

**A NEW MONOGRAPHIC STUDY BY
CONSTANTIN-TUFAN STAN:
Livia Tempea – the Composer-Pianist**
Review

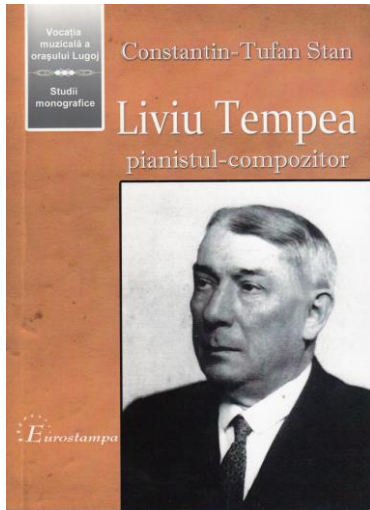
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It has been more than eight decades since Ion Dumitrescu, inspired by the emotions he felt in Bucharest in 1932, upon listening to the concert given by the “Ion Vidu” Choir, conducted by Filaret Barbu, rhetorically asked himself in an article: “Will anyone ever express, in pious enough words, the gratitude we owe to Banat for our religious, cultural and national rebirth? Who will write the history of the enthusiasms that animated Chizățau and Oravița, or Caransebeș and Lugoj?”¹³¹

¹³¹ Ion Dumitrescu, apud. Constantin-Tufan Stan, *Vocația muzicală a orașului Lugoj. Monografie*, Ph.D. Thesis, “Gheorghe Dima”, Academy of Music, Cluj-Napoca, 2008, p. 18.



Constantin-Tufan Stan,
Liviú Tempea – pianistul compozitor
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250 p.

Front cover

For more than a decade, musicologist Constantin Tufan-Stan has abundantly answered this question in well prepared editions, volumes and studies dedicated to the musicians and cultural life of Banat, bringing to the attention of his contemporaries events, institutions or personalities whose names had often been unjustly forgotten. Every year since 2003, at least one book – be it a monograph or a shorter text – signed by the distinguished professor from Lugoj, has added a new chapter to the music history of Banat (during this period he has published 12 volumes of his own writings, two others as co-author and over 100 studies). In the autumn of this year, Constantin-Tufan Stan completed what he himself calls “an exciting musicological adventure” (p. 13), reconstructing the biography and outlining the artistic profile of Liviú Tempea (1870-1946) – whose 145th birth anniversary was celebrated recently –, a musician originating from Lugoj and one of the first teaching staff members of the Cluj Conservatory.

Like other teachers of the Transylvanian institution established immediately after the Great Union¹³², the secondary piano teacher of the first generations of students gradually fell under the shadow of Gheorghe Dima, the founder of the musical higher education, and, as the writer Simion Dănilă noted (who also signed the preface of the book), “apart from a few musicologists and some relatives, who else remembers Liviú Tempea today?” (p. 9). As if anticipating this legitimate question, the author, in the first sentences of his book, summarizes the main attributes of the personality presented to the reader: “One of the first

¹³² The Union of Transylvania with Romania, on December 1, 1918.

professional musicians in Banat, Liviu Tempea, a concert pianist of great repute in his time and an equally gifted composer [...], was an important animator of the musical life of early 20th century Banat and Transylvania, who imposed the values of art music in the most diverse socio-cultural contexts” (p.13).

The nine sections of the biography provide a vast amount of information collected by the author from public and private archives, with a patience and perseverance that are also evident in all his other works. The biography provides detailed information about Tempea's family and relatives, his teachers from Lugoj and Vienna, his medical studies in the Austrian capital, the artistic and cultural activities attended in his youth, the personalities he came into contact with during his wanderings in Bucharest, Iași, Dumbrăveni, Sibiu and, finally, Cluj, but also about the imprint that has left on all these people and places. The author gives the same attention to every detail related to Tempea's teaching and concert activity (especially as an accompanying pianist), to his meetings with musicians and people of culture and to his experience as a conductor or as a military doctor decorated by King Ferdinand I for distinguished service during World War I. The biography reveals highlights of his artistic career based on documents of the time, press information, private correspondence and recollections from those who knew him. There are also numerous quotations that help us relive the emotions of unique events like Tempea's participation, as accompanying pianist, in the inaugural concert of the Cluj Conservatory, on March 28, 1920 (p. 62).

A special chapter is devoted to the musical works written by Liviu Tempea, who was self-taught in music composition and showed a special propensity for miniature genres. Many of his works, including piano pieces, lieder, secular and religious choruses – inspired by the folk dance tunes from Banat, by the poems of Octavian Goga, Mihai Eminescu, Ștefan Octavian Iosif and Ion Popovici-Bănățeanu, or by the religious songs notated by Dimitrie Cuțanu – have remained in manuscript form. *Liturghia Sfântului Ioan Gură de Aur* [The Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom] for mixed choir *a cappella*, printed in Cluj in 1933 and praised for promoting the Transylvanian religious song, for its “contrapuntal mastery” and for the “quality of its harmonizations” is regarded by C.-T. Stan as L. Tempea's “masterpiece” (p. 71); it received favourable references signed by composers G. Stephănescu and C. Dimitrescu and countersigned by George Enescu, to be included in the religious services.

In his all-encompassing approach, Constantin-Tufan Stan reveals another side of L. Tempea's personality: that of music columnist. A ubiquitous participant in the musical events of inter-war Cluj, the composer-pianist recorded moments of the city's cultural life in the pages of various publications, describing various events of emotional significance, such as the first performance of the Romanian

National Opera, appreciated by Tempea as “a complete success, highly auspicious for the future ... a true cultural feast” (p. 80).

As a musicologist with a deep passion for history and a researcher who exploits documentary sources to exhaustion, skilfully corroborating data from the most diverse sources in order to present a more accurate picture of the personality or event in question, Constantin-Tufan Stan brings again, in this volume, a plethora of new information. The author's text is complemented by substantial *Addenda* (pp. 91-174) including texts signed by L. Tempea or dedicated to him, an equally substantial iconography – with illustrations of remarkable quality (p. 174-237) – as well as a genealogical tree of Tempea's family. Originally from Braşov, his family's ancestors could be traced back to the end of the 18th century, including five generations of priests and archpriests who were all named Radu Tempea, who served the “St. Nicholas” Church in Şcheii Braşovului and who made outstanding contributions to the promotion of culture, Romanian language and local church music. The family tree compiled by C.-T. Stan also includes the present generation of the family. By studying it, we find that the Tempea family still includes members whose meritorious occupations and activities fall within the field of culture and arts. We leave the reader the pleasure of discovering the importance of this family and the numerous links that it has had over time with personalities of our culture, especially as, once opened, the book captivates and maintains its intensity to the very last page.

The critical apparatus, on the other hand, is as attractive as the text itself and also highly substantial; the footnotes provide additional information and details, forming a parallel text that betrays the same concern of the author for an exhaustive documentation. To the hurried researcher, the book also provides a rigorously prepared and extremely useful index of names at the end.

In conclusion, we can say that this book, in which Ph.D. musicologist Constantin-Tufan Stan evokes Liviu Tempea's almost forgotten personality, is a captivating and instructive read that opens new paths for the research of Romanian music. At the same time, the book convinces us once again that the foundation of the current Academy of Music of Cluj-Napoca was laid by talented musicians and personalities who brought along the German rigour of the schools they had attended, thus ensuring the well-known ascending evolution of higher musical education in central Transylvania. Liviu Tempea's life and work are a sound argument in this regard.