

Monday, November 02, 2004

Dear Maestro Riccardo Muti,

I don't know if this letter will reach you. But I decided that it is worth to try after reading your very interesting interview written by Mr. Marijan Zlobec, who was talking with you in Vienna. My name is Matej and am student of computer science at University of Maribor in Slovenia. Probably there is not a lot of connections between art and computer science, although all levels and protocols in informatics technology that are filling civilization today could be interpreted like an art form the right point in the space, but there is another point with different story that I'd like to write you.

Maybe you are wondering what the previous paragraph has to do with you and why I am writing to you. Please continue and I will explain.

Many times my mother explained to me, that when I was two years old little boy, the classical music influenced on me in every early moment when it was broadcasted. What was interesting was that only classical orchestra concerts and symphonies putted me in a special position of a one among youngest conductors in the world (the opera or vocal music was not influenced on me at this early beginning of my live). However 21 years later I landed in the classical opera orchestra of Maribor playing the second trombone and studying computer science beside. Next four years in Maribor national opera orchestra filled me with the greatest moments of my life. We had host some of the great names of the world (between them also famous Lalo Schifrin), but what was even greater, were my four years playing under excellent Italian conductor and composer maestro *Stefano Pellegrino Amato*. I don't know if you have heard for him, but I would like to write you some things about him.

In the comparison with me, his wish in the early beginning of a little boy was to become a magician. Then 21 years later he becomes a conductor (and I computer scientist). However by reading your interview in Delo, I have found some of similar characteristic and overview of opera music that you had express and that I got from maestro Stefano. Under his conducting I played almost all Verdi's and Puccini's work (Traviata, Aida, Don Carlo, Madam Butterfly, Tosca, La Bohem, Turandot, Machbeth, Trubadur). Many from the orchestra would agree with me, if I say that he was an excellent and the best interpret in Maribor theatre ever. But I don't want to write more about my views of his interpretations, rather I would like to write you about his second part, about the opera that he wrote.

In 2001, we made the world premiere of his work with name Hymnus. There were only five spectacles of it. During next years because of different policy in theater unfortunately no reprises were made. However maestro Stefano started in 2002 with recording the Hymnus for the studio record. This required a lot of energy, unfortunately the project did not success and what rested from it was the track of first part with violins and violas.

It is hard to describe strong and beautiful feelings by music that he wrote. He himself described this with words "*Hymnus is about the travel into the soul of the human, it is about her dreams, wishes and prays*". He said that Hymnus "*is about all that honesty that is coming deep out from us and is changing our destiny - the eternal fight between the light and darkness of the soul*". And these words are written in the universe of music. There are written in a way, like Cervate's Don Kihot is in the books.

Some of the critics wrote after premiere that the whole opera has no unit message and it is more like a collage or mosaic. But hearing only one performance is not enough to be objective. By my opinion there is an undiscovered power, beautiful entity, eternity, and deepness in the music of Stefano and pure long contact with something absolute, peaceful and loved. It is a music that turns into a small star, goes on the top of the concert hall and touches the people somewhere deep inside their hearts. It is an art of today times and the opera, which in modern composition and music crises, again inspires with respect to the unique language of the universe - the music itself.

Eugene Ionesco in 1972 wrote the following thoughts for Miro's painters:

“Inside us we bear all sorts of monsters, regrets, sorrow and suffering. Miro exorcises the monsters. They turn into lucid, free and pure creatures at a festival that is not loud but full of movement and ascending blossoming

Every work by Miro is a dancing garden a choir, an opera of couloirs, flowers and creatures ready to bloom. It is a word both transient and completely real. The ring of paints creates an original manner, an original reality, an interesant eloyence. Pure emotionally, slightly ironic, free of any sentinality, this is a virtue”

Most likely I would use the similar words for Stefano Pellegrino Amato and his Hymnus if somebody ask me for.

Well, nobody asked me for that. Still I have hope and I am writing this to you. Maybe I am not at right position to do that. My experiences in music are only four years of opera orchestra and a lot of listening, beside that I am today in different world – in the world of mathematic and technique. I have not education in composition or history of art. I am quite ordinary person, as others would describe me. However somewhere deep in myself, there is a strong feeling of what is genius, worth and magic, all that already from the early beginning of me - very young conductor – a little two years old boy. And the Hymnus has all that. It is genius and magic, and as such it deserves to view a light of the world. Now you know the reason why I am writing to you. It is Hymnus.

The announcement that you will be guest in Slovenia made me very happy. It is a great honor for Slovenian world of music. With the knowledge and feelings about existing Hymnus somewhere deep in me and with the story around the opera in two parts, the idea for this letter was born. I am kindly asking you for your opinion based on this short description of Hymnus and selected piece of the record. I added one aria by my taste to this description, which was live recorded during the performance in 2001 in Maribor (because of recorder the quality is not optimal). However I will let now music to speak the rest.

Unfortunately today Maestro Stefano, who could inspire and live the Hymnus on in the future, today is in the rehabilitation center in Verona, because of the brain stroke in last year. He is on the way of long recovery and his music currently sleep deep somewhere in him. Knowing all that about him, about new Italian work with the name Hymnus, and feeling that it should be on the repertoire of the operas among Europe when reading your interview, I came out with this idea to write you about this story, and kindly ask you for your opinion. If you thinking in a way that I am, please let me know.

With the new performance of Hymnus, many dreams could become a reality.

Pleasant staying in Slovenia and a lot of enjoy in a concert hall of “Cankarjev dom”. It should be one among better acoustic places in this part beside Vienna.

Matej

Contact information:

Email: matej.mertik@gmail.com

Adress: Hardek 29, 2270 Ormož, Slovenia