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Performing the keyboard percussion works of Nebojsa Jovan Zivkovic

Joshua James Webster
Edith Cowan University

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Performing the Keyboard Percussion Works of

Nebojša Jovan Živković

Joshua James Webster B.Mus (ECU)

Academic Paper In Partial Fulfilment for the Degree of B.Mus Honours

Faculty of Education and the Arts

Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts

Edith Cowan University

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USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

Abstract

This study deals with the keyboard percussion works of Serbian composer, Nebojša Jovan Živković, with a special focus on understanding and interpreting two of his concert works: *Ultimatum I* and *Ultimatum II*. Part one contextualises these two works by offering the most complete life and works study of the composer to date. This section concludes with some observations regarding Živković's compositional style and musical background. Part two focuses on two of Živković's best-known works, *Ultimatum I & II*, and offers a descriptive analysis of the music and a guide to performance. This study is informed not only by recourse to the standard secondary literature, but also through interviews with Nebojša Jovan Živković himself, and one of his students, the Australian marimbist, Jamie Adam.

Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

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— 8.6.09

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Joshua James Webster

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Introduction

Few artists have been as successful as both composer and performer as percussionist Nebojša Jovan Živković. This duality has resulted in more than thirty pieces composed for percussion. Many of these compositions now form a part of the standard repertoire of percussionists worldwide.

Although Živković has primarily composed works for percussion, his oeuvre includes pieces for classical chamber ensembles, piano, orchestral and vocal, and instrumental pieces, as well as two marimba concertos and a cello concerto. Some of his works for percussion may be played by beginning percussionists, and some require highly educated and skillful performers.¹

This study deals with the keyboard percussion works of Serbian composer, Nebojša Jovan Živković, with a special focus on understanding and interpreting two of his concert works: *Ultimatum I* and *Ultimatum II*. Part one contextualises these two works by offering the most complete life-and-works study of the composer to date. This section concludes with some observations regarding Živković's compositional style and musical background. Part two focuses on two of Živković's best-known works, *Ultimatum I & II*, and offers a descriptive analysis of the music and a guide to performance. This study is informed not only by recourse to the standard secondary literature, but also through interviews with Nebojša Jovan Živković himself, and one of his students, the Australian marimbist, Jamie Adam.

¹ Ira Prodanov, "The Castle of the Mad King: Compositions of Nebojsa Jovan Zivkovic at PASIC '98 New Music/Research Day." *Percussive Notes* 36:5 (October 1998): 66.

Part one - Nebojša Jovan Živković: Life and works

Early life to University (1962-1985)

Post University (1986 – present)

Teaching and the “Funny Series” of pedagogical works (1989 – present)

Performance – Touring and Recordings (1986 – present)

Compositions – Concert Works and Commissions (1986 – present)

Compositional style and influences

Categorising the Keyboard Works

Influences

Stylistic Traits

Life and Works

Early Life to University (1962 - 1985)

Nebojša Jovan Živković (pronounced Neboysha Yovan Chivkovich) was born in Yugoslavia in 1962. He studied at a Music High School where eleven out of thirteen subjects were specifically relating to music. In 1980, at the age of 18, Živković moved to Germany to study both percussion and composition at the University of

Heidelberg and Mannheim.² At this time Živković began learning the traditional four-mallet grip on the marimba and was exposed to Japanese and American marimba works. In this same year he composed *Macedonia*, his first piece for marimba and piano and began working on *Südslawenien*, two pieces for Orchestra. In 1981 he composed *Anba*, for marimba, xylophone and piano and *Divertimento*, for two trombones, tuba, marimba and timpani.³

In 1982, at the age of 20, Živković was first introduced to the 'Steven's grip'⁴ by Bill Zien, the first solo percussionist in Hamburg.⁵

He explained to me the independent grip and he showed me all those strokes because I used to play traditional grip. I was totally shocked about all of those things. I had heard about all of those things at the time but I wasn't interested in them. I asked him to explain more things to me. In 1982 Leigh Howard Stevens had a workshop in Kolberg percussion where I took part. Then a lot of things changed and I was energized to study Steven's independent method grip. I spent nights and nights translating Steven's book. I think those two people are directly or indirectly who influenced my technique.⁶

In 1983, Živković began studying with Keiko Abe, a Japanese marimbist who is partly responsible for the rise in popularity of the marimba⁷. Živković composed his *Drei Phantastische Lieder*, a set of three pieces for solo marimba, and the

² James Lambert, "Interviews with Two German Percussionists: Heinz von Moisy and Nebojsa Zivkovic, Tubingen, Germany, November 1990." *Percussive Notes* 29:4 (April 1991): 20.

³ See appendix three for a chronological list of Živković's works.

⁴ a grip with more emphasis on the independence of the individual mallets developed by the American marimbist Leigh Howard Stevens.

⁵ Lambert 1991, 20.

⁶ Lambert 1991, 21.

⁷ Edwards, J. Michele. "Abe, Keiko."

Bläserquintett for wind quintet. He concluded his studies at the Universities of Heidelberg and Mannheim and went on to complete a Master's Degree in Percussion and Composition in Stuttgart. Whilst at Stuttgart, Živković composed his first major work for marimba, *Concerto No. 1 per Marimbafono e Orchestra* (1984-5).

I recognized that Beethoven, Tchaikovsky, and Shostakovich didn't write anything for marimba, so I had to write a concerto.⁸

Along with this concerto, Živković composed *Valse Serbe* (1985) for marimba, *Atomic Games* (1984) for piano, *Amsfelder Klage* (1984) for flute, bassoon, horn, percussion and marimba and *Urklang* (1984) for four percussionists and tape.

Post University (1986 - Present)

Following the completion of his Master's Degree, Živković established himself as a musician in three principal areas: as a teacher; as a performer; and as a composer.

Teaching and the Funny Series (1989 - Present)

During this time Živković began teaching children percussion and through this, became aware of the lack of pedagogical materials available for keyboard percussion instruments. This was the impetus for the composition of some of his most popular keyboard percussion works to date, the so-called *Funny Series*. This series features fifty-five pieces in five books.⁹

⁸ Lambert 1991, 21.

⁹ Funny Marimba Book 1 (1989-92), My First Book for Xylophone and Marimba (1991), Funny Vibraphone Book 1 (1994), Funny Xylophone Book 1 (1996) and Funny Marimba Book 2 (1999).

The idea of Funny Marimba is that the pieces must be tonal, easy to understand, short, and must give the student a feeling of accomplishment. Instead of having the student practice one piece for the whole semester, with Funny Marimba someone can work on a piece for maybe three weeks and then move to the next piece. This is very effective with students that are ten or twelve years old. ... The solo book is good because it can be played on one four-and-a-half octave instrument. The teacher can play the accompaniment in the low register with four mallets and the student plays the solo in the middle/upper register. This also provides the young student with a valuable chamber music experience. The four that are already published are best sellers and have become standard methods in Europe in the last four or five years. They are also becoming more popular here in the U.S. as well. It seems that there was a big need for beginner four-mallet repertoire.¹⁰

The worldwide success of the *Funny Series* has helped to spread awareness of Živković's music and is an important factor in the rise in popularity of his concert repertoire - which naturally leads on from where the *Funny Series* finishes. Through the Series, Živković deals with a wide variety of different techniques that are common on keyboard percussion instruments, such as; double stops, shifting notes, alternating strokes, left and right hand independence, dead strokes, glissandos, fast note changes, traditional rolls, one handed rolls, mandolin rolls, pedal dampening and stick dampening, as well as some common musical techniques such as ostinato patterns, syncopation, polyrhythms and free rhythms.

¹⁰ Ben Toth, "Uneven Soul: A Conversation with Nebojsa Jovan Zivkovic." *Percussive Notes* 35:6 (December 1997): 47.

There are two more books planned in the series; *Funny Vibraphone 2* and *Funny Xylophone 2*, which are currently about ten years overdue.¹¹

In 1996 Živković ceased all of his regular teaching positions to become a full-time concert artist, a lifestyle held by a small number of classical musicians. Being free of full-time teaching commitments, Živković was able to travel to America in 1996 and 1997 as a Visiting Professor at the Universities of Minnesota and Hartford and has maintained a position as a Visiting Professor since 2003 at the University of Novi Sad in his hometown of Serbia.

Since 2000, Živković has held a Marimba Summer Course every two years in which students travel from around the world to participate in a one-week intensive series of lessons and masterclasses on his marimba works.¹²

Performance – Touring and Recordings (1986 - Present)

In the years following University, Živković also established himself as one of the world's leading virtuoso marimba and percussion composer-performers. Since 1996, he has been a full-time concert artist and maintains a busy touring schedule presenting solo recitals and giving masterclasses.¹³

¹¹ "There are two reasons why they are late – first I do not teach anymore; I stopped teaching the little kids and I'm not so into the material as I used to be when I was teaching every day ... and secondly the five existing books, especially *Funny Marimba Book 1* and *My First Book for Xylophone (and Marimba)* are selling so well; just *Marimba (Book) 1* sold about 6000 copies worldwide so we don't want to, you know, overkill and add new books to and then ... make the competition to existing books." Interview with Nebojša Jovan Živković and Joshua Webster, October 11th 2008.

¹² Information on the upcoming/previous summer school can be found at www.zivkovic.de

¹³ Živković has performed his own marimba concertos with many top orchestras and regularly tours to Europe, America and Asia.

In addition he has also released recordings of a large portion of his percussion repertoire in an ever-growing discography.¹⁴

Compositions – Concert Works and Commissions (1986 - Present)

In the years following University, Živković's compositional activity increased with the premieres of:

- Tensio* (1986), *Fluctus* (1988) and *Drei Unverbindliche Stücke* (1989-92) for solo marimba, *Quintetto per Cinque Solisti* (1989) for five marimbas and percussion, *Sta Vidis* (1990) for marimba and male choir,
- Cadenza* (1986), *CTPAX : STRAH* (1987), *Pezzo da Concerto* (1987), *Zwischen Tag und Nacht* (1988), *Ten Etudes for Snare Drum* (1990) for various percussion instruments,
- solo works for 'cello (1985), violin (1986-7) and double bass (1988), *Vier Unverbindliche Stücke und Eine Verbindliche Zugabe* (1987) for piano,
- Corale* (1987) for 13 winds and percussion, *Das Innere des Schweigens* (1989) a music theatre work for 6 drumsets, tape, narrator and actors, *Nada Mnon Je Nobo Zatvoreno* (1989) for string orchestra, choir and percussion and *Jenet* (1990) for mixed ensemble.

From 1991 onwards, Živković began to compose more for percussion, especially marimba, and this period contains the most popular of Živković's concert works. It

¹⁴ Marimba & Percussion' (re-released 2000), 'Uneven Souls' (1995), 'Marimba/Vibraphone Concerto', 'The Castle of the Mad King' (2000), 'Composer's Portrait' (2003), 'Percussion Made in Europe' (2008) and '3 Concertos and 3 Solos' (2008).

also brings about the beginning of Živković's commissioned works as he was now established as a composer.¹⁵

Živković's works are performed worldwide and receive around 200 performances annually (as of 2005). His concerti have been successful and his most recent *Tales from the Center of the Earth* has had more than twenty performances. He currently lives in Germany with his wife and four children, and is kept busy with a combination of performing, touring, recording, giving masterclasses and composing.

Compositional Style and Influences

When looking at Živković's compositions, one thing that is immediately evident is the broad stylistic range. When considering the works for the keyboard percussion instruments (primarily marimba), it is easy to separate the works on the basis of whether they were composed as a pedagogical teaching tool or as a concert work. Živković separates the works this way through grouping the pieces with a pedagogical intention in the *Funny Series*. However, when considering the musical content of the works, the divide is not as obvious, which is especially evident with the more advanced pedagogical works and the easier of the concert pieces. The works seem to divide more neatly into three groups; from beginner etudes to intermediate pieces to virtuosic concert works. Along with a range of technical difficulty the pieces also vary in the compositional style.

¹⁵ See appendix three.

Categorising the keyboard works

The beginner etudes are written to be short, tonal, easy to understand, and to isolate no more than a few technical challenges. Examples of the beginner etudes can be found in *Funny Marimba Book 1*, *Funny Vibraphone Book 1*, *Funny Xylophone Book 1* and *My First Book for Xylophone and Marimba*.

The intermediate pieces are on the border between pedagogical and concert repertoire and fulfil both categories. Some examples from this subset would be the pieces found in *Funny Marimba Book 2*, *Suomineito*, *Three Unforgettable Pieces*, *Three Fantastic Songs*, *Ilijas* and *Les Violins Morts*. When asked about this crossover section of his works Živković says “I felt that there was a musical and pedagogical need for them in the marimba student’s repertoire” but emphasises that they “are real music for concerts and part of my repertoire.”¹⁶

The virtuosic concert works are technically and musically challenging pieces that make use of an extensive range of marimba techniques and are of a more substantial length than the previous works from the previous two sections. Some examples from this section are *Ultimatum I*, *Ultimatum II*, *Tensio*, *Uneven Souls* and both Marimba Concertos 1 and 2.

Influences

The range in Živković’s compositional style can be attributed to his wide range of influences throughout his life. When asked about this broad range he commented:

¹⁶ Ben Toth, “Uneven Soul: A Conversation with Nebojsa Jovan Živkovic.” *Percussive Notes* 35:6 (December 1997): 48.

I have written xylophone and marimba pieces for beginners, as well as virtuoso and complex pieces like *Tensio* or *Ultimatum I* for marimba solo, or *Ultimatum II* for two marimbas. I suppose this compositionally schizophrenic behavior, ranging from contemporary pieces to some easy-listening tonal pieces in C-major, comes from the mix of experiences that I have. I grew up in Yugoslavia, in Serbia, listening to popular music, and I was very well-educated in High Music School in Yugoslavia. After this I studied composition, music theory and percussion in Germany, where I received a masters degree in each and was influenced by contemporary new music styles. So all of these influences—German and Yugoslavian education, contemporary music, folk music, pop music, sacred music and my own heritage—allow me, if I am in a tonal Balkan mood, to compose pieces that are easier to listen to, and if I am in a contemporary, energetic mood, then I compose a piece like *Tensio* or *Ultimatum I* ... This folk heritage I have from my country is a lucky thing on the one hand, but can be a very uncomfortable thing on the other, because I cannot get rid of this Balkan influence even in my most contemporary pieces. Certain melodic structures, harmonies or rhythms can be attributed to my Balkan roots. I also have had the opportunity to hear a wide variety of contemporary music ... I like the approach and music of composers Gustav Mahler and Dimitri Shostakovich. Most recently I have discovered the late Allan Peterson, who was a very successful symphonic composer from Scandinavia.¹⁷

¹⁷ Ben Toth, "Uneven Soul: A Conversation with Nebojsa Jovan Zivkovic." *Percussive Notes* 35:6 (December 1997): 48-49.

Ira Prodanov, a 20th Century musicologist who lectures at University of Novi Sad in Serbia, describes

Živković's poly-stylistic creative work as the result of a postmodern approach to the music without *code of conduct*. In his work you can hear the influences of various styles including Romanticism, Impressionism, Expressionism and the extreme Avant-garde of mid-twentieth century music, not to mention Živković's affinity for the folk music of his own Balkan heritage. According to Živković, honesty is a priority during his creative work. That could explain why his compositions always sound so familiar, so close to everyone's ear (and soul)—emotionally charged, whether written in cantabile tonality or “rough” atonality.¹⁸

Stylistic Traits

Some common elements in Živković's keyboard compositions are:

- Odd meters and uneven grooves as commonly found in the music from the Southern Slavic regions.
- Fast, virtuosic passages
- Complex rhythms
- Lack of barlines
- Improvisation, as in the cadenza for the Marimba Concerto No. 2
- One handed rolls with rhythmic or cantabile lines over the top
- Wide range of expression and intensity
- Wide dynamics range from ppp to fff

¹⁸ Ira Prodanov, “The Castle of the Mad King: Compositions of Nebojsa Jovan Zivkovic at PASIC '98 New Music/Research Day.” *Percussive Notes* 36:5 (October 1998): 66.

Part two looks at some of these elements of Živković's style in context, through a close study of *Ultimatum I* and *II*.

Part two – *Ultimatum I* and *Ultimatum II* under the microscope

Descriptive analysis

Programme

Ultimatum I

Section One

Section Two

Section Three

Ultimatum II

First Movement

Second Movement

Third Movement

Performance considerations

***Ultimatum I* and *II* - Descriptive Analysis**

It is recommended that the reader follow through the descriptive analyses with the scores for *Ultimatum I* and *II*. Score references are given as page number, system number and bar number where applicable (p, s, b). All page numbers are given as in

the score and in *Ultimatum II* both the treble and bass lines for players one and two are referred to as one system.

One of the most widely played of Živković's solo concert marimba works is *Ultimatum I*. This work was written in 1994-95 and was actually completed after *Ultimatum II*, which was written in 1994. The numbers I and II are used to define whether the work is for one player on one marimba or two players on two marimbas respectively. These two works are closely related and represent an excellent example of Živković's mature compositional style. It is for this reason that they have been selected for closer scrutiny.

Ultimatum I & II are both extremely virtuosic and both pose significant interpretational challenges to the performer. The works call for a wide range of marimba techniques including playing on the nodes of the notes (the point where the string passes through the notes), marimshots (a combination of playing the written notes whilst the shafts of the mallets strike any random notes to produce a percussive hit to complement the notes), one handed rolls, glissandos produced from dragging the mallet up the notes and tremolo glissandos produced by playing a traditional roll as the mallets are move up the range as in a traditional glissando.

Programme

Through the interview I conducted with the composer I am able here to shed some interesting light on these two works. The title *Ultimatum* refers to the ultimatum that the NATO gave to Serbia in 1994 and Živković feels very strongly about this issue. He did say that he is hesitant to tell the story behind the work as the issue remains

politically sensitive and that he wouldn't want anyone to shy away from performing the work for fear they might offend someone or for not wanting to feel as though they were making a political statement. It is for these reasons that Živković has not publically released the programme for *Ultimatum I*. The following though was offered to me.

The opening run ... of *Ultimatum I*, I mean this is very cheap to describe music like this, but basically why should I hide that the very first hit ... is the push of the button on the military jet plane, you know, you push the button, the rocket is still on the wings but it's already started before it gets, you know, before it flies away from the airplane wing, the rocket itself motor started, (sings opening roll) and then (sings as-fast-as-possible run) then it goes you know so this very first run is basically the bomb. ... then it falls down (sings the loud punchy dissonant chords) boom – destroyed, and then (sings octave melody) you know when the dust is down what has remained from, you know, wives and kids and other collateral damage.¹⁹

Ultimatum I

ULTIMATUM I (1994/5) is an angry lament which bursts into 14/16 time towards the end. It is an energetic, masterly and technically very challenging piece in three parts.²⁰

¹⁹ Interview with Nebojša Jovan Živković and Joshua Webster, October 11th 2008.

²⁰ Program note from www.zivkovic.de

Section One (start to p3, s2)

The first section starts very aggressively. The first notes sound like a gunshot and a roll builds out of the silence to *fff* and triggers an as-fast-as-possible run from the top of the keyboard down to the bottom. A short series of loud, fast, dissonant chords follow before they resolve to an open Eb chord (without the third of the chord). This section represents the bomb flying from the wing of a jet fighter and the resultant mayhem following the impact (p1, s1 to s2 *fp*).

This energetic and aggressive spark gives way to a sombre soft rolled section which calls for the use of one-handed rolls, achieved by rapidly rotating the wrists to produce a roll between the two mallets of the one hand; this technique has a different colour to a traditional roll, in which the player alternates the hands to produce a roll (p1, s2 from the *fp* to s4 *fff*). This soft roll section has a haunting melody (to represent the aftermath of the bomb impacting) in the low range of the marimba in octaves and is mainly built upon minor 2nds, major 2nds and minor 3rds (this melodic material is referred to by the author as the octave melody). The resultant effect is a pseudo-folk melody meant to evoke an aural image of Eastern Europe.

The octave melody becomes more intense through a crescendo and progression into the middle range of the marimba before it gives way to a very loud variation of the octave melody. This variation is punctuated with *sfz* grace notes with the rhythms becoming more complex.

It is interesting to note that the entire first section is written without barlines, and the octave melody is written without any regular pulse or structure, from a listener's point of view this lack of structure adds to the mysterious atmosphere Živković calls for.

The loud variation of the octave melody has five phrases broken up by a rhythmic outburst or variation in one hand whilst the other continues with a one handed roll. This style of writing for the marimba is complex as it requires complete independence of the hands so one can roll independently at an appropriate speed for the range of the instrument whilst the other plays either a melodic or rhythmic figure which varies in speed and dynamic.

The octave melody slowly moves down the instrument until it resolves on an open G chord. This chord is the main tonal centre for both ultimatums and this motif is the main motif for both works. Two short accelerating and decelerating runs move up the up and down the keyboard and are both finished with the open G motif. The octave melody returns in a more improvisatory style as the right hand varies the rhythm of the melody over the constant rolls in the left hand. This appearance gives a sense of mourning and grief through the repetition of notes in the melody line which get faster and slower and crescendo. The melody starts to become more frantic and crescendos into an open Gb chord, a variation of the open G motif.

Section Two (p3, s3 11/16 bar to p7, s2 14/16 bar)

The second section is completely contrasting to the first section. Whereas the first section was relatively free with its flowing rhythms, the second is built upon very fast rhythmic patterns. This section also makes use of a common element found in Živković's music, changing time signatures. This concept is very common in folk music and this second section sounds like it has elements of folk rhythms.

The first half of the second section features a new motif (p3, s3, b1. Referred to as the folk-like motif by the author), which also references the rhythm of the open G motif.

This folk-like motif moves up the keyboard and then a triplet run returns to the open G motif followed by some punchy chords. The folk-like motif makes its way up the keyboard again and the same punchy chords follow, this time in a different rhythm. Some new material leads into an as-fast-as-possible run which is identical to the run at the very start of the piece with an extended beginning. The folk-like motif is played again (p4, s6), this time with a more even rhythm and starting softer, crescendo-ing into an accelerating run that finishes with a roll and another as-fast-as-possible run as at the beginning.

The second half of the second section (p5, s3, b3) begins with shorter phrases moving up and down the keyboard with the open G motif appearing in its original and Gb variation. The folk-like motif returns (p5, s6, b1), with the notes played as double stopped notes (two notes played in one hand), and starts a series of short phrases that accelerate and move up the keyboard. The second section reaches its dynamic peak (p6, s3, b2) and a rhythmic variation of the octave melody is alternated with the open G motif. This alternation continues as it slows into a statement of the octave melody as it appeared in the first section (p6, s6, b3) before it leads to a roll followed by an as-fast-as-possible run which leads into the third and final section (p7, s2, b1-2).

Section Three (p7, s2, b3 to end)

The third section is the most rhythmically regular of the sections and features the most recognisable motif from the two *Ultimatum* works (p7, s2, b3). This 14/16 motif is a very dark sounding ostinato that uses 'marimshots' (a combination of playing the written notes whilst the shafts of the mallets strike any random notes to produce a percussive hit to complement the notes) to syncopate and add an aggressive edge to

the pattern. The pattern is a two bar ostinato which begins with the open G motif. This type of 'uneven groove' is a very common element in Živković's compositions.

Short fragments of material from the second section interject until the ostinato accelerates and the pattern is varied as the notes move rapidly up the marimba. A series of repeated notes at the players maximum dynamic move up by semitone and slow until exploding into an accent which starts a roll followed by an as-fast-as-possible run which concludes with the open G motif.

Ultimatum II

ULTIMATUM II, (1994) for two marimbas is a highly virtuoso composition in which the both players are equal in importance and technical challenge. In fact, this is a real sound of ambitious and demanding competition between two instruments. The endless "ultimatums" that they give to each other are difficult technical tasks always solved by both performers. The piece is based on the combination of atonality and extremely expressive post-modern tonality and probably therefore close to everyone's ear even if some of the virtuoso energetic licks required by the composer, might sound rough and contemporary.²¹

First Movement (start to p8, s1, b1)

The first movement begins with two soft swells from player two, the first played on the nodes of the notes and the second in the middle of the bars. The opening as-fast-

²¹ Program note from www.zivkovic.de

as-possible run from *Ultimatum I* follows (p3, s2) and player one answers with the octave melody motif before finishing with a different as-fast-as-possible run (p3, s2 to p4, s2). Player two also responds with the octave melody (p4, s3) played in a softer and expressive way before building into a loud and emotional fragment of the octave melody played in unison with player one (p5, s2). Player two finishes the first section of the first movement with another version of the octave melody (p5, s3). The second section features both players trading short musical fragments and playing interlocking patterns before ending in unison with six with loud dissonant notes low in the range (p6, s1 to p8, s1, b1)

Second Movement (p8, s1, b2 to p12, s1)

The second movement begins in the same way as the first movement, with a soft swell on the notes of the notes. Player two begins softly improvising in the higher tessitura over a set of four notes C, Db, F and Gb, in a way that sounds like the random patter of rain (p8, s2). Player two plays quite freely in this section in a series of rising rolled phrases which all end with a shortened version of the either the first or second as-fast-as-possible run from the beginning. Player two plays a phrase that is not rolled and decelerates which is answered with a combination of the first and second as-fast-as-possible runs from player one (p10, s1) and then player two responds with the same decelerating phrase (p10, s2).

Player one begins the rain-like improvisation and player two starts a series of rolled phrases that move slowly up the range and crescendo until the two players start trading rolls and short phrases as in the second section of the first movement (p11, s1-2). Player two plays the opening as-fast-as-possible run ending with a variation of the

open G motif and a series of short, punchy chords before both players begin a fp roll that finishes with a glissando down the instrument.

Third Movement (p12, s2 to end)

The third movement features the dark 14/16 two bar ostinato pattern as in the third section of *Ultimatum I*, though in this version it is played without the ‘marimshots’.

The two players begin in unison until player one breaks off and plays some short phrases following the underlying rhythmic structure of the 14/16 ostinato (the semiquavers are grouped as 2, 2, 3, 3, 2, 2). The octave melody returns (p13, s1, b2) and is played in time with the ostinato with short rhythmical phrases interjecting. The octave melody is then played quasi senza misura, in that it moves freely over the constant ostinato of player two but still needs to line up to end with the second as-fast-as-possible run over the second bar of the two bar ostinato. The players play the ostinato in unison briefly before player one breaks off again with short rhythmical phrases (p15, s3). The players play a unison run up the marimba and then back down in the rhythm of the folk-like motif used prominently in the second section of *Ultimatum I* (p16, s2, b3). The players return to the ostinato in unison and then another short rhythmic break before the octave melody appears over the ostinato in its initial form completely senza misura (p17, s1, b3). The second as-fast-as-possible run leads into the ostinato pattern for the final time before the players move up the instrument in unison akin to the ending of *Ultimatum I* before coming back down in double stops in the rhythm of the folk-like motif to end with a sfz p crescendo roll to finish on the open G motif.

Ultimatum I and II - Performance considerations

As a performer, approaching the *Ultimatum* pieces for the first time can be daunting task, as a quick glance at the score reveals a complicated pattern of music.

Technically, these works are suitable for advanced marimbists and they sit in the harder end of Živković's concert repertoire. Performers must have control over one handed rolls in both hands, especially the left hand as this is called for very frequently in the *Ultimatum* works (and Živković's concert repertoire in general). In addition to this, the player needs the independence to be able to play melodic or rhythmic patterns freely in one hand whilst the other continues rolling, which can be very challenging to learn.²²

These rolls also require a lot of stamina, as there are long sections of one-handed rolls and traditional rolls at very loud dynamics and the dynamic range for the majority of the works is *ff* to *fff* (especially in *Ultimatum I*). Therefore it is imperative that the marimbist has a relaxed technique to be able to play for the eight or nine minutes that the work asks without fear of strain or injury.

²² To develop the one handed roll technique it is beneficial to begin playing slow alternating strokes, at a relaxed interval such as a fifth, between the mallets in one hand to develop the strength and coordination of the muscles of the wrist. Once this can be successfully done at a slow speed the speed should be increased until the alternation sounds smooth and a roll is produced. It is also advisable to practice this exercise with the mallets at the interval of an octave, as this is a very common interval for independent rolls in Živković's repertoire and requires a different approach than rolling at a smaller interval. To build the independence of the hands once the one handed roll is mastered it is beneficial to start one hand rolling and then play an accelerating and decelerating pattern in the other hand and ensure the quality and speed of the roll remains unchanged.

Musically, the works require a very good sense of rhythm and intensity in performance to achieve the heated interpretation that Živković wishes for. The loud dynamic range that is used through most of the work exemplifies not only the physical but also the emotive intensity contained, and a very helpful way of understanding this intensity is to be aware of the historical context of the work. It is interesting to note that Živković “would actually like the people to feel and understand and be able to interpret all of my pieces without knowing the stories”²³ as he feels the stories can cheapen the work. Nevertheless, whilst it may be the composer’s intention for the story of the works to remain secret, the insight it gives a performer is undeniably valuable as it gives a very real example that conjures such strong emotions that can be channelled into the performance.

When asked whether the lack of barlines could be thought of as a rhythmic freedom in the more mysterious sections, Živković was adamant that he did want performers to play exactly what was written. It is interesting to note that in the recording of *Ultimatum I*, which Živković says “I intend them to set the standards how the composer wanted to have them played”²⁴ that there are some rhythms that are not as printed and some notes added or subtracted such as the decelerating repeated notes in the first section. Živković also stated that once the works are published, people are free to interpret them as they want, however he would prefer that they adhere to the printed part. Although the rhythms in the octave melody are to be played in time it is the grace notes that will make this sound out of time. The grace notes in these sections are always accented and the closeness of the grace note to the following note

²³ Interview with Nebojša Jovan Živković and Joshua Webster, October 11th 2008.

²⁴ Interview with Nebojša Jovan Živković and Joshua Webster, October 11th 2008.

can be varied to give this out of time feeling, as can be heard in Živković's recordings of both *Ultimatum I* and *II*.²⁵

For the notes with a slash through the stem, these are to be played as fast as possible and Živković doesn't like varying with the rhythm, such as starting off slowly and accelerating through. Through the knowledge that this figure represents a rocket in flight, it is easy to see why it should be played as fast as possible without any rhythmic variation.

You know what? I always mess up those runs when I play I want to play them so fast and get so exciting since 10 years when I played this piece that I hardly play the run as it should be to tell you the truth. And I would like it actually even me myself to control this better so as fast as possible but it should be clear all round with all notes.²⁶

As Živković performs all his own works, watching him perform live is the best way to find out how to perform these works, followed closely by listening to his recordings. Jamie Adam, a leading marimbist in Australia who has played a lot of Živković's concert repertoire and who studied at Živković's Marimba Summer Camp in 2004 related that

from spending time with him you can't help but pickup, you know, when he gets behind the instrument that he goes for it and he gives it his all ... I came back and thought wow, you just go for it, you just nail those, you try and nail all those runs (laughs) because he just makes it look so easy, I don't know how

²⁵ Interview with Nebojša Jovan Živković and Joshua Webster, October 11th 2008.

²⁶ Interview with Nebojša Jovan Živković and Joshua Webster, October 11th 2008.

he does it sometimes. I think ... because it's all really stuff that is very close to his heart so it can be emotional kind of stuff – so he gives everything, 110% of himself in the performance and it's that sort of stuff I picked up on and tried to put into my performance.²⁷

Živković's own advice to musicians approaching his repertoire is to

read books which has things to do with music to brighten you social and historical and general views so get rid of the blinders ... if you want to play *Ultimatum I*, if you want to play *Ilijas*, if your play *Tensio*, if you want to play whatever, not only my pieces, you definitely need to be educated person – generally educated person. History, to understand Earth, to understand social sciences, to understand a little of philosophy and arts and then, you know, from arts to musical arts, then from musical arts, you know, percussion arts and then from percussive arts so that it becomes more narrow, narrow, narrow, narrow.²⁸

This is an important concept for his works because though they are written by a marimbist, he stresses that he is a composer who plays the marimba and that his works are well planned out and there is a lot of thought put into the composition.

Jamie Adam believes

²⁷ Interview with Jamie Adam and Joshua Webster, October 18th 2008.

²⁸ Interview with Nebojša Jovan Živković and Joshua Webster, October 11th 2008.

it's important to, to actually listen to his music, I've noticed there is some kids back here that will pick up the book and play through his stuff and kind of play it, I think if they haven't listened to his music or the piece itself that they, not that they miss the point but there are just some things that they do differently, which if they had in the first place listened to his work they would pick up on things straight away. Like you know how his writing can have heaps of notes, all the runs and everything, like its not notated, like sort of 32nd notes or something like that, you know, its just the notes are there and it says as fast as possible but if someone tries to play it without listening and without hearing it first hand I think they won't convey to the audience what he is trying to create. Things like that just being aware of what his music should sound like.²⁹

Performers are lucky that Živković notates his music very clearly and that most of the aspects that could be misinterpreted are explained with a written instruction. Also, as previously mentioned, he has released recordings of a large portion of his oeuvre and it is an invaluable resource to be able to hear the work performed as the composer intended it. The main advice to performers approaching Živković's concert works is to give their all to the performance, to follow the scores as closely as possible and to have a knowledge about music and life in general so as to understand the context of the works.

²⁹ Interview with Jamie Adam and Joshua Webster, October 18th 2008.

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Appendix one	Transcript of an interview with Nebojša Jovan Živković
Appendix two	Transcript of an interview with Jamie Adam
Appendix three	Chronological list of compositions by Nebojša Jovan Živković

Appendix one

Transcript of an interview with Nebojša Jovan Živković (NJZ) and Joshua Webster (JW), October 11th 2008.

JW: How many books are there currently available in the Funny Series?

NJZ: There are five books available out of seven - I'm too lazy to compose the last books, which is *Funny Vibraphone 2* and *Funny Xylophone 2*, and they are like ten years late almost. There are two reasons why they are late – first I do not teach anymore; I stopped teaching the little kids and I'm not so into the material as I used to be when I was teaching every day, you know, and secondly the five existing books, especially *Funny Marimba Book 1* and *My First Book for Xylophone* are selling so well – just *Marimba 1* sold about 6000 copies worldwide so we don't want to, you know, overkill and add new books to and then maybe, to you know, to how to say, to make the competition to existing books, however it is desperately needed that I finish those two books just to get rid of this whole project because people are permanently calling this guy and asking him 'Oh it says the books will be out, it says on the book on the back cover'. That's it.

JW: These books have become a standard in the percussion repertoire for both concert pieces and pedagogical methods, when you composed them were you aware that there was a lack of student pieces available or suitable?

NJZ: Very much so, at least in Europe where I was teaching, I don't know, didn't know at that time exactly what is going on in United States because, you know, country is big and many things are coming out simultaneously and Japan also has a market for keyboard mallet instrument. In Europe we, I felt urgent need you know, and basically the first piece all my kids were playing, the first piece for marimba with four mallets I played was Mitchell Peters *Yellow After the Rain* which is a very good piece, however, this is a very good piece to learn and everything but you know when I was playing first piece with four mallets I was eighteen and when you are eighteen and the piece has eight pages and ten different problems like you know – alternating sticking, double verticals and independence, rhythmical left and right and you spend three months working on that, if you are eighteen or sixteen, at high school or university levels like I was, you consciously and, you know, knowingly spend the time, but at the time when I was teaching, especially nowadays, the kids are starting to play mallets, with four mallets at twelve you know or maybe even earlier, and for them, to present a long piece that deals immediately with so many different technical problems it takes forever for them to master the piece, and as we both know the younger you are the longer the time value is, you know when you were twelve and thirteen fall in love with someone and it says you 'Oh I will see you next summer on the seaside again' it sounded like forever. Today, you know, when I'm over forty and someone tells me next summer you have to do that I say 'wait, wait, wait, next summer will not work, I have no time'. So you have to go back to the kid's head to

understand the time feeling. So therefore the pieces for the kids must be short, tonal, easy to understand and deal with technically only one or two problems which funny mallets does.

JW: The two *Ultimatums* seem to have two main themes, the octave melodies from the opening and the 14/16 groove found at the end. Where did these two ideas come from?

NJZ: So basically from the *Ultimatums* the history is they are number one and number two – it means only two for dua and one for solo. The first piece composed was *Ultimatum 2*, yeah, so first I composed *Ultimatum 2* and then *Ultimatum 1* and then, you know, I really was thinking its important, you know, to write an energetic piece that has groove and that has (interference) that are built (interference) fascinating contemporary writing but not to be (interference) all those like really contemporary pieces, so this is probably the secret of success of both *Ultimatums*, especially *Ultimatum 1* – they are challenging technically, they are challenging musically and they are on the border between, you know, groovy, catchy piece, but also its not cheap pattern, you know, that's just repeated fifteen times like other pieces, it has compositional ideas and basically there is also of course story behind both *ultimatums*, this was NATO bombing of former Yugoslavia especially the Bosnian Herzagovia. But however, you know, now this is a sad history and I do not mention this any more very often but it's a secret that both *ultimatums* are inspired by ultimatum that NATO has given to Bosnian Serbs.

JW: The opening sections are both written without barlines, do you mean for these sections to sound out of time?

NJZ: You know, where is the barline – strictly in time. Where is no barline – um exactly little like out of shape like out of time. The opening run the first time, if you speak of *Ultimatum 1* I mean, this is very cheap to describe music like this, but basically why should I hide that the very first hit, in *Ultimatum 1* I am speaking, is the push of the button on the military jet plane you know, ‘whoosh’, you push the button, the rocket is still on the wings but it’s already started before it get, you know, before it flies away from the airplane wing, the rocket itself motor started, ‘whoooooosh’ and then (sings opening run of *Ultimatum 1*) then it goes you know. So this very first run is basically the bomb, so it should be played like a bomb, and then it falls down (sings as fast as possible chord section) ‘boom’ – destroyed, and then (sings octave melody) you know when the dust is down what has remained from, you know, wives and kids and other collateral damage. So if you go and kill people in western countries then you are terrorist and they have names and pictures, they are all over the place, and if you are a NATO country and go in other countries and kill people then they have no names and no pictures and they are not humans, they are collateral damage. So this is slight difference between NATO bombing and terrorist attack basically, theoretically explained, without sounding, I’m just, you know, naming it as it is.

The NATO bombed Serbia in 1999 a few years later they killed 5000 people including one my former girlfriend, who left husband and little baby. She was sitting in her yard and here we go – cluster bomb, ‘boom’ she’s dead. We used to call her Janis Joplin and she listened Jim Morrison, (interference) Jimi Hendrix and triple J. She was hippie, pro-Western, pro American blah blah blah, and she died finally from American bomb in her own yard in her own city. So this is so ridiculous. So therefore that all these pieces have this energetic and extreme thing. You know there

was some complaining from some, I don't know some analyst or whatever, the first page *Ultimatum 1* has 27 sforzato's. Someone took the time and counted the sforzato's and then in some masterclass in American was, you know, basically bitching about the piece – 'what kind of music is this, too crazy' so my answer to such is – well it has 27 sforzato's because it needs 27 sforzato's. Emotional level of this piece has a minimum 27 sforzato's. I would actually put 217 sforzato's on the first page but they wouldn't fit.

JW: Now when you're playing it does that mean that you can play it sort of out of time or do you want people to stick to the rhythms that you have notated?

NJZ: You know that many of the rhythms there, even if its out, not only that there are no bar lines but also the rhythms are actually not really notated, you know, soon and especially I have those grace notes (sings octave melody) they actually made this out of time, but when I have, even if there is no bar line, if I have dotted eighth notes and quarter notes and or whatever, this I want to have in time. So bar line is (interference) but actually think that (interference) but when there are no bar lines but notes have values, half note, quarter note, you know, this should be played as it is.

JW: You use a lot of folk influences and folk melodies such as in *Suomineito*, is this octave melody and original folk melody or is it (interrupted with answer)

NJZ: Yes. Yes this melody *Suominiето*, Suomi means Finnish (interrupted with question)

JW: No sorry, not from *Suominiето*, from *Ultimatum*.

NJZ: *Ultimatum*? No, there are no original melodies folksongs in *Ultimatum*. It is just um, it is just um (JW in the style?) typical folk style. Yes, especially typically augmented seconds (phone rings - I have to go in 10 minutes, so let's go)

JW: So the two *Ultimatums* (interrupted with answer)

NJZ: So there are no particular melodies, just augmented seconds and diminished seconds (he sings) and this is, yeah.

JW: Okay, so the two *Ultimatums*, they also have two fast runs – like you said, like the bomb, or the rocket. So these are to be played as fast as possible?

NJZ: You know what? I always mess up those runs when I play; I want to play them so fast and get so exciting since 10 years when I played this piece, that I hardly play the run as it should be to tell you the truth. And I would like it actually, even me myself to control this better, so as fast as possible but it should be clear all round with all notes.

JW: Yeah because what I, not knowing the story, um, well one of my natural inclinations is to do (sings accelerating passage).

NJZ: I don't like that. (JW: No, not at all?) No there is also recording of *Ultimatum 2*, um, there are several recordings and some of them do that you know, but I don't call those people and tell them 'don't do this' or whatever, you know, there is a freedom of interpretation when the piece is released and everyone can do it as they want. I

have a recording of both pieces which I intend them to set the standards how the composer wanted to have them played.

I don't like this (sings accelerating passage) but that's it. From the top, from the straight go, this pesanta start. (JW: Yes, that's why I am coming to the source to find out how to do it.)

JW: Now the interesting thing in *Ultimatum 2*, you have the idea of two players playing in different, um sort of, tempos. I thought this was quite interesting and wondered where this sort of idea came from?

NJZ: In the slow movement? (JW: Yes.) That section yeah?

This is not really different tempos – one is actually fully out of time and another is in time. One is just improvising his part so this is not really different. I have two different tempos and two different metronomes actually two different time measurement I have this in um (*Uneven*) *Souls* in first movement so people do have that very often you know, this is a compositional technique which is very you know common under the people who are compositionally educated and since I am not composing marimbist but I start the composition five years and have masters in a percussion and in composition I am in lucky position that I can implement many things that I have learned, (JW: can do both?) exactly, during my compositional studies. So there is nothing uncommon about that if you are educated composer who, you know, has seen so many pieces that use the similar technique work. You know double tempos placed together, they fit sometimes they don't fit, they fit after a certain number of bars you know like $4 \times \frac{3}{4}$ bars and $3 \times \frac{4}{4}$ bars they fit every you

know every three bars together and such combination you can count. So that they really you have 2 different circles but when the circle is done they meet on the first of the down beat or whatever sometimes you can overlap the tempi so they meet together after three or four circles. You know depends how you treat this okay.

JW: What advice would you give to players approaching these works say someone like me who doesn't know the Serbian background, the folk music?

NJZ: You know the thing is like this Bomb in NATO and this everything I would actually like the people to feel and understand and be able to interpret all of my pieces without knowing the stories because it has a little of um of a circus cheap things you know this story behind. I receive weekly e-mails from students all over the world – *Ilijas*, what is the story behind this, what's the story behind that, as if the pieces couldn't be performed as music only you know, and I do think, I do believe that. *Suomineito*, there is story – Finnish folk song well *Ilijas*, there was a girl who was refugee from Serbia, from *Ilijas*, which is a city near Sarajevo. *Ultimatum* also story, so every piece has a story but I do I must be really very careful telling those stories and I do tell like this case or that however I have to be very careful because those pieces should playable without the story without political message or educational message or whatever message because you know, if someone said for example bombing of Bosnia was very cool and good thing and necessary thing that he or she might feel might hesitate to play the piece *Ultimatum* because *Ultimatum* actually you know so this is just a radical example of how humans stupidity could go I would play the piece I like despite you know what the story is behind it. If I like the piece I'll play it so therefore it is very um one should be very careful with stories. By the way, you should probably know that *Eroica*, the symphony of Beethoven was composed in the

glory of Napoleon Bonaparte and later when Napoleon start messing around he pulled that back or you take Shostakovich, you know, his first Symphony dedicated to the May 1 Labour Day, his second Symphony dedicated to October Revolution of Soviet people blah blah blah, and you know now when there is no Soviet Union, there are no Soviet people, there is no revolution, there is nothing, when this is just a ridiculous past tense some people may feel crazy to you know, point out second Symphony – why should I play, it was glorifying October Soviet Revolution, so I would like the people listen Shostakovich second Symphony without thinking of October or whatever just as piece of music. Same here with *Ultimatum* everything else (what else do we have I have to leave in three minutes.)

JW: You have your own virtuosic skills they are compositions born out of improvisation and then transcribed or do you mainly composer away from the instruments?

NJZ: I compose on the instrument but they are not born out of improvisation composing on the instrument doesn't mean you go their fooling around and then something comes. Composing on the instrument can also be like in my case you think about a piece and unit of the piece and develop basically also the structure of the piece, the inspiring idea what will be you know, what you want to make out of that, you know, and all the intentions and everything then you get a piece and all those chops you have already sunk in your head and ideas basically you try to form them and to find them on the instrument and this is why I am on the instrument. For example, I did have idea that I want button push and want a fast run before I compose *Ultimatum 1* just then have to find a run. In case of *Ultimatum 1*, I didn't have to find it because it already was there from *Ultimatum 2* but um in *Ultimatum 2* I had idea

like coming from nowhere (sings) and then second go, so before I went instrument, I said, okay I want one movement and another movement and then third time it breaks through you know. And then this is how it goes you know then I just have to see okay where I will start movement on the high register, middle register lower register, shafts, ends or whatever so those details I work out then perform. That's it

JW: What advice would you give for anyone approaching your general concert repertoire?

NJZ: My pieces or general repertoire?

JW: Your pieces.

NJZ: I would give them advice to (laughs), this is if you go on my web site you will find somewhere on this and that a pdf document about Živković pyramid this is about books to read you know general education. So my advice is that you will also have the books to read ex libris from me. You have to search a little bit I don't know where it is but on my web site, probably under this and that, and go look for it and print this pdf file so this is advice. I really think that due to our specific education we have very uneducated, so to say, idiotic persons who may be can play marimba or cello or whatever but are still missing universal general education even if they have finished something called University. You know so my general advice would be read books which has things to do with music to brighten you social and historical and general views so get rid of the blinders. Unfortunately the whole modern neoliberal sort of say, society, is just basically pushing young people only in this competitive way practice, practice, practice, go practice room and then you have to be blah, blah, blah,

apply application has to look like this, you must come dressed like that, you have to practice those parts and these parts and that so people really spend their lives in practice rooms they maybe can play marimba but remain human idiots and this is what I am demoralised – so my advice would be if you want to play *Ultimatum 1*, if you want to play *Ilijas*, if your play *Tensio*, if you want to play whatever, not only my pieces, you definitely need to be educated person, generally educated person – history to understand Earth, to understand social sciences, to understand a little of philosophy and arts and then you know, from arts to musical arts, then from musical arts you know percussion arts and then from percussive arts, so that it becomes more narrow, narrow, narrow, narrow. So this is my advice because technically we have today kids that you know blow me away how technically perfect they are further same time they scare me how narrow minded they are and stupid what ever you ask them what is the capital of Bulgaria they have no slightest idea. How many countries we have in the world? Who was Napoleon? – no idea. (JW: So they miss out on a lot.) Yeah due this specialising, specialising, specialising. So this is advice read musical books.

Appendix two

Transcript of an interview with Jamie Adam (JA) and Joshua Webster (JW), October 18th 2008.

JW: When did you study with Živković?

JA: I studied with Nebojša in 2004 a summer camp in Germany, September, I can't remember the exact dates, it was for a sort of a week-long intensive.

JW: How would you describe his approach to teaching?

JA: Gee that's a good question; it was all about, not sure if it would be the same you know outside of a week long intensive, but, you know, a lot of teachers can get caught up in technique and all that sort of stuff but it was all about all about the music, and not even with, I guess also the technique and the sound things like that were all sort of taken for granted that you could do all that. So it was all about you know trying to express the music, what is the music saying, yeah it was all about really making the music. (JW: Great.)

JW: Now one of the first things that I'm doing is having a look at the Funny Series. Do you know the "Funny Series"? (JA: Yeah a few of them.) Did he use these at all when he was teaching or were people playing these pieces at the camp?

JA: We did use a couple at one stage ah I think it's from the second book. (JW: I'm just wondering whether he was using his own pieces to help the students with technical problems or whatever?)

Ah it wasn't addressed this way, sort of – play this piece to address this issue, but looking at some of his, like book one I think it is, the pink cover, you know, it's definitely sort of written that way you know – looks at changing intervals from thirds to fourths and fifths, and it's based around that and some others based on different sort of time signatures changes and things like that which I've sort of given to some of my students and it's been quite helpful.

JW: So what Živković pieces have you played?

JA: I have played *Ultimatum 1*, I've played *Ultimatum 2* for marimba duo, I've played his second *Marimba Concerto*, I've played ah *Ilijas*, I've played *Srpska Igra* from one of the books, one of the “Funny” books, I have sort of looked at some of his other marimba pieces, *Les Violins Morts*. I did buy – I've got the music for *Fluctus*, the two-mallet piece though I've never actually attempted it yet (laughs) (JW: that's great)

JW: How would you describe his compositional style?

JA: His style, I would describe it as one that's been influenced by his surroundings, being European has definitely, I mean you can hear folk elements which like in *Ilijas* there's a lot of that folk sound sort of melodically and then obviously the rhythm needs to dictate that melody so you get all these odd time signatures which is fairly influenced by the European sound and it's very thought out as well like compositional.

I know what his compositions aren't and that's, you know, it's not a cool little sort of pattern that sounds good on marimba and then moved to another pattern that sounds good and then moved another pattern you know it's like it's well constructed music for whatever instrument that is writing (that's great that's fantastic that you have done both *Ultimatums* because that's what I'm focusing on)

JW: Did you study either *Ultimatum 1* or 2 with him?

JA: I studied *1*.

JW: Do you remember some of the comments he gave you, like anything general or specific?

JA: I remember you know because everyone sort of plays *Ultimatum* and when you are with the composer you know you always ask, you know, what we're thinking at the time, you know, what was this about. And I remember clear him saying, you know, the opening, you know you've got that sforzando and then you know pianissimo those rolls and you know this is like the bomb, you know, when you sort of detonate the, what is that called, I can't even remember (JW: Like the guy firing the rocket from the jet sort of thing?) yeah so you know that was the only imagery was pretty much the first page I think that's what he is getting at that within you know you've got the whole piece but really it was only the first page where you could sort of (JW: Programmatic almost?) Sort of imagine this bomb going off and then you know the big rundown from the top of the keyboard down to the bottom so that's the big explosion and then you have that sort of quasi chorale eerie type section at the beginning and that just sort of being the aftermath of the bomb that went off and you

know you can imagine the big boom and then knocked to the ground and then you sort of get up and you're all a bit hazy and you don't know what's going on a bit fearful and so I remember him saying that but then from then on the composition itself; trying to think what other (JW: What other things about, may be things like, after the first before it gets to the second section that sort of gets fast, you know, you've got those runs that start slow and then get faster than come back down (JA: yeah) any sort of things about those?) I don't remember him saying much about that I think, I hope that was of the good thing that I was sort of playing it the way so I played it as I was written and so he was happy it so he didn't really say anything.

JW: Anything about the second section? (Sings example.)

JA: You know he did say, I don't know whether this is helpful or not, but he was just bringing out those accents (sings) through that section, and you assume it's all clean sort of rhythmically and articulate and you bring out the accents. (JW: Did he say anything about where that stuff came from, because to me it looks like some sort of an atonal folk sort of thing?) He didn't at the time. (JW: That's all right.)

JW: Did he seem to be fairly flexible about people's different approaches to his repertoire or does he have a pretty particular way that he likes them played?

JA: I think he never came across as sort of you know arrogant or rude and "you must play my piece this way" or would put anyone down you know, "that's not how it goes". I think he can't help but, sort of play it correct I guess or, you know, if you don't follow the notes and the time signatures, I mean if you try and pull it around and play it really romantically then obviously, you know, he would, or anyone would pick

you up on that, you know, hang on that doesn't sound like Živković – he's got a particular sound and a particular style all to his own and I guess you try as a performer, you are trying to just recreate that and pass that on to your audience so you almost have to play, you try and play it the way he does, and that's what everyone was really doing. I didn't find that anyone had really tried to sort of push the boundaries as far as rhythmically or expressively or putting rubatos really where there should be anything like that in there. Not sure if that answers your question... (JW: Yes it does.)

JW: With the *Ultimatums* the scores are pretty clear with what they require especially with a lot of the extra like the more advanced techniques like the shafts on the bars or a tremolo gliss as opposed to a normal gliss, so do think there are any extra little things that aren't notated virtue may have picked up from studying with him or having played so much of his repertoire?

JA: I think from spending time with him you can't help but pickup, you know, when he gets behind the instrument that he goes for it and he gives it his all and I mean there are things written on them like as fast as possible and you see all that sort of stuff and just from spending time with him and watching him play and going to his classes, I came back and thought wow, you just go for it you just nail those, you try and nail all those runs (laughs) because he just makes it look so easy I don't know how he does it sometimes I think all our sort of things just because it's all really, it's stuff that is very close to his heart so it can be emotional kind of stuff, so he gives everything 110% of himself in the performance and it's that sort of stuff I picked up on and tried to put into my performance. (JW: That's great.)

JW: Now just a more general one, what advice would you give to musicians approaching his work, say for someone like me who hasn't studied with him or doesn't necessarily know the Serbian history or the folk influences. What sort of things do you think are important to know?

JA: I think it's important to, to actually listen to his music, I've noticed there is some kids back here that will pick up the book and play through his stuff and kind of play it, I think if they haven't listened to his music or the piece itself that they, not that they miss the point but there are just some things that they do differently which if they had in the first place listened to his work they would pick up on things straight away like, you know, how his writing can have heaps of notes all the runs and everything like its not notated like sort of 32nd notes or something like that you know its just the notes are there and it says as fast as possible but if someone tries to play it without listening and without hearing at first hand I think they won't convey to the audience what he is trying to create. Things like that just being aware of what his music should sound like possibly you know even if you get recordings of that Serbian folk music that's got no marimba but you can hear where how he's been influenced ah what other advice? I think some people young people can get easily get turned off by some thing that to their ear doesn't sound "good" which I say in inverted commas. So not get put off not to judge a book by its cover, like *Three Fantastic Songs (Drei Fantastische Lieder)*, to someone who's listening like a young student who's listening to that for the first time they may think what's that it doesn't sound very good and you know just discard it straight away but to have an open mind and open ears to that that sort of stuff and to look deeper into the music before they easily discarded because it's really worthwhile stuff.

Appendix three

Chronological list of compositions by Nebojša Jovan Živković

Opus	Title	Instrumentation	Year
1	Thema und Variation für Klavier	Piano	1978/79
2	Südslawenien, zwei Sätze für Orchester	Orchestra	1980/81
2	Macedonia	Marimba, Piano	1980
3	Divertimento	2 Trombones, Tuba, Marimba, 4 Timpani	1981
3	Anba, Tanz der kleinen schwarzen Hexe	Marimba, Xylophone, Piano	1981
4	Bläserquintett	Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon	1983
5	Drei Phantastische Lieder	Marimba	1983
6	Amselfelder Klage	Flute, Bassoon, Horn, Percussion, Marimba	1984
7	Atomic Games	Piano	1984
8	Concerto No. 1 per Marimbafono e Orchestra	Marimba, Orchestra	1984/85
8	Urklang	Musik natürlicher Klänge für vier Percussionisten, auch	1984

Tonband -Version			
9.1	Musica	Violoncello	1985
9.2	Musica	Violin	1986/87
9.3	Musica	Double Bass	1988
9	Valse Serbe	Ver. 1 Marimba, Piano Ver. 2 Clarinet, Piano	1985
9	Cadenza	5 Timpani	1986
10	In Erinnerungen Schwebend	2 Flutes, Vibraphone	1986
11	Tensio	Marimba	1986
12	CTPAX : STRAH	Percussion, Tape	1987
13	Vier Unverbindliche Stücke und Eine Verbindliche Zugabe	Piano	1987
14	Corale	13 Winds, Percussion	1987
15	Pezzo Da Concerto	Snare Drum	1987
15	Zwischen Tag und Nacht	Percussion Sextet	1988
16	Fluctus	Marimba	1988
16	Das Innere des Schweigens	Music-theatre for 6 Drumsets, Tape, Speaker, Actors	1989
17	Nada Mnom Je Nebo Zatvoreno	String Orchestra, Female Choir, Solo Bass, Percussion	1989
18	Quintetto per Cinque Solisti	5 Marimbas,	1989

Percussion			
18	Drei Unverbindliche Stücke	Marimba	1989/92
18	Ten Etudes for Snare Drum	Snare Drum	1990
18	Sta Vidis	Tenor, Male Choir, Marimba	1990
19	Jenet, family songs	Flute, Bass Clarinet, Alto Saxophone, Violoncello, Harpsichord	1990
19	Funny Marimba Book 1 1. Mazurka 2. Bauern - Tanz 3. Sizianisches Lied 4. Kampf der Samurai 5. Silvias Lied 6. Der Wenderer 7. Ein Liebeslied? 8. Auf der Wiese 9. Srpska igra 10. Ballade für Petra	Marimba	1989/92
19	Funny Marimba Book 2 1. Tropical Feel 2. Il Sogno Di Paciocchino 3. Bulgarian Etude 4. Bayerischer Ländler	Marimba	1999

	5. Prokleti Koreni		
	6. Johnny's Shuffle		
	7. Il Canto Dei Gondolieri		
	8. Northwind.		
19	Funny Vibraphone Book 1	Vibraphone	1994
	1. Andante		
	2. Sommerlied		
	3. Tropfen		
	4. Bauernlied		
	5. Ragtime for Joe		
	6. Erinnerungen		
	7. Walzer		
	8. Heinz on Hawai		
	9. Ballade		
	10. Rock-Song		
19	My First Book for	Xylophone, Marimba	1991
	Xylophone and Marimba		
	1. Tanz der Gummibärchen		
	2. Polka		
	3. Walzer		
	4. Ententanz		
	5. Kosakenlied		
	6. Das kleine Zirkuspony		
	7. Das tapfere Schneiderlein		
	8. Der Drehorgelmann		

	9. Auf der Wiese		
	10. Der Hase und der Igel		
	11. Holzschuh-Tanz		
	12. Xylophon-Polka		
	13. Lied des Einsamen		
	14. Schottisches Lied		
	15. Ein Frühlingslied		
19	Funny Xylophone Book 1	Xylophone	1996
	1. Liedchen		
	2. Sweet Quick Sixteen		
	3. Alla Pollacca		
	4. Pfeiferl Hans		
	5. Double-Dodl-Dee		
	6. Der Kalif Storch		
	7. No Ragtime		
	8. Thessaloniki		
	9. Dee-Diddle-Doo		
	10. Glissando-Polka		
	11. Der kleine Paganini		
	12. Lamento		
20	Concerto per Violoncello e Orchestra	Violoncello, Orchestra	1990-94
21	Generally Spoken It's Nothing But Rhythm	Percussion, Vibraphone	1990/91
22	Uneven Souls (Sta Vidis II)	Marimba, 3	1992

Percussionists			
23	Die Arten Des Wassers	2 Pianos, 2	1993/94
Percussionists			
23	Les Violons Morts	Marimba	1994
24.1	Ultimatum 1	Marimba	1994/95
24.2	Ultimatum 2	Marimba Duo	1994
24	To the Gods of Ryhthm	Djembe, Voice	1994
24	Ilijas	Marimba	1996
25	Concerto No. 2 per Marimba e Orchestra	Marimba, Orchestra	1996/97
26	The Castle of the Mad King	Percussion	1998
27	Trio per Uno	Percussion Trio	1995/99
28	Concerto per Percussione e Orchestra (The Concerto of the Mad Queen)	Percussion, Orchestra	2000
28	Suomineito	Vibraphone	1999
29	Quasi Una Sonata	Percussion, Piano	2000/01
30	Born to Beat Wild	Trumpet, Bass Drum	2001
31	Concerto per Corno e Orchestra	Horn, Orchestra	2002/07
32	Lamento e Danza Barbara	Marimba, 3 Percussionists	2002
33	Tales from the Centre of the Earth	Percussion, Wind Ensemble	2003