

## SUMMARIES APRIL 2006

### Opening Column

#### **IVI TOMINGAS. Teamwork through the Years**

This year, the Estonian Culture Film celebrates its 75th anniversary and the Estonian Film Archive its 35th year. In the opening article of the current issue, the director of the Archive, Ivi Tomingas, remembers the history of the institution and talks about its present activities. The magazine also has a DVD with films and newsreels of the Estonian Culture Films.

### Replies

#### **OLEG TABAKOV**

At the end of January, audiences in Tallinn could enjoy the performances of the Moscow theatrical legend, Moscow Art Theatre artistic director, actor and director Oleg Tabakov and his private theatre 'Tabakerka'. He talks about his life, work and views of cultural politics with Eteri Kekelidze.

### Persona grata

#### **MONIKA MATTIESEN**

Portrait of one of the most talented flautists in Estonia. Monika Mattiesen is at the moment best known as the founder and booster of ensemble Küberstudio (Cyber Studio). Thanks to her inspired activities, a new notion has emerged in Estonian music – flute theatre. In addition to playing instruments, Monika has also started composition studies.

### THEATRE

#### **ENN SIIMER. Simplified Anna Karenina**

On 9 and 10 December 2005 Ugala Theatre presented the premiere of Lev Tolstoi's 'Anna Karenina', directed by the guest director from Moscow, Mikhail Tshumatshenko. Enn Siimer is not entirely satisfied with his version, summarising his opinion: 'Tolstoi's prose, unlike for example Dostoyevski's, cannot be submitted to merely bringing out separate characters, the losses are too extensive and the result is a simplified scheme that would suit a soap opera or TV-serial, but remains melodramatic on stage. /- - -/ The phenomenon of Tolstoi's prose does not lie in characters, but in the whole picture where the characters are like pieces of a mosaic.'

#### **JELENA SKULSKAJA. Director Responsible for Lev Tolstoi and Anna Karenina**

Short overview of the work of the scandalous Moscow director Andrei Zhitinkin and his interpretation of 'Anna Karenina', where the heroine (actually relying on Tolstoi's text) has become a drug addict. The production caused bitter conflicts that partly compelled his departure from the post of main director at Malaja Bronnaja Theatre.

#### **MARIS BALBAT. Russian Theatre Capturing Jaan Tätte**

On 9 December 2005 the Russian Drama Theatre premiered their version of Jaan Tätte's play 'Happy Everyday!' in restaurant Gloria, directed by Roman Baskin. The author complains about the uneven level of acting, and due to that 'capturing Tätte succeeded only occasionally'.

### **I'm not Fighting for a Role Nail and Tooth**

Interview with the prima donna of the Russian Drama Theatre, Larissa Savankova. Questions about her status and work opportunities in Estonia and abroad are asked by Nikolai Hrustaljov.

### **BERK VAHER. Notes of Theatre Year I – Rubbish Bag Midriff Blouses and Long Linen Shirts**

Berk Vaher's first summery of the events of the Estonian Theatre Year (next instalment in July issue). He examines documentaries about Ugala, Tallinn Linnateater (Town theatre) and Vanemuine, plus Andrus Kivirähk's play 'Theatre Paradise' that premiered on theatre day on 27 March in Vanemuine, directed by Ain Mäeots.

### **Estonian Theatre Annual Awards 2005**

## **MUSIC**

### **EVI ARUJÄRV. René Eespere and Ervin Õunapuu's 'Gourmands': evil is evil is evil?**

René Eespere's opera 'Gourmands II' premiered in early March at the National Opera Theatre Estonia. This is a sequel to the one-act chamber opera produced in 2001. In the spirit of the grotesque, the work poignantly tells about the general situation of life and culture in our contemporary world.

### **SAALE KAREDA. Spaces around Mozart**

Mozart lived in a field of tension where various phenomena crossed paths, such as pragmatic but on the other hand also turbulent enlightenment-era experimenting, mania of refined staging of the nobility in the form of decadent Rococo, but also the spirit of freemasons, latently emerging romanticism and the budding individualistic thirst for freedom. One significant dimension where Mozart lived and created was sacral music. Mozart's most famous, the unfinished sacral work Requiem is provided with a contemporary commentary by the Austrian composer Georg Friedrich Haas: 'Sieben Klangräume zu den unvollendeten Fragmenten des Requiems KV 626 von W. A. Mozart' for choir and orchestra. Haas sensitively reacts to the state of individual elements of Requiem, producing a magically intense but knowingly subjective counterpoint that runs in micro-tonal sound fields.

### **RIINA TÄNAV. The Fate of a Drawing – Gustav Adolf Hippus's 'Portrait of Ludwig van Beethoven.'**

The work of artist Gustav Adolf Hippus, born in 1792 in Nissi vicarage in Estonia, raises questions about the cultural contacts between Estonia and Western Europe at the time of early romanticism. In the article of 1986, 'Music and Baltic German Art',

the Estonian art historian Mai Levin had reason to regret: 'Quite a few interesting works have vanished in the course of years, for example Gustav Adolf Hippus's drawing of Ludwig van Beethoven, completed in Vienna about 1815.' L. v. Beethoven's portrait has also been mentioned in several books on Estonian art history, but its fate is not known. The portrait is actually not lost, it is in the archive of Beethoven house in Bonn (Beethoven-Haus Bonn). It is a pencil drawing (56 × 40 cm) without a signature and date. It was probably made in 1914.

### **MARIS VALK-FALK. The Baroque Today – in 2006. Baroque Music Festival 2006.**

The situation of baroque music around us is no longer very clear, either in authentic or contemporary sense, it is rather intuitive and hesitant. The sound alone is not important, but also the manner how we perceive sounds and musical phenomena.

'Baroque Music Festival 2006' (artistic director Andres Mustonen) focused on vocal music, presenting splendid vocal ensembles who performed the medieval chants, Gregorian songs, Indian ragas and contemporary music – Helena Tulve's work on Jewish poetry 'Reyah hadas 'ala', Šalom Šabaz's poems, performed by Vox Clamantis and Hortus Musicus. The concert 'Le grand chant' from the vocal duet of Dominique Vellard and Raitis Grigalis was extremely refined. An interesting programme was brought to the festival by Paul Dombrecht's *Il fondamento*. Händel's oratorio 'Messiah' (1741) at the opening concert was most impressive, performed by the mixed choir Latvija, vocal soloists Dita Kalniņa, Antra Bigača, Viesturs Jansons, Krišjānis Norvelis and the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Andres Mustonen.

## **CINEMA**

### **SILVIA KIIK. Avo Paistik's Struggle with Authorities, Censorship and Goskino I**

On 21 April Avo Paistik, former caricaturist and prolific director of animated films and current painter and man of religion, celebrates his 70th birthday. Through three issues of the magazine he remembers his work at the animation department of Tallinnfilm, focusing on the conflicts with the Moscow-based Soviet State Cinema Committee (Goskino) almost in case of every Paistik's film. The first part of recollections takes him to the time when he starts work at Tallinnfilm.

### **IVI TOMINGAS. Once Upon a Time There Was Estonian Culture Film...**

Director of the Film Archive gives an overview of the foundation of the Estonian Culture Film and later activities until 1940, when the Culture Film was nationalised.

### **MARIS BALBAT. The Unshakeable Pop of Ita Ever**

On 1 April Ita Ever celebrates her 75th birthday. The article by the theatre and film critic Balbat gives a brief overview of Ever's more than fifty-year long work at the Drama Theatre, in film, television and entertainment. The second part of the article is an interview with Ever's son Roman Baskin, who produced a TV film for his mother's birthday 'Vana daami visiit' (Visit by an Elderly Lady) based on the play of Friedrich Dürrenmatt. The main character is played by Ever, and many best actors also take part.

### **DONALD TOMBERG. Encounter of Jukebox and Cello**

Review of Peeter Simm's (b 1951) Estonian-German collaboration film 'Fed Up!' (2006, studios Ruut and Saxonia Media/Germany). The writer describes the film's plot, sudden twists in it and various lines that blend. In sum, however, he finds that the script is too complicated, but the camera by Rein Kotov and music by Sven Grünberg are excellent. Despite some looseness in the plot, the protagonist Maarja Jakobson is always profound and offers the best.

### **OLEV REMSU. The End Provides the Meaning**

Another review of Peeter Simm's film 'Fed Up!'. The writer analyses the film's genre – road movie on the one hand and comedy on the other. He finds that the film contains charming episodes which still might cause the viewer to say: I do not believe this, this cannot happen in real life. Remsu lists a number of such episodes. He also thinks that the characters' biographies are revealed too late in the film and this makes it difficult to believe the characters. The critic nevertheless finds that the female protagonist Maarja Jakobson produces a natural and credible character, the German Thomas Schmauser manages his complicated role very well, but the most credible of all is the other German actor Heio von Stetten in the role of the suicide character.

### **SVEN KARJA. Sentimental Women and Gentle Ghosts**

Review of Rainer Sarnet's (b 1969) TV film 'The Curse of a Werewolf' (2005, Estonian Television and Shop of Dreams). The history of Vanemuine Theatre is tackled at length as the plot unravels there. Then various productions of August Kitzberg's play 'Werewolf' are examined. The last third of the article focuses on Sarnet's film. Besides excellent acting, especially Katariina Lauk's main character Tiina, the montage seems somewhat hasty.

### **ELEN LOTMAN. Youth Film Festival with No Age Limit**

Alongside the Tallinn Black Nights Film Festival, the Just Film Festival for children and young adults has been organised for five years. The initiator Elen Lotman writes about its aims, what has been shown, who have been the guests and how the audience has received the films.

### **ANNIKA KOPPEL. TV + Film and the Virgin Maali Award**

Since 1994 the Estonian Association of Film Journalists has been issuing the 'Film of the year' award. In recent years this has acquired the name of Virgin Maali plus a relevant sculpture. The writer briefly recalls the past and then focuses on competing films for this year's award, i.e. films made last year. On 5 January 2006, Jaak Kilmi's (b 1973) television film 'Encounter with the Unknown' (Estonian Television) received the award in Cinema Sõprus.