Introduction

From today's perspective, the concept of Yugoslavia may seem like a failed political experiment. Formed as a collective of separate nation-states and kingdoms after centuries of rule by the Byzantine, Venetian, Austro-Hungarian Habsburg, and Ottoman empires, the Slavic nations fought four wars just in the first half of the twentieth century – two Balkan Wars (1912 and 1913) and the World Wars (1914–1918 and 1941–1944). The nation emerged as a victorious and unified multiethnic and multi-religious communist state after the Second World War: the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) (Figure I.1).[1] The country underwent several dramatic geographical reorderings and political-economic models. As Miško Šuvaković aptly observes, all major political systems that were introduced in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries were part of Yugoslavia's rise and fall – from bourgeois national capitalism and liberal capitalist fascism to nationalism and revolutionary communism, Stalinism, real socialism, self-governing socialism, postsocialist patriotism, and transitional post-socialism.[2] Adapting to such abrupt changes in a country with multiple ethnicities, religions, languages, traditions, and cultures made the formation of a unified Yugoslavia a well-intended, optimistic, and ambitious theoretical idea. In reality, the result was a state "permanently in conflict, flux, and redefinition,"[3] doomed to fail.

Throughout most of its existence, Yugoslavia's cultural life was guided by principles of socialist realism that aimed to construct an "ideal,

[1] The 1981 Yugoslav census shows the concentration of population of eighteen ethnic majorities in the multiethnic nation: Serbs occupy the largest portion of Serbia (and Vojvodina, but not Kosovo), about half of Bosnia, and about a quarter of Croatia. The category "Yugoslavs" reflects the citizens who identified as such in the 1981 census; "Moslems" represent Bosniaks – an ethnic group of Bosnians who are Muslim – and those living predominantly in the regions of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and the southern part of Serbia and Kosovo and Metohija who had adopted the Muslim religion during the Ottoman rule; "Gypsies" refers to the Roma people, with small pockets scattered around the country. Other ethnicities include Montenegrins, Croats, Slovenes, Macedonians, Russniaks, Vlachs, Italians, Hungarians, Romanians, Bulgarians, Albanians, Slovaks, Czechs, and Turks. The map was published in Dragiša Nikolić (ed.), *Basic Principles of State Demarcation: Collection of Works* (Belgrade: Military Geographical Institute, 1994).

[2] Miško Šuvaković, "Impossible Histories," in *Impossible Histories: Historical Avant-gardes, Neo-avant-gardes, and Post-avant-gardes in Yugoslavia, 1918–1991*, ed. Dubravka Đurić and Miško Šuvaković, 3–35 (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), p. 3.

[3] Ibid.

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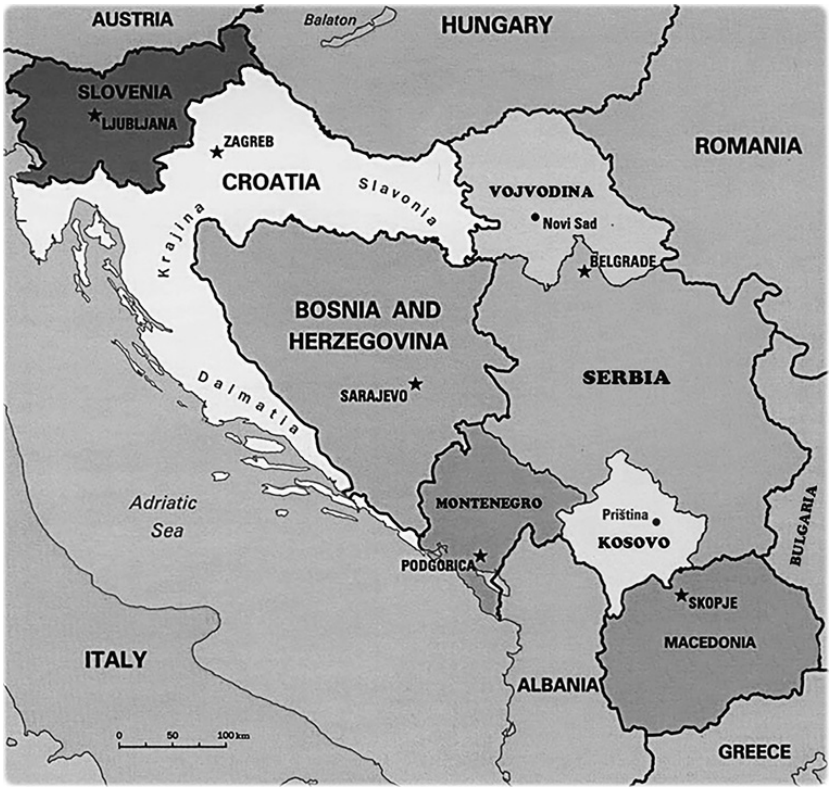


Figure I.1 Geopolitical map of the six republics forming the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Slovenia, and Serbia, with its two autonomous provinces – Vojvodina in the north and Kosovo and Metohija in the south.

[Communist] party-created vision of socialist society."[4] Recognizing music, arts, and education as valuable tools for postwar nation-building and Cold War cultural diplomacy, the Yugoslav Communist Party supported and sponsored cultural programs, which created one of the most compelling avant-garde and experimental art scenes throughout the Western and Eastern Blocs.

Due to its many momentous political challenges, Yugoslavia followed its own path toward musical avant-gardes. These experimentations rarely

[4] Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, "What, How, and Why in Serbian Music after the Second World War, in the Light of Ideological-Political Upheavals," *Музикологија* 23 (2017): 15–29, p. 18.

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developed in tandem with musical trends in other countries, but rather as a reaction to the sociopolitical changes within. Yet Yugoslav musical avant-gardes are hardly scrutinized in scholarship, both within and beyond the borders of the region. Šuvaković posits that the reason for this omission is twofold. First, academic work and discovery of musicological topics in Yugoslavia began only in the 1970s. Further, during the interwar period, the then-Kingdom of Yugoslavia was a "bourgeois, multi-national state" in which avant-gardes were treated "as the far-left fringe" and thus excluded from the corpus of national literature and art. After the Second World War, the avant-gardes were viewed as "extreme expressions of Western decadence, cosmopolitanism, and political subversion" within the context of the newly formed socialist multinational state.[5] As such, they were treated as phenomena that stood in opposition to the aesthetic of socialist realism and socialist ethics.

I propose that another of the principal reasons Yugoslav avant-garde music is omitted from wider scholarship is the language barrier; all publications are in Serbo-Croatian, the federation's official lingua franca. Further, by 1991, Yugoslavia was engaged in a decade-long internal conflict, which led to the collapse of the country. After the war, music scholarship was analyzed and retold from the perspective of now-independent nation-states rather than in the wider context of Yugoslavia, the country and the past they sought to distance themselves from.

The history of Yugoslav music is rather young – composition as an art form emerged only in the nineteenth century. The aesthetic of the earliest generations of composers may be categorized as pre-Romantic (1830s–1880s) and Romantic (1880s–1914), followed by a neo-Romantic style that prevailed through the 1950s. In tandem with the overall Romantic expression, many composers of the interwar period studied abroad and learned about the most current contemporary techniques. This is not surprising considering that Yugoslavia was an open-border, blossoming, modern kingdom at this time. Most of these composers sought studies of the quarter-tone system in Prague with Alois Hába, but their compositions also show the influence of expressionists (Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern), serialists, Igor Stravinsky, and Béla Bartók. Several more decades would pass before Yugoslav composers could again be in direct touch with the most current modernist trends. Instituting a communist regime and adopting the doctrine of socialist realism after the Second World War, the country experienced severe cultural and political isolation during the first fifteen postwar years. Restricted travel in a now

[5] Šuvaković, "Impossible Histories," p. 5.

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closed-border country and drastic sociopolitical changes had a profound effect on all artistic output.

With the military occupation of Czechoslovakia by Nazi Germany in 1939 and the impending Second World War, Yugoslav composers returned to their homeland. Surrounded on all sides by the Axis powers – Germany, Italy, Hungary, and Bulgaria – who were aiming to reclaim their historic territories in the region and occupy the rest of the country, Yugoslavia was bitterly fractured during the war, both by the invading forces and within. The Yugoslav Partisan resistance fought not only the occupiers, but also the Chetnik guerilla forces, who were Serbian nationalists and Yugoslav royalists, and Ustashe, the Croatian fascists and Roman-Catholic ultranationalists. Although Yugoslavia emerged as a victorious nation, it was deeply ethnically and religiously divided. This nationalist discord penetrated the cracks of the communist brotherhood during the 1980s and led to a series of brutal conflicts in the 1990s.

Thus, the once-vibrant kingdom was now a postwar socialist federation with a communist regime and repressed ethnic animosity, left in ruins and economically destitute. Seeking some stability and political protection, Yugoslavia joined the Soviet Union's Eastern Bloc in 1946. Only two years later, a geopolitical dispute between the two heads of state – Joseph Stalin and Josip Broz Tito – caused a rift between the allies, resulting in Yugoslavia fleeing the Eastern Bloc in 1948. Yugoslavia adopted its unique model of self-managed socialism (*samoupravni socijalizam*). In an effort to control the multiethnic, multireligious, and multilingual nation, and to depress nationalist tensions and bury the horrors of war committed by its own peoples, the Communist Party pushed for a message of rebuilding the nation through brotherhood and unity.

Remarkably, Yugoslavia remained neutral during the Cold War, operating independently from either bloc with its own political and economic model. Composers took advantage of their country's unique position, organizing cutting-edge festivals and events that not only pushed their creativity to new heights but also formed international exchanges, positioning Yugoslavia as one of the key players in the cultural diplomacy of the Cold War era.

Tapping into rich yet previously unexamined archival collections, as well as composers' personal documents, remarkable narratives, and captivating photographs, this book reveals a compelling story of the Yugoslav avant-garde and experimental music scene from 1945 until 1991, ending with the year when all artistic activities came to a sudden halt with the start of the conflicts that led to the breakup of Yugoslavia. Organized thematically (and not necessarily chronologically) in three

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parts – The First Avant-Gardes (Part I), Electronic Music (Part II), and New Avant-Gardes and Postmodernism (Part III) – the book examines the political, social, and cultural events that led to the momentous avant-garde scene in the country. It follows the emergence of Yugoslav cultural programs in the postwar period that made the republic a magnet for cultural exchange, through to the sudden and violent dissolution of those programs with the collapse of the political state.

Most of the cultural programs and initiatives took place in Belgrade, as the capital of Yugoslavia. Thus, the first higher institution for music studies – the Music Academy, later renamed the Faculty of Music of the University of Arts – opened in Belgrade, as did the first electronic music studio (Electronic Studio of the Third Program of Radio Belgrade) and the first computerized studio (Tonski Studio at the Faculty of Music in Belgrade). The Third Program of Radio Belgrade was the first national-broadcast radio station specializing in the promotion of experimental and avant-garde music. Thus, many composers from other Yugoslav republics came to Belgrade to study and work in the domain of electroacoustic and electronic music.

Zagreb and Ljubljana were also important centers for avant-garde explorations, but more prominently in visual and conceptual arts. The OHO group from Slovenia is one of the earliest examples of conceptual art in Yugoslavia. In the early 1960s, the group set out the theory and practice of reism, a philosophical and art movement in Slovenian culture that refers to "a return to things themselves."[6] In the mid 1960s, the group worked with process art (arte povera, antiform art, and land art) and then transcendental conceptualism in the late 1960s, before their disbandment in 1971. Zagreb was emerging as a center for the vibrant "New Tendencies" International Art Movement in August 1961. The first international exhibition of conceptual art in Yugoslavia took place in Zagreb a decade later. The New Art Practice in Yugoslavia, defined by the generation of Yugoslav artists coming of age in the 1960s and 1970s, was emerging in cities across the country, mainly in Ljubljana, Zagreb, and Belgrade. These artists practiced their art in student cultural centers and other alternative spaces. While student centers in Zagreb and Ljubljana were significant for the proliferation of the New Arts Practice, the arts scene at the Student Cultural Center in Belgrade (SKC), spearheaded by Marina Abramović and the "Belgrade Six," became the epicenter. The composers and music

[6] Miško Šuvaković, "Conceptual Art," in *Impossible Histories: Historical Avant-gardes, Neo-avant-gardes, and Post-avant-gardes in Yugoslavia, 1918–1991*, ed. Dubravka Đurić and Miško Šuvaković, 210–245 (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), p. 213.

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editors working at the SKC in Belgrade defined the new era of avant-garde in Yugoslavia with their explorations in minimalism, experimentalism, Fluxus, the use of multimedia, and conceptual art. These young composers translated music texts on minimalism, held listening sessions and workshops, organized concerts and international music festivals, and published periodicals and music recordings.

Generally speaking, the avant-garde styles in music were predominantly practiced by composers in Croatia, Serbia, and Slovenia (achievements by others are referred to within the context of music festivals in Belgrade and Zagreb). While avant-garde music in Yugoslavia was mostly moderate, especially in the first fifteen postwar years – the music exhibited German expressionism and the use of quarter tones by those who studied in Prague with Hába during the interwar period – in the 1960s, composers began to explore electronic music, serialism, and aleatorics (inspired by the music they encountered at the inaugural Music Biennale Zagreb in 1961, especially the Polish composers). The two most radical Slovenian avant-gardists were Vinko Globokar and Marjan Šijanec. Globokar, born in France to Slovenian parents, lived briefly in Yugoslavia, from 1947 to 1955, before returning to France. Šijanec, a composer, engineer, and programmer, is known for his electronic music based on Stochastic processes. He mostly worked in Belgrade, where he had access to the electronic music studios. Milko Kelemen, Ivo Malec, and Dubravko Detoni stand out as the foremost avant-gardists in Croatia. While Kelemen's avant-garde techniques in his works are not as innovative, he played a pivotal role in the founding of the Music Biennale Zagreb, one of the most significant contemporary music festivals in Europe at the time. Malec's achievements in electroacoustic and concrete music were significant. However, Malec left Yugoslavia permanently in 1955 and went to Paris to collaborate with Pierre Schaeffer. Detoni was a cofounder and a leader of the ensemble Acezantez, and his works are regarded as a "radical restructure of the autonomy in music."[7] While works by composers across Yugoslavia and their approaches to avant-garde are discussed in these chapters, this book highlights the most unique and innovative achievements, many of which were accomplished by composers who worked in Belgrade, such as Ljubica Marić, the first professional woman composer in the country and an early experimentalist who also introduced Byzantine modes in art music;

[7] Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, "Problems and Paradoxes of Yugoslav Avant-garde Music (Outlines for a Reinterpretation)," in *Impossible Histories: Historical Avant-gardes, Neo-avant-gardes, and Post-avant-gardes in Yugoslavia, 1918–1991*, ed. Dubravka Đurić and Miško Šuvaković, 404–441 (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), p. 414.

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Ludmila Frajt, the first woman to work in the domain of electronic (and film) music in Yugoslavia; Vladan Radovanović, the most notable Yugoslav avant-gardist; the composers of the Opus 4 collective who defined the new wave of avant-garde in Yugoslavia with their mix of minimalism, conceptualism, performance art, multimedia, and Fluxus; Ivana Stefanović, with her achievements in radiophonic works; and The Magnificent Seven group of young composers who integrated elements from popular music into their works, the last experimental musical force in Yugoslavia before the collapse of the political state.

Since the sociocultural events were not isolated phenomena in Yugoslavia, their reflection on the cultural life was many-faceted and wide-ranging. Musical explorations and different types of avant-garde styles and aesthetics were not always successive, sequential, or clearly delineated. Thus, while this book organizes three principal categories of avant-garde music in Yugoslavia in chronological order, there is, naturally, some overlap and chronological parallelism between the three parts.

The first part of the book scrutinizes the drastic political reordering of Yugoslavia and the effect the institution of new cultural policies had on the first generations of postwar composers. Covering the years from 1945 through the early 1960s, the three chapters of Part I present a narrative of the initial waves of avant-garde explorations in Yugoslav music. Chapter 1 examines the abrupt political reorganization of Yugoslavia following the Second World War – from a prospering kingdom to a restrictive communist state – and the impact this new political structure had on all spheres of cultural life. The interwar composers, mostly from Serbia and Slovenia, traveled freely during the 1920s and 1930s to study modernist techniques at the largest European metropolises and attend music festivals. Because most of them studied with Hába at the Prague Conservatory, they are referred to as the "Prague School students" (*Praški đaci*). Fleeing the Nazi occupation of Czechoslovakia, the Yugoslavia they returned to was very different from the one they had left before the war. In the new, communist Yugoslavia, they had to carefully navigate the challenges of restricted travel, virtually no contact with the outside world, and constraints mandated by the newly implemented doctrine of socialist realism. These impediments marked the first fifteen postwar years as the most challenging for Yugoslav composers. Socialist realism stood in direct opposition to freedom of artistic expression, innovation, and modernism, which they had been exploring across European music centers. It mandated that artists create works that conveyed the communist-socialist message of rebuilding the nation through unity and brotherhood, art that had to speak directly to the "masses."

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Even though socialist realism, instituted in 1946 when Yugoslavia joined the Eastern Bloc, was the nation's official cultural policy for only two years – ending in 1948, the year the country fled the Eastern Bloc – it nonetheless remained a dominant doctrine throughout the 1950s, and its remnants affected cultural production in Yugoslavia until the 1980s. Thus, most of the influential composers, music critics, and concert directors were either members of the Communist Party or were pressured to abide by the restrictive doctrine. Some composers, such as Josip Štolcer-Slavenseki, welcomed and embraced the populist approach to composition, writing mass songs and works imbued with folk motives across the region. Many others, especially those teaching at the only higher music institution in the country – the Music Academy in Belgrade – returned to traditional (neo-classical and post-Romantic) expression, interspersed with mild modernist traits. The experimental interwar Prague composers either abandoned their craft altogether upon their return or succumbed to the pressures of socialist realism and the demands of the traditional music institutions, where avant-garde music was received poorly by peers, critics, and the public. Thus, this type of "moderated modernism" – characterized by traditional forms with some modernist tendencies, such as the use of occasional clusters, polychords, or nonconventional meters – became the dominant aesthetic in Yugoslavia, their own brand of socialist realism.

Thus, when examined from a broader (external) context, the earliest Yugoslav postwar avant-garde aesthetic was anything but avant-garde – the most daring modernist works were written in the styles of impressionism, expressionism, Stravinsky, and Bartók. However, when assessed within the social and political context of the newly formed communist nation, which still adhered to socialist realism, these ventures into modernism, even if moderated, challenged the national communist rhetoric by embracing elements of "Western" ideals. This type of "internal" or "local" avant-garde takes into account the state structure within which avant-garde music existed in postwar Yugoslavia and considers it as an avant-garde creation of its own.[8] This interpretation not only recognizes how the avant-garde movement changed the musical environment in which it had appeared but also examines how the avant-garde transformed through interaction with the local musical, psychological, and social contexts.[9]

[8] For more on the "local" type of Yugoslav avant-garde, see Veselinović-Hofman, "Problems and Paradoxes," p. 405.

[9] Ivana Medić, "The Role of the Third Program of Radio Belgrade in the Presentation, Promotion, and Expansion of Serbian Avant-Garde Music in the 1960s and 1970s," *Contemporary Music Review* 40/5–6 (2021): 482–511, p. 485.

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The reason why socialist realism continued to shape cultural policy in Yugoslavia even after the nation left the Soviet Bloc is a consequence of the country's complex multiethnic and multireligious composition. That is, through the doctrine's message of brotherhood, Tito was able to suppress historically nationalist tendencies and conflicts between different ethnic groups. More specifically, under the doctrine, artists (and all citizens) were forbidden to draw attention to ethnic, religious, or social differences among Yugoslav peoples. Artists found themselves in a difficult position. They were now required to express their national identity through their art, but without showing their cultural background; rather, they needed to portray their new, pan-Yugoslav identity, devoid of any distinct ethnic or religious character. For a country that was a federation of peoples of many diverse ethnic and religious traditions, the task was problematic and unrealistic. Slavenski, for instance, approached the challenge by writing "all-Yugoslav" music that was representative of all its ethnicities. These works featured folk idioms from all regions of Yugoslavia with melodic, rhythmic, or religious elements derived from the nation's principal ethnic and religious groups. While this approach may seem reductive from today's perspective, in postwar Yugoslavia, a period when the country was establishing its new national identity, Slavenski's music truly represented the vision of Tito's Yugoslavia: a country where diverse ethnicities and religions were treated equally and could coexist peacefully.

While any demonstration of ethnic heritage in Yugoslavia was condemned, an art exhibit displayed in Paris in 1950 created a window of opportunity. The exhibit, titled Yugoslav Medieval Art, presented Orthodox frescoes, Catholic icons, and tombstones from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Musicologist Melita Milin posits that this exhibition was a crucial act of cultural diplomacy at the pivotal time when Yugoslavia cut ties with the Soviet Union and sought reconciliation with the West.[10] Recognizing the benefit of Western (capitalist) countries' interest in Yugoslavia's religious heritage, Tito allowed sacred art to permeate the public sphere. For Serbian composers, this meant that they could draw inspiration from Byzantine Orthodox Christian chants; to Western countries, Byzantine chants were not perceived as Serbian but as Yugoslav (or, even more broadly, as "Balkan").

Chapter 2 focuses on a new, distinct style of postwar avant-garde emerging in Yugoslavia in the 1950s – modernist music that incorporates Byzantine chants and a system of eight modes. Serbian composer Stevan

[10] Melita Milin, "Byzantium as a Metaphor for Identity in Serbian Music," *Contemporary Music Review* 41/5–6 (2022): 483–495, pp. 485–486.

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Stojanović Mokranjac, one of the first transcribers of Byzantine chants and their classification into eight modes – or Octoechos (*Осмогласник* [*Osmoglasnik*]) – had opened the door for the reemergence of Orthodox Christian liturgical choral music at the turn of the twentieth century. However, in 1956, Ljubica Marić, who had studied composition in Prague, Berlin, Strasbourg, and Paris during the interwar period, introduced a new style of modernism in Yugoslav music that featured Byzantine and folk motives interspersed with contemporary techniques. As the first professional woman composer in Yugoslavia, Marić paved the way for new generations of women and composers who were searching for ways to express their Serbian heritage through music at a time when the country was redefining its national identity. Even more, she also set the stage for composers like Miloš Petrović, who developed a distinct, experimental style by combining Western (jazz, improvisation, and popular genres) with Eastern (Byzantine Orthodox Christian chants) styles.

While these early postwar musical modernist explorations seemed progressive during the 1950s, Yugoslav composers faced European and American avant-garde trends at the inaugural Music Biennale Zagreb in 1961. Cofounded by Croatian composer Milko Kelemen, who refused to conform to the demands of socialist realism and managed to leave the country to study in Paris, Freiburg, and Darmstadt, the Zagreb Biennale was the most significant cultural event in Yugoslavia in the early 1960s and continued to play a pivotal role in the country's cultural diplomacy over the next three decades, as discussed in Chapter 3. Taking advantage of the Cold War political divisions, Yugoslavia's unique position as a "liberal" communist state that did not belong to either Bloc, and an economic model that adopted elements of socialism and capitalism, Kelemen devised a plan that reads like a Cold War spy novel. Pitting the Soviets against the Americans and Western Europeans with fabricated stories, Kelemen managed to secure the participation of the most recognizable figures in contemporary music in the US and Europe. Consequently, his festival became one of the most relevant international festivals of contemporary music and a forum for Yugoslavia's engagement with Western avant-gardism. At the inaugural event, Yugoslav composers and audiences heard works by familiar early twentieth-century composers and Soviet "traditionalists" but also experienced their first exposure to the Darmstadt serialists, Polish aleatoric music, French, Italian, and German electronic music composers, and John Cage's experimentations. Mauricio Kagel, Witold Lutosławski, Pierre Schaeffer, Goffredo Petrassi, and Karlheinz Stockhausen, to name just a few, participated in person. The following year, the festival welcomed

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featured guests Stravinsky and Cage, returnees David Tudor, Lutosławski, Pierre Schaeffer, and Bogusław Schaeffer, as well as Robert Craft, Krzysztof Penderecki, Luigi Nono, Luciano Berio, Bruno Maderna, and Luc Ferrari, among many others.

For Yugoslav composers, the Zagreb Biennale was a turning point in their artistic trajectory. For many postwar composers – especially those educated under the restrictions of socialist realism and the country's political and cultural isolation – hearing contemporary music from Europe and the US resulted in personal "crises." It led many to abandon composition altogether and others to try to modernize their aesthetic.[11] Still, Yugoslav composers, on the whole, lagged behind the current modernist trends and simply could not catch up with the times. Critics from abroad took notice. While some complimented Kelemen's music, likely out of respect for the festival's founder, others presented a more accurate picture of the stale and outdated Yugoslav avant-garde scene during the 1960s. Ulrich Dibelius, for instance, went as far as to state that Yugoslav composers lacked the capacity for progress and innovation. Composers who stood out were typically those who either were educated abroad, such as Marić, Kelemen, and Natko Devčić, or left Yugoslavia during the 1950s and took permanent residences abroad, such as Malec and Globokar.

Even though the Zagreb Biennale did not serve as a springboard to international recognition for any of the Yugoslav composers, internally, it set the wheels in motion. Soon after the inaugural event, other festivals of modern music and art were established around the country, most notably the "New Tendencies" International Art Movement in Zagreb (1961), the Review of Yugoslav Music in Opatija, Croatia (1963), the Belgrade International Theater Festival (1967), and the Belgrade Music Festival (1969). In 1965, the Museum of Contemporary Art opened in Belgrade, and the Third Program of Radio Belgrade – a national-broadcast radio station specializing in the promotion of experimental and avant-garde music – was founded, which paved the way for the creation of the first electronic music studio in Yugoslavia in 1972, Electronic Studio of the Third Program of Radio Belgrade (EMS). Such flourishing of institutions and programs that supported new art finally began to form cracks in conservative institutions, such as the Music Academy in Belgrade, which still safeguarded traditionalism, and set the stage for a new wave of extraordinary musical avant-gardes of the 1970s.

[11] Medić, "The Role of the Third Program of Radio Belgrade," p. 485.

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The formation of EMS Radio Belgrade was another pivotal event that marked the turning point in the trajectory of music in Yugoslavia. Three chapters in Part II survey the electronic music scene from intersecting angles. Chapter 4 contextualizes the earliest explorations in the domain of electronic music in the country, which started in 1959 in Zagreb and a year later in Belgrade in private studios. Besides Malec and Kelemen, both of whom left Yugoslavia in 1955 and worked extensively in electronic music studios abroad – the Groupe de Recherche de Musique Concrète in Paris and the Siemens Studio for Electronic Music in Munich, respectively – a decade later, a handful of other composers found ways to travel abroad and learn the techniques of electroacoustic music at the newly formed professional studios in Europe and the US. Constituting the first generation of Fulbright students in Yugoslavia, Rajko Maksimović, Natko Devčić, and Aleksandar Obradović went to the Columbia-Princeton Electronic Music Center in New York City to study with Vladimir Ussachevsky, James Randall, and Milton Babbitt. Ludmila Frajt, the first woman in Yugoslavia to work in the domain of electronic (and film) music, joined Josip Kalčič at the Experimental Music Studio of Czechoslovak Radio Plzeň. Vladan Radovanović was trained at the Polish Radio Experimental Studio in Warsaw before returning home to establish the first electronic studio in Yugoslavia – a state-of-the-art, third-generation digital-analog EMS Radio Belgrade. Told through the vivid recollections of Radovanović and other composers who worked at the studio when it first opened in 1972, this chapter reveals the fascinating yet little-known story of the formation of the Studio, the acquisition of the legendary Synthi 100 – the first custom-made instrument designed by Peter Zinovieff and David Cockerell at EMS in London – and how EMS Radio Belgrade became the center for creation, collaboration, and experimentation in electroacoustic music both within and outside the borders of Yugoslavia.

Chapter 5 offers in-depth case studies of two notable pioneers in this domain – Radovanović and Frajt – with their distinctive creative processes and unwavering quest for exploration. Before departing for Plzeň in 1967, Frajt had already acquired two decades of experience working with technology, first as Chief of Music of Avala Film production studio, then as Deputy Chief Editor of Radio Belgrade, later at a summer study program at Darmstadt in the early 1960s, and finally as Secretary of the Music Commission at Yugoslav Radio Television. Even though Frajt joined the Communist Party early on, which enabled her to hold some of the most powerful positions in the country, her creative process was not guided by the doctrine of socialist realism. Rather, she was seeking innovative ways to expand her sound palette. Her distinctive oeuvre of film, instrumental, electronic, and vocal music is

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derived simultaneously from Yugoslav folk and Western avant-garde elements. Thus, although she was particularly drawn to Lutosławski's aleatory processes, Penderecki's use of clusters and nonstandard treatment of instruments, and György Ligeti's micropolyphony, Frajt also presented these techniques within the Yugoslav folk idiom. For instance, she prevalently used dissonant seconds and microtonal clusters that are characteristic of Yugoslav vocal folk music, while her application of aleatoric techniques is framed around the untempered harmonic system and unpredictable heterophonic texture common in Yugoslav folklore.

Radovanović was a true catalyst for change, who, from his earliest ventures into artistic creativity in the early 1950s until his death in 2023, marched to his own beat and personified the avant-garde in Yugoslavia. His oeuvre pushed the limits of every art form – in addition to his advances in the domains of electroacoustic and computer music, Radovanović pursued poetry and the visual arts, which he synthesized with acoustic elements. In his other works, Radovanović also incorporated kinetic features, created conceptual and polymedia projects, and devised working with the body as an object, tactile art, plastic art, meta-art, transmedia, transmodalism, and metamusical projects. His innovations came at a time before they could even be performed or understood in Yugoslavia. In the field of electronic music, Radovanović understood the capabilities of computers, creating one of the earliest examples of computerized work based on Stochastic principles during his residency at the Institute of Sonology in Utrecht in 1977.

The 1980s ushered in a new era of electronic music in Yugoslavia with the introduction of personal computers. The historically conservative Music Academy in Belgrade (renamed the Faculty of Music of the University of Arts in 1973) brought about the most significant change in the computerization and digitization of music, the topic explored in Chapter 6. The young and progressive composers Srđan Hofman and Zoran Erić realized that the future of electronic music depended on computers and were determined to establish the first computer music studio in Yugoslavia – the Tonski Studio of the Faculty of Music, which opened in 1986. The state-of-the-art facility acquired Apple Macintosh II machines in 1988, becoming one of the very few Macintosh-equipped studios in Europe. Composers who studied with Radovanović at the EMS Radio Belgrade in the 1970s and 1980s quickly traded the outdated analog machine for personal computers, and for once they were caught up with the technological innovations of the West. However, these new and dynamic technological explorations would abruptly come to a complete halt only three

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years later, with the start of the Yugoslav wars and the ensuing brutal economic sanctions.

In tandem with the new technological innovations of the 1970s and 1980s, other radical musical explorations were unfolding, which would soon define a new period of Yugoslav avant-garde. Three chapters of Part III of the book break the linear chronology and investigate the parallel trends of these decades, the emergence of performance and conceptual art, Fluxus, minimalism, and postmodernism. This part focuses on the lively activities at the Student Cultural Center in Belgrade, examines how Yugoslav postwar cultural programs made the country a magnet for experimental musicians throughout the Western and Eastern Blocs, and documents the sudden dissolution of all artistic and cultural programs with the collapse of the political state in 1991.

In an act of reconciliation following the tumultuous student protests of 1968, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia gifted the students a building in the center of Belgrade – a student-managed "safe space" where they could freely express their views and creativity. The space, which officially opened in 1971, became the iconic Student Cultural Center (*Studentski kulturni centar*, SKC). It was the birthplace of the New Art Practice in Yugoslavia headed by groundbreaking artists Marina Abramović and the "Belgrade Six," and a young group of rebellious composers and performers – Opus 4 and the Ensemble for Different New Music – who defined a new era of avant-garde art with performance and conceptual art, minimalism, Cage-style experimentalism, Fluxus, and the use of multimedia. Informed by archival documents, Chapter 7 reveals the compelling history of the SKC and how artistic and music programming by young, daring artists contributed to its meteoric rise and international popularity.

Throughout the 1970s, the Music Academy in Belgrade was still a conservative institution, where traditionalists hindered progress and innovation. Young composers who dared to stand up to their professors by writing minimalist and experimental music inspired by American composers like Cage, Steve Reich, and Terry Riley were expelled from their studies. They found a home at the SKC, which under their reign and robust music programming quickly became the center for all artistic experimentation. It also served as a hub, connecting the East with the West in a fruitful exchange of ideas, despite the geopolitical division of the world at the time. Through archival documents and interviews, Chapter 8 presents the remarkable achievements – perhaps the largest strides in Yugoslav music history – by Milimir Drašković, Miodrag Lazarov Pashu, Miroslav Savić, and Vladimir Tošić, who founded Opus 4, as well as minimalist composer Miloš Raičković and the Ensemble for Different New Music, all

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of whom played a pivotal role in the dissemination of minimalist and experimental music in Yugoslavia.

In 1980, the death of Josip Broz Tito – Yugoslav president and leader of the Communist Party who came to power in 1945 – marked a spiraling downward turn for the country. While Yugoslavia was opening up to Western ideals and popular culture, internally, the conflict of ethnic identity was reaching a boiling point. Chapter 9 examines the effect of these two intersecting phenomena on Yugoslav cultural life. The chapter spotlights Ivana Stefanović's poetic musical essays and radiophonic works, inspired by her studies at IRCAM and extensive travels around Damascus, Syria, as well as Byzantine chants, in which she vividly captures her impressions of the sounds of the cities. This chapter also documents the spectacular rise and abrupt end of a group of young composers in Belgrade – "The Magnificent Seven" – the last musical force in Yugoslavia. Their vision of creating art music that crossed over to other styles, thus bridging Yugoslav folk and rock with Western pop, musical theater, and jazz, brought something unexpectedly fresh to the Yugoslav music scene. Unfortunately, these seven incredibly talented composers-performers, who emerged on the scene in 1988, did not get a chance to reach their full potential. Barely three years later, Yugoslavia was engulfed in a series of brutal conflicts, which would last for a decade. Like hundreds of thousands of other artists, intellectuals, and professionals who fled Yugoslavia during the mass exodus of the 1990s, six members of the Magnificent Seven left the country. Through interviews and compelling archival and composers' personal documents, this chapter illustrates the last years of artistic creativity in Yugoslavia before the country ceased to exist. The poignant Epilogue, titled "1991," depicts the dissolution of Yugoslavia as a functional federal state and the violence at the start of the interrepublic war.

Just like the country's short and turbulent yet fascinating history, the story of Yugoslavia's largely unknown yet momentous avant-garde music scene is dynamic and captivating. Rather than presenting an encyclopedic overview of all musical activity in postwar Yugoslavia, this book examines how Yugoslav composers reacted and adapted to the dramatic political, economic, and social shifts and in the process created seismic cultural changes.

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