

SUMMARIES JANUARY 2007

Opening Column

SAALE KAREDA. Estonian Cultural Landscapes in Switzerland

One of the major presentations of the Estonian culture of the new independence period abroad was organised in November-December 2006 in Switzerland. From 14 November to 3 December the festival „Culturescapes Estland” took place in Basle and in the surrounding areas. What were the impressions of this display of the Estonian elite culture? The audiences certainly learned that Estonian culture does not only consist of Pärt’s music – Estonia has a rich and diverse music life, exciting literature, witty animated film and experimental and socially critical theatre and art.

Replies

HANNES KALJÜJÄRV

Hannes Kaljüjärv, actor at Vanemuine Theatre, celebrated his fiftieth birthday in January. He talks to Sven Karja about his life, work and guiding principles.

Persona grata

ELEN LOTMAN

Short portrait of Elen Lotman (1981), cameraman and initiator of the Black Nights Festival’s sub-festival, Just Film Festival. The film was made by her course mate Tanel Toom at the Balti Film and Media School where they both are currently pursuing their MA degree. The film offers an expressive overview of a young person with diverse interests, who makes films and plays in films made by others, writes scripts and teaches the young in Rakvere and Tartu the foundations of film work and organises the film festival for children and young adults.

THEATRE

KALEV KUDU. Student Theatres – Different Theatre

In July 2006, the artistic director of the Tartu Student Theatre Kalev Kudu participated in the 6th world congress of student theatres in Urbino, Italy. The papers presented at the congress discussed the following issues: 1) What does being on stage mean to a student-actor? 2) Is it vital for a student amateur actor to first acquire technical acting skills, or is other knowledge more important? 3) What does participation in student theatre give to a person during his or her academic study period (or what positive feedback do we expect of students involved in acting)?

AIVI PARIJÕGI. Estonian Phenomenon – Alexander Technique in the World

Thanks to the only Alexander technique teacher in Estonia, Maret Mursa Tormis, similar teachers from all over the world have been gathering for the last five years in Estonia on the birthday of Frederick Matthias Alexander on 20 January, in order to celebrate this day with offering free workshops. The current issue gives an overview of the anniversary celebrations in 2006, and also interviews with the teachers.

Refusing Motion III

The final part of Vsevolod Meierhold's ideas on using biomechanics on stage, started in summer issues of the magazine in 2006.

ÜLO TONTS. Somewhere Between Science and Art

A review of Lea Tormis's book „Theatre Memory“, emphasising its polemical relations with today's theatre reception.

MUSIC

MARIS VALK-FALK. „Con brio 2006“ – the Face of Young Performing Art

An overview of the competition-festival of young musicians where the best of Estonians in the field take part.

EVI ARUJÄRV. Cinderella in a Curved Room

National Opera Estonia saw the first Estonian production of Gioachino Rossini's opera „La Cenerentola“, premiere 10 November 2006). Directing and stage sets by Michiel Dijkema (Holland), conductors Arvo Volmer and Jüri Alperden, costumes Claudia Damm (Germany). Cast: Helen Lokuta (Angelina), Juhan Tralla (Don Ramiro), René Soom (Dandini), Rauno Elp (Don Magnifico), Kristina Vähi (Clorinda), Juuli Lill (Tisbe), Priit Volmer (Alidoro) etc.

Michiel Dijkema's production was made unique by his clever playing with various types of relativity. The main storyline introduces the comical opposition of various realities, daily life and fairy-tale ideal world. The best aspect of the production is the superb acting, a compact and joyous ensemble, revealing the firm hand of the director.

EVELIN KÕRVITS. Impressions of a Music Fair: Mauricio Kagel 75

In October 2006 the prominent figure of new music, Mauricio Kagel, performed in the Estonia concert hall, conducting his work „Die Stücke der Windrose“. The article examines Kagel's attractive ideas of art.

MARIS KIRME. Discourse of Criticism: Past and Present

The interdisciplinary conference with that title took place at the Tallinn University in 16-17 November 2006. Its aim was to stress criticism as cultural description, increase interest in this research, and especially to map differences and similarities between criticisms of various arts. The topics included theoretical general issues, as well as forms of expression of different fields of art in the widest sense, and connections with the universal development.

Dmitri Shostakovich 100. Letters to Friends II

(beginning in TMC no 12 2006)

The musicologist Tiia Järg chose excerpts from Shostakovich's letters to Isak Glikman from 1949–1973. The article again has thorough comments by Tiia Järg.

CINEMA

KÜLLO ARJAKAS. Destined for Shelf-life

In 1971, studio „Eesti Telefilm“ completed a four-part, four-hour long feature film „The Outlawed“. The film was based on a novel of the same title by the proletarian writer Eessaare Aadu (real name Jaan Anvelt, 1884 – 1937). The book described the underground struggle in Estonia in the early 1920. It was banned and shelved. The premiere took place as late as in December 1975 in the hall of the Tallinn Polytechnic Institute at a closed viewing of the film club. It was shown on Estonian Television in 1989, during *perestroika*. The most recent viewing was in April 2006 at Kumu art museum during the 8th Estonian film days. The director Vladimir Karasyov (now Vladimir-Georg Karassev-Orgusaar, born 1931) settled in Paris in 1981. He was later known for his work at Radio Free Europe/ Radio Liberty (RFE/ RL) and his overviews about Estonia's sovietisation and its outcomes, both via radio and books. The longer analysis of Arjakas, historian and member of Estonian parliament, examines how the film was made, banned, and the destiny of its author and his family. In his opinion, „The Outlawed“ could have become one of the best in the whole Soviet Union and equally in Estonian film history, but unfortunately it was destined for shelf-life.

Letter of the Author of „The Outlawed“, Read Out on 1 April 2006 at Its Screening in Kumu

Vladimir-Georg Karassev-Orgusaar's address from Paris to the viewers of „The Outlawed“. He stresses that the film is meant for one, four-hour viewing, with a brief interval in the middle. In Kumu, however, it was shown in two evenings by two hours. The author then says that this was not a historical or a documentary-style film, but phantasms on the basis of Eessaare Aadu's unfinished novel.

MÄRT KUBO. Estonians Correcting Mistakes or From Small Forms to the Big, From Design to Requiem

Review of Juhan Aare and Toomas Lepp's documentary film „The Collapse of the Soviet Union“ (Insider's View of the Moscow Kremlin; Eesti Kultuurfilm, 2006). The writer, politician and cultural figure, first describes the plot and characterises the people seen in the film, Estonian envoys at the congress of the soviet people's representatives, as well as Russian politicians. The author appreciates the authors' determination to follow the main line and eliminate the unnecessary material. The film focuses on leaving the East and does not tackle other topics. The depicted characters arranged the almost bloodless collapse of the Soviet Union. The main factor in extinguishing the dinosaur was the Estonians' co-operation with Russian and other democrats.

ELEN LOTMAN. There Is an Eternal Teenager in All of Us

Overview of the 10th Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival's sub-festival of films for children and young adults, called Just Film Festival. It took place before the big Black Nights Festival, from 25 November to 2 December in 2006. The initiator has been from the very start the writer of the current overview, Elen Lotman. The main award went to the German film-maker Gregor Schnitzler for his drama for the young, „The

Cloud" (2006) and the special award to the Spaniard Alberto Rodriguez for his „7 Virgins" (2005) about the wild life led by the underage. Of the films for children, the jury awarded the Dane Niels Arden Oplev for his „We Shall Overcome" (2006) promoting struggle without violence, and the special award was given to the Englishman Peter Cattaneo for his fantasy film „Pobby and Dingan" (2006).

ALLAN VALGE. Fairy-tales of the Modern World

Review of Priit Tender's (1971) two animated films, „ Fox Woman" (2002) and „Message for the Neighbours" (2006). The first is a puppet film and the other an animation. Tender arrived in animation in 1995, and has become one of the most prolific and talented film-makers. He had made animated and puppet films, and received awards at international festivals. The reviewer finds that in the „Fox Woman", Tender gives the ancient Chilean-Indian fairy-tale a modern social-critical dimension with a few simple moves, especially in the artist's work. Thanks to this the film works on two levels, as an ancient fable as far as the text is concerned, and as a visually modern fairy-tale. „Message" is more documentary, presenting a gently ironic commentary of our life today. In years to come this could be seen as a chronicle about modern trends. Tender made the latter film almost on his own, being the scriptwriter, director, producer, artist, animator.