

THE FAMOUS PIANIST CAROL MICULI. IMPRESSIONS FROM A MUSICAL EVENT AS PART OF THE FESTIVAL *MANDYCZEWSKI FEST**

Iuliana LUCEAC

Abstract: *Autumn in Chernivtsi, as in any other cultural city, especially with such an interesting origin and full of events, begins with the opening of rooms and salon activities not only musical, but also literary, theater, generally creation. Wandering the streets of my hometown, I was extremely happy to see the poster of the festival dedicated to Eusebie Mandicevschi (1857-1929), another remarkable man of culture of Bucovina origin, celebrated locally in Molodia and at the museum in Băhrinești – the birthplace of the composer, the musicologist and choir conductor, coming from a family of priests and musicians, among his teachers and students we can name the well-known Johannes Brahms, Isidor Vorobchievici, Ciprian Porumbescu, his brother Gheorghe Mandicevschi, Marțian Negrea, etc.*

The above abstract, echoing a previous introduction in the Voice of Bucovina's "Bukovinian Personalities" was inspired by the Mandichevski Fest – an event, I had the pleasure to attend in August 2021, the year previous to the Russian-Ukrainian war in my native city of Cernăuți, aka Tchernowitz, Czernowitz the capital of Bucovina and under Habsburgs a multiethnical center, curenly Chernivtsi, Bukovina, where the poems of Paul Celan and the novels of Joseph Roth or Rezzori would reminisce of those times. It dwells on some fragments from the history of Carol Miculi, a renowned Bukovinian composer and pianist of an Armenian, Polish and Romanian descent, the pupil of the renowned Frédéric Chopin – who marked the 200th birth anniversary in 2019. The excellent evening, where, along with some known participants of the Romanian, Ukrainian and Polish community, I had the pleasure to attend, all accompanied by the cameral and classical music interpretations of the soloists L.Cholomeniuk, V.Fisiuk, Ya.Vyshpinska, B.Zaytseva-Cheban and an introduction to the life and activity of Carol Miculi, moderated by Yanina Vyshpinska, which would not have been possible without the support of the local concert Hall, the

*Courtesy and with the approval of *Glusul Bucovinei*, 1-4 / 2022 , XXX Nr. 111-114

A. Dobryanskyi Library, the Mandichevschi museum in Bahrinesti and other cultural figures and authorities. The fact, that the interest to the multiethnic cultural figures is still alive, despite the political and social situation in Ukraine cannot but encourage. The present article is a continuation of the story about Carol Miculi – a Bukovinian musician, composer and cultural personality who, undoubtedly played a significant role in formation of the modern enclave of Bukovina and whose music we hope to continuously hear in the concert halls of Cernăuți.

So, I decided to visit a musical event, which took place at the philharmonic in the city, - a small introductory concert-study in the life and work of Carol Miculi, also known as Karl von Mikuli or Karol Pstykián, composer, pianist, music teacher of Polish-Armenian origin, especially since I was going to return to this topic in the pages of the "Voice of Bucovina" magazine within the Tedeum in memory of the famous Hurmuzaki family, its members being rightly considered knights of the Bucovina culture. Carol Miculi, born in Cernăuți on October 22 (20), 1819, was a friend of the Hurmuzaki family from Bucovina, but also one of the greatest propagators and interpreters of the music of his teacher - the great gentleman Frédéric François Chopin. I owe my passion for researching the life and work of Carol Miculi to my late father, who appreciated classical music, especially that performed by masters of Bukovina origin. The personality of the musician is all the more fascinating, as he was one of the true Bukovinians who, as is well known, were usually multicultural not only from the point of view of the area of activity, but also by ethnicity. Carol was one of the most representative examples of this phenomenon, his family coming from Armenians and Moldovan boyars, which did not prevent the friend of the Music Association from Galicia (now Ukraine) to become famous in Austria-Hungary, Romania, Poland, Armenia and Ukraine. It is certain that in his personality the Bucovina vine was happily found, and the luck of living and creating in the times of Franz Liszt, Frederic Chopin, Sever Zotta, the Hurmuzaki brothers, and the geopolitical situation of his native land and its surroundings. The life and creation of Carol Miculi have been and are increasingly researched in Poland, Armenia, Austria, France, but also in Ukraine, which makes me happy and makes me proud of my place of origin.

I started my small contribution to the Carol Miculi chapter back in 2008, when I had the pleasure of corresponding with the late Professor Leszek Mazepa from the Lviv Conservatory, with whom I discussed the archives of Carol's work in Poland. Not having the opportunity to participate in the Tedeum Hurmuzaki, to which he had been invited, he was delighted

by the fact of renewing the memory of Carol Miculi. I was fascinated by the personality of the distinguished musician and motivated me to get to know his famous 48 Aires nationaux roumains, which I later did at the urging and with the support of my late father Ilie Luceac. The illustrious pianist was born in Chernivtsi, on October 20, 1821, in the well-known Miculi family, which descended from Romanianized Armenians. In some biographical sources, the year 1819 appears as the pianist's year of birth. Bucovina did not know the classical salon music compositions (vocal and instrumental - for violin and piano) of Carol Miculi during the 20th century, at least what we know from the concert programs after the Second War World. This Romanian musician of Armenian origin was an exceptional cultural personality of Bucovina.

The members of the Miculi family were Romanianized Armenian owners, who came to Iasi and from there to Chernivtsi. Among them was Ștefan Miculi, the composer's father. One of the Miculesti was even a district captain for a while, and the knight Iacob de Miculi took part, in 1851, in the establishment of the Country Library², together with the historian Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki. Carol Miculi also contributed to the founding, in 1862, of the Society for the Encouragement of Art music in Bucovina [Der Verein zur Förderung der Tonkunst]. Being a virtuoso pianist, he gave concerts during his artistic activity in several cities in the country and in Europe (France, Austria, Russia, Poland and Romania, including in Iasi). The Miculi family, as I mentioned before, was one of the most famous in Chernivtsi in the 19th century. First of all, we must mention that the Miculests had very close ties with the Hurmuzaki brothers and with other Romanian intellectuals from Bucovina. It is important to know that the "Hôtel de Moldavie", where many cultural events of Romanians from the capital of Bucovina took place, in the middle and second half of the 19th century, was the property of the Miculi family. The theater performances of the Fany Tardini troupe took place here, attended by high school student Mihai Eminovici. Later, also here, Mihail Pascaly's theater troupe also performed, etc., etc. Also in this hall of the "Hôtel de Moldavie" Franz Liszt gave a concert in the spring of 1847. In the house of the old man Doxachi Hurmuzaki from Chernivtsi, together with other Romanian intellectuals from the Principality, Carol Miculi was also hosted more than once. During this period, the composer also met the Bucovina violinist Nicolae Picu, the writer Vasile Alecsandri and many others.

But let's return to Carol Miculi. As a small child he learned to play the piano with concert pianist Franz Kolberg. In 1839 he began to study medicine in Vienna, during this period he met the personality of Eduard

Hanslick - a renowned authority in the musical world of the time. Between 1844-1847, he studied music in Paris, intensively studying piano with Frédéric Chopin, and counterpoint and harmony with Professor Heinrich Reber. In the Parisian society of that time he met them Alfred de Musset, Heinrich Heine, George Sand and, of course, Franz Liszt, with whom he will maintain, over the years, a close and friendly relationship. Between the years 1848-1857 Miculi was a piano teacher in Cernăuți, in Bucovina, then Conductor of the Musical Society from Cernăuți, between 1858-1870. In fact, the year 1858 is considered the year when the young pianist will get to know the old and beautiful city of Lviv, where he was invited as a piano teacher and where he will work for several good decades, until 1888, in the position of Director of the Conservatory in Lvov (then Lemberg). Between 1858-1887 he was also artistic director of the Galician Music Association in Lemberg. Appreciated in his time by Liszt and Chopin, Carol Miculi left behind a multitude of disciples who perpetuated the musical traditions of romanticism Chopinian, both in the vocal chamber music and in many of the instrumental pieces. One of them, Mieczysław Sołtys, for example, worked for about thirty years, from 1899 to 1929, as director of the Galician Music Society and director of the Lviv Conservatory. Another disciple of Carol Miculi was Stanisław Niewiadomski, a composer and pianist who continued his work at the Lemberg Conservatory.

Among his most talented students are the pianists Aleksander Michałowski, Maurice Rosenthal, Raul Koczalski and others. Among the most competent researchers, who studied the life and work of Carol Miculi, we can name the professor from the Academy of Music in Lviv Leszek Mazepa, who published a collection of original articles entitled *Storinky muzycznoho Lwowa (z neopublikowanogo)* [Unpublished pages from the music of old Lviv]. We also mention researchers Galina Blaschkewytsch and Tereza Staruh from Lviv, Oleksandr Zalutski from Chernivtsi, Mircea Bejinariu from Cluj (Romania) and others. The fact that Professor Leszek Mazepa personally met Carol Miculi's niece, Maria Miculi, aged 90, who lived for a while in Słupsk (Poland), is also not without importance. In recent years she moved to Lviv (Ukraine). We do not know if he is still alive today.

As for Carol Miculi's compositional work, we must say that he composed theater music (in particular, we mention here the vaudeville on the lyrics of Vasile Alecsandri *Piatra din casa*), vocal-symphonic music (the work *Missa romana*, 1864), works for mixed choir and organ or orchestra (*Veni creator*), as well as instrumental music, both for violin and piano (*Preludes*, *Polonezes*, *Mazurki*, *Waltzes*, *Paraphrases* on various themes from other composers, *Pieces for piano and violin*, etc.). The pieces for

piano denote the continuity of the romantic style of composition, with its methods of harmonic resolution, characteristic of the musical tradition of the 19th century. Also, in the A major Mazurka, for example, one can observe Carol Miculi's fidelity to the innovative compositional tradition of his master, Frédéric Chopin, in terms of the perfection of the miniature salon musical form, respecting both the softness and the elegance of dance of Polish origin. What's interesting: two songs, *Mondnacht* (Moonlit Night) and *Abschied* (Farewell or Parting), composed by Carol Miculi, demonstrate another facet of musical romanticism, this time of German origin. Here we encounter the Schubertian atmosphere of the time or, rather, the influence of another German composer, Robert Schumann. And there is nothing surprising, because we know that during the years 1855-1888 Carol Miculi was in full creative and pedagogical activity, in one of the cultural centers of the Empire - the city of Lemberg, which had close ties with the European metropolis of the time - Vienna. So it is not surprising that the German musical school influenced the Bucovina composer as well as the French one, by virtue of his studies undertaken in Paris, with the famous Frédéric Chopin. Carol Miculi also composed for the violin. And here we mention the piece entitled *Scherzo in C-moll* for three violins, in which the finesse and academicism of the score excel. The piece demonstrates a happy symbiosis of German and French romanticism, in which the philosophical meditations of German origin intertwine with the melodic softness of the French temperament. The classical form of the work and the romantic expression of the score rendering procedures conquer the listener right from the first chords.

Perhaps the most elegant concert piece is the *Poloneza in E-moll* for three violins by Carol Miculi. The Chopinian aura of the main melodic theme highlights the Polish-Austrian school, and the "aristocratic" melodic line of the piece reminds us of the salons of France in the first half of the 19th century. In this work, the influence of the romantic school is felt, which dominated the compositions for violin and piano until the end of the 19th century, creating an upward musical continuity with many of the European peoples who gave celebrities in the field of the art of sounds. But the most important thing, which must be remembered about the cultural activity of Carol Miculi in Bucovina, is the fact that he prepared and published in 1855 in Lemberg an Album in four fascicles, entitled *48 Aires nationaux roumains*. Each bundle with a separate special dedication is entitled: *Douze airs nationaux roumains* (Ballades, chants des bergers, airs de danse etc), *recueillis et transcrits pur le piano par Charles Mikuli*. This album was based on 36 Romanian national songs, collected in Bucovina by Alecu and

Constantin Hurmuzaki, as well as by their sisters, Eliza (married Sturdza) and Eufrosina (married Petrino). Therefore, the Hurmuzaki brothers, together with Carol Miculi, contributed to the enrichment of the national cultural heritage, valorizing rare pieces from the folklore treasury of Moldova's Upland. Each of these notebooks-fascicles, which contain 12 Romanian national areas, are dedicated to well-known personalities from the history of Bucovina from that time. These are Mme Chaterine de Rolla, Baroness Angelica de Mustazza, Mrs Pulheria de Buchenthal, née Costin, and Mme Eliza de Stourdza, née Hurmuzaki, who took part in the collection of songs and arias from Bucovina Romanian folklore. The members of the Hurmuzaki family identified the best groups of fiddlers or singers, from which the songs included in the album were collected. We were lucky enough to discover this Album in four volumes at the Warsaw Public Library. We intend to publish it in time. It must be known and valued, especially here, in Bucovina, where the beautiful folklore pieces were collected. Let's also add that the first composition to the lyrics of Vasile Alecsandri *Dulce Bucovina* also belongs to Carol Miculi. Later, the lesbian composer Alexandru Flechtenmacher also composed a version of the song. Carol Miculi also composed a version of the song at *Hora Unirii*, on the same lyrics by Vasile Alecsandri.

A significant thing that deserves to be known: Carol Miculi is the one who composed a Mass dedicated to the consecration (consecration) of the "Descent of the Holy Spirit" Cathedral Church in Chernivtsi, which took place in the summer of 1864, in the presence and with the participation of Bishop Eugenie Hacman. All the Romanian intellectuals from that time were present at the celebration of the inauguration of the Cathedral, among them and the Hurmuzaki brothers. In addition to the fact that he prepared for print the mentioned arias from Romanian folklore, ca editor, Carol Miculi from Bukovina immortalized his name in the history of universal music by preparing for publication and editing the complete works of his great master Frédéric Chopin, in a critical first edition¹⁵, which he also prefaced. For his artistic merits, he was decorated in 1880 with the Knight's Cross of the Order of Emperor Francis Josef I. Carol Miculi died on May 21, 1897, in Lviv, where he sleeps eternally in the central Lyciakov cemetery of the city. After he died, he was initially buried in the yard of the Armenian church in Lviv. Later, the remains of the composer and pianist were transported and reburied at the Lyciakov cemetery in the same city. A bas-relief of the musician with an inscription in Polish adorns the plaque on the facade of the Armenian church, in the courtyard of which the remains of the composer were originally buried. On this plate it is written: "To Karol Mikuli

/1819-1897/ to the extraordinary pianist and composer / to the Director of the Galician Music Association / thanks from the students".

It is appropriate to mention here also the trinity that was erected in Stupca (today Ciprian Porumbescu commune, Suceava county, Romania), near the graves of the Porumbești, in memory of Carol Miculi. On this trestle, erected by the descendants of the Porumbești, for which the parish priest Galeș from Stupca worked, as well as the writer Nina Cionca from Bucharest, niece of Ciprian Porumbescu, writes: "This Holy Cross was erected in memory of his servant God Carol Miculi, 1821-1897, former composition student of Frédéric Chopin, piano teacher of Ciprian Porumbescu. May his name be honored forever, to him and his descendants: Bela Miculi, Ioan Miculi, Sergiu Miculi, Constantin Miculi, Elena Miculi (Popovici), Rita Miculi, Adrian Miculi". We also mention here the close friendship of Carol Miculi with priest Iraclie Porumbescu, father of Ciprian Porumbescu. Several summers in a row, the musician came to rest at Șipotete Sucevei in Bucovina, at the invitation of the parish priest Iraclie, necessarily bringing the piano with him. Father Iraclie Porumbescu had the parish at Șipote at that time. There, fate crossed the paths of the two musicians, one of whom was the founder (in 1858) and the Director of the Lemberg Conservatory, a renowned composer and pianist (he founded the piano school in Lemberg), and the other, who would become "a Strauss" of the Romanian operetta, he was only six years old at the time.

It is, as is well understood, about Ciprian Porumbescu. Carol Miculi was the first to notice Ciprian's innate musical talent. And he was also the one who taught him to read musical notes. At that time, the little Ciprian also learned to play the piano under the guidance of Carol Miculi. Here, Romanians, we can trace some unpretentious works by Ciprian Porumbescu, for example, which come precisely from Chopin, through the chain of Carol Miculi, Chopin's favorite disciple, friend and executor of his musical will. This is understandable, because Carol Miculi was the first teacher who taught Ciprian to read musical notes and more, when he was only six years old fulfilled, as I mentioned before. In any case, the contribution of the Bucovinian - better said the European - Carol Miculi to the development and enrichment of the Romanian and Polish musical repertoire forces us to recognize that we have before our conscience a personality of great value for Armenian, Romanian, Polish, Ukrainian and universal art. Therefore, the valorization of his compositional work as well as the collaboration of the artist with other intellectuals from Bucovina, in particular, with the Hurmuzaki family, constitutes an increase in the enrichment of the cultural heritage of our people.

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Iuliana Luceac, philologist, translator.

He was born in Chernivtsi. Translate from and into languages

English, Ukrainian, Romanian, Russian and Polish. Graduated from the University of Chernivtsi (Faculty of Foreign Languages). Bachelor of Legal Sciences (2016, Dublin, Ireland). She is a translator for the magazine "Glasul Bucovinei" and is involved in various projects in Poland, Greece, Ukraine, Ireland and Romania. Member of the Association of Authorized Translators in Dublin since 2014, member of the Society of Bucovinian Librarians in Chernivtsi.