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UDC 78

Techniques of Working with Poetic Text in M. Feldman's Opera "Neither" on S. Beckett's Libretto in the Context of Anti-Opera Esthetics

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Abstract. M. Feldman's opera "Neither" to S. Beckett's libretto is one of the most striking examples of "anti-operatic" aesthetics in 20th century music. The work is distinguished by the maximum depersonalization of the opera's only character and the absence of any theatrical specificity (plot, stage action, etc.). At the same time, comparing "Neither" with the experimental works of Feldman's contemporaries, one can notice that the concept of the work is between traditional opera and its denial.

This article is devoted to the analysis of the composer's methods of working with poetic text from the point of view of the role they play in the embodiment of the original concept of the opera. The analysis reveals that a number of techniques (such as disruption of the syntactic coherence of the text, word breaks, a large number of textless fragments, lack of intonation diversity , etc.) achieve the effect of depersonalization, which is the key point of the opera's concept. The analysis of Feldman's techniques of working with poetic text also allows us to identify fundamental differences between the vocal parts in the opera Neither and the conceptually close monodrama Erwartung by A. Schoenberg. The author of the study concludes that Feldman's music creates the effect of immersion in the deep layers of the psyche, balancing between the heroine of the opera's awareness and unawareness of her own identity. In addition, the article traces the similarity between Feldman's concept of time, based on the intrinsic value of each moment and the absence of cause-and-effect relationships between them, and A. Bergson's idea of "pure duration" .

The opera "Neither" can also serve as an example of an original solution to the idea of overcoming the subject-object duality of world perception, which is relevant to the artistic culture of the 20th century . Based on an analysis of a number of stylistic features of the work, the author of the article suggests that Feldman saw the process of overcoming subject-object boundaries more as a transformation of individual consciousness than as its destruction.

Keywords: Feldman, Beckett, "Neither", anti-operatic aesthetics, mono-opera, depersonalization, "pure duration"

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Abstract. M. Feldman's opera "Neither" based on S. Beckett's libretto is one of the striking examples of "anti-opera" aesthetics in the music of the 20th century. The work is distinguished by the maximum depersonalization of the only character in the opera and the absence of any theatrical specificity (plot, stage action, etc.). At the same time, comparing "Neither" with the experimental works of Feldman's contemporaries, one can notice that the concept of the work is between traditional opera and its negation.

This article is devoted to the analysis of the composer's methods of working with poetic text from the point of view of the role they play in the embodiment of the original concept of the opera. During the analysis, it is possible to find out that with the help of a number of techniques the effect of depersonalization is achieved, which is the key point of the concept of the opera. An analysis of Feldman's methods of working with poetic test allows us to identify fundamental differences between the vocal parts in "Neither" and A. Schoenberg's "Erwartung". The author of the study comes to the conclusion that Feldman's music creates the effect of immersion into the deep layers of the psyche. The article also traces the similarity of Feldman's concept of time, based on the intrinsic value of each moment and the absence of cause-and-effect relationships between them, with the idea of "pure duration" by A. Bergson.

The opera "Neither" can also serve as an example of an original solution to the idea of overcoming the subject-object duality of worldview, which is relevant for the artistic culture of the 20th century. The author of the article puts forward the assumption that Feldman saw the process of overcoming subject-object boundaries as a transformation of individual consciousness rather than as its destruction.

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Introduction

The historical role of the opera "Neither" by M. Feldman to the libretto by S. Beckett is rather paradoxical. The work, which denies a whole series of fundamental laws of the genre, which both creators of "Neither" openly disliked, eventually became one of the most notable milestones in the development of opera art. arts.

"Neither" can be classified as a so-called "anti-opera" by a number of features . During the 1960s and 1970s, avant-garde composers created several works that musicologists unite under this term due to the contradiction of these musical and dramatic compositions with the aesthetics of classical opera, which, as a rule, was deliberately emphasized by the authors (Karpun

2018; 2021)1 . Feldman's opera stands somewhat apart in this series, since it does not contain the element of parody in relation to the operatic heritage of the past, which is characteristic of most "anti-operas" (Karpun 2021)2 . However, in terms of denying the fundamental principles that make up the specificity of the genre, "Neither" fits quite well into the anti-opera aesthetics. This article will attempt to identify the most essential features of the aesthetic concept of "Neither" based on an analysis of Feldman's techniques for working with poetic text.

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1 In turn, anti-opera is part of a broader genre trend in 20th century music – the new musical theatre (Tarnopolsky 2015). However, if we consider Beckett's text as an independent poetic work, we can see the irony in the relationship

2 between its extraordinary brevity and the term "libretto", which is translated from Italian as "book

"zhechka".

Libretto

The stylistic features of "Neither" are largely predetermined by Beckett's text , which, in turn, was written in accordance with Feldman's ideas about the future work. In general, the history of the creation of the opera is very specific and makes it clear that the stylistic integrity of the work is largely determined by the similarity of the worldview.

perception of its authors, which allowed them to understand each other literally at a glance.

Thus, when Beckett asked Feldman what text he needed for a future opera, the composer replied that he was looking for " something that just hovered"[3] (Skempton 1977, 5). Such a vague definition , however, turned out to be maximally specific for Beckett.[4] He immediately jotted down the first few lines, and sent the rest to the composer later by postcard. The full

the text of the libretto[5] looks like this:

> "Neither"
> to and fro in shadow from inner to outer shadow
> --
>
> from impenetrable self to impenetrable unself by way of neither
>
> --
>
> as between two lit refuges whose doors once neared gently close, once away turned from gently
> part again
> --
>
> beckoned back and forth and turned away
> --
>
> heedless of the way, intent on the one gleam or the other
>
> --
>
> unheard footfalls only sound
> --
>
> till at last halt for good, absent for good from self and other
>
> --
>
> then no sound
> --
>
> then gently light unfading on that unheeded neither
> --
>
> unspeakable home

---

3 The word "hover" can also be translated as "to hang", "to hesitate". Here and below is the author's translation of the article.

[4] Probably, this effect was due to the specificity of Beckett's artistic thinking: the characters in his works are often devoid of individual traits, the time and place of action are characterized by uncertainty, and the event the plot side is negated.

5 Studies of Neither tend to use traditional operatic terminology (Laws 1996; Livengood 2012; Owings 2018), which seems justified since Feldman's work, as will be shown below, despite its radical innovation, also has a clear historical continuity.

When considering Beckett's text as a literary basis for the opera, it is important to note that its originality lies not only and not so much in its extreme brevity, but in its non-conformity with the dramatic canons of an opera libretto, even in a very broad interpretation of this concept. Beckett's text contains not only no coherent account of the events, but also absolutely no theatrical -stage specificity: no hint of a plot (even far from realistic), no characters, no interaction between them, and moreover, the presence of any specific character is denied by the very title of the work, which is translated from English as "nobody", "no one", "neither one nor the other".

At the same time, the text superbly creates a state of uncertainty ("hover"), which Feldman wanted to embody in the music, and is also filled with extremely vivid, often paradoxical images: a shadow in which you can stay, while moving in opposite directions; mysterious doors that, as soon as you approach them, softly

close, and as soon as you turn away, they open again; silent, but at the same time resonant steps, etc.

Thus, the aesthetic concept of "Neither" can be considered as a denial of a number of fundamental principles on which classical (in the broad sense) opera was based, which emerged in the 17th century and was closely connected with the main conceptual dominants of the New Time. As V. N. Kholopova and Yu. N. Kholopov point out, "the era of individualism of the 17th–19th centuries sought to capture in music the image of the human personality in its bodily and spiritual concreteness" (Kholopova, Kholopov 1984, 167). And it is precisely in opera, where the "image of the human personality" is embodied not only by musical and linguistic, but also by visual and theatrical means, that this aesthetic

the installation was realized to the greatest extent. However, Beckett's text contains diametrically opposed ideas - maximum de- personalization (up to the denial of the presence of any specific character) and "atheatricality" (the absence of any plot or stage action).

This artistic concept is very characteristic of its time. As has already been said , the 1960s and 1970s were a time of active and extremely diverse experiments by avant-garde composers in the field of musical theatre, with a distinctive feature

many of them are a radical break with the previous tradition, which gives musicologists grounds to call a number of works of this period "anti-operas"6 . And one of the most important distinguishing features of anti-operas, according to N. A. Karpun, is "an appeal to an abstract concept instead of a plot, "the disintegration of the narrative (narrativity)", that is, in fact, anti-narrativity" (Karpun 2021, 134).

Musical interpretation
poetic text

As for the musical interpretation of Beckett's libretto, it can be said that it fully realizes the ideas embedded in the text. First of all, it should be mentioned that, although it is not predetermined by the libretto, a character does appear in the opera. Feldman assigns the only vocal part to a soprano, thus making it clear that the heroine of the opera is a woman. However, this is the only thing that can be said with certainty about the heroine. We still do not know her name, age, or even any circumstances

her life.

Moreover, we cannot form a
a clear idea of the inner world
heroine, since her mental appearance is also devoid of certainty. To a large extent , this is achieved by a number of working techniques

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6 At the same time, composers prefer other genre definitions for their works: "stage composition" ("Staatstheater" by M. Kagel), "stage action"
("Intolleranza" by L. Nono) "variable fantasy in the opera genre" ("Your Faust" by A. Pousseur), etc. (Karpun 2021).

with poetic text, which is why the vocal part in the opera sounds very specific.

As is known, speech is one of the most important mental processes (Barabanov 2021). Based on its individual characteristics (tempo, rhythm, prevailing intonations, etc.), one can say a lot about a person's character, as well as about the psychological state in which he is at the moment. In musicology , the technique of reconstructing a hero's "psychological portrait" based on the nature of his vocal intonation is applicable to a very wide range of works, including a significant part of the vocal music of the 20th century. However, if we try to use this method when analyzing Feldman's opera, it turns out that a number of features of the speech of its only heroine do not quite fit into existing ideas about the mental norm.

Thus, the vocal part completely lacks any resemblance to the characteristic speech rhythms. Of course, the discrepancy between speech and musical rhythm is also characteristic of classical vocal music (Ruchevskaya 1988), but in Feldman's opera there is not only some discrepancy, but actually a complete destruction of speech rhythm, which is expressed, among other things, in the breaks between some words by pauses. This is what happens, for example, with the word "shadow". On the other hand, Feldman writes some words of several syllables under one duration in the musical text, which also

it also emphasizes the contradiction between speech and musical rhythm (Fig. 1).
Moreover, Feldman systematically violates the syntactic coherence of Beckett's libretto, which, it must be said, is not very good anyway.

Rice. 1. M. Feldman. "Neither", bars 145–168, soprano part
Fig. 1. M. Feldman. "Neither", bars 145–168, soprano part

great: it has almost no punctuation marks7

, which blurs the structure of the text and allows us to only very conditionally divide it into sentences, which, moreover, are often devoid of a grammatical basis (for example, in the first lines).

However, in the opera, some structural and grammatical uncertainty of Beckett's text is greatly enhanced. This is facilitated by a number of artistic devices. Firstly, the duration of the opera - 50 minutes - is completely incomparable with the time it takes to pronounce the verbal text. Of course, in classical operas, a fairly short text often becomes the basis for a fully developed aria (due to numerous repetitions and an abundance of syllabic chants). However, in the operas of the past, such fragments are necessarily interspersed

with recitatives, where the text is conveyed in a form as close as possible to the sound of speech . Here, however, such "compensation" does not occur, which makes it difficult to perceive the meaning and structure of the text, and also makes the heroine's speech feel unnaturally slow.

In addition, the text of Beckett's libretto is abundantly "diluted" in Feldman's opera with numerous vocalises. At the same time, sometimes the melody with the text can initially be confused with the vocalise. This happens, for example, when the phrase "unspeakable home" appears, since its first syllable is accompanied by a long chant, which falls on almost the same phoneme that is present in the vocalises. In addition, the syllabic chants are so large-scale that the word "unspeakable" is impossible to

but sing it in one breath, resulting in the word being torn apart. All this, of course, contributes to less clarity of the text (Fig. 2).

There is also an example of grammatical inconsistency: the phrase "unheard footfalls only sound" when repeated sounds like "unheard footfalls only sounds", that is, the noun is used is in the plural, and the verb is in the singular. In addition, musical caesuras often do not correspond to the grammatical structure of the verbal text.

For example, in the phrase "as between two lit refugees whose doors once neared gently close, once away turned from gently part again» («as between two lighted havens whose doors, as soon as you approach, softly close,

and as soon as you turn away, they gently separate you-

(sya again) the word "whose", which connects the words "refuges" and "doors" , is separated by a long pause from both . At the same time, on the word "doors" new musical material appears in the vocal part , which further destroys the syntactic integrity of the phrase (Fig. 3).

An even more striking example of this technique is the phrase "headless of the way, intent on the "one gleam or the other" ("indifferent to the path, focused on one or the other gleam "). Here the words "intent on" ("focused on") and the phrase "the one gleam

or the other» («one or the other gleam»), to which they refer, are separated by a very extended orchestral fragment, in which a number of significant musical events occur, including the implementation of the unison theme, one of the most important in the opera. The destruction of the integrity of the verbal text is also emphasized by the fact that the vocal part on the words «the one gleam or the other» returns not to the three-part motive «fis2 –g2 –as2 », which sounded in the first part of the phrase, but to the repetition of the sound «g2 », with which the vocal part of the opera began (Fig. 4, 5).

Thus, it can be noted that the change of musical material in the vocal part emphasizes the appearance of a new, bright poetic image, which for the composer is more important than the syntactic coherence of the text. This produces the effect of "disconnection", fragmentation of the train of thought of the heroine of the opera. In addition to all of the above, Feldman actively uses such a traditional method of working with verbal text as repetitions of individual words and their combinations, which, in combination with all of the listed techniques , also contributes to the difficulty of perceiving

acceptance of the text.

It should be noted that the effect of some of the techniques described above increases as the opera progresses . Thus, the length of the vocalises increases (the total duration of the last three vocalises exceeds the total duration of all the preceding ones). Most of the repetitions of words are concentrated in the last phrases of the text. Here are also the most extended syllabic chants, and the technique of breaking words with pauses reaches its culmination both in quantity and in quality.

in personal relations.

It is interesting that K. Livengood, analyzing the musical material of the opera, comes to the conclusion that closer to the end of the opera its main thematic elements are destroyed (Livengood
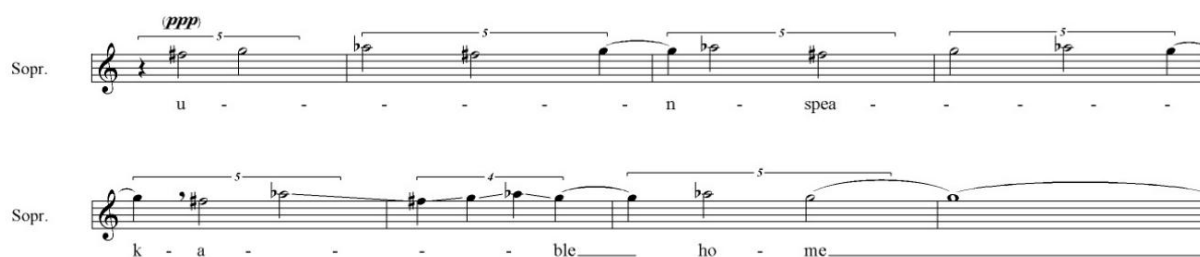
Rice. 2. M. Feldman. "Neither", measures 1362–1369, soprano part

Fig. 2. M. Feldman. "Neither", bars 1362–1369, soprano part
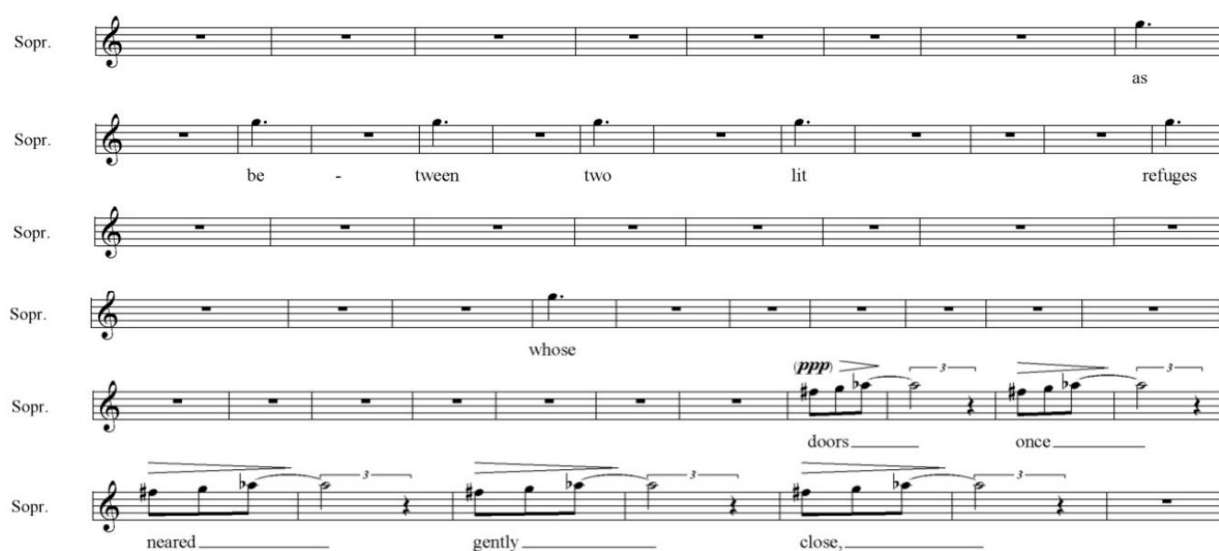
Rice. 3. M. Feldman. "Neither", bars 209–264, soprano part

Fig. 3. M. Feldman. "Neither", bars 209–264, soprano part

Rice. 4. M. Feldman. "Neither", bars 493–504, soprano part

Fig. 4. M. Feldman. "Neither", bars 493–504, soprano part

Rice. 5. M. Feldman. "Neither", bars 602–613, soprano part

Fig. 5. M. Feldman. "Neither", bars 602–613, soprano part

2012). Thus, it can be concluded that this process goes in parallel with a decrease in the structural coherence of the verbal text.
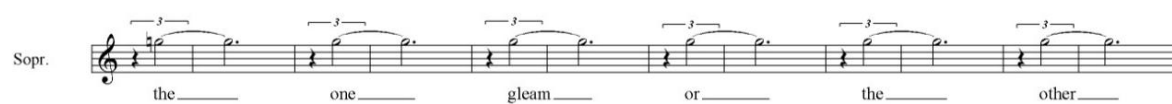
As for the intonation (pitch) aspect of the vocal part, the scanned repetition of the same tone, as well as the constant repetitions of intonations (exact or varied), characteristic in general of Feldman's style[8] , also do not correspond to the norms of natural speech, which, as a rule, is characterized by intonation diversity[9] . At the same time, repeating certain musical fragments , the composer, as a rule, makes small, often barely noticeable changes to them,

as a result, thematic elements that return at a distance are perceived as "similar enough to activate memory, but altered enough to raise doubt" (Owings 2018, 26).

This method is extremely important for the psychological characterization of the opera's only character: as Livengood notes, the micro-variation techniques used by Feldman produce the effect of the heroine of the work losing control over her own memories, the effect of memory instability and, accordingly, uncertainty.

division of the present, and ultimately the blurring of personal boundaries and the loss of a sense of one's own identity (Livengood

2012). Thus, in place of classical opera heroes, who possessed a very distinct set of external and internal (psychological) traits, in Feldman's "Neither" there comes a character without a name, age or biography, who is very vaguely aware of himself as a subject.

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[8] The principle of repetition on which Feldman's works are based raises the question of his belonging to the minimalist composers, to which researchers do not have a clear answer. Thus, R. Taruskin writes that Feldman is usually not considered a minimalist (Taruskin

2005). P. G. Pospelov, proposing to distinguish minimalism as a philosophical concept from a rehearsal technique, believes that Feldman's music has the former but not the latter (Pospelov 1992). At the same time, the term "pattern" — the main compositional element of a minimalist composition — is used in relation to Feldman's music both by the composer himself and by researchers of his work (Lyakhova 2014; Feldman 1985; Law 1996; Livengood 2012). Moreover, commenting on his piece "Why Patterns ?" the composer claims that he composes "exclusively in patterns" (Feldman 2019, 178). 9 It should be clarified that such asceticism is characteristic mainly of fragments with text. In vocalises, the intonational side of the melody is much richer.

Historical prototypes

It should be noted that, despite Feldman's pronounced innovation, his work nevertheless has deep historical roots. In particular, one of the prototypes of "Neither" can be considered the so-called " madness scenes", widespread in operas of the 17th-20th centuries. Of all the variety of plot-dramatic and musical-stylistic interpretations of such scenes, the most stylistically close to "Neither" seems to be the so-called "Koloraturdelirium" ("coloratura madness")10, that is, a touchingly idealistic interpretation of the loss of reason, widespread mainly in operas of the first half of the 19th century. The basis for such an analogy is the high tessitura of the soprano part in combination with the emotional and psychological state of detachment, concentrated introspection, and complete immersion of the heroine of the work in her own illusory world, cut off from the surrounding reality.

Of course, it is difficult to find any "clinical" signs of madness in 19th century music – we learn about the loss of reason of the heroine (hero) of the opera mainly from the libretto . However, there are some moments that I would like to draw attention to. For example, the culmination of the scene of Lucia's madness from G. Donizetti's opera "Lucia di Lammermoor" is an extended episode without words – the cadenza,

performed in a very high register, accompanied by a flute. Considering the stage situation, it can be assumed that the disappearance of the verbal text may symbolize in this case the complete break of the opera's heroine with the outside world and a partial loss of control over her own mental

ic processes.

Moreover, the scene of Lucia's madness is generally distinguished by an abundance of virtuosic coloraturas, which in themselves, of course, are not a sign of madness, but in this context also contribute to the creation of the impression of a "break from reality"11. Let us recall that in Feldman's "Neither" the proportion of vocalises in the soprano part is very large, and their duration increases towards the end of the opera, which produces a similar effect overall . It should be clarified,

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[10] The term is used by E. Husser

[11] (2006). As D. V. Lyubimov writes, "madness seems to free Lucia's voice from the bonds of words and gives it freedom of flight" (Lyubimov 2022, 34).

that interpreting the psychological state of Feldman's heroine as a loss of reason would be unfounded - if only because there is no information about this in the libretto. Rather , one can speak of extreme introspection.

a process in which some mental processes are transformed.

Another historical prototype of "Neither " is the monoopera, which at the time of the creation of "Neither" was already a formed, but still quite young genre. At the same time, the most common features are found between "Neither" and A. Schoenberg's monodrama "Expectation " ("Erwartung"): in both works, the heroines do not have a name and a specific age and are mainly in the world of their own emotions, thoughts and feelings. However, there are significant differences in their perception of themselves and the world around them , which are reflected in a number of features of the vocal parts.

For example, it is difficult to doubt the ability of the Woman (eine Frau) from "Erwartung" to be aware of her feelings, thoughts and memories . In many ways, this confidence is due to the fact that the vocal melody in Schoenberg's monodrama does not contradict either the rhythm or, even more so, the syntactic structure of the verbal text, and the broken melodic lines and sharp tessitura changes are a completely natural expression of the agitated emotional state in which the heroine finds herself.

On the contrary, the speech of the woman from the opera "Neither" does not express a rich spectrum of contrasting emotions. Moreover, as a result of applying the complex of musical interpretation techniques of the poetic text discussed above , the impression arises that the process of expressing her thoughts in speech form seems to be difficult for her.

If we try to reconstruct the " psychological portrait" of Feldman's heroine based on the characteristics of her vocal intonation, it turns out that her speech is distinguished by a number of features that in real life are assessed as inconsistent with the mental norm and are described by such terms as bradylalia12, scanned speech13, syntactic14 and intonational aphasia15.

The artistic meaning of such a specific vocal part, apparently, consists in creating the effect of the heroine of "Neuther" immersing herself in the deep layers of her own psyche, which consciousness can no longer fully control, which is why the boundaries of her personality become blurred, and she can balance on the edge between awareness and unawareness of her own identity. In this regard, it is necessary to briefly

mention the nature of the passage of time in the opera Feldman, although this problem certainly deserves separate and detailed consideration.

Thus, Livengood argues that Feldman's use of microvariation techniques combined with the lack of causal connection between events leaves the listener with the feeling that "one moment in time is equivalent in significance to any other moment" (Livengood 2012, 105). The composer himself noted: "I am not a watchmaker; I am interested in how to approach Time in its unstructured existence" (Lyakhova 2014, 15).

These statements, in our opinion, echo the concept of "pure duration" by A. Bergson. The French philosopher believed that "pure duration is the form that the sequence of our states of consciousness takes when our "I" is actively working, when it does not establish a distinction between

real states and states, them

preceding" (Bergson 1999, 750). At the same time, according to Bergson, pure duration is the deep essence of consciousness, while the ability to distinguish states and arrange them in a linear sequence pertains to its superficial layer, which is most closely in contact with the external world. In this regard, it can be assumed that by distinguishing between different mental states and ordering them in time, consciousness thereby establishes both its own identity (as an invariant that is preserved during various changes) and non-identity with the external world16. At the same time, in the absence of such a distinction, personal boundaries become blurred.

In light of all that has been said above, we can

It can be concluded that the nature of the musical process in Feldman's opera, based on the equivalence of all moments in time, contributes to the effect of immersion into the deepest layers of the psyche, in which the sense of cause and effect of events is lost, which

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[12] Slowing down the rate of speech (Stoimenov et al. 2003).

[13] A speech disorder in which words are pronounced slowly, syllable by syllable (Stoimenov et al. 2003). Violation of the

[14] syntactic organization of speech (Stoi-Menov et al. 2003).

[15] Speech disorders in which speech loses intonation diversity and becomes monotonous (Stoimenov et al. 2003).

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[16] A similar concept of identity is proposed by E. Erikson (Erikson 1996).

contributes greatly to the creation of a sense of depersonalization, which is key to the aesthetic concept of the opera.

The Role of "Neither" in the Process of Transformation of the Opera Genre

Considering Feldman's "Neither" in the context of numerous experiments of the 1960s–

1970s in the field of musical theatre, it is necessary to note the peculiar "duality " of the aesthetic concept of this work : along with the rethinking of some fundamental principles of classical

the composer of the opera retains a number of its traditional properties, and in this sense it turns out

"less radical" than many of his contemporaries . Thus, one of the key properties of "Neither" is its anti-narrative nature, expressed in the rejection of the plot as an understandable and logical

a logically determined sequence of events. In this sense, Feldman's opera was preceded by a number of works: "Originale" by K. Stockhausen (1961), "Sur Scène" and "Staatstheater " by M. Kagel (1959 and 1970), "Passaggio" by L. Berio (1962), "Aventures" and "Nouvelles Aventures" by D. Ligeti (1962 and 1965), etc. In addition, a characteristic "anti-operatic" feature of "Neither" is that its action (if it can be called that) takes place "outside of traditional time-space" (Karpun 2021, 134).

On the other hand, if in a number of musical and theatrical works of the 1960s and 1970s composers abandon such integral

attributes of classical opera, such as dominance

vocal beginning, and also replace the orchestra with an instrumental ensemble, including the participation of electronics17, then the vocal and instrumental composition of "Neither" is quite traditional - soprano and symphony orchestra. Not characteristic of Feldman is the rejection of specifically musical dramaturgy in favor of, for example, visual-stage (as in Kagel's "Staatstheater")18.

In addition, Feldman's opera contains a verbal text of very high artistic quality.

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[17] Thus, in L. Berio's "Opera", singing is often replaced by melodic recitation. In K. Stockhausen's "Originale", the music of his earlier work "Kontakte" for piano, percussion and electronics is used, as well as fragments of other works (in the form of an audio recording). In F. Glass's "Einstein on the Beach" , professional singers do not participate, and the orchestra is replaced by an instrumental ensemble. N. A. Karpun considers the rejection of the dominance of the vocal principle and specifically musical dramaturgy to be the most important typological

[18] features of anti-opera, along with anti-narrative (Karpun 2021).

level, and, despite a number of techniques that blur the structural integrity of the libretto, the text still does not break down into autonomously existing syllables19. Thus, we can conclude that "Neither" is not an anti-opera in the full sense of the word, but is located "between" the traditional opera concept and its negation, which is manifested in a number of conceptual and stylistic features.

In this regard, it is worth mentioning that the idea of "intermediality" was important for Feldman . "I prefer to think of my work like this: between categories. Between time and space. Between painting and music. Between the musical construction and its surface," the composer wrote (Feldman 2019, 117)20.

Intermediality as a balancing between different categories, states, the presence and absence of one or another constructive element of the composition is manifested in various aspects of "Neither". Thus,

There is a character in the opera, but he is maximally deindividualized, there is a libretto, but in fact-

there is practically no plot, there is a full-fledged vocal part with text, but the functional differentiation of the sounds of the soprano and the orchestra is expressed very weakly, as a result of which the melody seems to be there, but at the same time it seems to be absent21; the text of the libretto sometimes appears, sometimes disappears (since it is interrupted by pauses and vocalises); thanks to the subtlest techniques

microvariation creates an inseparable unity of statics and continuous renewal,

as a result, the feeling of time as a movement from the past to the future practically disappears, but one can feel the true (in Feldman's interpretation) essence of time , not distorted by the composer's manipulations22.

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[19] In this regard, the text in Feldman's opera is distinguished by significantly greater semantic and syntactic integrity than in the works of a number of his contemporaries. For example, M. Monk's operas often use texts consisting of individual words and syllables "not associated with the transmission of specific meanings" (Kiseeva, Kiseyev 2019, 37). In Kagel's "Staatstheater", only individual syllables are used as a verbal series , sung as vocalises.

[20] By a happy coincidence, Beckett's libretto is also conveys the idea of "in-betweenness" – as a kind of borderline state of the soul. Feldman said that he sought "to

[21] create the feeling that she (the soprano. – E.L.) is singing, and you have the feeling that it is a melody, and yet there is no melody" (Owings 2018, 18).

[22] Feldman, in his words, strove to "allow time to be, rather than perceive it as a compositional element" (Feldman 2019, 113).

As a result, the overall artistic effect of the work can be described as immersion in a special psychological state, in which the cause-and-effect relationship of events is lost, time appears in a syncretic, unstructured form, the feeling of one's own identity and separation from the surrounding world is blurred, which makes it possible to feel "vibrations of the universe" that are not perceived in the usual state.

In this regard, Feldman's aesthetic concept is extremely relevant for its time, since one of the fundamental ideas that determines the specificity of the artistic culture of the entire 20th century (and especially its second half) is the search for ways to overcome the subject-object duality.

the peculiarity of worldview, which outlines a clear and in many ways insurmountable boundary between the "I" and the surrounding world (Prosnyakov 2012). In American music of the 20th century, this idea was reflected in special attention to the intrinsic value of sound, which was characteristic of both the representatives of musical experimentalism of the first half of the century: G. Cowell, J. Cage, L. Harrison (Timoshenko 2004), and later for composers of the New York School: J. Cage , M. Feldman, K. Wolfe, E. Brown. Apparently , experiments in the field of aleatoric music23, and experiments in compiling fragments of works by other authors (for example, Cage's "Euroopera" cycle), and the passion of a number of composers for Eastern philosophy24 are connected with searches in this direction.

In the opera "Neither" Feldman offers his own solution to this problem: while preserving some traditional features of the musical genre, in which the subject-object paradigm of world perception is expressed most clearly, he actively transforms others. Thus, in the opera, unlike Beckett's libretto, there is a character, albeit de-individualized , there is a melody, albeit periodically "drowning" in orchestral sounds, there is, finally, a written musical text, which can be considered as a manifestation of the author's

individuality in the artistic fabric of the work25.

Ultimately, Feldman seems to find a way to make the boundary by which human consciousness separates itself from the surrounding world permeable without destroying it completely. Thus, despite the aforementioned closeness of the creative aspirations of the composer and librettist, Feldman's conception still turns out to be more optimistic than Beckett's: if for Beckett the overcoming of subject-object boundaries apparently means the complete disintegration of individual consciousness and its dissolution in an impersonal "nothing" (that is, the death of the subject), then the composer probably saw the result of the tormented searches of a restless soul differently. 26 In any case, the process of eroding the self -identity of the heroine of Feldman's opera is felt more as a path to the transformation of individual consciousness than as a path to its inevitable destruction.

Feldman's ideas had a significant impact on the development of the opera genre in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. For example, the idea of depersonalization was further developed. In particular, in S. Reich's opera Three Stories

vocal parts are not associated with any characters at all, and the singers "are only 'emitters' of the voice" (Kiseeva, Kiseev 2019, 36). The concept of a monoopera, in which the subjectivity of the main character is largely lost, is reimagined in F. Romitelli's multimedia opera "The Metal Index". Despite the presence of a solo vocal part (soprano), the female image

in this work does not receive any

visual embodiment, if we do not count the allusion to R. Lichtenstein's painting "The Drowning Girl" in K. Lekovic's text. The text only hints at "the love story of a certain anonymous person, whose voice we hear "off-screen"" (Lavrova 2019, 148).

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23 At the same time, priority in the field of aleatoricism apparently belongs to Feldman - it was he who in 1950 introduced Cage to his early experiments in graphic notation, which had already been created by that time (Manulkina 2012; Feldman 2019). 24 O. B. Manulkina notes that Cage was very selective about Eastern culture (Manulkina 2012).

Apparently , he was interested only in those aspects of it that were consonant with his own creative searches.

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25 It is significant in this regard that, having turned to aleatoricism in the early period of his work, Feldman subsequently returned to the practice of fixed notation of musical text and insisted that at least a minimal degree of conc-

control over the musical material on the part of the author is necessary. Thus, Beckett's text

26 clearly speaks of achieving

some kind of refuge, although inaccessible to verbal description ("unspeakable home"), and, as K. Laws believes, "the consequences of this final stop are deadly" (Laws 1996, 197). The researcher also points out that the libretto "suggests the concept of some end to constant wandering, but Feldman seems unwilling to allow this" (Laws 1996, 197).

Conclusions

The conducted research allows us to conclude the following conclusions:

1. Feldman's opera contains a number of principles that can be interpreted as anti- operatic: depersonalization, anti-narrative, "atheatricality", and the "timeless" nature of the flow of the musical process.

2. The historical prototypes of "Neither" can be considered Schoenberg's monodrama "Expectation" and the scenes of madness in the operas of the first half of the 19th century.

3. Compared to Schoenberg's "Erwartung", Feldman's "Neither" represents a new level of immersion into the deep layers of the psyche , which is expressed in a number of features of the opera's heroine's speech, as well as in the specific nature of the flow of the musical process, which is based on the intrinsic value of each moment in time and evokes associations with Bergson's "pure duration".

4. The idea of "in-betweenness" is of the utmost importance for the aesthetic concept and musical- stylistic features of "Neither".
accuracy."

5. Compared to the most radical experiments of the 1960s and 1970s in the field of musical theatre concept "Neither" is distinguished by a combination of innovation and the preservation of a number of features of traditional opera.

6. Feldman's opera reflects the idea of overcoming the subject-object duality of world perception, which is relevant to the artistic culture of the 20th century ; at the same time, the composer saw the process of overcoming subject-object boundaries more as a transformation of individual consciousness than as its destruction.

7. "Neither" continues the series of mono-operas of the 20th century and opens the way for new experiments, among which, first of all, we should mention Romitelli's multimedia opera "The Metal Index".

Conflict of interest

The author declares that there is no potential any obvious or apparent conflict of interest.

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