

EXPLORING AND EMPHASISING WOMEN'S VOICES AT SACRUM PROFANUM FESTIVAL IN KRAKOW*

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ИСТРАЖИВАЊЕ И ИСТИЦАЊЕ ЖЕНСКИХ ГЛАСОВА НА ФЕСТИВАЛУ *SACRUM PROFANUM* У КРАКОВУ

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Received: 15 October 2023

Accepted: 8 December 2023

Original scientific paper

АБСТРАКТ

Sacrum Profanum festival stands as one of the prominent musical events in Krakow. The festival is recognised for its unique fusion of contemporary classical music with electronic sounds, jazz and other genres. Alongside its artistic and musical endeavours, the Sacrum Profanum festival remains dedicated to social issues, meticulously promoting gender balance in its lineup, and constantly contributing to the social debate about gender equality in the cultural sector in Poland. The main aim of this article is to analyse the presence of women during the 2020 edition of the festival, with special focus on the socio-cultural message conveyed by the female artists (composers and performers) that actively contributed to that edition.

KEYWORDS: Sacrum Profanum, music festivals, Polish contemporary music, female composers, female artists.

АПСТРАКТ

Фестивал *Sacrum Profanum* један је од истакнутих музичких догађаја у Кракову. Овај фестивал се истиче својом јединственом фузијом савремене

* The analysis is partially based on data originating from field research carried out within the Horizon 2020/HERA funded project "European Music Festivals, Public Spaces, and Cultural Diversity".

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класичне музике са електронским звуком, џезом и другим жанровима. Поред својих уметничких и музичких делатности, фестивал *Sacrum Profanum* континуирано посвећује пажњу друштвеним проблемима, педантно промовишући родну равноправност у свом програму и доприносећи друштвеној дебати о овом проблему у културном сектору Пољске. Циљ овог чланка је да анализира присутност жена на програму из 2020. године, с посебним фокусом на социокултурне поруке којим су уметнице (композиторке и извођачице) активно допринеле тој фестивалској едицији.

Кључне речи: *Sacrum Profanum*, музички фестивали, пољска савремена музика, композиторке, уметнице.

INTRODUCTION

Sacrum Profanum is one of the flagship musical events of Krakow. Combining the so-called contemporary classics with electronic music, jazz and other genres, the festival is known for experimenting, presenting bold arrangements and connecting classics with the avant-garde. The organizers' intention to cross borders and explore alternative forms of musical expression is accompanied by the search for new channels of communication. The *Sacrum Profanum* festival has maintained a long-standing commitment to social causes, consistently striving to maintain gender balance in its programming. In recent years, the festival's lineup has explicitly tackled pressing social issues, including gender equality, recognition of minority voices, the challenges posed by the climate crisis, ecological concerns, and excessive consumerism.

By examining selected concerts and accompanying events featured in the 2020 edition of the festival, I aim to address in this article the following research questions: which women's issues are explored through the festival's content, and how is the presence of women/female voices at the festival connected to other themes relevant in the current social discourse? How does the *Sacrum Profanum* festival contribute to improving the representation of women in contemporary music? Is the festival's gender parity-based programming policy acknowledged and noted by critics? Can it serve as a model of good practice for other festival organizers and institutions or public entities?

The methodology applied in the research was based on an analysis of existing sources (scientific publications, press and magazine articles, reviews of selected concerts during the 2020 edition of the *Sacrum Profanum* festival, selected content from social media) and supported by information obtained during in-depth interviews with the festival's organizers.²

2 The reviews of the *Sacrum Profanum* festival's 2020 edition appeared on selected web pages and online magazines. The sample consisted of 14 online articles published both during the duration of the festival and immediately after its end, that is in the period of time from November to December 2020. All articles were selected through purposive sampling method. In this article I refer only to a part of all gathered materials.

MUSIC FESTIVALS, SOCIAL CRITIQUE AND GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Music festivals are undoubtedly an increasingly important part of the cultural sector. They have the potential to foster mutual appreciation among people of various ways of life, functioning as spaces of diversity, cultural exchange and transformation. When analyzing the nature of festivals, Monica Sassatelli and Gerard Delanty assert that “openness, innovation, hybridity, and change are constitutive and not derivative of cultural identity or specificity” (Sassatelli and Delanty 2011, 54). This openness and striving for change is also manifested in the involvement of music festivals in social debates and taking up currently important topics. On the one hand, music festivals reflect the changes taking place in society, but on the other hand, their organizers can determine these changes themselves, notice pressing problems and respond to current social challenges. The festival organizers’ activity may be perceived as a combination of mutually undergoing given circumstances and initiating new, often challenging activities, oscillating between structure and agency (Giddens 1979). The specific nature of festivals allows for “a collective representation, a collective celebration and, in many cases, a collective outpouring of a commonly articulated form of socio-cultural identity” (Bennett and Woodward 2014, 12).

What seems to be most important in the context of the considerations undertaken here is the contribution of music festivals to the social debate and their critical function. The engagement of music festivals in resistance and social protest has a long tradition. Per Bakhtin’s (1984) perspective, different forms of collective gatherings that existed before the modern-day festivals have historically functioned as arenas for discussing and negotiating various aspects of everyday life. Nowadays, music festivals are also becoming a platform for social debate and the space for “trying out of non-dominant values and systems within the public” (Caudwell and Rinehart 2014, 1). Already a decade ago Joanne Cummings (2014) stressed the need for more qualitative research on festivals as sites for raising awareness about social issues and promoting political consciousness. Apparently, this need still exists. There is a growing body of new research material available, as contemporary music festivals increasingly delve into social issues, engage in matters of significance to local communities, advocate for the equal rights of women and minorities, participate in the safeguarding of democracy, and highlight the valuable contributions of ethnic and immigrant cultures to the evolution of mainstream music culture. This is especially significant in countries like Poland, which have undergone a socio-political transition from an authoritarian regime to a democracy (Golemo and Kupis 2022). In recent years, ecological themes have gained increasing importance, highlighting the tension between environmental concerns and consumption practices. The concern for social and ecological issues became particularly evident during the Covid-19 pandemic. Many festivals, including those in Poland, not only altered their formats (shifting to online or hybrid events) but also incorporated more discussions on contemporary social issues into their programmes (Kupis and Golemo 2022).

In the broader context of social engagement, Jelena Gligorijević (2018) examines the role of ideology and politics in contemporary music festivals. From her anal-

ysis, she draws the following conclusion: most of today's festivals oscillate between a "consumerist form of cosmopolitanism" and a "seemingly more serious cosmopolitan mode of political engagement" (n.p.). According to Gligorijević, the common aspiration of all these events is to "project a progressive and cosmopolitan image using discourses of globalization, libertarianism, cultural diversity, sustainable living, creativity, and technological progress" (Ibid.), but these discussions may hide various conflicts related to class, race, gender, and global inequalities that are inherent in capitalism. The *Sacrum Profanum* Festival would be much closer to the latter model, but it goes a step further by engaging uncompromisingly in debate on gender inequalities.

In the context of the considerations presented in this article, it seems relevant to briefly characterize interconnections between the social role of music festivals and issues of gender and feminism.³ According to Gilmore (1998, 2) gender may be understood as "the ways in which men and women interact in the social encounters of everyday life". It is important to add that these encounters are often imbued with social expectations based on different cultural patterns. The notion of gender is directly related to the concept of hegemonic masculinity introduced by Connell (1982), who pointed out that gender and class are both subject to numerous hierarchical relations. Considering that throughout history, gender stereotyping has been prevalent at various events (Andrews and Leopold, 2013) it seems important to investigate how gender differences, prominent in contemporary society, and gender hierarchies are referred to and negotiated within music festival spaces. Various aspects can be distinguished here: gendered interactions and quotas in the process of festival production, the presence of women and men in the festival outline and on stage (as composers, artists, performers), the gender aspects of the festival content and message (i.e. presence of themes addressing the feminine perspective/women issues). This analysis regarding the *Sacrum Profanum* festival in Krakow is an attempt to verify to what extent a music festival can act as a platform for challenging and defying traditional gender hierarchies (Pielichaty 2015).

In her study dedicated to festival spaces, Hanya Pielichaty (2015) analyses gender-related issues concerning the concepts of liminality and the carnivalesque. She references not only so-called classical works by Bakhtin and Turner but also the considerations of other authors exploring this area of study. Pielichaty explores the idea of the festival space's liminality in the context of challenging the established order. This involves reversing power dynamics, subverting prevailing norms, and defying societal expectations related to social roles. These activities, which align with the Bakhtinian concept of the carnivalesque, can also manifest in a festival site. However, as emphasized by different authors, this game of meanings, norms and expectations always takes place according to predetermined rules and is subordinated to the one who has control. Pielichaty refers to the criticism of the idea of carnivalesque and social freedom presented, among others, by Umberto Eco, describing the carnival as

3 A detailed discussion of gender and feminism issues is beyond the scope of this text. Therefore, I limit myself to proposing a very general approach to this problem, without delving into the divisions and terminological complexities associated with these concepts.

an “authorized transgression”, during which “status is thought to be inverted, but is actually hiding under a façade of social order and discipline” (Pielichaty 2016, 238). In a contemporary festival site “power can be seen as ‘the rules of the game’, which both enable and constrain action” (Clarke and Jepson 2011, 9). Indeed, when the festival ends, all existing norms of behaviour are restored (Anderton 2009) and the structure takes control over agency, spontaneity, and freedom. Analysing the example of the Sacrum Profanum festival, I will try to show that this change in gender hierarchies can not only manifest itself during the festival, but also be consolidated as a new social norm to go beyond the time and space of the festival.

The aspect of gender stereotypes in the context of festivals also seems interesting. They may at the same time reproduce and counteract conventional/ traditional gender roles.⁴ In the following parts of the text, I will discuss the expectations related to the role of women (as well as the position of women in the contemporary music market in Poland) and how Polish female artists who perform at the Sacrum Profanum Festival are trying to break stereotypes.

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC AND SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT: SOME REFLECTION ABOUT THE CURRENT POLISH CONTEXT

In this section, I would like to refer to the current debate on Polish contemporary music and social issues, with particular emphasis on the role played by women in it. I will refer to selected voices of musicologists and commentators, as well as female composers. As music critic Jan Topolski observes: “While the tradition of music devoted to addressing current issues remains ever vibrant – think of Baroque opera, Beethoven’s overtures, or the politically charged avant-garde – each era endeavours afresh to discover the apt means of expression for the times” (Topolski 2020).⁵ According to the critic’s perspective, contemporary Polish artists are not limited to thinking in musical terms; they also think in journalistic terms. As an effect of their artistic work, they create a special kind of compositions that can be seen as manifestos for society or “sound essays”. They often refer to theories and publications of other authors, but employ them in a free, subjective and unsystematic way. In doing so, they convey their thoughts on specific socially relevant subjects, always within an artistic and musical framework. Topolski points out that these musical compositions can at times adopt the sharpness of a column or manifesto, while at other times, they exude a sense of nostalgic reminiscence. In some instances, they even take on a reportage-like form, as the artists incorporate authentic statements or field recordings into their musical message. It could be even argued that they employ ethnographic or autoethnographic methods for music creation. According to Topolski, the key

4 For example, in his study on selected music festivals in Calabria, Goffredo Plastino addresses the stereotypical gender roles attributed to festival female dancers. He analyses the mechanisms of dominance and control at dance festivals in southern Italy, but also shows the breaking of different gender-based expectations and empowerment of women through dance (2003).

5 All translation from Polish are made by the author of the article.

feature in these works is “associative structure, juxtaposing quotations and digressions in a loose way, but binding them together with an authorial twist, expressed in instrumental and electronic parts, sometimes also in performative action” (Topolski 2020). One of the most frequently discussed topics is feminism and emancipation, which is a response to the current social situation in Poland.

In an interview with Polish female composers of contemporary music, Paweł Klimczak tries to find answers to questions about why feminism is still a taboo subject in many areas of Polish art, and who maintains the old, patriarchal order in the contemporary music community. As noted by Monika Szyrka, one of Poland’s leading composers, female representation at concerts is still not very visible. The reason for this is that men are usually thought of first and foremost in the programme-setting process. As a reason for this, Szyrka cites historically grounded beliefs about women composing: “history has contributed to this matter, profoundly discouraging women from entering the profession, which has resulted in far fewer women than men (through criticism in the 19th century, the myth of the great composer, masculinism, machismo). The same is true of managerial positions in music institutions, mainly festivals – they are rarely held by women” (Klimczak 2023).

Szyrka notes that her generation is trying to change this situation, to take care of the women’s presence both in the creative field – composition, and music criticism. Some cultural institutions, or organisers of music festivals, are beginning to notice the problem and look for solutions: “(...) more and more parity concerts are appearing, compensatory history activities – promoting the forgotten work of female composers. I hope that, for the most part, this is a sincere action and not the result of a trend or commercial motives”, says the composer (Ibid.).

Another composer, Żaneta Rydzewska, observes that in recent years, more and more women have taken up senior positions in cultural institutions, which until recently were exclusively the domain of men. This is evidence that a certain process of change is beginning, although it is still difficult to speak of a balance (Klimczak 2020). It seems that the imposed gender parity may be a certain “remedy”, which the Sacrum Profanum festival has been using for years. However, the question remains whether it meets the criterion of adequate representation. The artistic director of the Sacrum Profanum festival himself has spoken out about how women-only festivals are not the right solution: “An edition entirely dedicated to women would be a strong voice, but I feel it would be false. After all, it is not about wading into utopia” (Smelczyńska 2017, 150). But at the same time, the festival organisers have been talking openly for several years about the quotas they apply (Gregorczyk 2019). They take care not only of the presence of female artists/performers or female debaters, but above all of the representation of women composers, including those who are less well-known and niche. Sometimes these strivings for balance lead to interesting discoveries: the leitmotif of the 2019 edition was the work of Lucia Długoszewski, the daughter of Polish émigrés and an important representative of the New York experimentalist community, completely unknown in Poland.

There is still a lot of work to be done regarding the cultural patterns of public life and work organisation rooted in Polish society. Feminism is still a taboo subject in Polish contemporary music, especially in academic circles. As Szyrka points out:

The mentality of the older generations is very hurtful, moralistic, rejecting all otherness, conservative, clinging to the old, patriarchal orders at all costs. The negative attitude towards feminism of both women and men is probably related to the fear of losing the stability that the system has shaped over the years, the fear of novelty. What is forgotten, however, is that feminism is first and foremost about equality, which also entails fair treatment of men (Klimczak 2020).

Szpyrka, known in musical circles for her social commitment to the fight for equal rights for women, addressed this theme, for example, in her emancipatory pieces *Useful Statistics* for orchestra and *Are There Any Hidden Figures?* for quartet, lights and electronics. In the score of the former composition, there are passages to be performed (in unison) only by female players in the respective ensemble. Thanks to this, one can see and hear the number of women in the orchestra. As the author herself says of this composition: "I had to integrate the concept into the sound in some way, hence the use of a single static pitch in the women's sections – to accentuate the difference between them and the tutti sections. To convey a specific message to the listener" (Topolski and Pasternak 2018).

Contemporary Polish composers practice a kind of "musical adventurism" (Wieczorek 2018, 163) aimed at changing the shape not only of musical life, but more broadly of social life.⁶ Analysing the socially engaged work of contemporary Polish artists, Jan Topolski has identified several thematic areas. One of them is emancipation and feminism, largely undertaken by women composers. These often intermingle with the issues of queerness, gender and the search for cultural identity. There are also intersectional "musical statements" combining feminist messages with, for example, concern for the environment, or topics relating to current politics (strikes, protests in Poland). The issue of mental and somatic balance appears, among others, in the work of Monika Dalach. The same composer addresses themes of climate crisis and anti-consumerism. The multimedia artist, now based in London, says:

As an artist, I have all the tools I need to be able to communicate a relevant issue. Such as environmental litter or the problem of gender inequality. If the project arouses emotion in the listeners and maybe even makes them think, I consider it a success. There is a chance that the audience will become interested in the topic after the concert and, in an optimistic scenario, the project will encourage them to take action (Topolski 2020).

⁶ Wieczorek (2018) delves into the intersection of music and social engagement, drawing on the example of musicians' protests in the Netherlands during the late 1960s which led to the formation of the Movement for the Renewal of Musical Practice. This movement stressed that the "social significance of music is as crucial as the financial well-being of musicians" (165), although its founders rejected the idea of music conveying specific content. As Wieczorek highlights, their focus was primarily on the social forms of musical performance rather than its internal content.

The issues of gender equality and women's rights are not only addressed in the aforementioned musical works presented in concert halls. The circles of music critics and specialist musicological magazines also engage in this debate. It is worth recalling that at the beginning of December 2020, i.e. immediately after the pandemic edition of the Sacrum Profanum festival, the Polish music-education magazine, *Ruch Muzyczny*, put forward a proposal to write an article-report on cases of harassment in the music community, consisting of anonymous confessions of victims. A few years earlier, during the 2016 edition of the Sacrum Profanum festival, one of the accompanying events was a debate on the role of women in Polish contemporary music, an account of which appeared in the musicological monthly *Glissando* (Smelczyńska 2017).

THE PANDEMIC EDITION OF THE 2020 SACRUM PROFANUM – A GENERAL OVERVIEW

The coronavirus pandemic has been a difficult experience for many organisers of cultural events. Festivals, oscillating between organizational schemes and innovative ideas, between ritualized repetition and imperviousness, driven by hard-to-grasp creative energy but dependent on very material factors (i.e. the external environment or finances), had to redefine themselves in extreme circumstances. Like many others, the Sacrum Profanum festival had to face unexpected organizational challenges. The conditions for the celebration of “youth” (theme of the 2020 edition) were difficult; nevertheless, the organizers saw it as an opportunity to renew and reinforce their festival (Golemo 2023). It can be argued that it was during the experimental pandemic edition that social themes resonated even more vividly in artistic interpretation. The incorporation of digital technology and multimedia enhancements aimed to underscore the social significance of the message conveyed. However, there were dissenting voices raising questions about the necessity of boosting an already powerful social message with special visual effects.

The descriptions of the festival's main idea referred to youth and its right to experiment. A promotional text authored by the artistic director of the festival contained the organizers' own definition of youth:

Youth is associated with physical strength, endurance, sport, rebellion, mutiny, bravado, arrogance, mistakes, popular culture, the internet, pop songs, improvisations, lustfulness, technology, carelessness, fun and oh, so much more! The program reflects all these attributes: the 18th festival pays homage to Youth” (Sacrum Profanum Artistic Director/webpage).

Some aspects of this definition could easily be linked to what is traditionally stereotyped as “masculine” attributes, such as physical strength, endurance, and bravado. Considering the festival's strong commitment to gender equality, the selection of “youth attributes” may be viewed as a kind of deliberate provocation and a challenge to societal norms. It was during the 2020 edition that the festival prominently show-

cased women's voices and their powerful energy. The youth theme is commonly associated with strength, experimentation, exploration, challenging conventions and norms, and unwavering determination. In this context, the festival artists had ample room for interpretation. Outwardly, female artists seized this opportunity to engage in the social discourse on feminism, bridging music and politics through words, visuals, or corporeal expression.

BROADENING THE SPECTRUM OF FEMININITY. WOMEN'S VOICES AT THE SACRUM PROFANUM 2020

In this part of the article, I would like to refer to two musical projects, which could be described as socially engaged music concerning women's issues. These are the concerts "Female Forms" and "Tova", created and performed exclusively by women. Although the idea for them originated much earlier, their appearance at the Sacrum Profanum 2020 festival coincided with the difficult socio-political situation in Poland. The national Women's Strike, taking place on the streets of numerous cities, lent fresh significance to these projects. The theme of femininity at the festival was closely linked to the theme of the body in music.⁷ Critics noted the "brilliant representation and presentation of the women's music" (*Młodość w formie 2020*) and considered the women's performances to be among the most interesting and successful. As one commentator wrote:

The creators of Sacrum Profanum make no secret of the fact that they are trying to maintain gender parity among female artists. If in previous years anyone had doubts about the rightness of this decision, they may change their minds after this year's edition. The organisers have paid off with all their efforts in programming the repertoire so that gender ceases to be a measure of the quality of art for good (*Jackowicz-Korczyńska 2020*).

TOVA

The multimedia project "Tova" (Hebrew 'good, pleasing'), which is dedicated to the transformation of female identity, is the result of a close collaboration between flutist Anna Karpowicz and four female composers whom she asked to write pieces for her. "Tova" premiered on the day of the nationwide Women's Strike in Poland, which was a complete coincidence. In this multimedia format of the cyber-recital,

7 The topic of the body interpreted through music from a feminine perspective appeared also in another composition that is not addressed directly in this analysis. Monika Dalach, in her "Carbon is a new black" (part of the "Permed Lecture" concert) presented "a musical-visual-performative story about the textile industry and its contribution to the climate catastrophe in the optics of the global crisis and individualized perspective, combining the experience of the human body and the body of the planet" (*Lniak 2020*).

they touched on themes of the female experience, seeking answers to universal questions: what does it mean to be a girl, a woman, an artist, a mother? What expectations do women face when stepping into these different roles, and how do they carry social expectations? (Smelczyńska, 2020). These fundamental questions referred explicitly to the specific context of Central-Eastern Europe. What impact does the social environment in a country that has experienced a political transformation have on the situation of young women? Who are the role models of young female artists from Poland? What does the Judaeo-Christian standard of “female kindness”, ubiquitous in Polish culture, inspire? (Sacrum Profanum, webpage). On a symbolic level, the artists wanted to disenchant the flute as a simple, pretty, girly instrument and present its dark, predatory face in the form of harsh, jagged sounds accompanied by electronics. The sound of the flute “tends to be infantilised and perceived as weak or even sweet, limiting it to pastoral and children’s music” (Sacrum Profanum, webpage). Breaking the stereotype of the flute as a delicate instrument that plays “sweet melodies” is a symbolic contestation of the common image of women: good and pleasing. Interestingly, the visual layer of the project was prepared by the performer herself together with the composers: “The whole was thus the result of female collaboration and community, proof that the separation of the roles of composer and performer need not resemble a hierarchical division of labour in which no one but the former (...) has access to the vision of the whole” (Libera 2012, 42).

Each composer, referring to her own experiences, placed her message in the broader context of experiences shared by women. Marta Śniady, in *4 Rituals of Women’s Happiness*, reflected on the ubiquitous contemporary cult of the body. The word “ritual”, which – as noted in the festival’s programme – “has become popular in the area of spa and wellness”, returned in the piece to its basic meaning and religious context. The composer also appeared as the protagonist in the video accompanying the piece, in which recurring motifs “resonated with the titular rituals, like beauty treatments with unattainable ‘beauty’” (Żochowska 2020). Aleksandra Kaca’s *Inner*, on the other hand, is a story about the pressures caused by media-promoted and hard-to-achieve ideals. The piece can also be seen as a gesture of musical solidarity with the body-positivity movement (Jackowicz-Korczyńska 2020). According to the organizers themselves, the author of *Inner* “turns inward, searching for intimacy and closeness through simple sounds. She draws references from documentary snapshots of the body damaged by pregnancies, finding similar textures in nature that we perceive as beautiful, harmonious, and valuable” (Sacrum Profanum, webpage). *SCREAM* by Teoniki Rozynek, showing different varieties of screams, both lurid and muffled ones, coincided with heated protests of thousands of Polish women who took to the streets to fight for their rights in November 2020. The piece showed that “the spectrum of femininity also includes rebellion and anger stereotypically attributed to men” (Jackowicz-Korczyńska 2020). However, there were also different interpretations:

The cry of the title, however, is not an expression of anger but of impotence. A desperate, silent cry. The flute here is merely an extension of the voice, a muffled scream.

It would be difficult to find a greater synchronicity in the context of what is happening on the Polish streets (Smelczyńska 2020).

Nina Fukuoka's *Zansei* delved into the multifaceted aspects of female identity and explored what is subjective, enigmatic, and unexplored within it. The festival program explains that "*Zansei* translates to 'last years,' and in the piece, it is interpreted as an endeavour to break free from a stifling reality and live the 'remaining years' in harmony with one's true nature" (Sacrum Profanum, webpage).

Combining the perspectives of five female artists and their research on ambiguous female identity, corporeality and various forms of oppression, Tova naturally corresponded with the slogans appearing at protests across the country.

FEMININE FORMS / FORMY ŻEŃSKIE

In another feminist project, *Feminine Forms*, women – both composers and instrumentalists – brought their voices to the discussion on gender inequalities in music, contributing to the social debate on the participation of women in the music industry in Poland. According to some critics, this feminine performance, inspired by pianist Martyna Zakrzewska, was one of the strongest concerts of 2020 in the field of contemporary music (Topolski 2020). *Feminine Forms* is a musical story about important women's issues and the diversity of female nature created by six female composers and five instrumentalists.⁸ It is also a form of "musical #metoo" (Jackowicz-Korczyńska 2020), best exemplified in the composition by Nina Fukuoka *Sugar, Spice & All Things Nice*, combining *musique concrète* with confessions about misogyny. As Agnieszka Lniak put it, this song-manifesto "gives an unambiguous signal: no more transparency (of sounds and patriarchy)" (Lniak 2020). According to Jan Topolski, Fukuoka "took up the subject of #metoo in Polish classical music in an almost journalistic spirit, collecting confessions of friends and passing them on to the seemingly dispassionate recitation to the band's instrumentalists. Memories of harassment and discrimination are accompanied at times by a treacherously relaxing, and at times disturbing layer of murmurs and looped gestures of musicians" (Topolski 2020). The electrifying effect of the spoken words against the background of harmony and rasp, false-sounding idyll, distorted noise and the voice of the crowd was emphasized (Dąbek 2020). Another reviewer noted the courage of the composer, but also of the women who provided "voices" in this composition, in tackling such an uncomfortable subject. Fukuoka "attempted to account for the discriminatory and sexist aspect of part of the hermetic musical environment. Requiring considerable courage, the quotes/statements recounting the harm suffered while functioning in a highly hierarchical, male-centric reality, provoked further discussion on this type of abuse in Poland" (Jackowicz-Korczyńska 2020). *Feminine Forms*, previ-

8 Compositions by Monika Szpyrka, Żaneta Rydzewska, Anna Sowa, Martina Kosecka, Teonika Rozynek and Nina Fukuoka were performed by Paulina Woś, Oriana Masternak, Barbara Papierz, Aleksandra Gołaj, Alena Budziňáková-Palus and Martyna Zakrzewska.

ously presented at another Polish festival, Warsaw Autumn (Warsaw Spring), was performed again during Sacrum Profanum, but with the order of the pieces changed. This was noted by commentators:

I was puzzled by the effect of rearranging Nina Fukuoka's flagship piece *Sugar, Spice & All Things Nice* to start the concert. The examples cited in the composition of discrimination against women and violence based on sex and power sounded more emphatically here, like a warning: "This concert is for real! Think about your prejudices against women's music" (Suprynowicz 2020).

Other pieces in the concert also carried a concrete emancipatory message and were an attempt to overcome the fear that overpowers women and replace it with (musical) anger. Symbolic gestures were abundant, including, for instance, the act of taping over a loudspeaker, as a form of protest, through which a deluge of male words was streaming. The potential of *Feminine Forms* not only as an artistic project but also as a feminist quasi-collective was highlighted (Lniak 2020). One commentator wrote: "The *Feminine Forms* concert reinforced my belief that the introduction of composer quotas at festivals is the beginning of the road to full equality" (Żochowska 2020).

It is worth noting that both the *Tova* and *Feminine Forms* concerts generated considerable reactions and comments on the festival's Facebook profile. Posts related to these projects ignited a discourse on feminism in Poland. Traditionalist voices opposing women's emancipation and questioning the relevance of feminist themes in the festival program also emerged. An interesting discussion was triggered by the Sacrum Profanum director's post referencing a special issue of *Ruch Muzyczny* magazine (#22/2020) on gender equality in music, inspired – which was underlined in the Editor-in-Chief's introduction – by the *Feminine Forms* concert at the Warsaw Autumn festival (Matwiejczuk, 2020). Krzysztof Pietraszewski highlighted the Sacrum Profanum festival's longstanding commitment to gender parity and the festival's role in advancing the gender equality dialogue in contemporary music. He expressed surprise that the magazine *Ruch Muzyczny* did not adequately acknowledge the Sacrum Profanum festival's role as a promoter of gender equality :

It is difficult for us not to be surprised that Sacrum Profanum's efforts to introduce new topics into the world of contemporary music and our concern for equality issues (including LGBTQ+ communities, tolerance and openness, racism and the refugee crisis) have not been such an inspiration so far, yet we cannot say that the editors of *Ruch Muzyczny* do not notice Sacrum Profanum – present in the pages of the magazine year after year. However, in the recommended issue, despite raising a flagship issue for us, we were not asked to comment on it, nor were our activities even mentioned (Sacrum Profanum Facebook profile, 21 November 2020).

CONCLUSIVE REMARKS AND PERSPECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE

Hanya Pielichaty claims that the concept of liminality, understood after Turner (1969) as a state in which social statuses do not apply, does not relate to the way gender roles or positions of authority are determined at the festival site. According to the author, “the power relations between men and women are culturally ingrained by the social structures apparent in society, and the festival space is just a microcosm of this social world and therefore conforms to these traditional expectations. Therefore it is difficult to understand to what extent festival spaces can be said to actively resist and oppose gender norms and expectations” (Pielichaty 2016, 246). Outwardly, the example of the Sacrum Profanum festival might appear to contradict this hypothesis. The objective of this analysis was to demonstrate that changes in power dynamics and gender roles, along with the social norms tied to them, can persist beyond the temporary festival environment. These shifts may not only remain confined to moments of artistic expression and experimentation, but can extend into everyday life. They transcend the festival's duration, the confines of the stage, and the fleeting moments of shared music-based fascination.

Responding to the research questions posed at the outset, it can be assumed that the Sacrum Profanum festival contributes to a better representation of women in the cultural sector by taking care of parity in the production process of the event, giving women a voice in the festival space, both in terms of the choice of repertoire (above-average participation of female composers, including their compositions written on commission and presented as world premieres), engaging female artists and performers to interpret their and others' works on stage. These efforts are appreciated by critics, praising the artistic director for having “evidently taken to heart the burning need to balance the masculine with the feminine still relegated to the background in contemporary music” being aware that “the power of female energy, wisdom and – by extension – art cannot be ignored” (Szczeńska 2017).

The organisers also take care to contribute to the social debate on feminist issues: equal rights for women and men, quotas, representation of women in the field of contemporary music. The festival gets involved in social campaigns and debates aimed at improving the situation of women in the Polish music market. The current artistic director has repeatedly spoken publicly on issues concerning women's status in the cultural-artistic sector. The introduction of quotas or feminine grammatical forms (an issue symbolically referred to in the title of one of the concerts analysed above: *Feminine Forms/Formy Żeńskie*) has become a good practice in Krakow's cultural institutions (such as the KBF/Cracow Festival Office) thanks to the Sacrum Profanum festival. Lastly, female artists, both composers and performers, actively participate in the Sacrum Profanum festival space, focusing on themes they consider significant. This extends beyond their personal experiences to encompass broader issues related to femininity. Their creative works address concerns such as discrimination in public life, including within the arts sector, various forms of violence, including subtle forms like being overlooked, silenced, or marginalized. They also explore societal expectations that limit women's freedom and agency, different aspects of female identity, various expressions of sensitivity, and the diverse stages of

a woman's life cycle, leading to maturity. Thanks to the women-friendly ideology of the festival, there is a space created for their voices, not only on gender-related and feminist matters but also on broader topics such as ecology and social equality.

The main objective of this article was a preliminary analysis of the presence of women (and "feminine issues") in the programme of the 2020 edition of the *Sacrum Profanum* Festival. My intention was to focus primarily on the content (socio-cultural message) conveyed by the female artists, leaving the question of the choice of means of artistic expression in the background. Exploring the use of artistic techniques for expressing feminist themes, particularly within the dimension of musical multimedia, is certainly a valuable avenue for further investigation. The themes that were not elaborated on in this article, but which are worth further in-depth research, include the presence of women in the production process of the *Sacrum Profanum* festival (in areas such as programming, personnel management, technical support of the festival) and the impact of feminist themes addressed at the festival on the audience.

Festivals unquestionably have the potential to influence social reality, which is well reflected in the words of the musicologist Monika Źyła:

If they can reverse our usual daily and weekly schedule to this extent, perhaps they can also create a temporary new, better world for us? More tolerant, diverse, equal, open, critical, inclusive? Without division, prejudice, patriarchy, homophobia, hatred? Maybe as such temporarily autonomous zones festivals can and can become better than what is outside festivals. Maybe there is room in them to test, to try out new models of coexistence, of sharing. For a radical reorganisation of how we live and create together as a society. Maybe festivals should become places for critical interventions, forums for contesting reality and deep analysis of society, able to shake us out of normativity and passivity (Źyła 2018).

Some argue that the growing commercialization of festivals adds complexity to their role as platforms for social discourse and catalysts for sociocultural change (see Sharpe 2008). The example of the *Sacrum Profanum* festival discussed here shows that it may be possible to resist commodification and openly express one's opinion on socially important issues, without losing the popularity and attractiveness of the artistic content.

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КАРОЛИНА ГОЛЕМО

ИСТРАЖИВАЊЕ И ИСТИЦАЊЕ ЖЕНСКИХ ГЛАСОВА НА ФЕСТИВАЛУ SACRUM PROFANUM У КРАКОВУ

(РЕЗИМЕ)

Фестивал *Sacrum Profanum* један је од истакнутих музичких догађаја у Кракову. Овај фестивал се издваја по јединственој фузији савремене класичне музике са електронским звуком, цезом и другим жанровима. Међутим, поред уметничких и музичких делатности, фестивал *Sacrum Profanum* континуирано посвећује пажњу друштвеним проблемима, педантно промовишући родну равноправност у свом програму и доприносећи друштвеној дебати о овом проблему у културном сектору Пољске. Ова манифестација се издваја по томе што инклузивност поставља као свој приоритет и настоји да промовише широк спектар уметника. Укључивање композиторки и извођачица превазилази

оквире пуке репрезентације; оно доноси нијансиране перспективе музичког пејзажа. Пажљиво израђен програм представља микрокосмос за културни сектор и подстиче шире разговоре о улози жена у уметностима и потреби за једнаким приликама. Неконвенционално спајање музичких стилова и напредна употреба мултимедијалности дају прилику за сусрете различитих гласова и преиспитивање традиционалних образаца.

Фестивалско издање из 2020. године, које је анализирано у овом чланку, представило је програм вредан пажње не само због тога што су жене наступале, већ и зато што су обликовале фестивалски наратив. Ове уметнице послале су снажне друштвене и културне поруке. Њихови наступи могу се тумачити као искази о еволуцији улоге жена у уметностима, преиспитивању стереотипа и дубини њихових уметничких способности. Присуство жена у програму не само да је обогатило музичко искуство, него је допринело и ширем разговору о родној равноправности у Пољској. У чланку се компаративном анализом испитују постојећи извори: научне публикације, чланци из новина и часописа, прикази одабраних концерата одржаних током фестивала 2020. године, те садржај са друштвених мрежа.