Unearthing the Elusive Istrian Scale: From Folk Idioms to Music Composition
Re-defining and understanding the transformation

Online Lecture Recital presented by Petra Peršolja

Sunday, May 31, 2020 | UC Santa Barbara

Abstract

The lack of a clear picture of the Istrian scale outside its own territory is mainly due to a unique cultural cross-section of Slovenian, Croatian, and Italian underpinnings. The presentation follows the metamorphosis of the Istrian scale from its folkloric origins on the Istrian peninsula on the northeastern coast of the Adriatic Sea to its manifestation in modern classical compositions of Slovenian classical (art) music. Supported with samples of Istrian folk music, the research follows a succession of musicologists and their sometimes misguided efforts to transform the folkloric idioms in pure intonation into a concise formula that fits equal temperament of the piano, from their early mistakes involving modality to the hexatonic tone row and the formation of the octatonic Istrian scale. The employment of this unique phenomenon in classical music will be presented with a live performance by Ms. Peršolja of Istrijanka; 15 piano miniatures in the style of popular Istrian melodies by Slovenian composer Karol Pahor.

Committee members; Professor Paul Berkowitiz- Chair, Professor Isabel Bayrakdarian, Professor Robert Koenig and Dr. Luisa Antoni. This is a presentation of the supporting document submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Musical Arts.

Petra Peršolja is a student of UC Santa Barbara Professor Paul Berkowitiz.