

Constructivism in the works of Iannis Xenakis as a new link between avant-garde art and music

Kinga Krzymowska

Institute of Musicology, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland
kinga.krzymowska@gmail.com

Abstract

The aim of this presentation is to show a new aspect of avant-garde in the works of Iannis Xenakis in relation to the Russian constructivism. Both the above-mentioned 20th-century art movement and the composer present an undeniably innovative character. It manifests itself not only in a radical rejection of traditional systems and the application of various scientific theories in the creative process in order to develop a formal language of art, but also in the synthesis of non-representational art, science and technical knowledge as well as fascination with modern technologies and machines.

During the presentation, a short description of Russian constructivism will be given, with a special emphasis put on its aforementioned avant-garde character, which may also be considered at the level of ideology. Afterwards, parallel assumptions will be made on the level of music as an attempt to create more accurate definition of constructivism in music. Subsequently, the main theses of constructivists will be found in particular works of Xenakis, as follows: *Achorripsis* with its sound pattern based on the theory of probability, *Nuits*, portraying non-representational, pure art, *Nomos Alpha* constructed with use of utterly innovative music material, *Metastaseis* with clusters of glissandi reflecting the structure of Philips Pavilion – a sample of Xenakis's architectural output, examples of space, tape and electro-acoustic music and finally *Polytopes*, spectacles of light and sound, remaining his most astonishing interdisciplinary work.

This comparative approach will reveal connection between avant-garde in art and music.

CV

Kinga Krzymowska - born in 1985, a mathematician and musicologist, Ph. D. candidate in the Institute of Musicology at the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin (Poland), where she gives a history of Polish music class. She also cooperates with Lublin's Cultural Guide. She graduated with honours on the basis of the dissertation entitled Constructivism in the works of Iannis Xenakis. The results of her research on constructivism in music were presented at several local conferences. Her current research concerns scientific theories in the music of the 20th century.