

(Public) Feminine Side of Orthodox Sacred Music in Serbia

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Contemporary music production in Serbia, mostly the choral practice and performance, has been greatly influenced by the rising interest in the Orthodox religion and spirituality during the last two decades. The church choirs have become more engaged, with many of them entering the concert stage, while the new ensembles with the repertoire mainly or exclusively orientated to the church or sacred music are being founded. Majority of them are led by women. In this study, the ways in which church and sacred music is being cherished and popularized in Serbia today is explored through the analysis of female choral conductors' personal views on spirituality and Orthodox church/sacred music, their repertoire politics, (mass) media visibility of their work, as well as the social and cultural tendencies reflecting on various aspects of contemporary sacred music choral practice and performance. Along these lines, special attention is given to the renowned festivals of sacred music such as "Horovi među freskama" (Choirs among frescoes). Using the interdisciplinary approach incorporating the elements of various disciplines such as sociology, cultural and religious studies and musicology, this study will show the aspects in which the work of female choral conductors gives insight both to the role of women and interest in church/sacred music in the contemporary Serbian music and society.

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- *Musicologist, graduated in 2013 at the Department of Musicology, Faculty of Music, University of Arts, Belgrade, where she is currently a PhD student. During her studies she received a number of state scholarships and awards. She participated in conferences in Belgrade and Novi Sad (Serbia) and published articles on Serbian and French music. Her research interests include surveying the correlation between the politics, history and social-cultural background and music production. She holds special interest in contemporary Serbian music inspired by the Orthodox religion and spirituality which she is exploring in her PhD research.*