

SUMMARIES OCTOBER 2007

Opening Column

TOOMAS KIHO. Sociality of Estonian Theatre through a Foreign Eye

Theatre festival Drama 2007 took place in September in Tartu. An international jury evaluated the best of recent Estonian theatre. The head of jury Toomas Kiho summarises the observations of foreign jury members about the social eloquence of Estonian theatre.

Replies

VLADIMIR ANŠON

Scenographer and icon painter Vladimir Anshon tells about his childhood and studies in Russia, his cooperation with directors and his own most exciting productions in theatre, also about icon painting and the relations between theatre and church.

Persona grata

TIIA TENNO

Kadri Ploompuu portrays Tiia Tenno, one of the best Estonian organists and student of Hugo Lepnurm. Tiia is a superb soloist, and also a much valued ensemble partner.

THEATRE

VLADIMIR ANSHON. Mid-life Crisis. Flood after Rain

An overview of this year's, eleventh forum of theatre designers' forum Prague Quadrennial, celebrating its fortieth anniversary. On the basis of works presented at the quadrennial, the author observes certain signs of mid-life crisis in scenography of the moment, which eclectically reflect the past achievements, without however producing any new vigorous trends.

JAAK ALLIK. Genre: Summer Production?

Summary of this year's summer theatre. Summer theatre has traditionally been regarded as primarily light-weight entertainment; recent years, however, have demonstrated that summer theatre has achieved an artistic independence. More serious productions are indeed often born in summer, in the spirit of experimenting. Last summer showed that this kind of theatre has already become a separate branch of industry and achieved critical dimensions, probably needing a pause in order to accumulate fresh ideas.

MUSIC

KERRI KOTTA. Fidelio – Postmodernist production of Modernist Work

Kerri Kotta analyses Nargen Opera's effective Beethoven-production that in fact constituted the introduction of opera *Fidelio* to the Estonian audience. The less-

known work of the classic was performed in a humorous key, thus making the opera's deadly serious and naïve plot more palatable to the modern public.

MARJU RIISIKAMP. Corelli Consort 15

Marju Riisikamp and the soul of the Baroque ensemble Corelli Consort, violinist Mail Sildos, talk about the work of the ensemble and the small concert agency Corelli Music. The succinct interview also reveals the background of cultivating early music and supporting the arts.

MARIA MÖLDER. Food for Soul from the Philharmonic Chamber Choir

Review of the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir's CD *Luule, see ei tule tuulest* (Poetry comes not from the wind). Under the conducting of Mikk Üleoja, the CD presents the entire choral oeuvre of Mart Saar.

MART HUMAL. Idea of the Baltic Musicology Association

Like in other Baltic countries, 1988 was a breakthrough year also in Estonia. A need for radical change was especially keenly felt by the intelligentsia who used the opportunity to publicly voice their demands. The article by four musicologists — Mart Humal, Priit Kuusk, Maris Männik and Vaike Sarv, published in June, was therefore no surprise. The article appeared in the weekly cultural paper and was titled "Is innovation possible in Estonian musicology?"

Developing the ideas presented in this article, the idea of the Baltic Musicology Association was born. The authors of the article made up the initiative group of the BMA, who on 26 September 1988 worded their proposals to establish BMA, inviting everybody interested to support and perfect the idea. The aim was to finalise the joint proposal of the Estonian delegation at the 22nd conference of Baltic musicologists in Riga on 12–15 October.

The BMA idea was one of those numerous plans of the transition period that soon lost their topicality due to the rapid changes in society.

Latvian and Lithuanian colleagues have continued within the Composers' Union in musicology sections, whereas in Estonia the paths of composers and musicologists split: in 1992 an independent organisation was founded — Estonian Musicological Society, which organised the Baltic conferences in Tallinn in 1993, 1996, 1999 and 2002. At the same time the Estonian musicologists were increasingly of the opinion that these conferences in their present form were no longer useful. The repeated attempts to come to an agreement with the neighbours about changing the form and frequency of the conferences came to nothing, the Estonian Musicological Society decided to cancel the conference that was supposed to take place in Tallinn in 2005. Latvians and Lithuanians, however, have stayed true to the existing format and continued with the annual conferences sine 2006.

PIRET AIDULO. Tallinn XXI International Organ festival AD 2007

This year's festival largely celebrated Dietrich Buxtehude's (1637-1707) anniversary, with numerous great composers as guests. Organists and other musicians were in the role of performers in two senses, and their list was impressive: Hartmut Rohmeyer, Pavel Černý, Emanuele Cardi, James David Christie, Marie-Louise Langlais, Andres Uibo, Aare-Paul Lattik, Tiia Tenno. In addition two remarkable choirs: the

Cambridge King's College Choir and the Estonian National Male Choir, and a number of other outstanding musicians. The festival was characterised by an overwhelmingly high musical standard. Diversity was added by involving choirs and soloists, fascinating programmes and concert venues.

A Few Questions about ENSO. Interviews with Nikolai Aleksejev and Andres Siitan

Cello professor and music journalist Toomas Velmet interviews Nikolai Aleksejev, chief conductor of the Estonian National Symphony Orchestra and Andres Siitan, director of the orchestra, on its 80th anniversary. How has the orchestra developed in recent years? It has room for improvement, stability must be achieved everywhere, so that the orchestra had its own high standard regardless of the conductor. ENSO has everything it takes to belong among the best in the world. Director Andres Siitan would like more media attention, the painful issue is still the small salary fund.

NELE SUISALU. What Makes You Show What You Show. Berlin festival „Tanz im August“ KAF (knowledge and fun) in HAU3 from 17 August to 1 September 2007 at the Berlin *Tanz im August* festival.

The project was initiated by young artists who participated in the study programme *ex.e.r.ce 07* of Montpellier National Choreography Centre (CCN). They invited other students of the same field to participate as well. KAF did and will accept artists and members of the public who are interested in contemporary choreography and performance arts. This is an open concept where the emphasis is on creating a certain space during certain time, and organise it into work, thinking and meeting environment. KAF „squats“ the usual theatre space, trying to change all its parts – rehearsal room, stage, bar, why not even the toilets – into locations where a performance can take place. Everything that happens there, depends on the will of the participants, finding one another, decisions taken together or taking the initiative. The members of KAF quickly adopted the slogan „Doer decides!“. Its aim was to give everybody the freedom and responsibility to make KAF into whatever seems necessary and interesting to them and also make the happening spontaneously organised, but not controlled. This year KAF took place for the first time, focusing on the question: „What makes me show what I show?“. The question concerned what was happening on stage, and the question might have been incited by the fact that since the 1990s contemporary dance, under the label of „conceptual“ dance, has expanded the definition of choreography. By now, almost anything could be choreography if it has something to do with any body and its movement, and occasionally the ties with the surrounding environment.

CINEMA

DONALD TOMBERG. Landscape Abounding in Figures

Review of Veiko Õunpuu's (1972) feature film „The Autumn Ball“ (2007, studios Homeless Bob Production and Kuukulgur Film). At first the actor-critic compares the differences between Mustamäe of the seventies and today's Lasnamäe in our consciousness – the plot of Mati Unt's novel unravels at the time and place mentioned first; the film is based on the novel but the action takes place in Lasnamäe.

In the opinion of the writer, Mustamäe was at that time a new and modern urban district, whereas Lasnamäe has never symbolised novelty, but oblivion instead. Taking the film from Mustamäe to Lasnamäe thus replaces the new and ideal place with an abandoned and deserted place. The film's slow rhythm amplifies the monotony of the area. The reviewer finds that in Unt's text play is essential, but Õunpuu focuses on a clearly existential attitude, balanced by self-irony. The article tries to guess who of the world greatest film-makers have influenced Õunpuu, and emphasises excellent acting. In 2007, the film won the main award of sub-festival Orizzonti at the 64th international Venice film festival.

MARIA ULFSK-SHERIPOVA. Heavy and Beautiful *The Autumn Ball*

Another review of Veiko Õunpuu's film "The Autumn Ball". The writer finds that the director has in fact shaken off most of Mati Unt's novel and retained only the title and some central characters. Three principal sign words link Õunpuu and Unt: yearning, solitude and silence. Mart Taniel's camerawork is, according to the reviewer, picturesque and spellbinding, but fortunately not too decorative and arranged. She also describes the actors' work which she considers excellent.

ÜLO PIKKOV. Characters in Animated Film

Theoretical article by the animation lecturer with numerous examples of films and opinions of other film theoreticians about the characters in animation. The writer points out that in analysing the essence of characters in animated films, we should also examine the so-called archaic thinking, as relating to the animated characters somewhat resembles the cult of totem and magic. In classical theatre and in feature film it is not possible to observe a character apart from the actor, whereas an animation character is like a mask, the creator of which we do not see in the character.

KAROL ANSIP. Insight into Estonian Documentary Film IV

The fourth part about Estonian documentaries describes the editing of films and the role of soviet censorship. The second half tells about the Estonian documentary author's film of the 1960s and 1970s.

To Be a Stoker or Make Films

The 3rd World Film Festival in spring 2006 in Tartu showed a special programme "Documentary Film in Soviet Estonia", including films by Virve Aruoja, Andres Sööt, Jüri Müür, Enn Säde and Mark Soosaar. A round table discussion followed, with Sööt, Säde and Soosaar, also Aune Unt, lecturer of journalism in Tartu University, Liivo Niglas, lecturer of visual anthropology at Tartu and the film historian Lauri Kärk. A summary is published here of the discussion about the role of censorship in Soviet Estonian documentary films and the relations between documentary film-makers of the time and today's documentary film-making in general.