

SUMMARIES JULY 2007

Opening Column

VEIKO ÕUNPUU. Art, Ethics and the Onslaught of Darkness

Several Estonian films have recently evoked heated dispute about the relations between art and ethics, and to which extent material based on specific persons can be used in film. Criticism was directed against Sulev Keedus's documentary „Jonathan from Australia“ (2007) because of its unethical shots. In addition, the Harju county court has banned the showing of Kadri Kõusaar's feature „Magnus“ (2007) – the film was premiered at the Cannes film festival last May, being the first Estonian film ever to be shown at that prestigious festival. The writer, a film director himself, regards these negative manifestations as nothing but hypocrisy.

Replies

RAINER SARNET

Longer interview with Rainer Sarnet (1969), director of features and documentaries who graduated as film and video director from the Tallinn Pedagogical University (now Tallinn University) in 1998. Since 1990 he has worked at various film studios, produced photo cartoons for newspapers, written film reviews and been a copywriter at several advertising companies. One of his first student films, „Seasickness“ (1993), was shown at a number of student film festivals and won awards. In 2006 he completed the full-length feature for television, „The Curse of a Werewolf“. The coming October should see the premiere of his feature film for young adults, „Where Souls Go“. In the interview Sarnet tells about his childhood, people who influenced him at school and university, his friends, work in film, advertising and theatre, about making his latest film and future plans.

Persona grata

TAAVI TÕNISSON

As the current issue of the magazine focuses on theatre studies at Viljandi Culture Academy, the actor Taavi Tõnisson talks about his studies in Viljandi, also his school-time contacts with theatre and how he finally ended up in his current job in the Puppet Theatre.

THEATRE

MADLI PESTI, LAUR KAUNISSAARE. Cats That Walk by Themselves

The festival called *The Golden Mask* took place in Moscow again last April, where the sub-programme *Russian Case* presents more avant-garde theatre trends in Russia, with the aim of introducing them primarily for foreign observers. The authors analyse the work of two fascinating experimenters, Andrii Žoldak and Dmitri Krõmov.

OTT KARULIN. Portrait of the 6th drama class of Viljandi Culture Academy

The drama class who graduated last spring was special because, firstly, for the first time new theatre directors were taught there as well, and secondly, because the

entire class went to work in the same theatre – Endla Theatre in Pärnu. The author portrays both actors and directors and describes their BA works.

Teachers Talk about the Graduates

Teachers Tõnu Tepandi, Katri Aaslav-Tepandi and Peeter Raudsepp talk about the graduates of the Viljandi Culture Academy.

IVIKA SILLAR. Antoška

Review of the interpretation of Chekhov's *Seagull* by Finnish director Kristian Smeds at Von Krahl Theatre, who did not focus on the original text too much, leaving out or introducing new characters on the basis of the dialogues between original characters. The author of the article tries to evaluate how much genuine Chekhov spirit has remained and whether this helps to address today's world better.

MUSIC

EVELIN LAGLE, HEILI EINASTO. In the Colourful and Black-and-white World

Dialogues about Marilena Fontoura's *Last July* and Mats Ek's *Fluke*. Marilena Fontoura's dance composition is set to the music of Nicolas Roubanis, Erik Satie, Dmitry Shostakovitch, Pēteris Vasks and Franz Schubert. The music of Mats Ek's *Fluke* is by the ensemble Fläskvartetten.

They were performed in the Almi hall of Finnish National Opera on the same night, premiere on 27 April 2007.

Marilena Fontoura from Portugal studied at Susanna Egri's ballet school in Turin and Maurice Béjart's L' École Mudra in Brussels. She has been working with the Finnish National Opera since 1986. The style of *Last July* seems a mixture of Mats Ek's contemporary choreography and classical ballet. Fontoura's principles of how to use the body resemble those of Ek. Diversity played a great role in the performance – in music, moods and choreography. Playfulness alternated with the serious. Playfulness, reality, reality, playfulness... The plot was of secondary importance. Dance was the main thing.

The choreography of *Fluke* by the prominent Finn Mats Ek was dense and smoothly flowing. Separate movements had no special meaning, what was essential was the flow of energy through motion, which all together formed a whole. The great asset of the choreographer is his skill to perceive the energy between different bodies and their relating in space. The second significant feature is angularity. Ek can skilfully insert angular lines and images and sudden movements into the general flow, into the entire motion.

The ballet evening made a splendid whole. At first Fontoura's colourful world of the young, full of dreams, yearning and great hopes; to be followed by Ek's sensible sober world of the middle-aged, where colours have been washed out.

BRIGITTA DAVIDJANTS. Orient – from Korea to Namibia

Brigitta Davidjants shares her impressions about the festival of oriental music, *Orient*, which took place in the first week of May. The musicians were from Korea, Namibia,

Armenia, India, Azerbaijan, Bhutan, Tuva and Kambodia. The festival had an exciting programme and made an attempt to map the Islamic cultures.

KERRI KOTTA. *Mart Humal. Studies on Tonal Structures. Introduction and Fourteen Analytical Studies. Writings on Music Theory III.* Tallinn: Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, 2007.

The author of the book, Mart Humal, is the undisputed leader and intellectual head of today's music theory in Estonia, whose active research and teaching activities have shaped the face of his chosen field, especially during the past fifteen years.

The book consists of two parts, the first written in Estonian, the other in English. Although the parts largely coincide, the target group of readers and several issues raised in them are quite different, which is mostly due to the differences in Estonian and English language space. The book focuses on contrapuntal analysis, whereas contrapuntal structure is seen in close connection with the form of the works. Both parts are divided into three: general theoretical introduction, the part tackling works of the classical-romantic period, and chapters analysing Estonian music. The book is based on the seventeen articles written by the author over the last six years (2001–2006), relying in turn on various papers presented at conferences and symposia.

VIRGE JOAMETS. *Like an Onion.*

The Classical music radio published a book *NYYD-music. New sounds on Classic Radio*, offering an overview of the work of people working in the radio, and presents their views about new music. Joamets finds the book interesting, but a bit eclectic and is not certain to whom it is addressed.

ANNELI IVASTE. *Feedback in Superlatives – Rule Rather Than Exception.*

A summary of articles in the foreign press about the 2006/2007 season of the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Orchestra. Ivaste presents paragraphs of reviews about the choir's CDs and concerts in the leading English, German and American publications.

HEILI EINASTO. *Warning Stories of Sylphide and Giselle*

La Sylphide and *Giselle* belong among **the oldest ballets that have reached today in live tradition.** The plots of both offer food for thought also today. Bournonville's *La Sylphide* (Løvenskiold's music) premiered last season in Estonia Theatre, Perrot-Coralli-Petipa's *Giselle* (Adam's music) in Vanemuine. The article examines the plots and characters of both ballets in the context of a romantic ballet.

CINEMA

KAROL ANSIP. *Insights into Estonian Documentary II*

The second part of the longer overview of Estonian documentary films describes changes in documentary films after Estonia was occupied in 1940, and in what direction our documentaries had moved by the early 1960s. The article analyses topics used by the new regime, the work by the guest film directors despatched here

from Leningrad, the newsreel „Soviet Estonia“ and documentaries of that time. As the canon in film was socialist realism, the article describes how this was expressed in films.

KÜLLO ARJAKAS. Three War Films in Three Years

The longer article by the historian Küлло Arjakas examines three recent Estonian war documentaries: Anne-Mari Neider's (1977) „Soldiers of the Skull“ (Estonian Television, 2004), René Vilbre's (1970) „Group Haukka“ (Ruut, 2005) and Raimo Jõerand's (1970) „The Blue Hills“ (Ruut, 2006). The writer points out the similarities and differences. He then describes the films separately, adding a lot of background information and explanation to the events shown in the films. The reviewer likes the fact that none of the films shows any signs of being politically commissioned. He concludes that the unpredictability in war is more powerful than we think today and the choices far fewer than we would like.

JAAN J. LEPIK. Wondrous Beauty of Man

Review of Sulev Keedus's full-length documentary „Jonathan from Australia“ (F-Seitse, 2007) that has evoked a fierce dispute. The film shows life on Saaremaa island and the hopes of local people about the building of the new harbour that would attract foreign cruise ships. Unfortunately their hopes are dashed. The reviewer, a clergyman, focuses on the problems connected with the genre of documentary films where reflecting contradictions and social suffering often causes misunderstanding with those shown in the film. In his opinion, Keedus's film is one of the most powerful among recent documentaries, because it honestly reflects life and its nuances today – and this has caused a lot of furore and raised many issues.

JAAN RUUS. Life in a Self-made Cage

Another review of Sulev Keedus's documentary „Jonathan from Australia“. The writer first describes the topics in the film and its characters. He points out that the people are often drunk, and several have suffered greatly during their lives, not despite that the film cannot be regarded as evidence of the decline of Estonian people. However, it also reveals the mentality where everything is for sale. Unfortunately, the only white cruise ship that landed at Tamme harbour on Saaremaa island went bankrupt. The filmmaker presents this as an ironic comment to waiting for an empty and pointless messiah. According to the film critic, the message of the film is simple: do not wait for redemption from a white ship, better go outside to the sunshine, which is not a bad start. Keedus has maintained the reputation as a keen observer of human nature.

Jasper Pääkkönen Only Plays in Film

Margus Paju's interview with the popular young Finnish actor Jasper Pääkkönen (1980) who has repeatedly appeared on screens here too. He has been in Estonia several times to attend the showing of his films. Pääkkönen tells about his films and his work with directors Aleksi Mäkelä and Aku Louhimies, also about his plans for the future.