

## SUMMARIES AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2007

### Opening Column

#### **HASSO KRULL. The Meaning of Violence in Art**

Writer and philosopher Hasso Krull discusses how to determine violence and in case art depicts violence, what possible meanings it could have. Popular art mostly cultivates the stylisation of violence, opposed by the so-called realist depiction of violence, although violence could also be shown almost ontologically, simply because it exists. Nature films often shows episodes of a lion killing an antelope or a grasshopper eating another grasshopper. We do not perceive this as violence, and why should we?

### Replies

#### **PEETER VÄHI**

Composer and producer Peeter Vähi is one of the most singular phenomena in Estonian music. He was among the first who was not ashamed to write 'beautiful' music at a time when complicated language of music was in fashion. He was greatly influenced by his activities as a rock musician, but Peeter is primarily one of the great experts in Estonia of everything Oriental and merger of the western and eastern music. The interview conducted by Sirje Normet also talks about organising festivals, which is one among many of Peeter's jobs.

### Persona grata

#### **MONIKA-EVELIN LIIV**

(Interview by Andrus Kallastu)

The young Estonian mezzo soprano Monika-Evelin Liiv studied singing at the Tallinn Georg Ots Music School, Lithuanian Music Academy, Estonian Academy of Music; she has participated in various summer courses and master classes under the supervision of Irina Gavrilovic, Maria Avda, Larissa Gergijeva, Hartmuth Höll, Maria Cleva, Vladimir Atlantov and Jeffrey Goldberg. In September 2007 she joined the Jette Parker Young Artist Program at the London Royal Opera, which brings her solo roles in Covent Garden. On 14 January Monika has her debut at Covent Garden as Flora in „La traviata”, followed by the Second Lady in „The Magic Flute”. She also prepares to sing Olga as an understudy in „Yevgeni Onegin”, Mercédès's „Carmen” and Dryad in R. Strauss' opera „Ariadne auf Naxos”.

### THEATRE

#### **KADI TUDRE. Body Technique in Acting**

Kadi Tudre research based on her MA work about body techniques, introduced to the occidental and not too body-focused theatre by Vsevolod Meierhold, Étienne Decroux, Eugenio Earba, Jerzy Grotowski and other theatre experimenters.

#### **FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE. Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music**

Next translated parts of Friedrich Nietzsche's treatise begun in February.

**JAANUS SOOVÄLI. „Birth of Tragedy “: Fateful *Schauspiel***

Introduction to Friedrich Nietzsche's treatise „Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music“, about how the treatise came about, its main terms such as „Apollonian“, „Dionysian“ etc.

**MADLI PESTI. Who's Afraid of German Theatre?**

Overview of the festival of German theatre last May „Theatertreffen“. Presuming that the festival was compiled of productions that, according to the 7-member jury, are characterised by the criterion „remarkable“, it is almost impossible to determine the trend of the moment in German theatre on the basis of this year's selection. It was easier last year when re-workings of the classics and documentary theatre prevailed.

**ÜLEV AALOE. Theatre Biennial 2007, Örebro: Brief Glance at Swedish Theatre and New Drama**

Summary of this year's Swedish theatre biennial in Örebro, its organisational principles and a comparing overview of the previous festivals.

**OTT KARULIN. *Journal personnel du festival d'Avignon***

Reportage in diary form of this year's Avignon theatre festival, its programme and general atmosphere.

**RIINA ORUAAS. Fairy-tales of Everyday: „Tallinn Teater Treff“**

The international puppet theatre festival „Tallinn Teater Treff“, organised by the Estonian Puppet and Youth Theatre, took place from 28 May to 3 June in Tallinn. The author gives an overview of the festival productions, detecting four general trends: entertainment and form plays, fairy-tale productions, social aspects and psychology and realism.

**MUSIC**

**NELE SUISALU. Bodies Performing and Being Performed *Festivals Uzès danse 16–23 June and Montpellier danse 23 June – 7 July 2007 in France***

Festival **Uzès danse** was remarkable for its untraditional venues: open-air stages in the garden of the old bishopric and for the first year at a hippodrome Haras Nationaux and in a black box set up *ad hoc* in a building. Workshops and conversations with choreographers took place, a film programme was running, showing movement-related films by the Belgian director, composer and percussionist Thierry De Mey (1956). 21st century dance from France, Germany, Belgium, Denmark, Portugal, Great Britain. The event was organised in co-operation with Montpellier national choreography centre (CCN). This year's festival **Montpellier danse** marked the fifteenth year since the death of choreographer **Dominique Bagouet** (1951–1992), founder of CCN who died of AIDS. Performances took place in two opera houses, two theatres, open-air stages and black boxes. The audience could see recordings of Thrisha Brown's early work and those of

Dominique Bagouet, and Alain Buffard's portrait film about Anna Halprin „My Lunch with Anna“. There was an additional one-day seminar „Ce que le sida a fait à la danse. Ce que la danse a fait du sida.“ („What AIDS has done with dance. What dance has done with AIDS.“). The programme was stylistically more diverse than in Uzès, including hip-hop, African social dance, contemporary flamenco and the neo-classic, also work by the prominent French choreographers (e.g. Mathilde Monnier and Alain Buffard) and old and new work by the pillars of contemporary dance (e.g. Trisha Brown and Angelin Preljocaj).

Both festivals offered a choice of solo performances that showed the body and the personality from various aspects. **Fabrice Lambert's** two solo performances in Uzès, „**Gravité**“ and „**H comme Harmaat**“ were one-idea productions based on body. The vanity of the performer was demonstrated by **Thomas Lehmen** and **Nigel Charnock**. Both choreographers based everything on their own persons and the relevant character (**Charnock's** „**Frank**“ and **Lehmen's** „**Lehmen lernt**“), **Eszter Salamon** and **Xavier Le Roy's** „**Giszelle**“ offered a third vision of body on stage, and may-be in life as well – body and its identity. **Mark Tompkins's** productions are primarily born in the form of the script and only then he begins work with the performer. In Uzès he showed „**Animal-Mâle**“ and in Montpellier he premiered its “twin”, „**Animal Femelle**“. Some works turned and twisted the body, thus revealing what is hidden in a body: what can refer to the body outside, on the surface, or what is alien in the body (**Régine Chopinot, David Wampach, Philippe Gehmacher, Xavier Le Roy**).

### **MERIKE VAITMAA. Finally the Right „Wallenberg“**

Erkki-Sven Tüür's opera „Wallenberg“ (librettist Lutz Hübner from Germany) premiered in the National Opera Estonia on 1 June 2007. Conductors: Arvo Volmer and Risto Joost (Estonia), director: Dmitri Bertman and Neeme Kuningas, artist-director Ene-Liis Semper, light design Neeme Jõe. The role of Wallenberg was performed by Jesper Taube from the Stockholm Royal Opera. Of Estonians, Priit Volmer as Eichmann, Mati Turi as the false Wallenberg, Helen Lokuta, Annaliisa Pillak and Juuli Lill as three diplomats, Aile Asszony as the Woman, and many others excelled. The result was a splendid ensemble. Dortmund's production six years ago that over-exploited the Nazi symbols, largely left unused the chance to show the similarity of the two totalitarian regimes, leaning towards criticism of Nazism. The general colours of the stage were grim. In Tallinn, Ene-Liis Semper filled the stage with colours. There was not a single swastika or a pentagon, no weapons, but the shining lilac sticks that were part of the SS uniforms seemed more dangerous than the machine guns in Dortmund's production. Erkki-Sven Tüür's first opera was finally produced in Tallinn, and has already been recorded on DVD.

### **BRIGITTA DAVIDJANTS. The Human Nature and Catharsis of Tüür's music**

The concert of the NYJD-Ensemble that introduced Erkki-Sven Tüür's CD *Oxymoron* in Estonia, encouraged the young critic to discuss on the topic of the composer's choice of styles and Tüür's strong impact on other composers. The concert was part of the festival *Glasperlenspiel*.

### **REIN VAHISALU. Northern Coast as Monument**

Estonian composer Villem Kapp's choral poem „Northern Coast” for a male choir, a soloist, organ and symphony orchestra was completed in 1958. The premiere was by the National Academic Male Choir, the former flagship of Estonian choir singing. Alongside Gustav Ernesaks's song „My Homeland is My Love”, this powerful choral poem in praise of nature was for many years a symbol of Estonian national resistance. Neeme Järvi chose it as the opening piece at his 70th anniversary concert.

### **MARIS VALK-FALK, HANS-GUNTER LOCK. Computation in Music – What's That?**

18-20 May 2007, the authors of the article participated in the conference „Mathematics and Computation in Music” in the Berlin Staatliches Institut für Musikforschung. This was the first conference of the recently established International Society for Mathematics and Computation in Music, indicating a growing trend to form smaller associations focusing on a speciality. The organisers were Timour Klouche from the Institute and the German mathematician residing at Barcelona University, Thomas Noll. According to him, musical musicology should be differentiated from mathematical musicology that often uses different means from the traditional musicology. In music research, mixing the various fields has clearly been fruitful. The boundaries of a narrow professional field become vague, but new perspectives emerge instead. Just like applied and pure mathematicians are usually not professional musicians, the highly professional musicians – composers, interpreters, musicologists – can only rarely be professional mathematicians. Performers: Guerino Mazzola (Minnesota University), Fernando Gualda (Royal University of Belfast), Jon Wild (Montreal McGill University), Chantal Buteau, (Brock University in Canada), Anja Volk (Utrecht University in Holland), Nicolas Weiss (Louis Pasteur University in Strasbourg), William A. Sethers (Wisconsin University) etc.

### **MART HUMAL. „Barbara von Tisenhusen”: Opera and libretto**

„Barbara von Tisenhusen” (1967–1968) was the first completed opera by Eduard Tubin. It is based on Aino Kallas's prose ballad of the same name, published in Finnish original in 1923, and next year in Friedebert Tuglas's (1886–1971) Estonian translation. In 1927 the English-language translation appeared in the book „Deathly Eros”, which besides „Barbara von Tisenhusen” also contained the writer's next prose ballad „Teacher of Reigi” (it later became the basis of Tubin's second opera). Almost all characters in Aino Kallas's prose works and Eduard Tubin's opera are historical characters. Musicologist Mart Humal examines Aino Kallas's prose ballad, opera and its libretto against the background of various historical sources and Eduard Tubin's letters. The article is based on Humal's paper at the Pärnu contemporary music symposium in January 2007.

## **CINEMA**

### **ASKO KÜNNAP. Class. After the Gunpowder Smoke Has Cleared**

Review of Ilmar Raag's (1968) feature film „Class” (2007, studio Amrion and Estonian Television) about bullying at school. The reviewer, a poet and artist, regards „Class” as an untypical Estonian film. Everything happens linearly, without dreams,

insights and future memories. Everything happens in present reality and now, according to calendar and clock, in the course of seven days. Everything is transparent and realistic, predictable, thoroughly inevitable. The film has a bold and clear message, a functioning narrative, credible dialogue, well-tempered rhythm, a number of excellent characters, precise and suggestive camerawork and montage. It has already received awards at various prominent international festivals.

#### **PEETER LAURITS. Anatomy of Love**

Review of Marko Raat's (1973) feature „Knife“ (2007, studio Allfilm) and the documentary film „F. F. F. F. Dissolves“ (2005, studio Kuukulgur Film). The reviewer-artist finds that „Knife“ is an especially alive film because it is very personal. The film is based on the prose of Peeter Sauter and Vaino Vahing, and you cannot easily find more personal writers in Estonian literature. Raat has knitted their texts into a film in such a personal manner that it is not possible to recognise the handwriting of either. The actors are excellent, as is Mart Taniel's camerawork. The film's power to generalise, probably thanks to the personal aspect, is enormous. In the reviewer's opinion, the group of dissolving artists F. F. F. F., about whom the film speaks, contains too much talk, affectation, accusations, justifications and mixed feelings, just like in every divorce. Laurits would have liked to see more work done by the group.

#### **PEETER SAUTER. Kelle nahk turule tuua?**

The writer's impressions of Marko Raat's feature „Knife“, where Sauter's text was used. The writer discusses the differences between original literary sources and the film, and finds it correctly done.

#### **SERGEI STADNIKOV. Russian Revolt**

Review of Urmas E. Liiv's documentary film „Bronzenacht: Russian revolt in Tallinn“ (2007, Kanal 2), showing the unrest in April in Tallinn and also the events of May last year. The historian Stadnikov finds the film quite objective and comprehensive, although he would have liked to hear the opinions of prominent experts on national relations as well.

#### **JÜRI EINTALU. Documentary about a TV Production**

Professor of philosophy analyses Urmas E. Liiv's documentary about the April unrest in Tallinn. He does not like the fact that the reporters in the film use intentionally provocative style. At the same time the film seems a bit like a TV production where emphasis lies on impressive mass scenes.

#### **ARMO SEPANDI. Jaan Toomik's Holy Communion**

Review of artist Jaan Toomik's (1961) short film „Holy Communion“ (2007). In the reviewer's opinion the film of Toomik who has so far cultivated video art, tells about being human, existence and its hardships. Everything is here, the pretty and the ugly: effective church-going, sex scene that seems pornographic, and a symbolic naked man in the forest – all this put together forms a whole, open to interpretations and encouraging to think further.

**MARIA ULFSAK-ŠERIPOVA. Tarantino „Death Proof“ – Dream of a Foot Fetishist**

Review by the young film critic of Quentin Tarantino's (1964) latest film „Grindhouse: Death Proof“ (2007). She points out that compared with Tarantino's earlier films, this time the story is linear and there is no mixing of genres. The review also examines the importance of food, drink and cigarettes in Tarantino's films, and also the significance in the current film of female characters' legs, in all possible situations and positions.

**MARGUS PAJU. When Dream Seems Larger Than Life**

Review of Michel Gondry's (1963) film „The Science of Sleep“ (2006). In the opinion of the young critic, the film superbly depicts weird and shifted reality, which emotionally seems credible and familiar. In order to show the fantasy world, forgotten animation techniques are used. These make things move, change proportions between things or play with gravitation, all of which have a refreshing effect. The strong side are also excellent dialogues that add to the strange atmosphere.

**KAROL ANSIP. Insight into Estonian Documentary Film III**

The third part of the overview of Estonian documentaries characterises the (re)awakening time of the 1960s and the emergence of a new generation; the authors are Valeria Anderson, Andres Sööt, Rein Maran, Peeter Tooming, Peep Puks, Mark Soosaar, Ülo Tambek, Grigori Kromanov and Mati Põldre. The film examines the Estonian political-cultural context of the 1960s and the birth of Estonian author's film. The final part tells about the 1968 political events in the world and parallel developments in Estonian film.