

SUMMARIES JUNE 2006

Opening Column

MARTIN AADAMSOO. *Pallas of Moving Pictures*

On 1 September a new school of higher education starts in Tallinn – the Baltic Film and Media School. Its aim is to provide contemporary film education to Estonia and take Estonian filmmakers abroad. The school's development manager Aadamsoo compares its mission with that of the art school Pallas many years ago.

Replies

PIRJO HONKASALO

In late April cinema Sõprus presented four films by the prominent Finnish director of features and documentaries Pirjo Honkasalo (b 1947): „Mysterion“ (1991), „Tanjuška and 7 Devils“ (1993), „Atman“ (1996) and „The 3 Rooms of Melancholia“ (2004). The director came to Tallinn for the occasion. The interview tells about how she found film, what film directors have influenced her most, how much she interferes as cameraman, what for her are the main differences between making features and documentaries, and about her long-time ties with Estonia – several of her films are about Estonia – and finally about her future plans.

Persona Grata

ANDERO ERMEL

Triin Sinissaar, dramaturge of the Tallinn City Theatre, talks to the actor at the same theatre, Andero Ermel, who in addition to his drama roles has recently been also acclaimed as a musical actor and a „singing actor“ in general. The latest role in that area was Rõnee in Elmo Nüganen's production „Karin. Indrek. Truth and Justice. 4“.

THEATRE

ANNELI SARO. „Truth and Justice“: Questioning Cultural Identity

At last autumn's theatre festival „Drama 2005“, most interest and dispute focused Elmo Nüganen's production „Truth and Justice. Second part“ on the basis of A.H. Tammsaare's epic novel. The production received special award of foreign critics, but in the opinion of many, deserved even more recognition. Member of jury and theatre critic Anneli Saro explains the decisions of the jury and presents a thorough analysis of the production. She considers the

dramatisation, composition and the main topics in Nüganen's concept, referring to the tendency towards entertainment.

ARNE MERILAI. Timeless Images and Temporal Director: Elmo Nüganen

The author examines in essayistic form two hugely successful productions of Elmo Nüganen at the Tallinn City Theatre: „Pianola or the Player Piano” based on Anton Chekhov that was performed ten years ago, and „Karin. Indrek. Truth and Justice 4” after Tammsaare, and discusses the meaning of the much-derided term ‘psychological realism’ in the given context.

IVIKA SILLAR. Two Times Two is Six

The review also tackles the production „Karin. Indrek. Truth and Justice. 4.”, focusing more thoroughly on acting and Tammsaare's notions about the essence of being Estonian.

MARIA GOLTSMAN. Dance's Play with Formality

Last spring, the Belgian choreographer Matteo Moles staged in Estonia his dance performance „Just”. Maria Goltsman talks to Moles about his current work in Belgium, Estonia and the relations between classical and modern dance in his dance teaching methods.

MUSIC

HEILI EINASTO. Connection with Memory: Carolyn Carlson and Estonia

Carolyn Carlson's troupe's visit to Estonia on 28 April 2006 and her modern dance workshop a week earlier could be seen as a bridge between the past and the present. The performance „Down By the River”, which the group presented during the first half of the evening at Kumu, should be regarded in the same key. The pulsating rhythm of Carlson's choreography, repetitions, the flowing and fragmentary motion of the dancers took the viewer back in time for twenty years – when the Estonians had the first chance to see her work via Finnish television. Carlson's work cannot be explained by way of movements or the topic, because these form only a framework to the contents. Just like with movement, the starting and final point in her work do not really matter, what is important is the journey between the two, the perception of progress. Like in drama, where the main message remains „behind words” and in music the essential lies „above sounds”, so in Carlson's dance the essential remains „between movements”.

The second half of the performance at Kumu constituted a strong contrast with Carlson's poetic dance – it could be compared with down-to-earth, but figurative prose. „Scène d'Amour” by the Finn Juha-Pekka Marsalo has a totally different rhythm, style and mood. Carlson had created an abstract poem, whereas Marsalo offered a glimpse of modern relations where love is replaced by hidden and evident power struggle. With Carlson, describing separate

movements seemed pointless, as they simply referred to something more significant, but in Marsalo, several technical traits were emphasised, such as a dancer's horizontal, spiralling flinging into the partner's embrace (this is eminent in the Canadian troupe La La La Human Steps); boxing-like fighting scenes and acrobatic headstands were more memorable than their hidden message about the struggle of the sexes.

EVI ARUJÄRV. Chamber Operas of Tõnu Kõrvits: Beauty of Madness and Issues of Gender

In April, Nargen Opera and Von Krahli Theatre jointly presented two new chamber operas from Tõnu Kõrvits: „Garden of Fire” and „My Swans, My Thoughts”. The critic sees the two operas, directed by Peeter Jalakas and conducted by Tõnu Kaljuste, as among the most significant events in Estonian music in recent year.

RAILI SULE. Passion Dramas at national Opera. Pietro Mascagni's „Cavalleria rusticana ” and Ruggiero Leoncavallo „Pagliacci ”.

On 11 May 2006 a new production premiered at the National Opera Estonia – two outstanding operas of verism, usually performed during the same evening. Music arrangement and conductor: Arvo Volmer. Conductors: Jüri Alperden and Aivo Välja; director: Neeme Kuningas; set design: Charles Cusick Smith (Scotland); costumes: Charles Cusick Smith and Ivo Nikkolo; lighting: Charles Cusick Smith, Neeme Jõe and Neeme Kuningas.

This production invites the viewers to ponder contemplate the unchanging human emotions through time. In the programme, director **Neeme Kuningas** says: „The keyword for today's opera evening could be ILLUSION. I am not trying to prove anything or answer complicated questions, it would be an ILLUSION to believe that this would be possible. Quite the contrary: I want to add a few questions, and I have an ILLUSION that a wish to seek answers to them makes every viewer a co-author, every viewer gets his own story.”

Pastoral Shepherd Story at Vanemuine

About Georg Friedrich Händel's opera „Acis and Galatea” (John Gay's libretto based on Publius Ovidius Naso's „Metamorphoses”) at Vanemuine Theatre in Tartu. Head of music and conductor: Lauri Sirp; director: Indra Roga (Latvia); choreographer: Ilja Vlasenko (Latvia); stage design: Andris Freibergs (Latvia); costumes: Kristīne Jurjāne (Latvia); lighting: Igor Kapustin. Cast: Karmen Puis (Galatea), Roland Liiv (Acis), Taisto Noor or Märt Jakobson (Polyphemus), Kristina Vähi or Pirjo Püvi (Damon), Aili Jürissaar (cleaner), Darli Thomson (Eva) and Anton Jakovlev (Adam) etc. Dance scenes: Kristaps Kikulis, Olegs Alens Piskunovs and students of Vanemuine dance and ballet school Jevgenia Penkova, Eva Luts, Annika Kaasik and Saile Langsepp.

Premiere on 3 February 2006 in the small house of Vanemuine. Co-operation project of the Latvian National Opera and Vanemuine.

According to the young Latvian director Indra Roga, „Acis and Galatea” contains „several attractive contrasts – beauty and coarseness, youth and old age, comedy and tragedy, infatuation and hatred, masculinity and femininity [- - -] The two-sidedness culminates in the moment when people realise that without love the earth will turn into a desert, and beauty without a soul is nothing but a soap bubble.”

VIRGE JOAMETS. About Aime

A warmly written recollection of Aime Karm, the popular music teacher in Tartu.

CINEMA

SILVIA KIIK. Avo Paistik’s Struggle with Authorities, Censorship and Goskino III

Final part of the memories of Paistik, former caricaturist and renowned animated film-maker and current painter and religious man, who turned 70 in April. The third part focuses on the making of his last films and the continuing opposition with the State Film Committee of the Soviet Union (Goskino).

ANNIKA KOPPEL. The World in Berlin Film Mirror. Where are we?

Overview of the programme at this year’s 56th International Berlin Film Festival, focusing on the writer’s own favourites. She also describes the reception of Estonian films, which were shown quite a few, especially on the film market.

KADRI KÕUSAAR. Kernels of Berlinale

Another article about the latest Berlin Film Festival. Here the author concentrates on the films that captivated her most and were screened outside the competition programme. In conclusion the reviewer says that if you see at least one truly excellent film, the whole undertaking is a success.

MARIANNE KÕRVER. Born Innocent in Such Life

Review of Aku Louhimies’s (b 1968) film „Frozen Land “ (2005) and Aleksi Mäkelä’s (b 1969) film „Matti” (2006). These two popular Finnish feature films were recently shown in our cinemas. The writer finds that the two very different films are united by the fact that they show the country where such unpleasant and sad things occur. At the same time they constitute a counterbalance to the absurd vision of Finns and their way of life of the most famous Finnish director Aki Kaurismäki. Contrary to Kaurismäki’s charming fairy-tales these films show a different Finland – much more serious, more social and tragic.

KAROL ANSIP. Baltic Film and Media School – New Estonian Nokia

Interview with Martin Aadamsoo, development manager of the new school that starts in autumn 2006. He talks about its aims, structure, financing, fees and future plans and hopes.

KÄRT HELLERMA. The Fragile Art of Living

Longer analysis of the work of the documentary film-maker Kersti Uibo (b 1956) who lives in London. Three films are tackled here: „Edvard’s Acre“ (National Film & Television School, 1994), „Narrow is the Gate“ (Trinity Films, 2002) and „Still-life with Wife “ (Exitfilm, 2006). In her earlier two films, the author showed the need of good deeds, the misery of Godless man and wise humility. The third film is a desolate drama of relationships between an artist and his wife in Ivangorod beyond the Estonian border. The reviewer finds that Uibo’s style could be regarded as a wise person’s humility who has managed to reach beyond self-love, which contains a sense of justice and responsibility, and also readiness to help and understand a fellow human being. Kersti Uibo’s films have received awards at various international festivals.