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## Silence as a symbol of death in the reflection of Gisèle Brelet and Tōru Takemitsu

### I

The connections between silence and death have been a recurring theme in human thought over the centuries. Each of these two notions entails absence/lack/loss, they are both related with crossing the borders – respectively of an audible sound and life – and similarly as our mind cannot ‘think’ death,<sup>1</sup> our ears cannot ‘hear’ silence.<sup>2</sup> The association between these two concepts can often be found in music, both in its philosophical and in its compositional spheres. Probably as one of the most common examples of linking them, the Baroque rhetorical figure *aposiopesis* (“a rest in one or all voices of a composition; a general pause”)<sup>3</sup> may be considered. Among the theoreticians writing about *aposiopesis* as a symbol of death and eternity were Johann

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- 1 Z. Bauman, *Mortality, Immortality and Other Life Strategies*, Stanford, Calif. 1992, pp. 12–13.; Polish edition (transl. N. Leśniewski): *Śmierć i nieśmiertelność. O wielości strategii życia*, Warszawa 1998, p. 20.
  - 2 J. Cage, *Silence. Lectures and writings*, Middletown, Conn. 1973 (First printing 1961), p. 8.
  - 3 D. Bartel, *Musica poetica: Musical-Rhetorical Figures in German Baroque Music*, Lincoln 1997, p. 202.

Andreas Herbst (1588-1666) in *Musica poetica* (1643) and Daniel Speer (1636-1707) in *Vierfaches musikalisches Kleeblatt* (1697).<sup>4</sup>

From the compositional point of view, many attempts to approach this problem long before and after Baroque era may be found. Considering only the pieces written as an homage after another composer's death as an example, the 14<sup>th</sup> century ballade *Armes, amours/O flour* by F[rançois] Andrieu with texts by Eustache Deschamps or *Cantus in Memoriam Benjamin Britten* (1977) by Arvo Pärt could be enumerated. The first piece was written as an elegy for the death of Guillaume de Machaut in 1377. A general pause in all four voices is used there after the words "Machaut" and "mort" (death).<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, the second work is literally framed by silence. Its score starts with dotted minim rest, after which a bell stroke in *ppp* succeeds, and ends with semibreve rest in string orchestra with dotted semibreve in *pp* resonating in bell part.<sup>6</sup> According to certain authors,<sup>7</sup> silence as a symbol of death was an important motif in the work of Anton Webern, considered as "the first modernist composer to scrutinize silence."<sup>8</sup> In this approach, it is usually associated with a loss of composer's mother Amalie von Webern, who died in 1906, when Anton was 23 years old. Among various other strands that could be mention here, representing death by a cinematic silence is also noteworthy.<sup>9</sup>

In this paper I am going to focus though on the philosophical attempts to the problem, made by the French musicologist Gisèle Brelet (regarded as one of the pioneers of 20<sup>th</sup> century discourse on silence) and the Japanese composer Tōru Takemitsu (whose silence-as-death concept had been noticed by Richard C. Littlefield and assessed as deserving future study, what gave birth to the concept of this paper).<sup>10</sup> I will try to discuss the similarities and differences between their reflec-

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 203–206.

5 E.T. Harris, *Silence as Sound: Handel's Sublime Pauses*, "The Journal of Musicology" 2005, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 525–526.

6 A. Pärt, *Cantus in Memoriam Benjamin Britten* (score), Universal Edition, Wien 1981.

7 See, for example, J. Johnson, *Webern and the Transformation of Nature*, Cambridge 1999.

8 D. Metzger, *Modern Silence*, "The Journal of Musicology" 2006, Vol. 23, No. 3, p. 334.

9 S. Link, *Going gently: contemplating silences and cinematic death*, in: *Silence, music, silent music*, N. Losseff, J. Doctor (eds.), Aldershot – Burlington 2007, p. 71.

10 R. Littlefield, *The Silence of the Frames*, "Music Theory Online" 1996, Vol. 2, No. 1, [online] <http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.96.2.1/mto.96.2.1.littlefield.html> [accessed: 04.04.2016].

tions, especially concerning the reasons for linking silence and death and the consequences that it entails.

It is assumed that the perception of silence as a symbol of death is observable especially in the so-called Western culture.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, manifestations of this relationship are present already in the Bible. For instance, Psalm 94 says: “Unless the LORD had given me help, I would soon have dwelt in the silence of death.”<sup>12</sup> In Psalm 115 we read: “It is not the dead who praise the LORD, those who go down to the place of silence”. Again, the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Book of Amos brings an evocative vision: “The time is ripe for my people Israel; I will spare them no longer. “In that day,” declares the Sovereign LORD, “the songs in the temple will turn to wailing. Many, many bodies — flung everywhere! Silence!” The discussed issue is also present in the thought of philosophers. What inevitably springs to mind is the famous phrase by Jean Jacques Rousseau: “An absolute silence leads to sadness. It offers an image of death.”<sup>13</sup> Immanuel Kant, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida or Giorgio Agamben – to name just few of them – could be mentioned here as well.

However, silence and death are linked also in other cultures. For example, in some parts of Africa the custom of keeping silence is observed during burial and funeral ceremonies, the birth process as well as initiation rituals.<sup>14</sup> It may be also useful to recall the notion of ‘Tower of Silence’ (‘dakhma’ in Persian) – a circular tower-like construction, typical for Zoroastrian tradition, that serves for exposure of the dead to the flesh-eating birds. This English term is attributed to Robert Xavier Murphy, the 19<sup>th</sup> century oriental translator, who noticed that in Persian and in Hindustani it is common to say that dead people are

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11 For research on death in Western culture see, for example: P. Ariès, *Western attitudes toward death: from the Middle Ages to the present*, Baltimore 1974; Polish edition (transl. K. Marczevska): *Rozważania o historii śmierci*, Warszawa 2007; M. Vovelle, *La Mort et l'Occident de 1300 à nos jours*, Paris 1983; Polish edition (transl. T. Swoboda et al.): *Śmierć w cywilizacji Zachodu. Od roku 1300 po współczesność*, Gdańsk 2004.

12 Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.®, [online] <http://www.biblica.com> [accessed: 04.04.2016].

13 J.-J. Rousseau, Ch.E. Butterworth (transl.), *The reveries of the solitary walker*, Indianapolis 1992, p. 70.

14 P. Peek, *Re-Sounding Silences*, in: *Sound*, P. Kruth, H. Stobart (eds.), Cambridge 2000, pp. 23–24.

silent ('Khâmush').<sup>15</sup> In this context, it will be particularly interesting to juxtapose the thought of Brelet and Takemitsu. As a composer, the latter takes a different perspective on music, and, despite his numerous links with the European tradition, he derives his inspiration from distant cultural roots.

## II

Gisèle Brelet is widely associated with the notion of musical time. Further, she is one of the first Western aestheticians who engaged in the discussion of the problem of silence. In 1946, she published a paper called *Musique et silence (Music and silence)*, translated into English 22 years later. The “faithful companion of music, which perpetually is born, dies and is born again” – this is one of the ways in which the French musicologist describes silence.<sup>16</sup> While sound is for her a symbol of what is current or has been realised, silence stands for what is indeterminate, for an infinite potential, a possibility and freedom. According to Brelet, silence yields a building material for a musical form (provided that there are not too many rests that could destroy it) – sounds vanish quickly, but a listener synthesises them through a silent mental activity. Thus, thanks to silence, a temporal musical order emerges, because an absolute continuity (only sounds) would be a disruption and immobility (here comes a polemic between Brelet and Bergson). Objectively, silence cuts continuity, it divides it. Subjectively, however, it reunites the musical form, it synthesises it spiritually.

Brelet distinguishes two basic, opposite types of silence: formal and expressive.<sup>17</sup> The first one may also be called full, peopled, integrated into the form; and the latter is empty, making the listener realise the subjectivity, a feeling of evanescence, expelling them from musical time. Here we experience the link between silence and death. Brelet notices

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15 J.J. Modi, *The Religious Ceremonies and Customs of the Parsees*, Bombay 1937, p. 56, [online] <http://www.avesta.org/ritual/rcc1937.pdf> [accessed: 04.04.2016].

16 G. Brelet, *Music and Silence*, in: *Reflections on Art: A Source Book of Writings by Artists, Critics, and Philosophers*, red. S.K. Langer (ed.), New York 1968, p. 103; original version: G. Brelet, *Musique et silence*, “Revue Musicale” 1946, Vol. 22, No. 200, pp. 169–181.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

that both the composer and the performer fear pauses and she offers a clear explanation of the reason behind this fear. As she writes, silences

always oscillate between two extreme values – nothingness or plenitude.<sup>18</sup> Silence [...] is the instant made manifest, and, because it is bound to the instant, that unreal division between the past and the future, silence is inseparable from unrest, from anxiety.<sup>19</sup>

It seems though that the key to understand the link among silence, death and fear in the thought of Brelet may be found in the last chapter of her extensive work *Le temps musical*, entitled evocatively “Death and transfiguration”. The beginning of its last paragraph, which has not been included in the aforementioned paper, reads as follows: “Like a musical work, our soul is an activity that falls into time, where it accomplishes its destiny...”<sup>20</sup> Therefore, Brelet equates musical time with inner standing in awareness (an equation which has been postulated by Hegel); she draws a direct parallel between the condition of life and the condition of a musical piece. Thus, we could say that like silence, which “always exists in music”,<sup>21</sup> every moment of our life is branded by inevitable death that ensues it. Fear of silence is then a fear of mortality.

However, Brelet does not stop here. Developing the narration on the polarity of silence, she writes that thanks to silence, which separates music from the external world and creates a peaceful atmosphere, the listener may hear the voice of his inner self, a dimension for which the music exists. Music confronts us with the possibility to meet ourselves. In this way, silence must be respected by the composer, the performer, and the listener. The internal peace of the performer directly before starting a piece may bring a clear confirmation that he or she is united with the audience, as far as the audience together with them are discovering this inner principle. The problem is that going deeply into ourselves is connected with the polarity that silence stems from – an array of opportunities and freedom or nonexistence, death. That is why some may try to avoid it.

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18 *Ibid.*, p. 117.

19 *Ibid.*, p. 106.

20 G. Brelet, *Le temps musical: essai d'une esthétique nouvelle de la musique*. [Vol.] 2, *La forme musicale*, Paris 1949, p. 752. (transl. by the author.)

21 G. Brelet (see note 16), p. 105.

As Brelet concludes, “sounds must fade away and die for the musical work to be born.”<sup>22</sup> She finds here a victory of mind over matter, spiritual essence over corporeality. That is also why the French philosopher paraphrases Platon, saying that as “Love is the son of poverty”, likewise “Music is the daughter of silence.”<sup>23</sup> Absence means here a spiritual possession; death in this sense is only a stage, an essential prerequisite for something more.

### III

Let us turn now our attention to Tōru Takemitsu, whose most extensive set of writings in English is entitled *Confronting Silence*. As he admits, the title alludes to his main task as a composer, that is: to search for a sound which is strong enough to confront silence. Contrary to Brelet, his reflections concerning silence are scattered over many sections of his work and presented in quite an unstructured manner. He doesn't consider this notion only in the context of music but, for example, art (Shūzō Takiguchi's sketches),<sup>24</sup> poetry (citing Pierre Reverdy's words: “Only silence is eternal”)<sup>25</sup> and language are also included. Takemitsu finds silence as “the womb” from which spoken languages that have no written version are born. He notices that the meaning of particular word depends there on very subtle factors, like the way of breathing (he gives examples of the language of the Hawaiians, Polynesians, Ainu and Swahili).<sup>26</sup> He also shares the suggestive biologists' report that the essence of the dolphins' communication “lies not in their sounds, but in the length of silences between the sounds.”<sup>27</sup> Moreover, Japanese composer criticizes Western musical notation because of putting the rests to the score “with statistical considerations, which is related to the unrestrained willingness to plan music.”<sup>28</sup> What may be unanticipated though is his following declaration: “From Cage I learned life – or

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22 *Ibid.*, p. 121.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 120.

24 T. Takemitsu; Y. Kakudo, G. Glasow (transl. and eds.), *Confronting Silence. Selected Writings*, Berkeley 1995, p. 16.

25 *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 16.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 83.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 88.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 5.

I should say, how to live and the fact that music is not removed from life.”<sup>29</sup> This approach is typical for Japanese culture; it would confirm the claims of some researchers, like Mikiko Sakamoto, that “Cage Shock” [a term coined by a Japanese music critic, Hidekazu Yoshida] “made Takemitsu return to his native Japanese music and art.”<sup>30</sup> With regard to the John Cage’s contribution in restoring the role of silence in Western music, it has been explicitly commented by Takemitsu in the following phrase: “he evoked silence as the mother of sound.”<sup>31</sup>

The quest of connections between silence and death in the thought of Takemitsu could be started with his following statement: “For a human being, there is always the duality of life and death. Music as an art form always has to connect vehemently with both.”<sup>32</sup> And, as Yuri Chayama – who wrote a doctoral dissertation dedicated to Takemitsu’s piano pieces – rightly noticed, since the composer compared once silence to death, it may imply combining sound and life. Moreover, Takemitsu defined art in an enigmatic way as “a human creature’s rebellion against silence. Poetry and music were born when man first uttered a sound, resisting the silence.”<sup>33</sup> It may be inferred then that art in his view is a rebellion against death. Thus, the goal of artists should be to achieve immortality – if not in a literal sense, it would be through their work. Takemitsu sees the source of this kind of thinking in the fear of silence, which “is nothing new since silence surrounds the dark world of death.”<sup>34</sup> It befits the bitter conclusion of the composer that contemporary arts often “have left the meaning of silence behind.”<sup>35</sup> Meanwhile, as he explains, “it is in silence that the artists singles out the truth to sing or sketch. And it is then that he realizes his truth exists prior to everything.”<sup>36</sup>

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29 *Ibid.*, p. 137.

30 M. Sakamoto, *Takemitsu and the Influence of “Cage Shock”: Transforming the Japanese Ideology into Music*, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Lincoln, Nebraska 2010, p. 58, [online] <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1022&context=musicstudent> [accessed: 04.04.2016].

31 T. Takemitsu (see note 24), p. 137.

32 T. Takemitsu, *About ‘Marginalia’*, in: “Takemitsu Toru Chosakushu”, Vol. 2, p. 207, Y. Chayama and M. Kimura (transl.; as cited in: Y. Chayama, *The Influence of Modern Art on Toru Takemitsu’s Works for Piano*, The University of Arizona 2013, p. 96.).

33 T. Takemitsu (see note 24), p. 17.

34 *Ibid.*

35 *Ibid.*

36 *Ibid.*

Takemitsu's view on silence as a symbol of death matches one of the four precepts of Japanese aesthetics, as distinguished by Donald Keene.<sup>37</sup> Apart from suggestion, irregularity, and simplicity, this Japanese scholar of American origin singles out perishability. A musical symbol of evanescence could be another manifestation of this ideal, alongside the analogy with cherry blossom, which is in bloom so briefly, or a comparison with a cracked tea bowl. This hypothesis is reinforced by Takemitsu himself, who asks rhetorically: "doesn't beauty exist by its own coming into being and disappearing?"<sup>38</sup>

In the centre of Takemitsu's meditations on silence there is, of course, the Japanese idea of *ma*, broadly described by many authors.<sup>39</sup> The composer defines this ambiguous notion in a following way: "It is here that sound and silence confront each other, blending into a relationship beyond any objective measurement."<sup>40</sup> In the light of these words the title of his book – *Confronting silence* – becomes a clear allusion to the idea of *ma*. At first glance it might even appear analogical to Brelet's concept of background silence that perpetually surrounds music. "Each sound, each phrase, has a halo of silence" – writes the French author.<sup>41</sup> However, there is a strong clash in the perception of the relationship between silence and sound. Surprisingly, the Japanese composer adds that "sound, confronting the silence of *ma*, yields supremacy in the final expression."<sup>42</sup> Contrary to Brelet, he gives precedence to the sound and stops at this sensory impression.

#### IV

While discussing the links between Brelet and Takemitsu, one should point out the vocabulary that the French author uses. Many times she writes about "perpetual rebirth" of music and sound, saying that the essence of the musical form is "to be perpetually nascent and renas-

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37 D. Keene, *Japanese Aesthetics*, "Philosophy East and West" 1969, Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 293–306.

38 T. Takemitsu (see note 24), p. 21.

39 See, for example, J. Lee Chenette, *The concept of ma and the music of Takemitsu*, Grinnell 1985.

40 *Ibid.*, p. 51.

41 G. Brelet (see note 16), p. 106.

42 T. Takemitsu (see note 24), p. 51.



cent” and comparing the sound which “never stops dying and being born again” to the mind.<sup>43</sup> This may resemble in some way the idea of reincarnation – a word that Brelet also uses. She explicitly refers to East (with a broad geographical understanding of the word) when she talks about the need of mental preparation of the listener. In this context, she mentions the Hindu and Tibetan tradition of “the birth of sound”, treated as a religious mystery.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, in 1946, the same year that she published *Musique et silence*, Brelet had a paper released dedicated to the problems for the Western listener with perception of music that she called ‘exotic’.<sup>45</sup> She referred there to some examples of music from Bali (Javanese gamelan), China (*orgues à bouche chinois* – probably sheng), Japan (Nō theatre) and Tibet (religious polyphony). It proves that Eastern cultures – despite the poor state of research on them that was available at the time – were in the scope of Brelet’s scientific interests. It is also worth noticing that Brelet’s *Esthétique et création musicale* (1947) was translated into Japanese already in 1969 and the Brelet’s thought is nowadays extensively referred to by the Japanese scholars.<sup>46</sup> It would be tempting to dwell on this “Eastern motif” for a bit longer, especially because a few years after publishing Brelet’s *Musique et silence*, John Cage, regarded as the pioneer of transplanting the Eastern idea of silence onto the Western culture, released his *Lecture on Nothing*.<sup>47</sup> However, the idea of reincarnation is not alien also to the European philosophy, starting as early as Pythagorean school. Besides, it is generally recognised<sup>48</sup> that Brelet was inspired by French spiritualism, for which continuity is one of the key concepts. This notion deserves a yet closer look by thorough analysis of other Brelet’s writings and studies on them.

Interestingly, regardless of their cultural sphere of influence or origin, Brelet and Takemitsu arrive at the conclusion that a common

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43 G. Brelet (see note 16), p. 106.

44 *Ibid.*, p. 104.

45 G. Brelet, *Musiques exotiques et valeurs permanentes de l’art musical*, “Revue Philosophique de la France et de l’Étranger” 1946, Vol. 136, No. 1/3, pp. 71–96.

46 See, for example, the writings by: T. Hori, M. Satō, M. Shibaike, K. Tanogashira, S. Yamashita.

47 The lecture was delivered in 1949 or 1950 at the Artists’ Club in New York City (Eighth Street). See: J. Cage, *Silence: lectures and writings*, Hanover, N. H. 1973 (First printing 1961), p. 1x, 126.

48 See, for example, E. Fubini, *History of music aesthetics*, London 1990.

feature for silence and death is the fear that it causes among people, including composers, performers and listeners. They also both describe silence as a unique source of creativity. Surprisingly though, the Japanese composer does not specify if he means only people from the Western culture; neither does he suggest how to deal with this fear of silence, other than quoting the aforementioned verse from the French poet Pierre Reverdy: “only silence is eternal.”<sup>49</sup> This may remind a manifestation of Buddhist silence on metaphysical issues, stereotypically interpreted by some Western scholars as the evidence of lack of metaphysical discourse in Buddhist teaching.<sup>50</sup> Meanwhile, as already underlined, a strand of eternity and the benefits from exploration of our inner self in silence are clearly present in Brelet’s thought.

## V

At the end of this paper I would like to mention another prominent composer and writer who explored the connection between silence and death – Raymond Murray Schafer. Similarly as in the case of Takemitsu, his thoughts on silence are a series of loose observations, although brought together in one short chapter of his book *The soundscape*, entitled “Silence”. Among other things, the Canadian composer draws attention to the appreciation of silence in the religious context. Calling it “the tongue of angels”, he lists great “masters of silence”, like, among others, Lao-Tzu, Rumi, Kirpal Singh and Christian mystics (Angela of Foligno, Meister Eckhart, John of Ruusbroec, or the anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*). At the same time he underlines the importance for mental and spiritual condition of quietening in the bosom of nature or in the silent places. He also mentions the role of silence in

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49 T. Takemitsu (see note 24), p. 7.

50 See, for example, J. Y Park, *Buddhism and postmodernity. Zen, Huayan, and the possibility of Buddhist postmodern ethics*, Lanham 2008, pp. 11–30 (Chapter 1: *The Silence of the Buddha*). For the idea of “soundless music” in the tradition of Zen Buddhism, see, for example, R. Skupin, *Muzyka ciszy i cisza w muzyce kultur Orientu*, in: *Wokół ciszy. W stulecie urodzin Johna Cage’a*, M. Grajter (ed.), Łódź 2013, pp. 131–141.

Rilke's *Duino Elegies* or simultaneous discovery of the value of silence in music by Anton Webern and in psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud.<sup>51</sup>

It should be emphasised that one of the subsections of Schafer's work is entitled "Western man and negative silence". According to the author, the goal of avoiding silence in our society is "to nourish [the] fantasy of perpetual life."<sup>52</sup> Schafer combines silence with death and nothingness, perceived as "the eternal threat to being."<sup>53</sup> This use of silence as the symbol of nothingness, also present in Brelet's thought, seems to be quite paradoxical. It is generally recognised that silence always mean something, depending on the context, for example of surrounding sounds. Feeling of nothingness would be then nothing but the mental impression. Schafer also notices that making sounds serves as a remedy for loneliness. Here, the words of Takemitsu concerning the origins of poetry and music sound as if they were a counterpoint to this statement.

The quotation from Schafer could be used as a motto to sum up this paper: "If we have a hope of improving the acoustic design of the world, it will be realizable only after the recovery of silence as a positive state in our lives."<sup>54</sup> The first step is to realise why it is perceived in a negative way and then to consider the benefits of silence. The case of Brelet and Takemitsu seems to be an interesting attempt to answer these questions, although – as we could see including the elements of Schafer's thought – not the only one. Extensive anthropological and psychological research in this area is also necessary. As one might say, *Memento mori* – *Memento silentii*.

## Abstract

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The link between silence and death has been a recurring theme of human thought and can often be found in reflections on music. Among many attempts to approach this problem, the author of this paper focuses on those done by Gisèle Brelet and Tōru Takemitsu. The "faithful companion" of music which "perpetually is born, dies and is born again"

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51 R.M. Schafer, *The soundscape: our sonic environment and the tuning of the world*, Rochester, Verm. 1994, pp. 253–259.

52 *Ibid.*, p. 256.

53 *Ibid.*, p. 257.

54 *Ibid.*, p. 259.

– this is one of the ways in which French musicologist describes silence. “For a human being, there is always the duality of life and death. Music as an art form always has to connect vehemently with both” – notices Japanese composer, who in another statement combines silence with “the dark world of death”. Interestingly, both Brelet and Takemitsu arrive at the conclusion that such connotations may well be the source of the fear of silence that affects some composers or performers. Despite different contexts, some analogies to their thought – like connecting silence with nothingness and loneliness – may be also found in the Canadian composer Raymond Murray Schafer’s writings, presented fragmentarily in the last subsection. The differences in the notion of the problem between the authors are, moreover, discussed in this paper.

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## Keywords

silence, death, Gisèle Brelet, Tōru Takemitsu, Raymond Murray Schafer

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## Abstrakt

### Cisza jako symbol śmierci w refleksji Gisèle Brelet i Tōru Takemitsu

Związek pomiędzy ciszą i śmiercią to wciąż powracający motyw w ludzkiej myśli. Często znajduje on swoje odzwierciedlenie w muzyce. Spośród licznych prób zmierzenia się z tą kwestią autor niniejszego artykułu skoncentrował się na tych podjętych przez Gisèle Brelet i Tōru Takemitsu. „Wierna towarzyszka” muzyki, „stale rodząca się, umierająca i odradzająca się na nowo” – oto jeden ze sposobów, w jaki ciszę opisuje francuska muzykolog. „Dla człowieka zawsze będzie istniał dualizm życia i śmierci. Muzyka jako forma sztuki musi się łączyć z całą żarliwością z każdym z tych elementów” – zauważa japoński kompozytor, który w innej wypowiedzi łączy ciszę z „mroczną krainą śmierci”. Co ciekawe, zarówno Brelet, jak i Takemitsu dochodzą do wniosku, że tego rodzaju powiązania mogą stać się źródłem strachu przed ciszą, wpływającego na kompozytorów bądź wykonawców. Pomimo odmiennych kontekstów pewne analogie do ich poglądów – na przykład łączenie ciszy z nicością i samotnością – można odnaleźć w pismach

kanadyjskiego kompozytora Raymonda Murraya Schafera. Zostały one pokrótce omówione w ostatnim podrozdziale. W artykule zaprezentowano także różnice w spojrzeniu autorów na podjęty problem.

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cisza, milczenie, śmierć, Gisèle Brelet, Tōru Takemitsu, Raymond Murray Schafer

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