

SUMMARIES NOVEMBER 2006

Opening Column

TANEL LEPSOO. From Surrealism to Social Sensitivity?

The theatre section of the current magazine tackles Tiit Ojasoo and Ene-Liis Semper's production of Alfred Jarry's play „King Ubu” (where the critics argued whether this was sharp social theatre or aesthetic impressions based on visual effects). Tanel Lepsoo, on the other hand, reflects on how theatre seeped in surrealism could have a social impact at all in today's world. He points at Antonin Artaud's criticism of surrealism and defines theatre that would be free of the primary duty to depict something.

Replies

ELENA POZNJAK-KÕLAR

Elena Pozjak-Kõlar who celebrates her jubilee in November graduated from the Tallinn Choreography School in 1955, and has since worked in Vanemuine Theatre as a ballet artist, dance arranger, director's assistant and rehearser. Also as a ballet teacher and head of the Vanemuine Dance and Ballet School. Her student Maria Goltsman talks with Poznjak about the latter's life, work and best roles.

THEATRE

ERKKI LUUK. Summer of Pataphysics and Surrealism

The title is based on the fact that last summer, Alfred Jarry's „King Ubu” was staged in Estonia for the first time, directed by Tiit Ojasoo and Ene-Liis Semper from theatre NO91. In addition, Hendrik Toompere jun directed Andrus Kivirähk's „Surrealists” at the Estonian Drama Theatre. The critic finds that the latter production managed to introduce surrealism, but that was all. „King Ubu”, on the other hand, offered extraordinary freshness in the context of Estonian theatre, focusing on the play with various artistic means of expression.

KAIA SISASK. The Mind is Dead, Long Live the King!

An overview of how Alfred Jarry's play „King Ubu” came to be, and of the author's creative methods, also introducing the etymology of the names of the characters. Kaia Sisask examines the reasons why the play which caused a scandal in its time, can today only shock with the force of its pictorial language, leaving the viewer somewhat confused about its message.

OTT KARULIN. Comeback of the Variety Show

As theatre NO99 headed by Tiit Ojasoo and Ene-Liis Semper is institutionally the heir of Eino Baskin's variety theatre Vanalinnastudio (Old Town Studio), the article tries to find some contextual similarities as well. Defining the features of a variety theatre, the author finds that one reason for the golden age of Baskin's theatre in soviet Estonia was the need to speak between the lines. Since this is no longer necessary, it partly explains the present downfall of that genre in today's social

context. However, Ojasoo and Semper also use the methods of the variety theatre, and thus we can speak about the genre in the 21st century as well.

RIINA ORUAAS. The Journey to the Unknown

The reviewer tackles Jaan Tooming and Anne Törnpu's production of Rudolf Reiman's play „The Tormentor and the „Strangers“. The production has three different languages of expression that create a new synthesis. These are Reiman's powerful and poetical words, expressionist manner of playing based on body language, and the poetry of theatre connected with folk songs that has become the trademark of Tooming and Törnpu.

SVEN KARJA. Gold Rain and Shower of Stars

Summary of „Russian Case“, sub-festival of Moscow's „Golden Mask“ festival in April 2006, meant for foreign audiences and gathering a choice of more innovative Russian theatre.

MUSIC

KERRI KOTTA. Louis Andriessen in Tallinn

The Dutch composer Louis Andriessen, one of the most prominent authors of new music in the world, visited Tallinn in October, participating in the Autumn Festival organised by the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre. The composer met Estonian musicians and talked about his work and his development as a composer. Kerri Kotta gives an overview of Andriessen's visit to Estonia.

EVI ARUJÄRV. Tammsaare's „Judith“: Polyphony of Sadness and Brutality

(Helena Tulve's music to the drama production)

On 22 September 2006 the National Opera Theatre Estonia premiered the Biblical play „Judith“ by the classic of Estonian literature, A. H. Tammsaare. Director: Katri Aaslav-Tepandi, composer and musical designer Helena Tulve.

The basis of the music was Tulve's piece for orchestra „Thaw“ („Sula“ 1999) and a chamber work written for harpsichord and zither „...il neige“ (2004). Music was chosen by the director.

Tulve's so far only orchestral piece „Thaw“ won the International Rostrum of Composers 2004 in Paris, in 2006 it also received the main award of the International Society for Contemporary Music. In the production, the composer used the material of the above-mentioned works, arranging or „re-creating“ it with a computer programme, and adapting with the wishes of the director.

Tulve's world of sounds provides an additional dimension to the production: it is music that seems to express Tammsaare's position that is otherwise not so obvious in the production – resignation, fatalism, observing sadness, giving the drama its entirety.

HEILI EINASTO. Soberly Calculated Cool. Angelin Preljocaj's „The Four Seasons“

On 26 September 2006, Ballet Preljocaj performed Angelin Preljocaj's „The Four Seasons” set to Antonio Vivaldi's music at the National Theatre Estonia. The critic examines the performance and the earlier works of the choreographer.

SIRJE NORMET. With Canadian Composer Ted Dawson from Pärnu Organ festival to Kristofer Festival in Vilnius

Together with the renowned Canadian composer Ted Dawson, Sirje Normet visited two major music festivals and observed how the Estonian and Lithuanian audiences received his music. The article explains how Dawson got to know the work of the Estonian poet Andres Ehin, which inspired him to write the vocal cycle „Andres Ehin Cycle”. Normet also tells about the successful European premiere of Dawson's piano concerto in front of the demanding audiences of Vilnius.

TOOMAS VELMET. Who or What is ESTA

Between 8 and 13 August 2006 the 34th international conference of the European String Teachers Association took place in Tallinn (and Pärnu), under the slogan: „The World of Strings”. 183 people participated. During six days a number of papers was presented, lectures-concerts and workshops were organised. The participants included: Bruno Giuranna, Irina Bochkova, Edith Peinemann, Gerhard Mantel, Dermot Crehan, Mari Tampere-Bezrodny, Niina Murdvee, Peeter Paemurru, Valentina Jakubovskaya, Anja Manja, Airi Koivukoski etc.

MAIT JÜRIADO. Wochtzhée „Diktüoneemakilt”

Wochtzhée alias Taavi Tulev is a young talented Estonian composer of electronic music. Mait Jüriado describes his impressions of listening to Tulev's latest CD.

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH.100. Letters to Friends I

The music historian Tiia Järg has compiled a collection of Dmitri Shostakovitsh's letters to his closest people, and translated excerpts from them. The article is provided with her comments. The first part presents excerpts from the composer's letters to Levon Atovmjan from 1934–1961. (To be continued)

CINEMA

KAIRE MAIMETS-VOLT. Only One Heaven

A longer theoretical article analysing the plot and structure of Tom Tykwer's (1965) feature „Heaven”, 2002, in connection with the music of Arvo Pärt in it. The author is writing her doctoral thesis about Arvo Pärt's oeuvre in film music. She has found that over twenty of Pärt's compositions have been used in films over the past few decades. The film-makers have preferred the instrumental pieces of earlier and middle period *tintinnabuli*-style (up to the 1990s), characterised by little change of musical parameters during a particular piece of music (i.e. music is throughout slow and/or in minor manner and /or with brilliant timbre). One of the reasons is presumably the fact that due to the mentioned compositional-technical peculiarity, the type and intensity of the idea/emotion of the work does not vary. This enables

the director to express a specific idea/emotion in the film very precisely. This is why Pärt's music is so widely used. This is true also of Tykwer's film.

RAIT AVESTIK. Multi-faceted and Amphibian Life of „Mindless”

The article examines Eva Klemets's (1977) production „Mindless” (2005) at the Tallinn City Theatre and Elmo Nüganen's (1962) feature film of the same title (Taska Productions and Estonian Television, 2006), both based on the play of Jaan Tätte. The reviewer finds that the protagonist, played in the film and in theatre by Rain Simmul, is the representative of the so-called generation of the winners, who in their pursuit of money lost their family and happiness, and have to turn to doctors for medical help. Although the character is more or less the same, the film tells more – at least about the protagonist. The theatre production seemed to want to convey one specific message, whereas the film shows lives of many people and the situation in the country. The film also paid attention to minor characters and their strong acting, concludes the critic.

LILIAN VELLERAND. Farewell

Review of Rein Raamat (1931) and Peeter Brambat's (1954) documentary „Mikk” (Raamat-Film, 2006) about the theatre director and actor Mikk Mikiver (1937 - 2006). The theatre historian wonders whether it is good or bad when the documentary portrait film is so spellbinding that you watch it from start to finish on the wavelength of the same emotion. She concludes that as a whole, „Mikk” is like a joint farewell of colleagues and friends to the beloved man and artist. Quite different approaches and choice of material are naturally also possible. This is a biographical film of Mikk Mikiver with a tragic undertone.

URMAS E. LIIV. Portrait of a Saint

Review of Eve Ester's (1959) portrait film about the actress, „Ada Lundver” (studio Lege Artis Film, 2005). The writer-director says that with the choice of person to be portrayed, Ester's BA documentary has hit the bull's-eye. At the same time he admits that although the film itself adds little to the Estonian film in general, documenting the sparkling Ada-legend is gratefully received by the wider public. The value of the accumulated material will be truly ascertained only years later.

ÜLO PIKKOV. Space in Animation

Theoretical discussion by Ülo Pikkov, director of animated films, artist and lecturer in animation at the Estonian Academy of Arts, about space in animated films. Examples include Roger Allers's and Rob Minkoff's film „The Lion King” (1994) and Robert Zemeckis's „Who Framed Roger Rabbit” (1988).

JAAK LÕHMUS. Quiet Jubilee Celebrations in Pärnu and Elsewhere

Overview of the 20th Pärnu International Documentary and Anthropology Film Festival that took place in 2–22 July 2006. The festival showed 130 films, additionally six films by Lennart Meri and a selection of films made by children. Besides Pärnu, the films also reached Viljandi, Heimtal, Haapsalu and Manija island. Eight documentaries were shown on Estonian Television and these were nominated for the Estonian People's Award. The *grand prix* went to Arunas Matelis's

film „Before Flying Back to Earth” (Lithuania) and the Estonian People’s Award was given to the Americans, Richard Ladkani and Kief Davidson’s film „Devil’s Miner”. The article also takes a look at the history of the festival and offers many facts about the development of the first Estonian international film festival.