

# Pianistic reflections of Dinos Constantinides' creative musical language during 1965-2009

Christina Sidiropoulou

MMUS Piano Performance, LLCM, T.V.U.

Doctoral Candidate

Department of Music Science and Art, University of Macedonia.

*The present article aims to make the acquaintance of the prolific and multifarious Dinos Constantinides and highlight his creative ideas, inquiries and expressive modes. In particular, it investigates the use of piano in his compositions for solo, chamber music, and large orchestral ensembles and their attainment within the broader frame of the composer's output and the categories of his structural syntax. Furthermore, this article studies the variety of instrumentation in accordance with multiple versions of specific works as well as the stylistic content that reflects the Greek, socio-psychological, musical, literary, historical and mythological contaminants, references, origins and referrals that contribute to the configuration of the composer's personal style. An understanding of aspects of his personality, thinking and ultimately his oeuvre is pursued by tracing his sources of inspiration, his concerns, his aesthetic and expressive pursuits and the ways they merge and transform in his compositional output.*

Keywords: Piano Works, Instrumental Piano Ensembles, Thematic Units-Cycles, Greekness, Socio-psychological Content.

An inspection of the creative output of the approximately two hundred and seventy works of Dinos Constantinides, with reference to the composer's<sup>1</sup> electronic archive and information provided by him, detects three solo piano pieces. However, the piano has an active and vigorous presence in his vocal and instrumental chamber music as well as in his orchestral ensembles. Moreover, an examination of the texture and referential content of the compositions establishes the possibility of subsuming a large number of them in thematic units and formal cycles of versions, mutations, transcriptions or arrangements, which bring to prominence the musical material through their wide range of sources of inspiration, references, backgrounds and citations. From this exuberant entirety, this study focuses on and presents the ***solo piano works*** as well as the ***instrumental ensemble works with piano*** into two broad thematic sets, the first of which includes those involving ***elements of Greekness (Hellenity)***, while the second consists of works with ***socio-psychological content***. In addition to the original versions of the works, their revisions and transformations in variant structures or forms are investigated and listed in chronological order and the correlations between them are examined. References to thematically corresponding vocal compositions are limited to those having related instrumental versions. It is also noted that elements of the musical texture and structure are given based on the available sources.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.magnipublications.com>

## A. Thematic Set with Elements of Greekness (Hellenity)

### I. Thematic Unit with reference to Greek Traditional Music

Dinos Constantinides, as a Greek of diaspora, not only preserves but also incorporates and proclaims indisputably and diversely to the world music community, the style, character and content of his Greek origins. His inspiration draws notably on the musical elements of Greek traditional dances and songs, blending them with his contemporary personal compositional language, which is already present in his early works. After completing his core music studies in Ioannina and Athens, the composer moved to the U.S.A., where he was awarded a B.M. Diploma in Violin by the Julliard School, studied chamber music with members of the Julliard quartet and attended composition classes at the University of Brandeis from 1957 to 1961. A short return to Greece (1961), was followed by his permanent settlement in the U.S.A. (1963), where he continued his violin studies and received a Master's Degree from the University of Indiana in 1965, as well as a Ph.D. degree in Composition from Michigan State University in 1968. During his doctoral studies, D. Constantinides inaugurates his first period in composition, which includes, according to his own classification, the category of atonal, twelve-tone and serial works. The *Concerto for Violin, Cello, Piano and Orchestra*, op.LRC7, 1967, was written as his doctoral dissertation and is typically mentioned as the representative work of this period. However, the year 1965 marks the beginning of his compositional creation, with his first work for solo piano in the form of variations.

#### I.1. Forms of *Variations*

The **Theme and Variations for Piano**, op.LRC1, is both the starting point for classifying the works of D. Constantinides in chronological order (Symeonidou 1995: 213-214) and his first reference to Greek tradition in terms of style and content. In the initial modal thematic material one can identify the pianistic formation of the original melodic tune of the *pentasimos* popular folk dance and song *Sou 'pa mana m'* (I told you mama) of the region of Tsakonia of the Peloponnesian Kynouria, regarded as a unique sample of resonance of the equivalent ancient Apollonius *paionikos* rhythm in five beats (Liavas 1993: 10-11). The elaboration of the primary thematic statement's characteristic asymmetrical meter of 5/8 results in a series of mutations in the form of ten variations, with various metric structures, most of which succumb internally to an expanded range of mixed meters: *variation II* in 4/4 and 2/4, *variation III* in 5, 4, 1/4, *variation IV* in 3,4/4, *variation V* in 5/8, *VI* in 3,2 / 8, *VII* in 3/4, *VIII* in 6/4, *IX* in 3/4, 3/8 and *X* in 3/4, 3/8, 6/8, ending in 3/8. This rich metric structure, combined with the rhythmic diversity of the linear contour and the harmonic language that employs chord planning and techniques of bitonal effects, takes full advantage of the widest range of the piano's timbral palette, creating a highly energetic, rhythmic, modal atmosphere.

Even though *Theme and Variations* forms chronologically the first work of the composer, it appears to establish both stylistically and characteristically a broad category of works, which D. Constantinides himself incorporates in his second compositional period. In the texture of these works, modal scales, folk harmonic

designations and rhythmic formations with backgrounds and references to Greek folk music are interwoven with contemporary elements of complex chords and scales (Symeonidou 1995: 214).

The **Grecian Variations for Solo Viola and Piano**, op.LRC106b, 1991, also falls within this context, as a later version of the orchestral *Grecian Variations for Solo Viola and String Orchestra*, op.LRC106a of 1987, a work that is not only based on Greek folk melody but also recruits and processes modal and rhythmic material from Greek folk music in general. The work was commissioned by the violist Jerzy Kosmala, who premiered it in October 1987 in Poland and to whom it was dedicated. Constantinides' personal blending of formulated forms of traditional Greek music and his reference to its style is proclaimed by the element of national identity found in the titles of many of his works. Furthermore, he is echoing the creative assimilation of compositional trends and techniques of the integration of the *folk melos* in the contemporary scholar's musical expression, already present in the works of representatives of the Greek National School of Music in the early 20th century.

## **I.2. Forms of Folk Concerto**

The work **Homage - A Folk Concerto**, orchestrated both *for Flute and Orchestra or Strings*, op.LRC110a, as well as for **Flute and Piano**, op.LRC110b, was written in 1988. Its title reflects its traditional character and style, inspired by, without borrowing actual material from, Greek folk music. According to the composer's description, the first movement, *Prelude*, is simple and unaffected, with some bursts of excitement, leading to the second without interruption. The next two parts, *Idyll (Cadenza)* and *Dance*, predispose and foreshadow the programmatic atmosphere of their nature in the descriptive titles referring to characteristics of the Greek countryside and traditional music, respectively. The second movement is constructed as a free, improvisational and expressive cadence-like flute solo part, supported by the piano's four-bar chord progression, while the final movement, according to the composer, is a frenzied dance, typical of the Greek islands' folk music. However, in the course of the work, the intrusion of impressions reminiscent of music by J.S. Bach becomes apparent. The work, intended to be a musical portrait dedicated to Dr. Everett Timm, former Dean of the LSU School of Music, is a personal tribute and token of appreciation for his contribution to music in Baton Rouge<sup>2</sup>.

## **II. Thematic Unit with reference to Epirus**

The origins of Dinos Constantinides can be traced from Epirus to Marmara in the region of Ioannina on his father's side and the town of Arta on his mother's. He was born, lived his childhood and took his first violin lessons in Ioannina until the end of the war, whereupon his family moved to Athens. The composer already conveys a specific geographic reference, and cites the name of his homeland, during the decade of 1970-1980 in a series of instrumental and vocal ensembles, highlighting at the same time elements of the Greek countryside as well as traditional, folklore, ancient, Byzantine and modern music.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.magnipublications.com>

## II.1.Cycle of Instrumental Ensembles *Mountains of Epirus*

The first implicit reference to **Epirus** is made in the fifth study of the composer's *20th Century Studies for Two Violins*<sup>3</sup>, subtitled *V. Pentatonic*. The first edition of the *Studies* was *18 Studies*, op.LRC14a, in 1970, and the second, *14 Studies*, op.LRC14e, in 1979. The work is a collection of studies for two violins, employing various compositional techniques of the 20th century and written for the educational purpose of acquainting violinists with contemporary techniques of playing. The *Pentatonic* study served as a springboard for a range of various wordings, forms, mutations and elaborations. The **Pentatonic for Solo Violin and Piano**, op.LRC19, of 1971, replaced by the work **At the Village** in 1980 and incorporated as the first movement of the **Mountains of Epirus for Violin and Piano**, op.LRC73a, is described as a starting point. Its title distinctively highlights the geographical area of the composer's origins, indicating that not only does he not forget his roots, but also that he ensures to clearly declare them worldwide. The work, written in memory of the composer's parents, is modal and employs typical characteristics of Greek folk rhythms, syncopated formations and polychordal sonorities. The composition was originally written in the same year as the orchestral form of *Mountains of Epirus for Violin and Orchestra*, op.LRC73b, as a commission for John Demos, professor at Georgia State University, and the Greek Orthodox Clergy-Laity Congress<sup>4</sup>.

Among the timbral versions of the first movement of the work *Mountains of Epirus for Violin and Piano*, op.LRC73a, are transcriptions entitled **At the Village for solo Oboe / Clarinet / Viola and Piano**, op.LRC69. Moreover, subtitled as **Mountains of Epirus** and bearing the same description as to musical language and content, are the following three works: **Concertino for Euphonium or Tuba and Piano**, op.LRC70a; *Concertino for Euphonium or Tuba and Wind Orchestra*, op.LRC70b, 1980; and *Concertino for Euphonium or Tuba and Orchestra*, op.LRC70c, 1981 and 1995.

## II.2.Cycle *Songs from Epirus*

Under the title **Four Songs from Epirus** (*Tessera tragoudia gia tin Epiro* in Greek), D. Constantinides created a series of vocal and instrumental ensemble works in response to Georgia Tentas' request to compose songs for voice and percussion, made while Constantinides was in Thessaloniki for seminars and concerts. The composer chose four poems by Georgia's father Nikos Tentas<sup>5</sup> from *Essay: Epirus in the poetry of Chrysanthi Zitsea*<sup>6</sup> (2001), thereby accomplishing the simultaneous meeting of

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<sup>3</sup> Drawing from the primary material of the *Studies*, D. Constantinides created a series of works entitled *Dedications* with various orchestral versions (see <http://www.magnipublications.com>).

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.magnipublications.com>

<sup>5</sup> The novelist Nikos Tentas (1935-2008) served as president of the Society of Authors and Writers of Epirus and editor of the literary magazine *Epirotika Grammata*. He was regarded as a focal person for the Literature of Epirus as he successfully united men of letters, arts and sciences (Nei Agones Epirou, 21.10.2008).

<sup>6</sup> Chrysanthi Lambros Economides (1902-1995), under the pen name Zitsaia, demonstrates her origins from Zitsa. She belongs to the pre-war generation of Thessaloniki's poets 1920-1930 (<http://www.translatum.gr/forum/index.php?topic.9084>).

three Epirots, since the poetess' penname reveals the same regional origins. The **Four Songs from (for<sup>7</sup>) Epirus for Voice (Soprano) and Percussion**, op.LRC214a, based on Chrysanthi Zitsea's poems, and the **Songs from Epirus for Voice and Piano**, op.LRC214b, were written in 2002. The following versions of the work are part of the same cycle, written in the same year: **Songs from Epirus for Alto Saxophone and Piano**, op.LRC214c, as a transcription of the latter, and the trio arrangements **Songs from Epirus for Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano and Piano**, op.LRC214d, and **Songs from Epirus for Soprano, Alto Saxophone and Piano**, op.LRC214f, written *for the ensemble Kelados*, as noted on the inside cover of the musical text.

In the version for *Alto Saxophone and Piano*, op.LRC214c, the A section of the ternary form of the first part, entitled *Tragoudi se Palio Skopo (Song on an Old-Tune)-For Chopin*, comprises two simple melodies. The first, in melancholic recitative style, is structured and unfolds over a very slow and characteristic rhythmic ostinato accompaniment of alternating chords of thirds and sevenths, while the romantic, lyrical and nostalgic mood of the second melody's motion is supported by accompanying classical patterns. The atmosphere brightens with the interference of the B fast dance section in 7/8 meter and the indication *Fast - Greek Dance*, whereas the return to A is achieved by inverting the tunes' order, moving from the lyrical description of the evocative questions to the slow stochastic and prose nature of the introduction, which also serves as an epilogue.

In the second part, entitled *O Horos – Gia ton Elliniko Horo* (The Dance - For the Greek dance), an introductory prelude pattern in 2/4 leads to the Greek dance of 7/8, marked by the indication *Greek Dance*. This dance is identified as an explicit melodic reference to a traditional tune, while its flow is interrupted by intermediate returns to the initial introductory motive. During its appearances, this motive is then mutated in metric instances of 3/4 or and 5/8, while the middle section of the dance in 4/4 seems to incorporate the weight of life, displaying rhythmically the poetry's meaning.

The slow rhythmic *Skiniko* (Scene) bears Zitsea's reference to a *Delphic Hymn*. The solo *recitative* character of the initial piano part abounds in dense, linear, rhythmic figurations flowing within mixed meters of 5, 6, 4 and 7/4, reflecting impressions of the melismatic language of hymns and traditional songs of Epirus, and allows expressive gestures which enhance the improvisational free atmosphere and mood. The composer employs extensive contemporary techniques, mostly developed in America during the 20th century, indicated as *knock the piano wood with knuckles*, thus allowing the piano to demonstrate its percussive character in rhythmic syncopated patterns. In contradistinction, his apparent use of arpeggiated broken chords may be considered as a reference to the sound of an ancient string instrument. Thus merges the past with the present, grasping together ancient Greek, Byzantine, traditional, western and modern symbols and elements.

The slow and free fourth movement *Sta Panigiria-Glendi kai Prosefhi* (In Festivities - Feast and Prayer) integrates its recitative style in 4/4 time. Both the piano and the saxophone support the memory's flashback with a mere lyrical accompaniment. The

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<sup>7</sup> **Constantinides** uses the preposition "for" in the Greek title.

simple symbolic image of the A section is interrupted and contradicted by the B section, the *Revelry* of the lively dance in 7/8. The composer borrows material from the second song and indicates that its origin is a traditional Greek dance. The festive atmosphere, carrying musical memories and images of the nature and social life of Epirus, is repeated twice, with the second part extended. The contemplative A is recapitulated and expanded, too, while a very slow movement in the style of prayer is introduced by retarding the rhythmic pace. The epilogue returns to *a tempo*, echoing the melodic material of the prayer with a slight variation.

According to the composer, the most recent and best work, relative to this cycle, is a small trio titled **Greek Reflections for Violin, Clarinet and Piano, op.LRC230**, written for the Trio Verdehr in 2006.

### III. Thematic Unit with Ancient Greek references

#### III.1.Cycle of Instrumental Ensembles *Rhapsody*

The *Composition for Flute, Harp and Percussion, op.LRC27*, of 1973, revised in 1978, formed the starting point for the cycle **Rhapsody**. This composition is an intensely lyrical work, with several changes in atmosphere and color effects based on the intervals of the seventh and fourth. Its harmonic language draws from and is based on the quartal system, while the instrumental parts are densely interwoven into a unique texture. The work was commissioned by the harpist Pol Sofras (Charlotte, North Carolina). During 1977-1978, Constantinides arranged the work in four different timbral versions of instrumental chamber music ensembles entitled **Rhapsody for Oboe or Flute and Harp or Piano, op.LRC47**. Their character, as the title indicates, is rhapsodic and inspired by Homer's *Iliad* (Constantinides 1997: Program notes). Subsequent editions and revisions included in the same cycle are **Rhapsody II for Flute and Piano, op.LRC167a**; **Rhapsody II for Flute and Harp, op.LRC166a**; **Rhapsody II for Oboe and Piano, op.LRC167b**; and **Rhapsody II for Oboe and Harp, op.LRC166b**, 1998.

#### III.2.Trio Cycle - *Oracle of Delphi*

Constantinides' reference to the **Oracle of Delphi** is made with his homonymous trio for **Violin, Clarinet and Piano, op.LRC146a**, written in 1994. In 1995, it formed the first movement of the **Trio No. 3 for Violin, Clarinet and Piano, op.LRC152**, under the title **Study III**, together with a second movement titled *Finale*. The piece was commissioned by the Verdehr Trio, which premiered it at Weill Recital Hall of New York's Carnegie Hall in the same year. The first movement won first prize in the *Delius Composition Contest*.

The **Trio No. 3 for Violin, Alto Saxophone and Piano, op.LRC165**, of 1998, is a subsequent version in which the composer replaced the clarinet with an alto saxophone. The work is based on a folk-style modal melody which highlights and brings to prominence the composer's Greek heritage. This folk-like tune appears as a solo part on the clarinet or alto saxophone at the beginning of the work. The diverse treatments of parts of the melody and the use of the intervals of fourths and fifths throughout the piece result in the creation of new tonal possibilities. After a third

elaboration in 1999, the distinct first movement was introduced in a trio version employing the flute, entitled **Oracle of Delphi (Study III) for Violin, Flute and Piano**, op.LRC146b.

#### IV. Thematic Unit with references to Modern Greek History

##### IV.1. Works for Two Pianos

The **Suite for Two Pianos** or '*Diakos Suite*', op.LRC98, of 1985, consists of five movements: *I. Legend*, *II. Memories*, *III. Dance*, *IV. Song*, and *V. Festivities*. The suite was derived from incidental music composed for the Greek play *Diakos*, for ensemble orchestra, which was performed in New York by the Lemos Theater in 1961, following the orchestral version of 1980, '*Diakos Suite for Orchestra*', op.LRC71. The work focuses on the life of the Greek hero Athanasios Diakos, whose bravery and courageous actions inspired his compatriots in the early stages of the Greek revolution against the Turkish conquest in 1821. The music, which employs Greek rhythms and modal melodies, is meant to depict and portray the character of rural Greece. The piece was commissioned by the Mangos Duo Piano. In his *Diakos Suite*, the composer uses the same musical ideas as those in the vocal work *Four Greek Songs for Soprano and Piano*, op.LRC23a, of 1972.

The **Dance for Four Harps**, op.LRC95, of 1985, forms an orchestral mutation of one of the movements of the *Diakos Suite for Two Pianos*. It serves as a setting of traditional Greek dances, sharing their modal quality, their lively, mixed meter rhythms and their metric changes. This piece was written for and premiered by the New York Harp Ensemble.

The **After Victory Celebration for Two Pianos**, op.LRC123, 1990, was commissioned by the Mangos Piano Duo and is a transcription for two pianos of the fourth movement of the *Symphony of Leventias (the Brave) for large orchestra, opus 2* by Manolis Kalomiris (1883-1962), inspired by the Greeks' struggle for freedom. The symphony was written during the years 1918-1920 and was dedicated, according to the composer's note, to the poet Kostis Palamas. The fourth movement, entitled *Nikitiria*, is based on the Byzantine hymn *Ti Ypermacho Stratego ta Nikitiria* interwoven in a symphonic texture with the heroic theme of the first part. The composer first conceived of this symphony in Macedonia and wished to transmit musically the thrill inspired by Greek bravery in all aspects of life, joy, war, dance, love and death<sup>8</sup>.

#### V. Thematic Unit of Mixed Effects

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<sup>8</sup> The A part *Heroica kai Pathitika (Heroic and Passive)* sings of the energy of youth and the joy of passion and victory. The B part *To kimitiri sti vounoplaga (The cemetery on the hillside)* has been written based on the prose poem: *Pera sti vounoplaga kimounte palikaria (Beyond the mountainside are deeply sleeping the lads)*, conveying the thrill felt by the composer when passing a minimal military cemetery in the region Skra of the Macedonian front of 1918. The C part *Scherzo-glenti (festivity)* depicts a picture of lads celebrating, while imparting their yearning and fatalism (www.kalomiris.gr// M.Kalomiris, Sheet Project, Publisher Greek Compositions, Greek Composers Union, Athens 1956).

## V.1.Cycle *Mutability*

In the series of works entitled **Mutability**, Constantinides assembles heterogeneous sources of inspiration. Ancient Greek philosophy is implicitly reflected in his meditative contemporary lyricism through his direct reference to the poem *Mutability*, by the radical and lyrical poet Percy Bysshe Shelley<sup>9</sup> (1792 England-1822 Italy), and its blending with elements of contemporary Greek and European romantic music. The concept of mutability, or its forms of fluidity and change, appears as one of the central axes of Shelley's philosophy and world theory, around which both his personal as well as his literary, social and political thought, his action and struggles, were formed and developed.

*The flower that smiles today Tomorrow dies;  
All that we wish to stay Tempts and then flies..<sup>10</sup>,*

The pre-Socratic Heraclitus' (544-484p.Ch.) doctrine of flux grounded the universal law in ceaseless change and instability, viewing the world as a being that changes constantly and presents itself within new forms. That doctrine is reflected in the poem by Shelley, who studied ancient Greek philosophers, Plato especially. Everything runs and nothing is stable. *Πάντα..ρεῖν, εἶναι δὲ παγίως οὐθέν. Panta..rein,einai the pagios outhen* (Arist. Peri Ouranou III 1 298 b 30). *Τὰ ὄντα ἰέναι τε πάντα καὶ μένειν οὐδέν. Ta onta ienai te panta kai menein ouden*. Entities always move and nothing remains still. *Πάντα χωρεῖ καὶ οὐδέν μένει Panta chōrei kai ouden menei*. Everything changes and nothing remains stable (D.402 A. Platon.Krat.401 in Tseler-Nestlé 1980:55, 56-57).

In addition, in the musical texture of Constantinides' Mutability cycle, one can discern the well-known melody of *Poppy*, written in 1936 by the composer Attik<sup>11</sup> and one of the most important representatives of Greek popular songs of the early 20th century. The inspiration and choice of the specific initial thematic material, which the composer then transforms into a contemporary scholarly form, emerges, obviously, and due to the ratio it presents to the content of its lyrics. In addition to the pluralism of references and citations of the musical text one can detect echoes of the third movement *Funeral March* of the *Sonata for Piano op.35, B flat minor* by Chopin, which contributes to the romantic, lyrical and yet melancholic atmosphere.

The first work of the series is the **Second Quartet - Mutability for Soprano and String Quartet**, op.LRC61, of 1979. According to the composer's<sup>12</sup> description, its three movements, fast-slow-fast, focus on the idea of constant change, but are also interrelated by the melody *Poppy*. This melody mainly appears in the solo part, but is

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<sup>9</sup> Shelley is one of the most important British Romantic Writers, acclaimed for his classical lyric poetry anthologies, long poetic works, dramas, prose works, essays, novels, and reviews, as well as his translations ([www.bartleby.com/139/Shelley](http://www.bartleby.com/139/Shelley) Percy Bysshe, Biographical Sketch, Norton 1999a, b: 689-701, 789-802).

<sup>10</sup> This poem is included in the collection *Posthumous Poems* of Shelley, published in 1824 (<http://oll.libertyfund.org>).

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.magnipublications.com>



diversely transformed and dispersed among the stringed instruments throughout the composition (Constantinides 1994: The Compositions).

The duo versions of the work include the **Mutability Fantasy for Voice and Piano**, op.LRC57, of 1979; the **Mutability Fantasy for Solo Alto Saxophone and Piano**, op.LRC66, of the same year, which was revised in 1995; the vocal **Mutability Fantasy for Bass Baritone and Piano**, op.LRC59, of 1979, which was commissioned by Robert Glass; the **Mutability Fantasy for Solo Euphonium and Piano**, op.LRC67, of 1979 (1995); and the **Mutability Fantasy for Solo Tuba and Piano**, op. LRC68, of 1979 (1995).

Further orchestrations for instrumental ensembles that draw on the work for voice and piano include *Mutability for Alto Saxophone and String Quartet*, op.LRC58; *Mutability for Clarinet and String Quartet*, op.LRC60, of 1979; *Mutability for Horn and String Quartet*, op.LRC101, of 1986; as well as *String Quartet No. 2 (Mutability)*, op.LRC 62, of 1979.

## **B. Thematic Unit with Social and Psychological References**

### **B.1.Cycle *Impressions-Madness-Dream-Resignation***

Three works involve the piano in the thematic cycle *Impressions-Madness-Dream-Resignation*, as indicated by their homonymous movements as well as their stylistic, formal and structural relevance: a solo piano version in the sonata form and two subsequent trio versions.

The **Sonata for Solo Piano**, op.LRC49, was originally written in 1977 (1981), while its final revised version was created in 1999. Its programmatic nature, as indicated by the titles of its four movements, *Impressions-Madness-Dream-Resignation*, places the sonata in a **thematic unit of works with social and psychological references** expressing the composer's social sensitivity to and concerns especially for the psycho-emotional experiences, worries and struggles of young people.

More specifically, its movements, which are to be played without interruption, provide programmatic references to the intense mood swings characteristic of youth and, according to the composer's description, suggest the cycle of emotional states experienced by a young man during his efforts to integrate and survive in a society governed by and causing confusion. The work has an eclectic nature and employs a variety of styles. The different atmospheres of impressions, insanity, dream and resignation are composed through its diverse musical language, embodying in its harmonic texture quartal sonorities, polychords, clusters, and horizontal sequences, which mix chromaticism, preference to intervals of fourths, and traditional folk tunes. The flowing harmonic environments are actively supported by a flexible and unstable rhythmic texture, which is subject to constant modulations of the metric pulse and full of polyrhythmic structures and restless horizontal and vertical rhythmic configurations, adding to the compositional style an improvisatory character, a more inconsistent place for expression or the symbolic gesture of confusion. In addition, sound impressions and timbral landscapes resulting from the employment of extensive contemporary notational techniques add to the mixing and reconciliation of the

heterogeneous elements. Conclusively, the emotional states, stresses and concerns of the socialization of the youth's creative nature are achieved through the blending of the old and traditional with the new and contemporary, following an emotional as well as romantic point of view harmonized with contemporary demands. Is it a dreaming, insane, resigning soul? The *Sonata*, which lasts 17 minutes, was written for the pianist Nancy Saxon and, according to the composer's notes, the first performance was given by Jon Klibonoff at Carnegie Recital Hall in November 1979 (Constantinides 1997: Program notes).

The **Trio No.2 for Violin, Cello and Piano**, op.LRC43a, dedicated to the composer's mother, Magdalene, was composed prior to the *Sonata* in 1976, according to the composer's electronic archive, while the second elaboration of its four movements *Impressions-Madness-Dream-Resignation* of 1988, an expanded re-composition of the *Piano Sonata*, was completed between the two treatments of the *Trio No.2 for Cello, Clarinet and Piano* version.

The **Trio No.2 for Cello, Clarinet and Piano**, op.LRC43b, was initially written in 1982, whereas the most recent revision of the musical material of the same homonymous movements, *Impressions-Madness-Dream-Resignation*, as a developed and extended re-composition of the *Sonata* for piano, lasting 18 minutes, was made by the composer in 1995.

## **B.2.Cycle Suite for a Young Man**

The **Suite for a Young Man for Solo Piano**, op.LRC74, of 1980 (2000) is also performed as a single unified work of five movements. It could be described as a programmatic musical psychogram, which recounts the socialization process of a young man, attempting to portray the various stages of adolescence and express its emotional turbulence using a contemporary compositional language. In the first movement, *Proud and Solemn*, chordal formations in different rhythms and registers constitute the compositional material that D. Constantinides enlists to convey the pleasure and tranquility of the self-absorbed youth in his moments of autonomy, as enabled by his introversion. In the second movement, entitled *The First Kiss*, the musical language employs expressive modes that combine tenderness with anxiety and even nervousness.

The third movement, *Beginning Dance Lessons*, correlates the perceptible embarrassment, shyness and lack of concentration characteristic of youth with the suggestion of a developing self-consciousness and experiences of frustrations, repulsions, denials and cancellations, occurring within the disciplined socialization pursued through the dance lessons. It somewhat foreshadows the last movement of the work, the so-called *cotillions*, which were developed and implemented in the U.S. as group exercise classes employing dance as an interactive tool for practicing various modes of behavior, eliminating psychological inhibitions as well as teaching important social skills<sup>13</sup>. A dazzling surprise effect is incorporated here by borrowing blue notes (3rd, 5th, or 7th) from the blues and jazz.

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<sup>13</sup> [www.websters-online-dictionary.org/definition/cotillion](http://www.websters-online-dictionary.org/definition/cotillion).

In the fourth movement, having the composite title *Clusteritis*, Constantinides formulates a kind of musical pun, interlocking the dominant extended technique of the simultaneous group resonance of dissonant pitches of the *clusters* with the suffix "itis", as symbolic of a disease. Thus, the composer formulates musically, as he himself states, the ambiguous question *Whose sickness is this?*<sup>14</sup>, paralleling the need of contemporary composition to use the technique of *clusters* as a necessary stage in its evolution, with the pathological, addictive and compulsive exploration and clumsy time distribution of adolescents in the company of their peers, disregarding the quality of their encounters.

The last movement *Cotillion*<sup>15</sup>, an elaborate, sophisticated dance with reference to the modern standard form of official graduation dances, is the longest in duration and the most brilliant movement of the suite, in which the young man appears to be balancing, reconciling with himself and reassembling his own personality, experiencing moments of joy and gladness despite all his troubles. In the movement's ternary structure ABA with Coda, A forms the biggest part and B recapitulates material from the previous four movements, while the Coda, by accentuating the musical material of A, gradually increases the intensity that charges the festive epilogue. Furthermore, *Cotillion* reclaims a unifying role by restating material from the entire suite, while its extended length balances the duration of the first four movements.

In this unified musical progression, starting with the appearance of autonomy in the first movement and the subsequent experience of changes, concerns, controversies, emotional turbulences and problems, up to the celebration of the achievement of balance and maturity in the last important movement, the composer expresses his affection and tenderness, but also his belief in the necessity of the healthy psychological and behavioral development of young people, proclaiming the suite as a paean to life and growth. The work was commissioned by LSU pianist Daniel Sher, who premiered it in September 1980 in the Community Concerts in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

### ***Orchestral Versions of the Suite***

In 1981, Constantinides wrote *Suite No.2 for Orchestra*, op.LRC78a, for two percussion, piano, and orchestra. The homonymous five movements are played, according to him, with little interruption, but they are clearly distinguished as separate entities, in which each title indicates and reveals the moods and impressions created by the music.

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.magnipublications.com>.

<sup>15</sup> The term refers to a kind of *contre danse* in France in the 18th and 19th centuries, possibly associated with the English rural country dances of the 16th and 17th centuries. It has the form of a structured, vigorous circular dance, in which four couples follow various shapes and intricate steps. A *quadrille* is the same type of dance performed in a square formation (Ulrich Michels 1995: 423). The social function of *contre danses* is indicated by the connections and flirting between the dancers, while its name reflects the momentary display of petticoats during rotations when changing partners. The dances spread to America around 1772.

In 1990 the composer reviewed and re-orchestrated a second version of the work as **Suite No. 2 for Wind Orchestra or full Orchestra, Harp, Piano**, op.LRC78b, consisting of homonymous distinct movements performed without pauses.

## **Epilogue**

The search for pianistic reflections in the exuberant creative output of Dinos Constantinides revealed a significant number of works embodying elements of national identity. This finding prompts further thematic inquiries into his oeuvre that focus on the particular components of the compositional forms of the instrumental, mostly, ensembles with piano. The identification, classification and accessioning of these works into thematic units reveals the emergence of various forms and aspects of Greekness in the composer's total output, highlighting them as beloved and favorite elements and key components of his musical language, playing vital roles in a great part of his works through 2009. Nevertheless, antiquity and history, tradition and literature are blended in the musical and thematic references and referrals of Constantinides' personal contemporary, lyrical, neo-romantic expression and are transformed as a worldwide musical proclamation of Greekness.

Furthermore, the concept of mutability, as an essential determinant of his musical language, can be traced in the assembly of heterogeneous components from the wider range of the present and past, in the content, form and style and the multitude of versions, instrumentations, re-compositions, reviews, redefinitions, revisions and correlations constituting the works' cycles.

Last but not least, the composer's allusions to socio-psychological references and issues reveal his particular sensitivity to social concerns attuned to his time.

The great number and breadth of the fusions of Greek and world literature occurring in Constantinides' vocal works involving the piano could not be included in the present study. Therefore, further in-depth exploration of the wealth of forms, content, texture and nuances creatively transformed within the composer's distinctive style remains an area for inquiry.

The task of discovering and deepening such a wide range of multidimensional emanating sources of inspiration and expression of the internationally distinguished Greek composer, conductor and educator actively and effectively contributes to enhancing the modern Greek scholarly geography within the broader frame of world music.

**Comprehensive Table** including original titles, durations and editions of the works<sup>16</sup>.

## **A.Thematic Set with Elements of Greekness**

### **I.Thematic Unit with reference to Greek Traditional Music**

#### **I.1. Forms of *Variations***

*Theme and Variations for Piano, solo, op.LRC1*, 1965, (9min.), Ed. Philippe Nakas.  
*Grecian Variations for Solo Viola and String Orchestra, op.LRC106a*, 1987, (20min.), Ed. The Composer's Library (Magni).

*Grecian Variations for Solo Viola and Piano, op.LRC106b*, 1991, (20min.), Ed. The Composer's Library (Magni).

#### **I.2. Forms of *Folk Concerto***

*Homage - A Folk Concerto for Flute and Orchestra (or Strings), op.LRC110a* , 1988, (Ob(2)[opt] FHn(2)[opt] Orch/Strings), (16:35min.), Ed. Connors Publications.  
*Homage - A Folk Concerto for Flute and Piano, op.LRC110b*, 1988, *I.Prelude II. Idyll (Cadenza), III. Dance*,(16:35min.), Ed. The Composer's Library (Magni).

## **II.Thematic Unit with reference to Epirus**

### **II.1.Cycle of Instrumental Ensembles *Mountains of Epirus***

*20th Century Studies for Two Violins (18 Studies), op.LRC14a*, 1970, (10min), The Composer's Library (Magni).

*20th Century Studies for Two Violins (14 Studies), op.LRC14e*, (10min), 1979, The Composer's Library (Magni).

*Pentatonic for Violin and Piano, op.LRC19*, 1971, (5min), The Composer's Library (Magni).

*Mountains of Epirus for violin and piano, op.LRC73a*, 1980, (8min) The Composer's Library (Magni).

*Mountains of Epirus for violin and orchestra, op.LRC73b*, 1980, Ed.The Composer's Library (Magni).

*At the Village for solo Ob/Clar/Viola, Piano, op.LRC69*, 1980, (4min.), Ed. The Composer's Library (Magni) Publications.

*Concertino for Euphonium or Tuba and piano, op.LRC70a*, 1980, (7min.), Ed.The Composer's Library (Magni).

*Concertino for Euphonium or Tuba and Wind Orchestra, op.LRC70b*, 1980, (7min.), Ed.The Composer's Library (Magni).

*Concertino for Euphonium or Tuba and Orchestra, op.LRC70c*, 1981,(1995) (7min.), Ed.Cimarron Music and Reproductions (Whaling Music Publishers).

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.magnipublications.com>

## **II.2.Cycle Songs from Epirus**

*Tessera Tragoudia gia tin Epiro-Four Songs for Epirus for Soprano and Percussion*, op.LRC214a, 2002, in C. Zitsaia's poems, *I.Tragoudi in Palio Skopo*(Song on an Old Tune)-For Chopin, *II.O Horos- Gia ton Elliniko Horo* (The Dance - For the Greek dance), *III. Sciniko* (Scene), *Delphic Hymn*, *IV.Sta Panigiria-Glenti kai Prosefhi* (In Festivities - Feast and Prayer), (12min), copy manuscript.

*Songs from Epirus for Voice and Piano*, op.LRC214b, 2002, (12min).

*Songs for Epirus for Alto Saxophone and Piano*, op.LRC214c, 2002, (12min.), Ed.Magni Publications.

*Songs from Epirus for Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano and Piano*, op.LRC214d, 2002, (12min.).

*Songs from Epirus for Soprano, Alto Saxophone and Piano*, op.LRC214f, 2002, (12min.), Ed.Magni Publications.

*Hellenic Musings for Violin, Clarinet and Piano*, opus LRC230, 2006, (4min).

## **III.Thematic Unit with Ancient Greek references**

### **III.1. Cycle of Instrumental Ensembles *Rhapsody***

*Composition for Flute, Harp and Percussion*, op.LRC27, 1973 (1978), Ensemble, (4min.), Ed. Seesaw Music Corporation.

*Rhapsody for Oboe or Flute and Harp or Piano*, op.LRC47, 1977 (1978), Ensemble , (6:30min.), Ed. Seesaw Music Corporation.

*Rhapsody II for Flute and Harp*, op.LRC166a, 1998, revised edition, Ensemble, (6:45min.), Ed. Conners Publications.

*Rhapsody II for Flute and Piano*, op.LRC167a, 1998, revised edition, Ensemble, (6:45min.), Ed. Conners Publications.

*Rhapsody II for Oboe and Harp*, op.LRC166b, 1998, revised edition, Ensemble (6:45min.), Ed. Conners Publications.

*Rhapsody II for Oboe and Piano*, op.LRC167b, 1998, revised edition, Ensemble (6:45min.), Ed. Conners Publications.

### **III.2.Trio Cycle -*Oracle of Delphi***

*Trio No. 3 for Violin, Clarinet and Piano*, op.LRC152, 1995, *I.Study III*, *II. Finale*, Ensemble (1995, clarinet; 1998, alto sax), (17min.), Ed.Conners Publications.

*Trio No. 3 for Violin, Alto Saxophone and Piano*, op.LRC165, 1998, *I.Study III*, *II.Finale*, Ensemble (1995, clarinet; 1998, alto sax), (17min.), Ed.Conners Publications.

*The Oracle at Delphi (Study III) for Violin, Clarinet and Piano*, op.LRC146a, 1994, Ensemble, (9:15), Ed.Conners Publications.

*The Oracle at Delphi (Study III) for Violin, Flute and Piano*, op.LRC146b, 1999 Ensemble, (9:15), Ed.Conners Publications.

## **IV.Thematic Unit with reference to Modern Greek History**

### **IV.1.Works for Two Pianos**

***Suite for Two Pianos “Diakos Suite”, op.LRC98, 1985, I. Legend II. Memories III. Dance IV. Song V. Festivities, (12min), Ed.The Composer’s Library (Magni) Listed, Diakos Incidental music for Chamber Orchestra, 1961, (20min).***

***Diakos Suite for Orchestra op.LRC71, 1980, (3 Picc, 2EH, 2BCl, 2CBsn-4,3,3,1-Guitar,Timp, 2Perc,Harp, Piano-celesta, Strings), (15min), Ed. The Composer’s Library (Magni).***

***Dance for Four Harps, op.LRC95, 1985, (4min.), Ed. The Composer’s Library (Magni).***

***After Victory Celebration, op.LRC123, 1990, (Transcription for two pianos, 4<sup>th</sup> movement of the Symphony of the Brave, 1920 by M. Kalomiris), Ensemble, (8min.), Ed.The composer’s library (Magni).***

## **V.Thematic Unit of Mixed Effects**

### **V.1.Cycle Mutability**

***Mutability for Soprano and String Quartet, op.LRC61,(1979), Poetry P.B.Shelley, (15min), Ed.The Composer’s Library (Magni).***

***Mutability Fantasy for Voice and Piano, op.LRC57, (1979), (15min), Ed. The Composer’s Library (Magni).***

***Mutability Fantasy for Solo Alto Saxophone and Piano, op.LRC66, 1979 (1995), (5min.), Ed. Connors Publications.***

***Mutability Fantasy for Bass Baritone and Piano, op.LRC59, (1979), (15min.), Ed. The Composer’s Library (Magni).***

***Mutability Fantasy for Solo Euphonium and Piano, op.LRC67,1979 (1995), (5min.), Ed. Connors Publications.***

***Mutability Fantasy for Solo Tuba and Piano, op.LRC68, 1979 (1995), Ed. Connors Publications.***

***Mutability for Alto Saxophone and String Quartet, op.LRC58, (1979), Ensemble (15min.), Ed. The Composer’s Library (Magni).***

***Mutability for Clarinet and String Quartet, op.LRC60, (1979), Ensemble (15min.), Ed. The Composer’s Library (Magni).***

***Mutability for Horn and String Quartet, op.LRC101, (1986), Ensemble (15min.), Ed. The Composer’s Library (Magni).***

***String Quartet No.2 (Mutability), op.LRC 62, (Violin 2, Viola, Cello ), 1979, (20min) Slow-Fast, Slow, Scherzo-Very Fast, Moderate, Ed. The Composer’s Library (Magni)***

## **B.Thematic Unit with Social and Psychological references**

### **B.1.Cycle Impressions-Madness-Dream-Resignation**

***Sonata for Solo Piano, op.LRC49, 1977, I.Impressions-II.Madness-III.Dream-IV.Resignation, (17 min), Edition Seesaw Music Corporation.***

***Trio No. 2 for Violin, Cello and Piano, op.LRC43a, 1976 (1988), Impression-Madness-Dream-Resignation, (18min.), Ed. Seesaw Music Corporation.***

***Trio No. 2 for Cello, Clarinet and Piano, op.LRC43b, 1982, rev. 1995, Impression-Madness-Dream-Resignation, (18min.), Ed. The Composer’s Library (Magni).***

### **B.2.Cycle Suite for a Young Man**

***Suite for a Young Man, Solo Piano***, op.LRC74, 1980 (2000), I.Proud and Solemn, II.The First Kiss III. Beginning Dance Lessons IV. Clusteritis V. Cotillion, (12min) Ed.Musica 21 Publishing.

***Suite No.2 for Orchestra***, op.LRC78a, 1981, I. Proud and Solemn II. The First Kiss III. Beginning Dance Lessons IV. Clusteritis V. Cotillion, (Perc(2) Piano Orch), (12min), Ed. The Composer's Library (Magni).

***Suite No. 2 for Wind Orchestra (or full Orchestra)***, op.LRC78b, 1990, I.Proud and Solemn II. The First Kiss III. Beginning Dance Lessons IV. Clusteritis V. Cotillion, (WOrch/Orch Hrp Piano), (12min), Ed. The Composer's Library (Magni).



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