

Distortion of reality in painting interpreted musically in String Quartet “Dali Miniatures” by Inna G. Onofrei

*“Alice laughed. ‘There’s no use trying,’ she said.
‘One can’t believe impossible things.’*

*I daresay you haven’t had much practice,’ said the Queen.
‘When I was your age, I always did it for half-an-hour a day.
Why, sometimes I’ve believed as many as six impossible
things before breakfast. There goes the shawl again!’”
L. Carroll. “Alice in the Wonderland”.*

Due to changes in the modern technology of creating a drawing, many artists now are experimenting with multidimensional images. Aram Vardazaryan an Armenian artist, graphic designer and experimenter, tried to connect different paintings by Salvador Dali, which depicted the silhouettes of moving elephants in one piece, creating the concept of the multiplicity of mirror reflections of walking elephants. Aram Vardazaryan turned to the philosophical and mythological ideas, according to which the Earth rests on the backs of elephants. In this interpretation, the Earth is represented by individual islands: symbols of world religions that are interconnected over time. There is also another point of revelation of the ideas and images of Dali's paintings. Modern American composer Inna Onofrei presents her interpretation of the artist's miniatures. Inspired by the creativity of the surrealist, she composed the collection “Miniatures of Dali” (2018) for string quartet, the performance of which should be accompanied by the broadcast of images corresponding to the paintings.

The interpretation of the works of surrealism is one of the most complex, illusive and at the same time interesting tasks. In the perception of masterpieces of art, such as those from the Renaissance, the plot is our pillar. In the case of surrealism, when the creator captures visions, fantasies, illogically combines elements of reality and seeks to “express the true functioning of thought” (“The Manifesto of Surrealism” by A. Breton, 1924), the task of correctly perceiving and interpreting seems impossible. “The fact that at the time of working on my paintings I myself do not understand their meaning does not mean at all that this sense does not exist in them,” said Salvador Dali. In search of this “meaning”, Inna Onofrei engages in a polemic with Aram Vardazaryan in the fourth part of her cycle. In the digital painting “Caravan” in the style of Dali, the artist depicts

elephants walking on stilts across the desert with monumental structures on their backs, on which the dome, the Gothic spire, the obelisk of the pope, the pyramid and even the Buddhist temple are distinguishable. All elephants walk one after another in a strong line and rise above the endless desert, in which small human figures bustle like ants. The music of Inna Onofrei reflects the eastern flavor of this picture, including a flexible melody with the color of the Phrygian fret and a syncopated rhythm, similar to the dance movement of the tango. Before us appears the design of the picture in the form of ten variations on a rhythmic theme. Each new detail appearing in a separate variation adds its own zest to the movement. For example, at the very beginning, the viola with polyphonic counterpoint is added to the theme of the first variation performed on the pizzicato in the cello part, creating the effect of a massive load that is pulled by an elephant. Then a descending theme is introduced in the part of the second violin, gradually revealing the image of elephant legs, which grow into tall tree trunks, making them giants. The voices of string instruments switch between each other, creating a stunning ensemble of diverse themes that resemble the motifs of Gregorian choirs, oriental melodies superimposed on an unchanging rhythmic bass. The feeling of the approaching and gradually receding caravan procession creates dynamic shades. The unconventional approach to understanding surrealist paintings by Dali is also observed in other parts of the cycle.

Analyzing the first part of the cycle of Inna Onofrei, based on the painting by S. Dali "Galatea with Spheres" (1952), we see that it is contrasting, ternary form with expressive, laconic themes. Short swirling motifs of triplets, smooth growth and fading of sound in each phrase, as well as the canonical imitation technique "draws" spheres. *Sforzando* strings creates the effect of attraction and collision of particles. The middle part of *espressivo* introduces the character of a waltz and a romance into the theme, hinting to the listener about the image of the Muse (feminine). The perspective of the whole picture is created by the theme that takes place in the cello part, built in the form of short chromatically descending lines of motifs that dissolve (*into pianissimo* dynamics) by the end of the first movement of the cycle.

The second movement is based on the painting "Disintegration of the Persistence of Memory" (1952-1954), interpretation of the popular "Persistence of

Memory" (1931). The choice of Dali's later work is not accidental: after 20 years, the artist's view of the world and art has changed. Dali's unconditional interest in the achievements of science, a rethinking of the organization of space, and the general philosophical idea of the subjectivity of the concept of time, are visible. The "bricks" of our world (atoms), the "fluidity" of time: these and other abstract images are literally drawn by the music of the second part of the cycle. The work is based on a mono-theme which permeates the clock rhythm on the pizzicato strings, alternating with a glissando in semitones, reminiscent of the flowing Camembert cheese, which Dali was inspired to paint. The expansion and narrowing of the temporary space is achieved by changing the durations in one microtone (half, triplets and then sixteenths) and by changing time signatures (5/4, 4/4, 2/4) to create the effect of accelerating movement. The image of clocks located in different dimensions is embodied in four voices, each leading their own themes.

Each theme has a specific syncopated rhythm, which reveals the idea of subjectivity of the flow of time. The game with the concept of time can be seen even in the structure of the work. The number of measures that hold the theme increases, creating the effect of expansion. In the last twelve measures, the theme is divided into four motifs, which in itself is symbolic (referring to four hours in the picture), pausing them for a whole beat, and ends with a four-voice glissando (C, D, Es), leaving the listener with a question about the essence of the concept of time.

A bridge that symmetrically separates two fast movements (second and fourth) is the third movement, the Meditative Rose, at the pace of *Lento*. The name of the picture corresponds with the content of the music. The theme moves up and down by whole and half tones, harmoniously sending us to the melodic polyphony of the Middle Ages. This technique, associated with the interval ratio of the leading lines (the first and second violins, the viola and cello) moving in pure intervals of fourths and fifths, creating an unusual sound. In the composition of the painting by Dali, the flower petals reflect each other. This moment is represented in the music by variations of the theme. The artist depicts a floating scarlet rose against the background of two elements - earth and air. Inna Onofrei divides the space into three dimensions by changing the meter: 3/4 with a theme of triplets draws hills; 4/4 depicts endless sky; and the main

theme in 6/4 describes the central image of a floating rose. The symbolism of the flower in the world of art is interpreted differently. According to the myth of Adonis, the red rose is a symbol of rebirth and all-conquering love. In Christianity the rose symbolizes martyrdom and mercy, like a flower grown from the drops of Christ's blood. Of course the rose stands for the Virgin Mary, "a rose without thorns" a symbol of chastity. The Rose of Dali resembles the oriental lotus, a symbol of life-giving energy, a state of meditation and peace which is also conveyed in the music of Inna Onofrei.

The fifth movement of the cycle revealed the theme of war, reflected in the work of Dali. Inna Onofrei artistically connected with the artist who lived in Paris at the beginning of World War II. The painting "Face of War" (1940) is striking in its emotional intensity, so Inna Onofrei chose it for the final part. The composer managed to convey a sense of horror, piercing the one looking at the picture. The image of the endless lifeless desert is revealed with the help of an empty and *ostinato* sound. The theme itself consists of intonations associated with angry crying. Its descending line gradually brings to culmination the whole movement which is striking in its tension, reminiscent of a heart-rending cry. Separate details of the image - the multiplying eyes, mouth - are reflected with the help of canonical imitation, and by the thirds, which are the basis of the thematic grain, smoothly passing one into another, emphasizing the alarming mood. Salvador Dali conveyed these emotions with wrinkles that plowed his forehead and snakes wriggling around his face.

All parts of the Dali Miniatures series are built on the principle of contrast, but at the same time, repeating techniques (rhythmic, polyphonic) suggest the unity of purpose. The composer managed to catch not only the mood of the artist's paintings, but also literally draw images, details and perspective. Inna Onofrei has set herself a difficult task: to interpret the pictures of different periods of creativity with contrasting plots, combining them into a musical cycle. Thus, she was the first to reflect the surreal world of Salvador Dali in sounds.