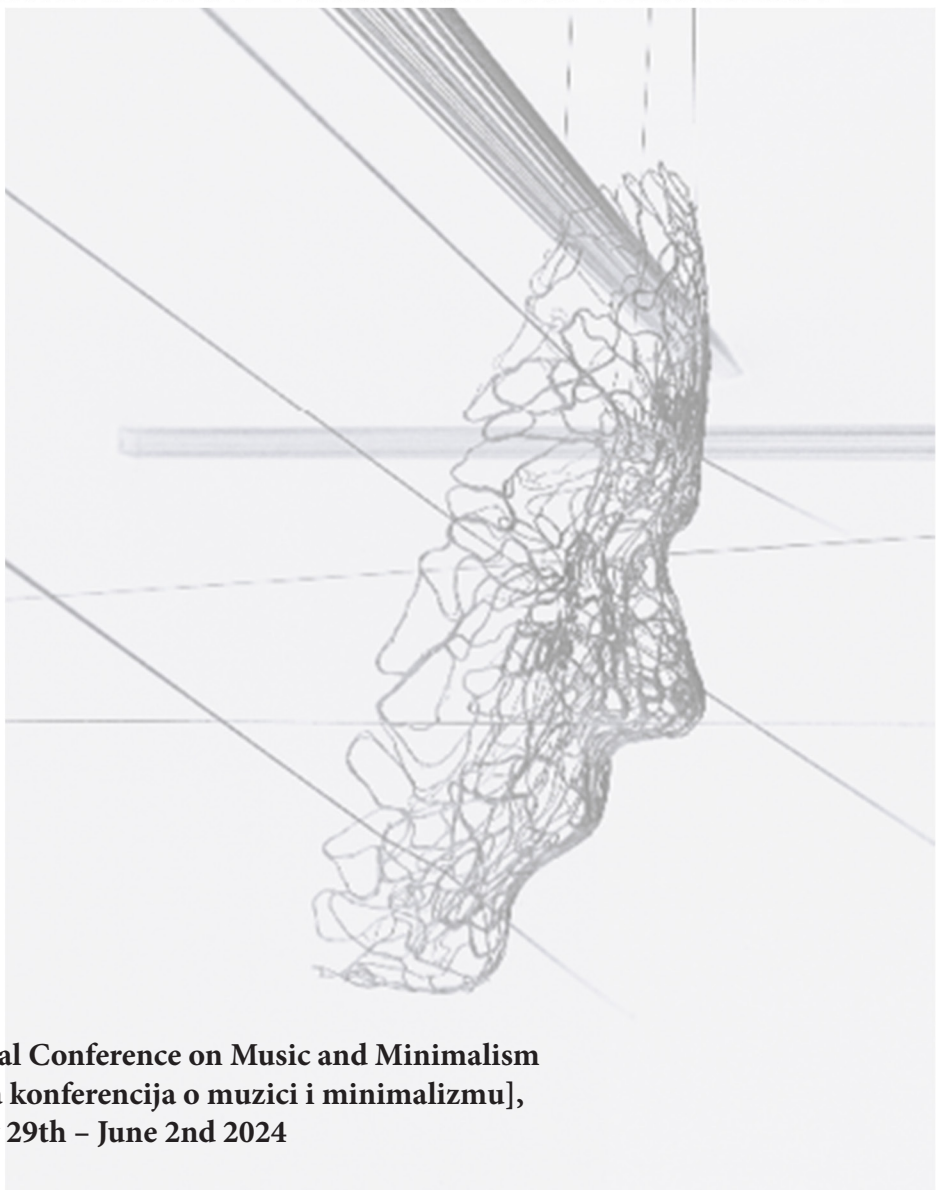


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**The Ninth International Conference on Music and Minimalism
[Deveta međunarodna konferencija o muzici i minimalizmu],
Belgrade, Serbia, May 29th – June 2nd 2024**

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**THE NINTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
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Musical minimalism, *postminimalism*, *new simplicity*, *new classicism* or *holy minimalism*, were the words on everyone's mind across Belgrade as the The Ninth International Conference on Music and Minimalism begun on May 29th. The biennial conference – in its Belgradian edition – was organized by the International Society for Minimalist Music² based in Cardiff (UK), the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts and the Institute of Musicology SASA, as well as Belgrade Festivals Center (CEBEF), the Cultural Center *Parobrod* and Music School *Mokranjac* in Belgrade (Serbia). The Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Science, Technological Development and Innovation of the Republic of Serbia, the Secretariat for Culture of the City of Belgrade, the Organization of Music Authors of Serbia SOKOJ, European Commission – program Erasmus+, and Emory University (Atlanta, USA) financially supported this conference (Figure 1).

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2 Society's official website: <https://www.minimalismsociety.net>.



Institute of Musicology
Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts

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Девета међународна конференција о музици и минимализму
The Ninth International Conference on Music and Minimalism

МИНИМАЛИСТИЧКА ПРОЖИМАЊА
MINIMALIST INTERSECTIONS



EMORY
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BELGRADE FESTIVALS CENTER

Parobrod

29.5–1.6.2024.

Figure 1. Conference poster © Muzikološki institut SANU / Institute of Musicology SANU.

The ambitious program (fifteen panels, three keynote lectures, five lecture recitals, one roundtable, five concerts, as well as the exhibition and the screening of a documentary film at the Cultural Center *Parobrod*) gave the international public an opportunity to get acquainted with musical minimalist production all over the world as well as engage in discussions on musical minimalism's seeming omnipresence in one form or another, intersecting with other genres of music and other art fields.



Figure 2. This way ... © author of the review.

The exhibition (Figure 2) *The Origins of Yugoslav Musical Minimalism* held in Cultural Centre *Parobrod* (from May 25th until June 3rd) set the stage for the following conference, introducing the public to the musical minimalism in Yugoslavia, and to the work of Belgradian group *Opus 4* and its members – composers Vladimir Tošić, Miroslav Miša Savić, Miodrag Lazarov Pashu, and Mili-mir Drašković. The exhibition was the brainchild of Laura Emmery and Ivana Miladinović Prica and it, among other things, highlighted the importance of the Student Cultural Centre at the end of 1960s and during the 1970s – a unique, safe space for artists to experiment, explore, reevaluate and redefine their art.



Figure 3. Keynote speakers (from left to right: Christophe Levaux, Kevin C. Karnes and Elena Dubinets) © Muzikološki institut SANU / Institute of Musicology SANU.

Keynote lectures (Figure 3) were held by Christophe Levaux (Université libre de Bruxelles, Belgium), Kevin C. Karnes (Emory University, Atlanta, USA) and Elena Dubinets (London Philharmonic Orchestra, UK). Levaux gave a lecture *On the Establishment of a Musical Concept: Minimalist Music Through the Lens of Science and Technology Studies* exploring the socio-technical construction of musical categories with a particular focus on the advent, as well as the triumph, of Minimalist music. Listeners, as well as readers cognizant of Levaux's book *We Have Always Been Minimalists: The Construction and Triumph of a Musical Style* (published in 2020 by University of California Press), seized the opportunity to engage in fruitful discussion with the author. Karnes presented to the audience the rich *DJ Culture, Black Market Sounds, and "Minimalistic Hardcore Sequencer Music" in Riga – with Excursions to Tallinn and Berlin – from 1975 to 2000* giving a thorough insight into underground music festivals, the spread of new tech-

nologies leading up to the birth of House music, the musicianship of composer/performer duo Hardijs Lediņš (1955–2004) and Kaspars Rolšteins (b. 1971) and the unique soundscapes of their work. Karnes explored the notion of *minimalist hardcore sequencer music* (term coined by Berlin DJ Westbam). Lastly, Dubinets posed the question “*What Do We Talk About in Times of War?*” *On the Ukrainian Minimalism*, presenting the palette of Ukrainian composers who utilized minimalist techniques in their works where the techniques, in junction with referentiality, consonant music language and elements of Ukrainian folklore, resulted in soundscapes containing important messages for the listener. Dubinets also provided context for the Ukrainian composers in relation to Western and Russian minimalism and presented the works of Oleh Bezborodko (b. 1973), Oleksandr Shymko (b. 1977), Maxim Kolomiiets (b. 1981) and others.

Five lecture recitals were given by Viktor Lazarov (Faculty of Music, University of Montreal, Canada) on *Stylistic Evolution and Diversity in Piano Music by Opus 4: 1988–2023*, Paul David Kean (independent performer/researcher, South Wales) on *The Complete Solo Piano Music of John Adams: Evolutions in Style and Performance Practice*, Ivana Medić (Institute of Musicology, SASA) on *Minimalism as a Vehicle for Postmodern Spirituality: Old Indian Cantillation*



Figure 4. Miloš Raičković's workshop and performance © Muzikološki institut SANU / Institute of Musicology SANU.

and *Hilandar Bells* by Vuk Kulenović and David Kirkland Garner (University of South Carolina School of Music, USA) on *Timelike Curves: Composing with Microtiming*. The highlight of the recitals was Miloš Raičković's *Water Tones (1977): A Mini-Workshop and Performance* (Figure 4) during which the composer asked members of the audience to join him on stage to receive the instructions on performing the titular piece. One short rehearsal later, the piece came alive under Raičković's conductorial guidance. Other audience members received handouts containing detailed instructions, should they feel daring enough to attempt performance of the piece on their own. These audience-engaging moments were greatly appreciated and welcomed among attendees.

Roundtable (Figure 5) was dedicated to recent publications on minimalism (*On Minimalism: Documenting a Musical Movement* by Kerry O'Brien and William Robin, eds. [University of California Press, 2023]; *The Names of Minimalism: Authorship, Art Music, and Historiography in Dispute* by Patrick Nickelson [University of Michigan Press, 2023]; previously mentioned *We Have Always Been Minimalists: The Construction and Triumph of a Musical Style* by Christophe Levaux). The authors and the editors gave the audience 'a peek behind the curtain', discussing and sharing various challenges they've met during the research for and editing of the aforementioned publications.



Figure 5. Roundtable *New Books on Minimalism* © Muzikološki institut SANU / Institute of Musicology SANU.

Six concerts acoustically enriched the conference, giving the audience a sonic smorgasbord to relish in. *The Ensemble for Different New Music* (*Ansambl za drugu novu muziku* or *ADNM*³) gave two concerts, acquainting the audience with the pieces of Andrej Negić (*Images in D*, 2021), Dragoljub Ilić (*Mindfields*, 2019), Milimir Drašković (*From the New Old World / Aus der Neuen Alten Welt*, 1999), Miroslav Savić (*Ovo nije Op. 1 [This is Not Op. 1]*, 2018) and Gavin Bryars (*My First Homage*, 1978) on the former (on May 29th at *Bioskop Balkan*) and Miodrag Lazarov Pashu (the piece *Vreme 3.1 [Time 3.1]*, 1981) on the latter concert (on May 31st at Cultural Centre *Parobrod*). A showing of the documentary *The Belgrade Minimalists: Ensemble for Different New Music – 40 Years Later* (dir. Srđan Janjuš, 2018), centered around the history of this ensemble, was also presented post-concert.

At the Great Hall of the Kolarac Endowment on May 30th, Sandra and Jeroen van Veen, together with *LP Duo* (Sonja Lončar and Andy Pavlov), performed Simeon ten Holt's *Canto Ostinato*, taking the audience on an otherworldly, meditative journey through the 'landscape' of the piece (Figure 5). This time, however, the piece donned new sonic textures due to the fact that, for the first time, *Canto Ostinato* was performed on two acoustic and two DUALITY Hybrid pianos!

*Pneuma Quartet*⁴ performed pieces by Dimitrije Beljanski (*Echoes of Ostinato*, 2023 and *Cliffhanger*, 2022), Miloš Raičković (*Dream Quartet*, 1986), Faruk Mehić (*OCD*, 2023), Vladimir Tošić (*Altus*, 2001), and Milivoje Pićurić (*Titex*, 2021) at Cultural Centre *Parobrod* on May 31st. Vladimir Milošević (piano) and Nemanja Stanković (cello) presented the music of Philip Glass. Besides the pieces *Glassworks Opening No. 1* (1981), *Piano Etudes* no. 2 (1995), no. 5 (1995/6), no. 6 (1996), no. 20 (2012), as well as *Metamorphosis 2* (1988, arr. Laura Emmery) and *Glassworks Closing* (1981, arr. Laura Emmery), their program included two numbers from the soundtrack of the film *The Hours* (2002, dir. Stephen Daldry) – *I'm Going to Make a Cake* and *The Poet Acts* (arr. by Michael Riesman and Miloš Bralović, respectively). The sixth, matinee, concert (again at the Great Hall of the Kolarac Endowment, on June 2nd) was dedicated to the music of Miloš Raičković, featuring pieces *Petite Suite* (2012/2019), *Variations* (1989), *Kolo japansko [Japanese Round Dance]* (2022), *B-A-G-D-A-D* (2002), *Passacaglia & Double Fugue on B-A-C-H- and B-A-G-D-A-D* (2013), *Romance no. 1* (1988/2018), 32 (2022), *Now or Never* (2023) and *Duet Without You* (2011).⁵

3 The ensemble includes: Dragoljub Ilić, Andrej Negić, Nataša Penezić, Miroslav Savić (piano/keyboards).

4 Members of the quartet: Dimitrije Beljanski (piano), Tetiana Tomić (violin), Stefan Milović (clarinet), Nina Henig Beljanski (cello).

5 Performers: Marija Lazić (oboe), Marko Bogdanović (piano), Stana Krstajić (flute), Milena Stanišić (harp), Srđan Tošić (guitar), Nataša Mitrović (piano), Ivana Dakić (oboe), Katarina Aleksić (violin), Maja Mihić (piano), Sanja Romić (oboe), LP Duo.

This review aimed to showcase the scope of the gargantuan conference and the ambitious program it presented to the international public. Wondrous encounters, fruitful discussions and exchange of knowledge proved that minimalism offers so much more. We look forward to the next opportunity to discuss its scope. Same time, 2026?

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