (1978–79). In the second movement with the meaningful title *Scherzetto popolare* the composer set to music the well-known melodies *Umarł Maciek, umarł* [Died Maciek died]; *Krakowiaczek jeden* [One little Cracovian boy] and *Wlazł kotek na płotek* [A kitten climbed on a fence].

On the basis of many analyses of works of this type and the catalogue of about 550 *sinfoniettas* included in her master’s thesis, the author derives her own definition: it is a subgenre directly derived from the symphony, which may undergo a process of miniaturisation in such aspects as cast, instrumentation, duration, form and motif. These modifications may occur simultaneously, but only some of them

¹⁹ ‘Sinfonietta’, in A. Chodkowski, ed., *Encyklopedia muzyki* (Warszawa: PWN, 1995), 813.

²⁰ The reference point for the author is the duration of the classical symphony, i.e. circa 30 minutes.

²¹ Temperley, *Sinfonietta*, 337.

²² A. Granat-Janki, *Forma w twórczości instrumentalnej Aleksandra Tansmana* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Akademii Muzycznej im. K. Lipińskiego we Wrocławiu, 1995), 122.

may appear. The *sinfonietta* draws on the historical heritage of the symphony, being most often an orchestral cyclic work. Neoclassical compositions are the most representative of this genre, as they have reminiscences of the sonata form, integrating all parts themes or motifs and a *secco* type of sound. These works usually have an abbreviated three-movement form, thus alluding to the pre-classical *sinfonia*.

The author's definition is supplemented by a general classification of *sinfoniettas* in Polish music (see Table 1).

The general classification of <i>sinfoniettas</i> in Polish music of the twentieth and twentieth centuries together with the selected examples
Based on the orchestration
1. String orchestra: Szymon Laks, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for string orchestra, 1936, Krystyna Moszumańska-Nazar, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for string orchestra, 1983.
2. Chamber orchestra: Aleksander Tansman, <i>Sinfonietta No. 1</i> for chamber orchestra, 1924, Roman Palester, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for chamber orchestra, 1948.
3. Symphony orchestra: Tadeusz Baird, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for symphony orchestra, 1949, Mieczysław Weinberg, <i>Sinfonietta No. 1</i> for symphony orchestra, 1948.
4. Soloist + instrumental ensemble: Krzysztof Penderecki, <i>Sinfonietta No. 2</i> for clarinet and string orchestra, 1994.
5. Other instrumental ensembles: Jan Krenz, <i>Sinfonietta per fiati</i> , 1995, Bogusław Schaeffer, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for sixteen instruments, 1996.
5. Vocal ensembles: Jan Wincenty Hawel, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for mixed choir a cappella, 1969.
Based on the form
1. One-movement <i>sinfonietta</i> : Marek Stachowski, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for string orchestra, 1998.
2. Three-movement orchestra: Michał Moc, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for string orchestra, 1999.
3. Four-movement orchestra: Aleksander Tansman, <i>Sinfonietta No. 2</i> for chamber orchestra, 1978.
4. Five- and more-movement orchestra: Krzysztof Penderecki, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for string orchestra (<i>Sinfonietta per archi</i>), 1992.
Based on the content
1. Programme <i>sinfonietta</i> /based on national elements: Maciej Bałenkowski, <i>Sinfonietta No. 2 'Polonia; homage a Wojciech Kilar</i> , 2017, Mieczysław Weinberg, <i>Sinfonietta in D major (sur des themes juifs)</i> , Op. 41 No. 1, 1948.
2. <i>Sinfonietta</i> of an absolute character: Antoni Szalowski, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for symphony orchestra, 1940, Marek Stachowski, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for string orchestra, 1998.

Based on the style or a composition technique
1. Neo-classical sinfonietta: Grażyna Bacewicz, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for string orchestra, 1935, Aleksander Tansman, <i>Sinfonietta No. 1</i> for chamber orchestra, 1924.
2. Sinfonietta that uses the dodecaphonic technique: Kazimierz Serocki, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for two string orchestra, 1956.
3. Neo-romantic sinfonietta: Tadeusz Baird, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for symphony orchestra, 1949, Czesław Józef Marek, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for symphony orchestra, 1916.
4. Minimal sinfonietta: Weronika Ratusińska-Zamuszko, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for string orchestra, 2009, Paweł Łukaszewski, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for string orchestra, 2004.
Based on the circumstances in which it was composed
1. Original sinfonietta: Paweł Szymański, <i>Quasi una sinfonietta</i> , 1990, Kazimierz Serocki, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for string orchestra, 1956.
2. Sinfonietta-transcription: Weronika Ratusińska-Zamuszko, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for string orchestra, 2009, Paweł Łukaszewski, <i>Sinfonietta</i> for string orchestra, 2004.

Table 1: The classification of sinfioniettas referring to Polish compositions.

The last type, the sinfionietta-transcription, is the essence of the author's reflection in the following analysis. The sinfionietta is then not so much an attempt to miniaturise the genre of the symphony, as an enlargement, an extension of the chamber music genre, and in this context it acquires a new meaning.

Weronika Ratusińska-Zamuszko (born 1977) is a composer, violinist and teacher. She is mainly associated with the Warsaw community,²³ but she has honed her composing skills in Holland.²⁴ She grew up in a family with musical traditions, therefore music has accompanied her from an early age. Due to her education, her output is dominated by works for string instruments (her fondness for the sound of the cello is

²³ Ratusińska studied composition with Włodzimierz Kotoński and Stanisław Morzyto. In 2001, she graduated with distinction from the Fryderyk Chopin Academy of Music in Warsaw (currently the Fryderyk Chopin University of Music). Since 2002, she has been working there in the Department of Composition. In 2009 she received the title of the Doctor of Musical Art, and in 2018 a *doctor habilitatus* of the musical art degree. See: 'Weronika Ratusińska-Zamuszko: biografia', http://www.ratusinska.eu/bio_pl.htm, accessed 16 Apr. 2020.

²⁴ The composer studied at the Royal Conservatory in Hague. The frequent privilege of the generation of the composers born in 1970s and 1980s was the possibility to study abroad.

particularly evident), such as: *String Quartet No. 1* (1997), *Divertimento per archi* (1998), *Concerto* for amplified violin, instrumental ensemble and tape (2002), *String Quartet No. 2 'Ostatnie chwile'* (2003), *Blue Note* for cello and piano (2007), *Concerto No. 1* for cello and orchestra (2008), *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra (2009), *Concerto No. 2* for cello and orchestra (2013), *Exile* for solo cello for right hand and cello quartet (2014), *Concerto* for clarinet, viola and string orchestra (2015), *Blue Note II* for cello and orchestra (2017), and *Fantasia* for cello and piano (2019).²⁵

An important part of the composer's output is religious music. These include: *Mass* for choir and organ (1998), *Adoratio Crucis* for mixed choir (1999), *Adeste Fideles* for soprano and organ (1999), *Magnificat* for soprano, baritone, mixed choir and symphony orchestra (2001), *Różaniec* [Rosary] for soloists, mixed choir and instrumental ensemble (2006), *Kolędy* [Carols] for mixed choir a cappella (2016), *Tryptyk* [Triptych] for organ (2017), and *Agnus Dei* for white voice and string quartet (2018).

Ratusińska-Zamuszko's work is characterised by artistic individuality, nobility of sound, and compositional artistry. Harmonic and melodic aspects referring to the old tonality, nowadays referred to as 'neotonicity', play an important role in shaping her works. She applies modality, bitonicity and dissonant consonances relatively frequently in her pieces. A characteristic feature of Ratusińska's works is the use of traditional barlines, but variable metre and irregular accentuation.²⁶ Her compositions encourage deep reflection on aesthetics and beauty. The composer is often inspired by the music and traditions of other cultures—Spain, ancient Greece, or countries of the Far East (e.g., *Cello Concerto No. 1* features the Indian raga). Quotations from folk music also play an important role, e.g. in the *Concerto* for clarinet, viola, and string orchestra.

Sinfonietta for string orchestra²⁷ was composed in 2009, but was not originally written for this instrumental ensemble. Interestingly, it is a transcription of the *String Quartet No. 2 'Ostatnie chwile'* from

²⁵ The catalogue of the works is available to see on the official website of the composer: 'Weronika Ratusińska-Zamuszko: biografia', http://www.ratusinska.eu/bio_pl.htm, accessed 16 Apr. 2020.

²⁶ The composer refers in this way to the work of Igor Stravinsky and Louis Andriessen.

²⁷ It is the only composition of Ratusińska of this type, despite the traditional genres, such as concerto or trio, are close to her.

2003. Using the typology proposed by Barbara Literska, *Sinfonietta* can be described as an example of the so-called substantive transcription, which consists in a strict transcription of the entire substance of a work into a new instrumental medium.²⁸ A similar principle was applied to, among others, Paweł Łukaszewski's *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra (2004)²⁹ and Krzysztof Penderecki's *Sinfonietta per archi* (1992).³⁰

The transcription of the solo quartet for string orchestra does not distance Ratusińska-Zamuszko's *Sinfonietta* from the original work; instead, it gives it a fuller sound, which was not possible in the original instrumentation. The composer supplements the work with a double bass part which, analogous to the procedures known from the history of orchestration, does not appear alone, but rather doubles the cello part by an octave. Like *Quartet*, *Sinfonietta* consists of three contrasting movements—the composer remains faithful to the miniaturisation of form which is typical for the (sub)genre of *sinfonietta*.

It is worth noting that Ratusińska chooses not to include the titles of the individual movements originally used in the *Quartet*, leaving only agogic suggestions in the score (see Table 2).

In her introduction to the score of *Sinfonietta* from 2012, Katarzyna Kucia notes that the work reflects her fascination with the culture of the Far East. She quotes the composer herself:

The art of Tibetan Buddhism does not exist 'for art's sake', but indicates the necessity of meditative experience [...]. I also want my music

²⁸ M. Gołąb, *Spór o granice poznania dzieła muzycznego* (2nd ed., Toruń: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, 2012), 86. The author presents the typology of the transcriptions presented originally by the author in her work. Compare B. Literska, *Dziewiętnastowieczne transkrypcje utworów Fryderyka Chopina. Aspekty historyczne, teoretyczne i estetyczne* (Kraków: Musica Iagellonica, 2004).

²⁹ *Sinfonietta* is a transcription of the *III String Quartet* composed in the same year. It is currently more popular than its prototype and more frequently performed. As in Weronika Ratusińska's *Sinfonietta*, the composer uses a quasi-minimalist sound language, simplified rhythm and reduction of musical material. Restricting the construction of the composition to a few selected sounds is connected with contemplation, prolongation of time and experiences, as well as general reflection.

³⁰ *Sinfonietta per archi* is a transcription of *String Trio* composed a year earlier. The favourable interest of the audience made the composer decide to transfer the work into a new sound design. *Sinfonietta* was dedicated to Sinfonia Varsovia Orchestra.

to induce reflection, and by slowing down the pace of life—to help in concentration and contemplation.³¹

Movements	<i>String Quartet No. 2 'Ostatnie chwile'</i> [Last moments]	<i>Sinfonietta</i>
I	Chwila buntu [A moment of rebellion]	Adagio
II	Chwila pożegnania [A moment of farewell]	Andantino
III	Modlitwa [A moment of prayer]	Allegro

Table 2: A juxtaposition of the names of the movements in the *String Quartet No. 2 'Ostatnie chwile'* and *Sinfonietta*.

Although devoid of titles suggesting intentions to write programme music, the work has many performance indications which are marked by deep emotionality and thus influence the reception of the individual movements: these include *amarevole*, *con melanconia*, *espressivo*, *misterioso*, *dolce*. Stylistically, the piece refers to minimal music,³² a trend initiated in the 1960s, using the expressive means and compositional techniques associated with it. The basis of this composition is therefore the simplicity of the melodic material and the repetitiveness of the musical content.

Movement I Adagio

It begins with a two-bar, extremely poignant (the term *amarevole* means 'sad, with bitterness') motif of the first violin, which the author calls the initial motif, since it will be the foundation, the basic idea for the creation of subsequent structures (see example 1).

The transparency of the motif results from basing the melody solely on the tones of the C eolian scale. The first bar of the motif in 4/4 metre has a small range of the melody, with a predominant movement in seconds. In the second bar in 5/4 the range is considerably extended

³¹ The statement of the composer was placed in the Preface to the score: W. Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta na orkiestrę smyczkową* (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Euterpe, 2012).

³² The main representatives of minima music are La Monte Young (b. 1935), Terry Riley (b. 1935), Steve Reich (b. 1936) and Philip Glass (b. 1937).

(interval of the major tenth). The essential element of the motif is the melodic figure that initiates it, marked in the example. Then, the composer introduces the part of the second violin, which plays a contrapuntal two-bar motif which mirrors the melody of the first violin (see example 2). The use of motifs and their transformation is very similar in Jan Krenz's *Sinfonietta per fiati* (1996).



Ex. 1: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. I, bb. 1–2. The motive of violin I.
Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 1.

The composer reduces the musical material by basing the melodic lines of subsequent instrumental parts on the initial motif presented earlier (see table 3).

Melodic structure in the part of violin I	Melodic structure in the part of violin II
	<p>The composer uses the mirror reflection of the last five notes of the initial motif.</p>
	<p>The composer bases the motif of viola on the notes that do not appear on the second and third beat of the second bar of the initial motif.</p>
	<p>The motif is based on the characteristic skip on the first beat of the second bar of the initial motif.</p>

Table 3: The motifs of the instrumental parts concerning the initial motive of violin I. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*.

Crucial for the form of the *Sinfonietta*'s first movement is the repetitiveness of its melodic and rhythmic structures. The composer uses two- or four-bar sections which she then repeats several times (see example 2). The section in bars 1–10 has the character of an introduction/exposition through continuous repetition of the melodic line and oscillation in *mp* dynamics. In the next phase of the piece, the composer presents modifications of motifs appearing in all parts:

1. The presentation of the motive moved one octave higher or lower

Original	Modification
 <p data-bbox="278 620 482 644">Part of violin II, bb. 5–6.</p>	 <p data-bbox="664 620 893 644">Part of violin I, bb. 11–12.</p>

2. The melodic modification of the initial motif, simultaneously preserving the original rhythmic structure

Original	Modification
 <p data-bbox="278 922 482 946">Part of violin I, bb. 1–2.</p>	 <p data-bbox="664 922 893 946">Part of violin II, bb. 11–12.</p>

3. the exchange of the order of rhythmic figures of the initial motive as well as highlighting the selected rhythmic structure, i.e. syncope

Original	Modification
 <p data-bbox="278 1226 482 1250">Part of violin I, bb. 1–2.</p>	 <p data-bbox="664 1226 893 1250">Part of cello, bb. 41–42.</p>

The composer gradually expands the repetitions to four-bar phrases. She also expands the melodic line of cellos and double basses, which until bar 32 was limited to three pitches only. In the melodic line, the characteristic melodic figure based on the interval of a second is activated and presented more and more frequently (see example 3). It is exposed through *fff* dynamics and selective accents. The culmination is achieved by expanding the volume of sound and *poco a poco*

accelerando. The composer abandons the repetition of phrases in favour of the evolution of motifs, combining them with one another, constantly transforming them.

A tempestuous culmination leads to the first chord in this movement—C minor—followed by *decrescendo* and a change of the melodic line's narration. The composer presents *solo* of the first violin of quasi-impromptu form. The soloist's virtuoso is displayed against the background of the constant accompaniment of the remaining instrumental parts in chords. The C minor chord is expanded by adding non-chord tones, forming B-flat major and G minor chords. The whole is crowned with a hexadecimal figure based on the notes C and D and a delicate, misty single *pizzicato* sound.



Ex. 2: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. I, bb. 1–8. The introduction of the motives in all instrumental parts besides double basses. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 1.

Through a fixed sixteenth-note movement, from the very beginning Ratusińska introduces an element of repetition. Gradually, however, she presents new instrumental parts and constantly intensifies the dynamics (from *mp* to *fff*). While listening to the accumulation and overlapping of motifs in the middle section of the work, one may feel

a certain discomfort, an 'inner struggle'. Despite the lack of a title at the beginning of the movement, *Sinfonietta* undoubtedly depicts a situation of 'rebellion'. It may be assumed that as the melody calms down, the conflict also disappears and an emotional 'calm' and 'relaxation' takes place.

The image shows a musical score for four string instruments: Violin I (Vn. I), Violin II (Vn. II), Viola (Vle), and Violoncello (Vc.). The score is for measures 37 and 38 of the first movement. The tempo marking is 'poco a poco accelerando' and the dynamics marking is 'simile'. The music is in 4/4 time and features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes.

Ex. 3: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. I, bb. 37–38. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 3.

Movement II Andantino

It is built of consecutive, contrasting phases. Phase I is maintained in homophonic texture. The main melodic line is built from a decomposed G minor chord coloured with second deviations in the heights A and A (see example 4). The accompaniment is limited to a delicate *tremolando* and contains the expressive phrase *con melanconia*. An exception and a very significant change from the original Quartet notation is the addition of the double bass part. It provides the harmonic basis, intoning a pizzicato descending melodic line.

The composer refers to tradition, using a specific combination of tensions and relaxations. In the harmonic course, two chords and their harmonic functions (in the sense of major-minor harmony, or rather its relic) are distinguishable:

G minor (i) – D major (V) – G minor (i)

Ex. 4: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. II, bb. 1–4. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 5.

Through cadence and dynamic gradation (from *p* to *mf*) the composer brings the melody to a climax. Apart from the traditional treatment of harmony, Ratusińska also uses progression and imitation, referring to traditional compositional techniques. The melody is presented successively in the part of the second violin and the viola. Phase II is preceded by a change of character—the harmonic basis for this phase is the interval of a pure fifth presented in the cellos and double basses (see example 5).

Ex. 5: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. II, bb. 13–16. The chords in the melody of violin I and violin II predicts the following phase of the piece. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 6.

Just like in the first movement of the work, phase II presents structures of a repetitive character. It is the composer's intention that the repetition of musical thoughts in a way 'lengthens time', which is subjectively slowed down and sometimes even stopped. In phase II,

important structures are treated in a strictly imitative manner (see example 6). Throughout the whole phase, separate melodic plans are exposed, developing the polyphonic texture. Ratusińska presents new timbral qualities, introducing glissandos, harmonics or the realisation of the melody on a single string into the instrumental parts.

Musical score for Example 6, showing the imitation in the melody of viola and violin. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of five staves. The top staff is for the first violin, the second for the second violin, the third for the viola, the fourth for the first cello, and the fifth for the first double bass. The score starts at measure 17. The first violin part has a 'arco' marking. The second violin part has 'pizz.' and 'mp' markings. The viola part has 'ppp' and 'mp' markings. The first cello and first double bass parts have 'mp' and 'misterioso' markings. The score shows a complex polyphonic texture with overlapping melodic lines.

Ex. 6: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. II, bb. 17–21. The imitation in the melody of viola and violin. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 6.

The culminating moment of phase II is the clarification and exposition of the poignant melody of the first violin (see example 7), which is repeated ten times with a simultaneous crescendo of the whole ensemble. The phase ends with a cadence which can be reduced to a traditional harmonic system:

D minor (i)—A major (V)—D minor (i)

Musical score for Example 7, showing the imitation in the melody of viola and violin I. The score is in 4/4 time and consists of a single staff. The score starts at measure 34. The melody is a series of eighth notes, starting on a G4 and moving up stepwise to a D5. The score is marked 'viv.' and shows a clear imitation between the viola and violin I parts.

Ex. 7: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. II, bb. 34–36, part of violin I. The imitation in the melody of viola and violin I. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 7.

Phase III was created by combining such elements of the other phases as a *pizzicato* in chords, octave *glissando* and *tremolando*. The alternating plucking of the strings imparts an agogic liveliness (see

example 8). The viola melody in seconds comes to the fore and introduces an element of anxiety.



Ex. 8: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. II, bb. 65–70. The irregular pulse of the part of violin disrupts the regularity of the metric pulse. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 8.

This episode should be treated as a prelude to the final, fourth phase, which in motifs refers directly to phase I (see example 9). The composer presents the main melody in transposition, preserving the cadential combination of chords: A minor (i)—E major (V)—A minor (i).



Ex. 9: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. II, bb. 82–85. The melody of the accompaniment is supplemented by the complementing rhythm. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 9.

The form of the second movement is woven with great care from fragments differing in expression, rhythm, agogics and texture. In the course of analysis it is possible to clarify the three key sections of this movement. In this case phases II and III should be combined into one

episode and treated as a kind of connector, since it does not introduce new musical content:

Section A (bars 1–17)

Section B (18–81)

Section A1 (82–95)

Coda (96–103)

Movement III Allegro

It is the longest of all the movements of *Sinfonietta*. Like its predecessors, this one, too, has some characteristic segments. Segment I (bars 1–100) begins with a two-bar motif of the first violin presented *divisi*. This melodic structure is invariably repeated over the course of thirty bars like a Baroque *ostinato* (see example 10).



Ex. 10: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. III, bb. 1–5. The part of violin I.
Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 10.

The long rhythmic values played on open strings give this episode its characteristic ‘predatory’ character. The rhythmic factor comes to the fore and provides a great contrast to the lyrical, cantilena-like movement II. The composer introduces the other *divisi* voices one by one, which correspond with each other, although at times the pulsation and sense of stability are lost through irregularly placed accents (see example 11).

Energetic motifs and percussive treatment of string instruments give this section vitalistic, bruitic qualities. The rigorously maintained tempo is contrasted with long rhythmic values realized by the viola, cello and double bass. The narration of segment I, interspersed with local climaxes, remains constant until the next phase of movement III begins. Segment II (bars 101–130) introduces a different mood through the intoning of *tutti pizzicato* melodic-rhythmic structures. The motifs of the cellos and double basses are exposed (see example 12).

This musical score excerpt shows measures 25 through 30 of the third movement of the Sinfonietta for string orchestra. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with five systems. The first system contains the Violin I (Vn. I) and Violin II (Vn. II) parts, both marked 'div.' (divisi). The second system contains the Viola (Vla) and Violoncello (Vcl.) parts, also marked 'div.'. The third system contains the Double Bass (Cb.) part. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 2/4 and back to 3/4. The music features rhythmic patterns of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and dynamic markings.

Ex. 11: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. III, bb. 25–30. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 12.

This musical score excerpt shows measures 103 through 109 of the third movement of the Sinfonietta for string orchestra. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with five systems. The first system contains the Violin I (Vn. I) and Violin II (Vn. II) parts, both marked 'div.'. The second system contains the Viola (Vla) and Violoncello (Vcl.) parts, also marked 'div.'. The third system contains the Double Bass (Cb.) part. The time signature changes from 3/4 to 2/4 and back to 3/4. The music features rhythmic patterns of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some rests and dynamic markings. A 'mp' (mezzo-piano) marking is visible in the lower systems.

Ex.12: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. III, bb. 103–109. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 9.

The composer finishes this fragment by gradually changing the articulation to *arco*. Segment III (bars 131–183) introduces a melody full of lyricism and longing, led by the part of the first violin against the background of delicate figurations of violins and violas (see example 13).

The image shows a musical score for three string instruments: Violin I (Vn. I), Violin II (Vn. II) and Viola (Vla), and Viola (Vla). The score is in 3/4 time and features a main motif of a melody in the first violin part, marked 'f dolce'. The first violin part is in the treble clef and has a key signature of one sharp (F#). The second violin and viola parts are in the bass clef and have a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score is divided into four measures, with the first measure starting at bar 136. The first violin part has a melodic line with a long note in the first measure, followed by a series of eighth notes. The second violin and viola parts have a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

Ex. 13: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. III, bb. 136–139. The main motif of segment III. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 19.

Two alternating chords should be distinguished: G-sharp minor and B minor. Rhythm remains an important form-shaping factor; within a single phrase, the composer juxtaposes duple and triple meters.

A clear counterpoint for the violin part is the expressive melody of the cellos, which then takes over as the leading instrument. The nostalgic character of segment III is disturbed by exposing rhythmic elements and accents in all instrumental parts, which emphasises the dance character of the melody (see example 14).

Segment III flows smoothly into a section that functions as a link (bars 184–203) anticipating the appearance of segment I. The composer presents the motifs that appear in it, but they are hesitant, as if they resounded somewhere in the distance, just a memory. After this hesitation, segment I (bars 204–271) appears with renewed force, leading to a rhythmic finale (see example 15). However, it is not stormy and full of pathos until the very end. Ratusińska ends the work by gradually silencing successive instruments, leaving only the rhythmic part of the first violin and a delicate chordal accompaniment.

Ex. 14: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. III, bb. 178–183. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 9.

Ex. 15: *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra, mov. III, bb. 102–207. The return of Segment I. Source: Ratusińska, *Sinfonietta*, 26.

Movement III in the original recording of the quartet was entitled *Modlitwa*. Prayer is most often associated with reverie, calmness, which

is why the agogic marking *allegro* at the beginning of the movement may come as a surprise. However, it is worth noting that this prayer refers to the Tibetan culture. The repetitions of sounds saturated with aliquots played on empty strings are meant to allude to the Buddhist way of performing melody. The constant repetition of melodic and rhythmic structures allows one to reach a state close to trance, a deep contemplation of time.

According to the author, Weronika Ratusińska's *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra in the context of the (sub)genre is characterised by

- miniaturisation of motifs—this results from the minimal music or analogical assumptions;
- contrasting motifs;
- the chamber sound—the violin *solo* appears once;
- melody of a figurative character, mainly in the third movement;
- the occurrence of supplementary rhythms, imitations, numerous syncopations, dance and march rhythms;
- miniaturisation of instruments—a string orchestra;
- miniaturisation of form—this results from the transcription, the work consists of three movements;
- miniaturisation of duration—the duration of the work is about 20 minutes.

The analysis of Weronika Ratusińska's *Sinfonietta* for string orchestra presented above has revealed its most important aspects: the main motifs, the instrumentation or the manner of shaping the narrative. Although it is not a work originally intended for these instruments, it fits correctly into the main framework of the subgenre. As an extension to the string quartet, the composer increases the volume of sound (by introducing a double bass part) and applies *divisi* of the instruments, which also changes the texture. The author of the paper wonders whether there is another term in music literature for the transfer of an instrumental quartet or trio to a string orchestra. It is natural to consider the *Sinfonietta* as the most complete and precise transfer.

Most importantly, factors and elements typical of the genre of symphony are visibly subjected to the process of miniaturisation in this work (the number and duration of movements, micro-form elements such as motifs and the degree of their development). The author noted that in *Sinfonietta* there are sections intended to display the soloist, reminiscent of the tradition of the concerto. This is due to the exact

transcription of the quartet, but sinfoniettas originally written for orchestra also contain divisions of this kind, e.g. in the work of Grażyna Bacewicz (1935) or Aleksander Tansman (1978–79). This is primarily due to the fact that a string or chamber orchestra favours polyphonic textures with clearly delineated motifs and phrases. This makes it easier to expose the sound of the solo instrument.

The issues of transcriptions and original works require further and deeper research, which the author plans to undertake in the near future.

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